EFFECTIVE TEACHING AND LEARNING IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS OF THE THOHOYANDOU DISTRICT THROUGH CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES

By

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DECLARATION

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I declare that **EFFECTIVE TEACHING AND LEARNING IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS OF THE THOHOYANDOU DISTRICT THROUGH CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES** is my own work and all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

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SIGNATURE   DATE

(Ms LC MUNONDE)
  LIMPOPO

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my late grandmother, Milomoni Meriam Moseri; my mother, Sakgofiwa Martha Moseri; and my children, Tshifhiwa, Alusani, Elekanyani, Ronewa.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

SUMMARY

The aim of this study was to investigate the criteria for effective continuous professional development of educators and to determine ways of improvement of the programmes as implemented in secondary schools in the Thohoyandou district of Limpopo Province. The study was conducted through a literature review and qualitative investigation. The literature review explored the nature of effective professional development of educators and the criteria for design, planning and implementation of such programmes. The qualitative study investigated the management of professional development programmes for secondary schools educators in the Thohoyandou district using interviews with district coordinators or Educator Multi Purpose Centers (EMPC) facilitators, secondary school principals and educators. The findings revealed the strengths and weaknesses of professional development programmes. Based on the literature review and qualitative investigation, recommendations were made with regard to the provision of effective professional development programmes for educators, particularly secondary school educators.

KEY TERMS

Effective teaching and learning

Secondary school

Professional development of educators

Thohoyandou

Vhembe district

Principals

Qualitative research

Focus group interviews

Facilitators

ACRONYMS

ANC	African National Congress
CASS	Continuous Assessment
C2005	Curriculum 2005
CPD	Continuous Professional Development
EMPC	Educator Multi Purpose Centers
FE	Further Education
FET	Further Education and Training
GET	General Education and Training
INSET	In-Service Educator Training
IQMS	Integrated Quality Management System
NCS	National Curriculum Statement
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NPDE	National Professional Diploma in Education
NQF	National Qualification Frameworks
OBE	Outcomes-Based Education
PD	Professional Development
PDP	Professional Development Programmes
PRESET	Pre-Service Educator Training
R&R	Rationalisation and Redeployment
SACE	South African Council of Educators
SADTU	South African Democratic Teachers Union
SAPA	South African Principal Association

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CHAPTER ONE

BACKGROUND, PROBLEM FORMULATION, AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

1.1   INTRODUCTION

When South Africa became a democracy in April 1994, it found itself in a competitive world in which a greater need for knowledge and skills would be required by its citizens in order to meet international challenges. In order to meet the challenges brought about by socio-political changes, South Africa has to provide quality education for its people. Schools play a vital role in the provision of quality education and thus contribute to national progress.

The South African government commenced to transform the apartheid education system in an attempt to purge the curriculum of racially offensive and outdated content by introducing the three national curriculum reform initiatives focused on schools (Jansen, 1998:321). Williamson and Lemmer (2003:137) indicate that the former Minister of Education, Prof SME Bengu, announced that much needed curriculum reform in South Africa would culminate in a completely new curriculum entitled Curriculum 2005.

According to Robinson and Latchem (2003:49), in many countries, and particularly in the developing world, policy-makers and planners face challenges in developing, expanding and improving school systems and providing trained educators. In this endeavor, distance education as a solution is increasingly on the agendas of educational policy-makers and planners and appears in policy documents on educator education. This was also evident for the Australian government which transformed its education system in 1989 in order to improve the existing curriculum. During the past 30 years attempts were made in Australia to promote a national curriculum for schools that is suitable for national development of the learners, rather than a range of curricula according to differing geographical locations (Williamson & Lemmer, 2003:141). Changes in the education

system impacts on the educator development programmes offered to educators. However, the nature and extent of policy-making for initial and continuing educator education varies from country to country. Therefore, the researcher found it important to investigate the professional development of secondary school educators in the Thohoyandou district in Limpopo Province, during the implementation of the new curriculum and education policies.

This chapter provides a brief but detailed background of the professional development of educators and the changing education system; the effect of professional development of educators on the new education system in the Vhembe/Thohoyandou district and the need for professional development training programmes for educators. The problem formulation is presented as well as the research aims and objectives; the method of investigation; the division of chapters and the definition of concepts under study.

1.2   BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

1.2.1   Professional development of educators and the changing education system

The researcher's personal experience as an educator of mathematics and technical drawing in one of the secondary schools under investigation, her teaching philosophy and her methodology have been shaped by factors such as her background, life history and her professional vision. The researcher's lack of adequate and relevant professional development support in the learning areas that she has taught from grade 10 to 12 for the past five years has contributed to her awareness of the problem. She has found that in her school in the Thohoyandou district learners perform badly in mathematics and science subjects and this is the case in most secondary schools in the district. As a result many educators have lost interest in teaching mathematics and learners only take mathematics because it has become compulsory.

Moreover, learner performance in a significant number of secondary schools in the Thohoyandou/Vhembe district has been deteriorating since 2003.This was also indicated

by the Grade 12 results in 2003. When asked by the former Minister of Education about the poor performance for schools within the district during the Provincial announcement of grade results 2004 held in Polokwane in December, the then Thohoyandou district senior manager said, "For the past years the Thohoyandou district was taking position one in all the districts around the province, but since the year 2003 the district has been taking position three" Limpopo matric results announcement, December 2004. This was after the introduction of new policies and curriculum 2005 (C2005).

The professional development support based on the introduction and implementation of the new education policies, did provide not much to support math's and science educators. However, efforts have been made by Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's), such as Kgatelopele, to improve the quality of education by offering in-service training in subjects like english, physical science and mathematics. No other form of professional support has been offered in the engineering and commercial subjects. However, the transformation of the disbanded educator training colleges into Educator Multipurpose Centers (EMPC's) in the Limpopo province is an indication of the importance of educator professional development programmes to provide educators with the necessary professional support they need to remain effective in teaching and learning.

This was evident when the education department took initiatives to supplement the qualifications of under-qualified educators, by ensuring that educators undergo part-time courses at universities. As from 2001 under-qualified educators have been given the chance by the Department of Education to upgrade their professional competence at various universities where they can enroll for the National Professional Diploma in Education (NPDE) (Rathogwa, 2006:4).

In addition to the effort to upgrade under-qualified educators EMPC's were introduced and they were intended to address the professional development programmes that educators need, but their usefulness has been limited. Secondary school educators need these programmes during the implementation of the new education system because most of the learning areas and policies, such as Continuous Assessment (CASS) of learners

require that they approach teaching and learning from a different perspective. Yet the EMPC's have not been able to meet their needs fully and as a result this has affected their teaching and learning. Jansen (1998:3204) asserts that the present education and training system is designed to meet the needs of an outdated and narrowly Taylorist specification and this renders the economy incapable of competing with workforces that are trained to be self-directed, innovative and reflective. Educators are expected to apply appropriate and relevant knowledge and skills required by the new curriculum in the new education system. This requires a shift in emphasis on the part of educator preparation and educator education that will prepare them to cope with the new challenges in their teaching. The knowledge and skills that the existing educators acquired in their pre-service training institutions were mainly based on the former apartheid system. Thus, educators should be provided with adequate and relevant knowledge and skills needed by the new curriculum. According to Van der Horst and McDonald (1997:26), the new education system in South Africa requires comprehensive remodeling and a fundamental shift in the attitude that educators adopt to the learning process. The implementation of the new education system in South Africa requires that educators should be provided with adequate and relevant training support programmes that will prepare them for the new curriculum.

Jansen (1998:328) argues that for Outcomes-based Education (OBE) to succeed even in moderate terms, a number of interdependent innovations must strike the new education system simultaneously. It requires trained and retrained educators who can implement new forms of assessment, classroom organization, additional time for managing the complex process, constant monitoring and evaluation of the implementation process. Retrained education managers or principals are needed to secure implementation as required as well as parental support and involvement.

The successful implementation of the new national curriculum depends on the willingness to implement, supported by the knowledge about what is to be done by implementers as well as following the appropriate steps that need to be followed. The Department of Education is also expected to develop professional modules that will guide the professional development support.

The successful implementation of the new curriculum is supported by what happened during the implementation of the new education system in Australia in 1989 as indicated by Williamson and Lemmer (2003:153) who state that the implementation of the new education system in the New South Wales for an outcomes-based approach was initiated by developing two professional development modules: an outcomes and profile approach in focus; and an outcomes and profile approach in the classroom. Although these forms of professional development were widely criticized, it succeeded in offering direction to secondary school educators.

When the national and provincial Departments of Education in South Africa decided to implement the new education system it was required that much consideration should be given to the procedures to be followed for the successful implementation of the new system. This included: familiarization of the policy documents; training workshops; publication of first steps; support for the new curriculum policy; industrial action; support for schools; publication of outcomes profiles; and management of student achievement information.

Although before the final implementation of the new curriculum, pilot projects were done followed by information sessions and training workshops for educators, this was haphazard because the time frame impacted on the successful implementation. This is depicted by the inadequacy of information about the whole process during the implementation. Clearly, the professional development support did not provide educators with adequate and relevant knowledge and skills to effectively meet the demands placed by the new curriculum. Therefore, it was difficult for most to approach their teaching and learning situation as required by the C2005 with OBE as its methodology.

Inadequate information led to the ineffective implementation of C2005 as the new curriculum which was further substituted by the new National Curriculum Statement which was then introduced in 2005. Implementation started in 2006 in grade 10 to be infused in other grades in subsequent years. Van Niekerk in Marishane (2002:118) states

that the educational change in South Africa with the implementation of OBE since 1997 has failed to deliver the expected results because of inadequate orientation, training and development of educators; policy overload and limited transfer of learning into classrooms. The implementation of the new education system brought major changes in roles played by different stakeholders in schools especially the roles of principals, educators and learners in the teaching and learning situation. Thus, a shift in focus in the roles played by various stakeholders was advocated (Van der Horst & McDonald, 1997:138).

In the former education system, educators were expected to impart knowledge to learners through rigid curriculum content which was informed by the uniform syllabus for a particular race group; learners were regarded as passive participant, who were regarded as empty vessels, without a say in the process of learning. According to the new education system, educators have to change from primary suppliers of knowledge to facilitators in the teaching and learning process who should use their creative ideas and apply new ways to develop the curricula to achieve critical as well as specific outcomes as required by the new curriculum at the end of learning sessions. Learners have to assume greater responsibility for their learning by participating actively in the process of teaching and learning to develop their critical thinking skills and should feel free to ask questions for better understanding about what and why they have to learn. The initial educator training provided to educators before the new education system did not prepare them to cope with any other education system. As such educators find it very difficult to develop their own learning programmes to suit their learners and are very reluctant to start new things on their own.

The district officials were tasked with the responsibility of providing continuous professional development support programmes to educators but they indicated in their workshops that they did not know much about the details of the new education system. They could not demonstrate this new knowledge to educators and were only able to monitor that the curriculum was implemented as planned. This was supported by the report of the Review Committee on Curriculum 2005 (Van Niekerk in Marishane,

2002:120). Moreover, the implementation of the new curriculum was coupled with the implementation of other new education policies at the same time for secondary schools in some provinces, including Limpopo.

When C2005 with OBE as its methodology was implemented during 2001 in grade 8, the policy on Rationalization and Redeployment (R&R) which was introduced in 1999 was not yet finalized in the Limpopo province. The province was one of the last to implement the R&R process and yet it had to be finalized during 2001. In addition to the R&R policy, Continuous Assessment (CASS) was introduced and implemented in 2001 as a substitute for the so-called year mark for grade 12 learners. This was also compounded by the policy on Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS) which came as a replacement of the educator appraisal policy. In Thohoyandou district IQMS was to be implemented concurrently with R&R because of the delayed process of R&R in the whole district.

The Vhembe district, formerly known as the Thohoyandou district, is one of the six districts in Limpopo. Here the situation was not adequately controlled in most secondary schools. In the Vhembe district the R&R process affected most educators because of the way educators were employed prior to 1994 as a result of the independent homelands policy. This led to a situation where most educators had to be redeployed from primary schools to secondary schools. The fact that most secondary schools were led by newly appointed principals appointed towards the end of 2000 made it difficult for principals to deal with this situation. Secondary school principals had to relinquish temporary educators with experience of the subjects to make place for permanent educators who had been teaching in the primary school since they started their teaching careers. The situation was worse for the new principals who had to lose educators because of a decrease in learner enrolment. This was exacerbated in the cases of technical and commercial schools in which educators only focus on their specialized subjects. In other instances it was difficult for principals to get a suitable educator for the post especially for math's, science and technology learning areas.

The delay in the finalization of the R&R process in Limpopo province made it impossible for the successful implementation of the new curriculum because not enough time was given to provide professional support to educators by the school and the district. The emphasis was put on finalizing the process of R&R which was intended to be finished by the end of 2001. The district had to make sure that all the policies ran concurrently.

However, this was not possible because secondary school principals had to orientate primary school educators to the secondary school level. Although the latter were already used to most terminology of the new curriculum, it was difficult to assign them to positions in higher grades, such as grade 12, left by temporary educators. The principals had to battle with trying to place educators in appropriate subjects/learning areas and this delayed the proper implementation of other policies.

The complicated situation that principals and educators had to face led to the ineffectiveness of the implementation of the new education policies and curriculum. Principals as initiators and coordinators of staff development programmes did not provide these to educators when the new policies were implemented. Beside time constraints most principals in the district did not have a policy on educator development. Moreover, few had received induction programmes when they were appointed in their new posts since 2003.

The issue of continuous professional development was further compounded by the fact that for many years there has been no national system of evaluating the performance of schools and therefore there is no comprehensive data on the quality of teaching and learning or educational standards. The professional development of educators depends highly on the identified needs for professional support, but it has been very difficult for principals to find out the educators' levels of performance without a formal monitoring instrument.

The policy on whole school evaluation introduced in 2001 has not been effective, due to the unsuccessful implementation of Educator Appraisal Policy. Moreover, the educators

were instructed by their unions not to be assessed. This is supported by a South African Democratic Educators Union (SADTU) district circular dated 23 March 2004, which ordered educators to refuse to be visited in class and to submit their portfolios to any department official, including the principal.

In the light of this, there is a need to investigate professional development in secondary schools in the Vhembe/Thohoyandou district in Limpopo province which is seen to have experienced great difficulties in the implementation of most recent education policies.

1.2.2 The effect of professional development of educators on the new education system

Teaching like any other profession is a process that requires comprehensive and practical training of educators to develop thorough knowledge and skills in order to be effective in the teaching and learning process. The fact that the education system changes over time requires that the existing educators undergo professional development training programmes relevant to the present education system in order to adapt to the challenges and changes in education.

According to Van Niekerk in Marishane (2002:119), human resource development is very important in the successful implementation of change. In addition, Le Roux and Maila (2004:236) maintain that in-service education refers to instructional programmes aimed at upgrading the skills and qualifications and of providing training in new policy directions, as the ongoing professional development of teaching practitioners.

The introduction of the new education system required that the existing educator training institutions be rationalized after the department realized that it had enough trained educators, some of whom were not even employed. However, of all these trained educators very few had been trained for certain subjects/learning areas called scarce subjects. The Vhembe district had several educator training institutions. Out of the sixteen educator training institutions in the province, eight were in the Vhembe/Thohoyandou

district. The latter were turned into community colleges and one is a pre-service training college for math's and science educators only. These community colleges were further rationalized into four EMPC's in 2003 respectively: Lemana, Makhado, Tshisimani and Shingwedzi. The EMPC's were intended to serve as in-service training/professional development support centers to upgrade the existing educators with the required knowledge and skills they need in the new education system. The Limpopo provincial Department of Education planned that the former lecturers from the rationalized training colleges together with the district officials would work as facilitators and coordinators of professional development programmes at the various EMPC's.

This has not been easy for the district officials together with the EMPC's facilitators to introduce the training programmes to the foundation phase educators and other primary school educators. The situation was more difficult for the senior phase and the further education and training band educators because there was a shortage of facilitators in learning areas like engineering. Moreover, the facilitators themselves did not have confidence in what they were doing and thus just reviewed the policy documents without providing any further explanation about practice.

The situation was complicated by the fact that the implementation of C2005 with OBE as its methodology was done simultaneously with the introduction of CASS substituting the year mark in grade 12. Moreover, as mentioned during this time the process of rationalization and redeployment of educators was to be finalized and in most cases principals had just been promoted to the principalship. Principals had to attend many district and other meetings which gave them no time to monitor the successful implementation of the new curriculum and new education policies.

In some secondary schools the staff was small because of the size of the school yet some educators teaching grade 8 to grade 12 were expected to teach more than one learning areas in all the school grades. This made it difficult for them to start implementing the new curriculum and provide the required activities for grade 12 CASS. The educators indicated that, during the external moderation for grade 12 CASS, they did not understand

the policy and what was expected from them. This became evident when they were sent back to their schools to redo the CASS. Moreover, because CASS activities had not been completed during the year, educators ended up giving learners activities just to meet the requirements for CASS or they just made up CASS marks.

The situation was worse when it came to the 75% CASS for grade 8 and 9 learners. Most educators never attempt to apply the OBE principles in their classes because they do not know how to assess learners or use the policy document. Principals also did not know the requirements for most of the learning area assessment forms and as such found it very difficult to instruct educators.

The inability of educators to facilitate their teaching and learning using the new curriculum gave them less confidence to engage in their teaching and reduced their motivation. This in turn inhibited the effective implementation and management of the Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS) policy. Ever since the introduction of the policy on whole school evaluation which included the appraisal of educators, educators have been resistant to the implementation of the IQMS. They feared being observed during the teaching and learning session as they thought it would reflect their inability to apply the principles of OBE. Consequently, that even though educators did not undergo the IQMS process, they had to complete the forms to receive the pay progression as agreed. This was initiated in 2006 and the pay progression was to be given to educators for the 2005 IQMS, to be continued in 2006 and 2007 respectively.

In the light of this discussion, it becomes clear that lack of adequate and relevant professional development of educators in the whole district has had great impact on the effective implementation of the new education policies and curriculum. On this ground the researcher deemed it important to determine the need for continuous professional development and the importance of these programmes for the future of educators.

1.2.3   The need for professional development training programmes for educators

South Africa today is characterized by a rapidly changing socio-political environment, changing technology and a severe skills shortage, especially in the technical, professional and managerial categories (Human, 1991:199). These changes have impacted a great deal on the current teaching and learning approach. This is evident if we consider the level of learner performance in the matric results since the introduction of the new education policy and the new curriculum in the Thohoyandou/Vhembe district for the past five years. For many years the Thohoyandou district had been regarded as the best district in Limpopo Province. However, this has changed since 2002 due to the R& R policy which impacted the district in many ways. It is a district with more trained educators as well as more training institutions than any other district.

In addition, most educators who had been redeployed were found to move from primary schools to secondary schools and it took them a long time to adjust to the secondary school level. They were expected to offer subjects or learning areas from grade 8 to grade 12 due to the given staff ratio and this resulted in the lowering of the level of performance in matric results as depicted by the Limpopo Provincial departmental statistics announced during the awards ceremonies for grade 12 results which takes place every year. On this occasion it was announced that the Thohoyandou district results were outstanding until 2003. Thereafter, the Thohoyandou district has taken position three and never improved.

The high failure rate of grade 10 learners in the Limpopo province in 2003 was assumed to have been caused by the introduction of C2005 in grade 8 and 9 and which was not continued to grade 10 in 2003. This led the former Minister of Education, J Mashamba, to direct schools to condone learners to grade 11 and then to grade 12 in the following year. This resulted in disastrous grade 12 results in 2004. In 2005 and 2006 the grade 12 pass percentage deteriorated further because of the inconsistency of the implementation of C2005 which was substituted by the National Curriculum Statement (NCS), introduced in grade 10 in 2006.

Moreover, the situation with C2005 could be repeated with the new National Curriculum. The current education system requires that education, training and development should take place concurrently. But the knowledge and skills of current educators are inadequate and irrelevant in meeting the demands of the new education system.

This is supported by Williamson and Lemmer (2003:15) who state that the implementation of the new education system in Australia was initiated by the provision of professional development on profiling which was followed by workshops conducted by educational officers for educators and office based staff. These were aimed at familiarizing participants with the language and structure, relevance and aims of the documents and school needs. At these workshops officers observed that educators required adequate time to reflect on the philosophy, process and practicalities of outcomes profiling.

In addition, Le Roux and Maila (2004:237) point out that educators play a vital role in the interpretation of the education policy and as such it is imperative that they receive professional development opportunities in order to meet the challenges of implementing these new education policies in schools. The Department of Education (1995:39) contends that without the support of educators, fundamental policy changes can never be put into practice successfully, and further asserts that the successful transformation of education and training system is ultimately dependent on professional development and commitment of educators.

However, although the provincial education department made efforts to ensure that educators receive the necessary support to acquaint themselves with the new policies and new curriculum, the district officials and EMPC facilitators who have been assigned the duties of coordinators and organizers of professional development support lacked capacity. District officials indicated that they did not have adequate information about the actions to be followed in the new curriculum because they had not been trained.

Beside the fact that the district officials provided inadequate professional development support programmes to educators, school managers on the other hand did not attempt to give their staff additional support programmes on the basis of the new curriculum. They had no idea how to proceed since they too did not receive any formal training programme except for certain principals who had furthered their studies at some universities. To support this, Kydd, Crawford and Riches (1997:2) indicates that professional development of educational managers is too often considered both in the literature and practice as a highly individualistic process focused on the needs, aspirations and careers of educators who are potential managers, ignoring the need for organizational development.

According to Human (1991:270), formal training programmes and management education are often perceived as an easy way out and organizations themselves are often reluctant to get involved in the messy problem of training and developing people. Instead they send them on courses. O' Sullivan, Jones and Reid (1990: 180) maintain that one of the most sensitive roles of the head educator and staff development coordinators (SDC) is to balance the educator's individual needs and the school's requirements of them.

Moreover, the introduction of the appraisal of educators as a method of evaluating educators' work complicated matters. The policy on educator appraisal did not work and had to be substituted by the IQMS which also failed. Thus, principals still do not know what to do in order to provide the relevant professional development support to educators. This situation has led to the deterioration of the standard of teaching and learning and of educator motivation.

Thus, the researcher felt the need to determine the need of secondary school educators in the Vhembe district for professional development programmes.

1.3 PROBLEM FORMULATION

1.3.1 Statement of the problem

In the aforegoing discussion, it has been indicated that the South African education system has been characterized in the past decade by far-reaching changes. The implementation of new education policies and C2005 simultaneously has major consequences for the training and continuous professional development of educators.

The new education system required the knowledge and skills of educators to be upgraded to approach the new curriculum. This implied that more comprehensive and adequate training would be a necessity for educators to be effective in teaching and learning. However, it is clear from the discussion that the programmes as implemented by the provincial education department are failing to upgrade current educators to fit into the new education system. In the Thohoyandou/Vhembe district the professional development conducted by district officials and coordinators indicated that they had failed to address the needs of educators especially those of secondary schools.

The hiatus between the needs of educators and the way these programmes are designed, planned and implemented leads to frustration among educators and reluctance to attend the professional development workshops. This led to the following research question.

1.3.2 The main research problem

What are the criteria for the design, planning and implementation of effective continuous professional development programmes for educators? In which way can the programmes, as implemented in the secondary schools of the Thohoyandou/Vhembe district in the Limpopo province, be improved to ensure effective teaching and learning?

1.3.3 Sub - problems

(a) What is the essence of an effective continuous professional development programme for educators? What are the factors that need to be considered in the design, planning and implementation of such programmes?

(b) What is the nature of the professional development programmes for secondary school educators in the Thohoyandou/Vhembe district of the Limpopo province?

(c) What are the developmental needs of secondary school educators in the Thohoyandou/Vhembe district and what are the educators' perceptions of the quality and relevance of the current programmes offered?

(d) How can the programmes implemented be improved to ensure effective teaching and learning?

1.4   RESEARCH AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

1.4.1   Main aim

The main aim of this study is to identify the criteria for effective continuous professional development programmes for educators and to determine ways of improving the programmes as implemented in secondary schools in the Thohoyandou/Vhembe district of the Limpopo province.

1.4.2   Research objectives

The following research objectives have been identified:

(a)   To investigate the nature of effective professional development for educators.

(b)   To identify the criteria for the design, planning and implementation of such programmes.

(c)   To investigate the nature of the professional development programmes as implemented in the secondary schools of the Thohoyandou/Vhembe district of the Limpopo province.

(d)   To determine educators' perceptions about the current programmes and to identify their real needs in terms of professional development.

(e)   To make recommendations for the improvement of the programmes implemented to ensure effective teaching and learning in secondary schools.

1.5   METHODS OF INVESTIGATION

Method commonly denotes a specific procedure, tool, or technique used by the researcher to generate and analyze data, i.e. the means of supporting theory of where you want to go with your enquiry (Shram, 2003:31).The researcher used a qualitative research method and design to conduct this research. According to Leedy and Ormrod (2001: 270), qualitative methodology is appropriate for the study of attitudes and behaviors best understood within the natural setting.

1.5.1   Research design

The researcher used qualitative research design to conduct this study. The researcher considered the case study design as the most suitable qualitative research design because this study is focused on one phenomenon that she needs to understand in depth, which is effective teaching and learning through professional development. According to Schumacher and McMillan (1993:375), the investigation of one phenomenon is not reliant on the number of sites, participants or documents for the study.

Schulze (2000:50) maintains that qualitative researchers use emergent design and make decisions about data collection strategies during their study. The researcher realized that this study required a thorough study of relevant literature, including official documents as well as interviews with participants who are knowledgeable about the relevant aspects. As such the case study design was found to be suitable for this investigation

Hoberg (1999:76) argues that qualitative research focuses on individuals' social actions, beliefs, thoughts and perceptions through interaction with selected persons in their natural settings and by studying relevant literature. Schumacher and McMillan (1993:372) maintain that qualitative research requires a plan for choosing sites and participants. In this study the researcher collected data by interacting with secondary school educators and principals as well as district officials from the Thohoyandou /Vhembe district of Limpopo province through interviews. The researcher did this to understand the problem from the participants' perspectives as they experienced it in real life through direct communication with them in order to make sense from their tone and expressions.

The findings could also be important in providing guidelines on strategies and procedures for effective continuous professional development programmes that will enhance successful and effective teaching and learning in the future implementation of new policies in the district and the province as a whole. Schulze (2000:51) indicates that qualitative research is mainly concerned with understanding the problem from the participants' perspectives as they experience the problem as it is in reality.

Qualitative research requires that problems and interpretations are described in the report by means of words as opposed to quantitative research in which this is done by means of numbers. According to Babbie and Mouton (2006: 103) qualitative researchers construct interpretive narratives from their data and try to capture the complexity of the phenomenon under study. They use a more personal literary style and often include the participants' own language and perspectives.

1.5.2   Data collection strategies

In this study the researcher used semi-structured interviews. Johnson (1994:51) argues that semi-structured interviewing is the most likely style to be followed in small scale research, when it is of greater importance to gain cooperation of a limited number of interviewees than it is to ensure that the information they give is supplied in a standardized and readily collectable form. An individual as well as focused group interviews were conducted with secondary school principals and educators as well as EMPC facilitators whom the researcher had selected.

These participants were selected because the researcher realized that they are participants who can best shed light on the phenomenon under investigation and were deemed to be information rich. According to Leedy and Ormrod (2001:102), qualitative researchers are often described as being the research instrument because the bulk of their data collection is dependent on their personal involvement in the setting. In this study the researcher was the main research instrument since she made use of direct, face-to-face interviews with the participants as well as taking observation notes. The researcher used an audiotape recorder to collect information during interviews.

1.5.3   Participants

The following participants were selected to be interviewed by the researcher:

(i)   Four EMPC facilitators responsible for coordinating and facilitating the professional development programmes in Thohoyandou/Vhembe district as they are more likely to yield fruitful data on professional development offered to educators in the district.

(ii)   One principal from a secondary school that has been performing very well in matric results even during the introduction of the new curriculum. This principal

was selected to find out how he has been successful during this lengthy period of time.

(iii)   One principal from a technical high school that has been improving its results for the past five years after obtaining a 0% for the final year matric results in 2000. This principal was selected to find out how he has managed to improve the school.

(iv)   A principal from a school that has been performing poorly in matric results. The school has been regarded as a dysfunctional school by the provincial Department of Education. This principal was interviewed to find out the reason of the poor performance.

(v)   A focus group of six educators who were from a secondary school that has been performing very well.

(vi)   A focus group of four educators from a school that has been performing poorly.

(vii)   Individual interviews with three educators from different schools that are not performing well.

In total 21 participants contributed to the data collected. All interviews were tape recorded with the permission of the participants. The taped information was later transcribed. Observation notes were also taken during the interviews.

1.5.4   Data analysis

The data collected were consolidated into three broad categories, namely the knowledge, experience and attitudes (behaviour) of the participants towards professional development.

Analysis of data was approached in three stages. Stage one was immediately after the data had been transcribed: the first step was to read them several times. Stage two focused on

segmenting the data into categories such as the design, planning, implementation, attitudes as well as impact of professional development. The categories were then consolidated into themes. The themes were then discussed in declining order of frequency: knowledge; experience, skills and attitudes of participants towards professional development; the design of professional development; the professional development plan; the implementation of professional development; the impact of professional development on educators as well as the attitudes towards professional development.

According to Leedy and Ormrod (2001:103), qualitative researchers move into a more deductive mode to verify or modify themes with additional data after identifying the themes in their data using the inductive approach process.

1.6   DIVISION OF CHAPTERS

Chapter one provides the introduction, background of the study, problem formulation, research aims and objectives, methods of investigation, division of chapters and definition of concepts.

Chapter two entails the theoretical background to the study. The researcher provides a literature review of the following:

- The nature of the professional development for educators
- The criteria for the design of professional development
- Planning for professional development programmes.
- The implementation of professional development programmes.
- Evaluation of professional development programmes.
- Maintainance of professional development.

Chapter three provides a further discussion of the research methodology as used by the researcher to investigate professional development programmes as implemented in Thohoyandou/Vhembe district (c.f. 1.4). The reason for using this research methodology

is explained in this chapter as well as the data collection strategies. The researcher also provided a brief exposition of data analysis (c.f. 1.4.4)

Chapter four provides a report on the findings of the research.

Chapter five provides a summary of key findings as well as recommendations

1.7   DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS

1.7.1   Teaching and learning

According to McLaughlin and Oberman (1996:4), teaching is the facilitation of knowledge construction, not the delivery of information and needs to become an intellectual endeavor in which educators and their students inquire deeply into the nature of knowing, rather than a technical craft in which educators arrange activities that lead students to having the right concepts. Vrasidas and Glass (2004:235) point out that teaching must be considered as embracing both design and implementation of an educational environment with clear objectives and with carefully considered means of attaining them.

Schoeman (2000:53) asserts that effective teaching takes place when the educator creates an environment in which learners are encouraged to think and critically interact with subject matter, peers and educators in ways that promote democratic behavior and attitudes.

Meier (2003:231) maintains that for teaching to be effective, there needs to be a collaborative effort between the educator and the learner.

Learning proceeds through the individual construction of understanding (McLaughlin & Oberman, 1996:4). Schoeman (2000:54) indicates that effective learning occurs when learners are engaged in reading, writing, observing, debating, role- play, simulations and

the use of statistical data to develop skills in critical thinking, decision- making and problem solving.

Human (1991:200) asserts that for effective learning to take place learners need to feel an internal need to learn, the learning environment needs to be characterized by physical comfort, mutual respect and trust, mutual helpfulness, freedom of expression and acceptance of differences. Learners need to participate actively in the learning process, the learning process needs to be related to and make use of existing experience of the learners.

In this study effective teaching and learning will refer to the process, which educators and learners engage in to bring about quality education

1.7.2   Secondary school

Mc Laughlin and Oberman (1996:39) maintain that a secondary school is a place where educators work, mostly on their own, to teach the content prescribed by states, districts or departments within a finite amount of time for the subjects they have specialized in at training institutions. According to Hargreaves (1994:253), a secondary school is regarded as being a bureaucratic organization able to build a sense of community to secure loyalty and attachment among their students and to be responsive to the changing social world around them.

Secondary school in this study refers to all high school and secondary schools with grade 8-12 learners offering the Further Education and Training band (FET) and General Education and Training Band (GET) in the Thohoyandou/Vhembe district of Limpopo province.

1.7.3   Professional development

Dunlap (1995:147) maintains that professional development refers to a life-long educator development process that begins with initial educator preparation and continues

throughout the educator's career to develop professional knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to educate students more effectively and to sustain change. In addition, Craft (1996:6) argues that professional development is seen as conveying all forms of learning undertaken by experienced educators from course to private reading to job-shadowing. In this study professional development refers to all forms of developmental activities and programmes offered to educators while on the job.

1.7.4   Thohoyandou district

The Thohoyandou /Vhembe district is one of the six districts in the Limpopo province. This district is situated in the far north of the Limpopo province and consists of the five circuit clusters with 26 circuits according to the new restructuring of the education department in the Limpopo province. In this study the terms, Thohoyandou and Vhembe, will be used interchangeably to denote the district under study.

1.8   SUMMARY

In this chapter the researcher discussed the impact of the current professional development of educators on teaching and learning in relation to the new education system. The restructuring of the education system in South Africa led to major change in classroom teaching and learning. This led to a greater need for emphasis on educator development especially when it comes to the educator's role and approaches to the teaching and learning process. In order for South African schools to remain effective, greater demands on continuous professional development programmes are found to be a priority in the South African schooling sector today. This is depicted by the way in which the new education system has impacted the educators' careers which has affected the teaching and learning performances in the majority of schools in the country especially in secondary schools.

The next chapter provides a literature study based on aspects that deal specifically with the professional development of educators.

CHAPTER TWO

THE NATURE OF EFFECTIVE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATORS AND THE CRITERIA FOR DESIGN, PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION OF SUCH PROGRAMMES

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this chapter is to provide a literature review dealing with the nature of professional development of educators and a discussion of the essence of effective continuous professional development programmes of educators as researched by others. The researcher will also provide a brief discussion on the criteria for design, planning and implementation of effective continuous professional development programmes for educators.

The chapter provides inter alia the detailed discussion based on a literature study on the nature of professional development of educators in both pre-service and in-service training and/or career development as well as the unique nature of professional development of educators by discussing policy, functions, purposes as well as the approaches used for professional development of educators. In addition the chapter will provides a detailed discussion of the roles of educational managers in professional development as researched by others. The chapter further provides the discussion on the criteria used for design, planning, and implementation of professional development programmes of educators.

The chapter concludes with the significance of and the findings in terms of the criteria for design, planning and implementation of effective professional development programmes as revealed by the literature study.

2.2   THE NATURE OF EFFECTIVE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATORS

2.2.1   Professional development of educators

Professional development is a process that educators must undergo before and while engaged in the process of teaching and learning. According to Trorey and Cullingford (2002:2), professional development is used in a broader sense, frequently encompassing all types of learning by educators beyond the point of initial training.

To support this, Dunlap (1995:147) indicates that professional development is a life-long learning process that begins with initial educator preparation and continues throughout an educator's career. O'Neil (1994:285) adds that professional development relates to life-long development programmes which focus on a wide range of knowledge, skills and attitudes in order to educate students more effectively.

According to Darling-Hammond (1996:203), educator development focuses on deepening educators' understanding about the teaching/learning process and the students they teach. It must begin with pre-service education and continue throughout an educator's career, involves educators as both as learners and as educators and allows them to struggle with the uncertainties that accompany each role. Desimone, Porter, Birman, Garet and Yoon (2002a:81) indicate that professional development is considered an essential mechanism for deepening educators' content knowledge and developing their teaching practice.

Kuiper and Wilkinson (1998:208) see professional development as a broad concept which includes more than changing teaching approaches. To support this, Onwu (2000:46) suggests that professional development programmes should enable educators to build knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to engage in life-long learning. Fishman, Marx, Best and Revital (2003:645) maintain that professional development should be about educator learning: changes in knowledge, beliefs, and attitudes of educators that leads to

the acquisition of new skills, new concepts and new processes related to the work of teaching.

Day and Sachs (2004:49) contend that successful professional development efforts are those that help educators to acquire or develop new ways of thinking about learning, learners, and subject matter, thus constructing a professional knowledge base that will enable them to teach students in more powerful and meaningful ways.

Taylor in Rathogwa (2006:15) contends that professional development is all the means available for an educator to become a better educated person, to develop judgments and skills, and to keep in touch with ideas and innovations in his/her own cognate fields through active participation in the planning and design of what is offered. The above discussion leads to a discussion on the professional development as offered by various education institutions. In the next subsections professional development in pre-service training, in-service training and schools will be examined.

2.2.2 Professional development of educators in educator training institutions, in-service training centres and in schools

According to Rathogwa (2006:33), the Department of Education notes that without the support of educators, fundamental policy changes can never be put into successful practice. The successful transformation of the education and training system is ultimately dependent on the professional development of educators (Department of Education 1995:39).

2.2.2.1 Pre-service professional development of educators

Educators undergo initial educator training and teaching practice in training institutions before they engage in classroom teaching and/or teaching fields. Robinson and Latchem (2003:11) assert that initial educator training often takes the form of full-time residential pre-service programmes in colleges or universities or, in some developing countries,

secondary level normal educator training schools. According to Ravhudzulo (1997:23), the pre-service stage develops in educators a basic insight into the profession and the key skills required in various teaching learning tasks and situations. In addition, Dunlap (1995:230) indicates that the preparation for teaching begins with the pre-service stage and improvement of teaching continues throughout the educator's professional career. This means that professional development of educators should be a continuous process across the career span.

The literature reveals that, for the past few years, educator education appears to have lacked coherence. This is supported by Robson (1996:20) who indicates that for the past decade the provision of educator education for further education (FE) has lacked the coherence of the school sector. Qualified educator status has long been a necessary entry qualification for the service, FE has had no such common approach to training and provision has been piecemeal and selective. Furthermore, Onwu (2000:45) indicates that the literature reveals that less research has been done on Pre-Service Educator training (PRESET) than In-Service Educator Training (INSET) and provides a list of features that are said to impact positively on the success of PRESET.

Levin and Rock (2003:137) point out that by providing opportunities for pre-service educators and experienced educators to work collaboratively through an action research process may help establish effective professional development schools. However, the approaches that are used at different educator training institutions are directed by the education system followed in a particular country. This means that when a country thinks of changing the existing education system, the pedagogical approach within the various training institutions becomes very important

Marais and Meier (2004:223) point out that since South Africa has embarked on the implementation of a new national curriculum based on an outcomes-based education (OBE) philosophy or approach, new school and classroom realities have been created that require educators to reconsider existing teaching practices. McLaughlin and Oberman (1996:204) indicate that the effort to redesign the education system requires rethinking

educator preparation and professional development and, thus, the development of such institutions and environmental support to promote the spread of the ideas and shared learning about how change can be attempted and sustained.

Onwu (2000:43) points out that although the post-apartheid South Africa has elected to restructure its education within an OBE paradigm, the issue of educator preparation in South African context revolves around the question of how to educate science educators for the competency-based education system. In addition, Williamson and Lemmer (2003:i37) indicate that the implementation of the new curriculum was surrounded by controversy from the outset since educators, particularly in rural areas, did not have access to training materials and in-service training initiatives failed due to lack of trained facilitators.

The transformation of the South African education system brought about structural changes which led to the disbandment and transformation of educator training institutions in the Limpopo Province into EMPC's that serve as INSET centers This meant that pre-service training of educators was reduced since the province had more trained educators at its disposal who were not working and it was decided to upgrade those educators already in the field.. Steyn (1999:256) indicates that on-going professional development is essential if quality education is to be provided, since no pre-service training programme can effectively prepare staff members and/or educators for a lifetime in organizations.
 This is supported by Rathogwa (2006:31) who argues that improvement in educator quality is sought in the development of initial educator education, FE and INSET and, as such, this reflects a need for special INSET and upgrading programmes leading to the professional development of educators in the Thohoyandou district.

Robinson and Latchem (2003:92) assert that for many unqualified educators, in-service training may be the only training they receive and for others pre-service education may well have been of a general kind, an extension of their secondary education with some study of education thrown in for good measure. In the following section the researcher

discusses INSET as one of the approaches used for the continuous professional development of educators.

In conclusion, the above discussion shows that although educators undergo initial educator training courses, it is important that they receive various types of professional development training in order to update their qualities to remain effective in the teaching and learning. Robinson and Latchem (2003:92) assert that for many unqualified educators, in-service training may be the only training they receive and for others pre-service education may well have been of a general kind, an extension of their secondary education with some study of education thrown in for good measure. In the following section the researcher discusses INSET as one of the approaches used for the continuous professional development of educators.

2.2.2.2   In-service professional development of educators

Although qualified educators have attended pre-service training courses, in order to remain progressive in this ever-changing society and to cope with the demands put to them by the changing education system within a country, provision should be made for professional development on an ongoing basis. As such INSET programmes should be regarded important for both qualified and under-qualified educators.

Rathogwa (2006:12) asserts that INSET is the function of all structures that have been established within different education systems to constantly address the changing professional and personal needs of educators with the view to improve their effectiveness. According to Ravhudzulo (1997:26), INSET aims at upgrading in-service educators professionally through regular courses at in-service training centers where the competence of serving educators is renewed, permitting them to keep up with the development of the profession and changing needs of students. In addition, Millinex (1996:6) points out that educator in-service training empowers the educator through all the career stages to develop to the most effective level of performance and to adapt to an ever-changing educational environment.

Craft (1996:5) maintains that in-service training is a term which covers a broad range of activities designed to contribute to the learning of educators, who have completed their initial training. According to Le Roux and Maila (2004:236), in-service education refers to instructional programmes to provide for continued professional development of educational practitioners during their working years and it is aimed at upgrading the skills and qualifications of teaching practitioners.

Bell and Day (1991:7) maintain that in-service courses tend to fall into three groups: the enhancement of existing qualifications so that non-graduates become graduates and those with degrees obtain higher degrees (assuming that improved qualifications would enhance professional performance); providing top-up and professional skills; and remedial courses which help educators in areas in which they are perceived to be experiencing difficulty. Lundin et al (1991:1) indicate that educator professional development has been recognized as an important contributor to quality in schools at both state and national levels. To support this, Robson (1996:1) indicates that the quality of teaching and learning in the FE sector is considered important due to the clearly acknowledged need for a more professional approach to staff training and development and for a wider range of opportunities to meet the diversity of needs in a new era.

Hayes (1997:1) adds that in-service education and training has increasingly been seen by many countries as a key element in strategies to raise the quality of educational provision. The introduction of the national curriculum in the United Kingdom and the re-training of educators in the former USSR and many eastern European countries after the collapse of communism would be cases in point.

Kruger (1999:16) points out that in-service training should be provided or facilitated by the principal or any capable educators on the staff of a school and should be supported by continuous follow-up sessions and class visits or scheduled meetings. According to Bell and Day (1991:4), two aspects of professional development of educators are: further

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professional study which is orientated to the needs of individual educators and staff development which is rooted in the needs of the institution.

Steyn (1999:212) points out that ongoing professional development are essential if quality education to learners is to be provided. According to Bitzer (2004:200), basic professional development programmes will need to be introduced and continuously updated for the educators to be equipped with the skills to handle change and renewal.

According to Grisham and Peck (2002:5), educator preparation and school reform have constantly identified educator preparation as a significant factor in the success or failure of school reform. Van Schoor and Van Niekerk (1995:3) argue that INSET can be seen as loosely interchangeable with staff development and professional development. In addition, Le Roux and Maila (2004:236) state that it is critical that educators receive professional development opportunities in order to meet the challenges of implementing environmental learning in schools according to environmental education policies.

The foregoing discussion reveals that on-going professional development is a vehicle through which educators can remain effective in the teaching and learning situation and can adapt to ongoing challenges and change.

2.2.2.3   Professional development in schools

Learning to teach is a process which occurs unevenly over time and requires ongoing support and resources to meet a range of needs (Robinson & Latchem, 2003:15). The processes of professional development in schools include both the individual educator and the organization as a whole in order to bring about school improvement and quality education. In addition, Davidoff and Lazarus (1997:36) states that organizational development is a strategy for managing change and is aimed at developing people and the organization as a whole for the purpose of facilitating effective teaching and learning. It includes strategies such staff, learner and parent development and structural change which

covers changing the structural aspects of the school like management structures and processes, policy and the code of conduct.

Dunlap (1995:149) points out that professional development is a vehicle for achieving school improvement and sustainable change and has to include individual development and organizational development in order to improve the capacity of the organization. In addition, Van Niekerk in Marishane (2002:133) maintains that to support change, the school needs to be a learning organization which is constantly and systematically reflecting on its own practice by means of professional educator development.

Furthermore, Craft (1996:14) states that staff's training needs may result from current problems, or may arise from the introduction of a new system, process or new curriculum, or a need that will occur in the future and the new South Africa requires different approaches to meet its needs. Development will bring about quality education for learners. To support this, Dean (1991:11) points out that professional development in school can be seen from a point of view of the aim of the particular school or the needs of the individual.

2.2.3 The unique nature of professional development of educators

Professional development of educators is directed by the education system. Thus, change in the education system may imply a change in the approach to professional development of educators. To support this, Dean (1991:26) states that most of the changes implemented in schools require a change in teaching style particularly where the secondary school is concerned. This means that the approaches used in developing educators will have to be taken into consideration when decisions are made for the professional development of educators.

In order for the various education institutions to implement professional development effectively, these institutions need to understand various aspects underlying the professional development of educators which include the functions, purpose, roles as well as approaches to professional development of educators. These institutions also need to

have a policy on the professional development of educators that is guided by the existing education system within the country.

2.2.3.1   Purpose of professional development

The purpose of professional development is to promote a learning process which will enhance the performance of individuals and the organization as a whole. According to Craft (1996:11), the purpose of professional development is to meet the need of individuals as well as the requirements of the system and can be viewed from a continuum of needs: at one end, the system's needs and at the other end, the individual's needs.

In addition, Steyn (2001:45) maintains that the purpose of professional development is to promote the learning process, which will, in turn, enhance the performance of individuals and the organization as a whole. This implies person development, career development as well as organizational development which are regarded as the purpose of professional development. Steyn (1999:251) further indicates that the primary aim of professional development is to increase the quality of student learning through the development of staff potential in order to meet some of the current problems experienced in the South African education system. These include:

✓   Identifying staff needs and improving staff performance in their present positions, i.e. changes to teaching methods, especially with regard to OBE necessitate an identification of staff's needs in their current positions;

✓   creating opportunities for personal fulfillment and institutional effectiveness in order to enhance creativity and facilitate changes to the system;

✓   serving the primary aims of the education system, i.e. the promotion and attainment of quality teaching and learning which means the educators' efforts are required in creating a culture of teaching and learning;

✓   enabling staff members to co-operate to achieve their personal aims and those of the system;

✓   developing the skills of important selected staff members so that anticipated vacancies can be filled; and

✓   providing meaningful programmes in which the strength and talents of each individual in the system can be utilized.

Furthermore, Craft (1996:12) indicates that the system's needs are more dominant at the end of the continuum that caters for staff/group performance; individual job performance involves slight dominance of system needs. Individual needs and career development needs involve a slight dominance of individual over system needs; professional knowledge involves dominance of individual over system needs and personal education involves strong dominance of individual over system needs.

To support this, Welton (2000:5) indicates that the purpose of professional development is the acquisition of the knowledge, understanding, skills and abilities that will enable individual educators and the school in which they work to:

✓   develop and adopt their range of practice;

✓   reflect on their experience, research and practice in order to meet pupils' needs, collectively and individually;

✓   contribute to the professional life of the school, and as a practitioner interact with the school community and external agencies;

✓   keep in touch with current educational thinking in order to maintain and develop good practice and give critical consideration to educational policy, in particular, how to raise standards; and

✓   widen their understanding of society, in particular information and communication technology (ICT).

Smith and Desimone (2003:119) point out that professional development is considered an essential mechanism for deepening educators' content knowledge and developing their teaching practice. According to O'Sullivan, Jones and Reid (1990:180), the purpose of professional development includes personal professional development and staff

development. As regards staff development, they suggest that the primary purpose of staff development is:

✓   to improve the capacity of staff to fill special roles, particularly in relation to teaching;
✓   to help staff to learn and develop;
✓   to help staff to solve performance problems; and
✓   to help staff to anticipate needs, problems and formulate policies and action plans.

In addition, Marais and Meier (2004:221) state that educator training should be designed to achieve the four basic objectives, which are;

✓   improving the educational background of student educators;
✓   increasing their knowledge and understanding of the subjects they are to teach;
✓   understanding the pedagogy of children; and
✓   learning and developing practical skills and competencies.

Smith and Desimone (2003:119) point out that professional development is considered an essential mechanism for deepening the educator's content knowledge and developing their teaching practices. In addition, Fishman et al (2003:645) suggest that a chief objective of professional development should be to foster changes in the educator's knowledge, beliefs and attitudes, because these components of educator cognition show a strong correlation to classroom practices.

The above discussion reveals that the purpose of professional development is to meet individual needs of human resources in the school as an organization in order to meet the organization's primary objective, which is quality education. Hence, the effectiveness of this will be determined by the approaches that are used by different institutions.

2.2.3.2 Policies for educators' professional development

Policy is defined as a judgment that is derived from some system of values and some assessment of situational factors operating as a general plan for guiding decisions regarding the means of attaining desired objectives (Le Roux,& Maila 2004:23). Most researchers argue that the following aspects are important for designing policies for professional development of educators:

a)   The national education system

The policy for professional development of educators is and should be directed by the national education system that is being practiced within a particular country. According to Darling-Hammond and McLaughlin (1996:203), the changed curriculum and the pedagogy of professional development require new policies that foster new structures and institutional arrangements for existing policies in terms of their compatibility with a vision of learning as constructed by educators and the students and of professional development as a lifelong inquiry-based, collegial activity.

In addition, Onwu (2000:44) indicates that South Africa, according to the National Educator Education Audit Report of 1998, has never had a coherent national policy for educator development and that a division between the planning of pre-service training and in-service training has exacerbated this fragmentation of control. Moreover, the absence of coherent and comprehensive policies for in-service training of educators has further compounded the problem and this suggests the need to reconstruct South Africa's educator training policies.

According to Smith and Desimone (2003:127), novice and veteran educators have different professional development needs and that different forces in the policy system create incentives for educators depending on their experience. To support this, Grisham and Peck (2002;14) suggest that the brutal conflict between the complexity of the challenges faced by educators attempting to implement deep and pervasive changes in

their teaching practice and the impoverished motivational and professional support for this change process, suggests that policy makers have failed to imagine the reality of implementing education reform. In addition, Vally and Spreen (1998:16) indicate that the research done on educators and INSET during the implementation of C2005 in South Africa reveals that many educator training institutions, district officials and educator unions have long warned about potential problems in implementation at provincial and local level.

b)   School managers and district officials

The head educator and senior staff of a school are responsible for seeing that their colleagues have the opportunity, support and encouragement to develop in their work and have to establish and maintain a school policy for professional development which may include an overall philosophy and attitude toward the people whom the policy concerns, the possible professional development activities, responsibilities for professional development, the way needs will be assessed, the part played by appraisal, provision for induction and probation, provision for management training, the way in which provision for individuals is built up and the way in which educators progress and development is recorded (Dean, 1991:33)

Levin and Rock (2003:148) suggest the use of collaborative action research to achieve maximum effective professional development for both pre-service and experienced educators. They offer the following as guidelines for engaging pre-service and experienced educators in the collaborative action research:

✓   Provide both pre-service and experienced educators adequate training, and, if possible, give pre-service educators prior experience with action research before they complete a collaboration action research project.

✓   Increase ownership and accountability of experienced educators by setting up informal group presentation.

✓ Establish ways for experienced educators to receive credit for their effort by earning professional development or renewal credits from their district.

Smith and Desimone (2003:119) indicate that one type of policy support for the professional development of educators is the extent of the incentives state, district or schools provide for educators to participate in professional development. To support this, Lundin et al (1991:23) maintain that although the constitutional responsibility for schooling rests with the state, all stakeholders including employing authorities, providers, higher educational institutions, educator unions and professional associations, parents and citizens may formulate policy on professional development.

In addition, Welton (2000:133) states that the professional development policy should reflect a school management team's desire to value and support its staff and the policy should be designed by a team, the members of which represent all levels of activities within the school. The policy should include details of:

✓ staff development related to school targets
✓ individual needs, as identified by the appraisal process
✓ training opportunities via in-school, LEA and national initiatives; award-bearing courses; and whole-school INSET provision,
✓ Resources available in school, funding agencies and external bids.
    .
From the above discussion, it can be concluded that the effectiveness of professional development programmes depends on the policy of that programme. Hence, those involved in the policy making must be aware of the different aspects underlying the effectiveness of professional development of educators.

2.2.3.3   Approaches to professional development

Approaches to professional development of educators vary in terms of the institutions' needs as well as the individual needs. However, whatever approach used should lead to

making an educator effective in his/her work. Approaches to professional development of educators can be viewed as follows:

a)   In-school professional development

Howey in Rathogwa (2006:36) believes that school focused in-service education can incorporate both on and off site activities and be facilitated both by outside agencies and the school itself. Kuiper and Wilkinson (1998:217) suggest that a systematic approach to educator professional development necessitates a broad vision of what it is to be an educator and what influencing factors play a role. To support this, Welton (2000:5) states that an educational institution's approach to professional development will depend on whether it views employees as a resource or a cost-commodity, its view of adult as lifelong learners, its educational goals and preferred methods for achieving them.

In addition, Desimone, Porter, Birman, Garet and Yoon (2002b:102) point out that professional development is more effective in changing educator's professional classroom teaching practice when it has collective participation of educators from the same school, department, or grade; active learning opportunities, such as reviewing student work or obtaining feedback on teaching; and coherence, for example, linking to other activities or building on educators' previous knowledge. According to Craft (1996:13-15), professional development can be organized as school-based, school-focused or school-centered or off-site INSET professional development. He explains that:

✓   Off-site professional development is a traditional model where educators typically come together for varying lengths of time for a training course ranging from short courses of one day or less to longer, award bearing courses.
✓   School-based professional development is regard as an in-service course, provided within the school and targeted at a group of staff and aimed at achieving a better match of an INSET course to the needs and culture of a particular group of professionals and having some direct impact on practice.

✓ School-focused professional development involves the targeted group of some or all the staff of the particular school and the programme is related to the needs of the particular group or school.

O'Neil (1994:301) maintains that institutions have to establish a balance in the development which takes place at individual group or organizational level if they are to improve quality of teaching and learning. He further indicates the following approaches to professional development at organizational level:

✓ Organic approaches, which view professional development as reactive and lack any systematic effort to balance individual and organizational needs in the programmes;

✓ Process-based approaches, which encompass a cycle of learning which leads to evaluating potential solutions to problems in practice;

✓ Consultancy approaches, which include the use of outside agents in analyzing individual group or whole organizational work such as consultative assistance, content consultation and process consultation;

✓ Objective approaches, which focus on the needs of the organization at the expense of the individual development needs.

b)   In-school and off-school professional development

Welton (2000:6) points out that the management of professional development involves different types of professional activities which include practitioners' development, professional education, professional training and professional support. He explains them as:

✓ practitioner development includes school-based development, self-development, induction, mentoring, observation, job-shadowing and team teaching;

✓ professional education includes award bearing courses managed and taught at higher education institutions focusing on the relationship between educational theory and practice, and leading to higher education accreditation and professional qualifications;

✓ professional training includes conference, courses, and workshops that emphasize practical information and skills, managed and delivered by Learning Education Agencies, school's external consultants or trainers for Higher Education and Training (HET);

✓ Professional support as provided by colleagues and managers in fulfillment of contractual conditions of service, e.g. recruitment and selection procedures, promotions, career development, appraisal, redeployment.

The foregoing discussion indicates that approaches to professional development of educators aim at developing educators professionally which in turn brings about development in the whole school as an organization.

2.2.4 The role of school managers in professional development

Principals play a vital role in many aspects of the school. One of these aspects is to ensure that staff members develop professionally on a continuous basis. Trorey and Cullingford (2002:146) maintain that every school needs a leader to create a sense of purpose and direction, to set high expectations of staff and pupils, to focus on improving teaching and learning, to monitor performance and to motivate the staff to give their best.

Kydd et al (1997:1) indicates that one of the crucial tasks of educational managers is to apply the principle of professional development not only to themselves but to other people and tasks that they manage.

In addition, Steyn (2001:47) indicates that the role of educational leaders in schools is to take a lead in creating a climate for professional development by providing opportunities for staff to discuss case studies and good teaching practice, create consensus on the vision

of the school and review annual school objectives, encourage experimentation, provide professional development programmes that are purposeful and research based, model a commitment to professional growth, actively involve staff in professional development programming as well as working for change by means of school-wide projects.

DuFour and Berkey (1995:2) contend that if the premise that people are the key to school improvement is correct, it follows that the fundamental role of the principal is to help create the conditions which enable a staff to develop so that the school can achieve its goal more effectively.

The role of educational managers can be discussed as follows:

2.2.4.1   The principal as instructional leader

According to Greenfield in Van Niekerk (2002:101), instructional leadership refers to actions undertaken with the intention of developing a productive and satisfying working environment for educators and desirable learning conditions for learners. Therefore, principals must be sensitive to all factors influencing the effective functioning of their schools as learning institutions by developing their schools as a whole to achieve school improvement and effectiveness. In addition, Greenfield (1987:120) points out that in order to exert effective instructional leadership, school principals can use the following three options:

✓   bringing in district specialists, trainers and consultants through quality choices as regards who to invite, for what purpose, and under what terms;

✓   by supplying leadership directly through evaluating educators, organizing team work and supplying the human and material resources for necessary innovation;

✓   by organizing and training staff to provide leadership for each other, such as training Heads of Departments as leaders, organizing peer coaching among educators and letting staff report back on staff development programmes.

To support this, Botello (1999:15) suggests that the role of the principal as instructional leader is aimed at bringing school improvement and should include:

- ✓ unifying the school's stakeholders
- ✓ being visibly present
- ✓ providing and protecting instructional programmes
- ✓ relating educational policy to classroom implementation
- ✓ helping educators to learn how to assist students to invent knowledge
- ✓ motivating educators in staff development experiences
- ✓ constructing educator culture
- ✓ shaping educator's perceptions of the principal's instructional leadership.

Greer and Gresso (1996:23) maintain that the following functions of the principal are vital in executing their role as instructional leader:

- ✓ to actively shape the school culture so that it embodies and supports learning-centered values
- ✓ to discern and articulate a vision of excellence and enable others to share effectively in the visioning process
- ✓ to be aware of moral dimensions of schooling, to act ethically and sensitive educators and students to moral aspects of education and learning
- ✓ to maintain focus on curriculum instruction by informing educators of current developments, sharing knowledge gained from experience, observing educators at work, monitoring the implementation of the curriculum and rewarding effective teaching
- ✓ to use routine activities and informal interactions as means of reinforcing the educators commitment to learning.

2.2.4.2   The principal as creator of a positive climate for professional development

Du Four and Berkey (1995: 2) indicate that if the premise that people are the key to school improvement is correct, it follows that the fundamental role of the principal is to help create the conditions which enable a staff to develop so that the school can achieve its goals more effectively. They suggest that principals who hope to promote organizational development by focusing on professional growth of staff should consider the following:

- ✓   Create consensus on the school you trying to become.
- ✓   Identify, promote, and protect share values.
- ✓   Monitor the critical elements of the school improvement effort
- ✓   Ensure systematic collaboration through our school
- ✓   Encourage experimentation
- ✓   Model a commitment to professional growth
- ✓   Provide one-on-one staff development programmes that are purposeful and research based.

2.2.4.3   The principal as the coordinator of school development programmes

Principals must involve every member of the staff in the development of a professional development programme in which they have to review areas for development. Bell and Day (1991:19) indicate that in order to create a framework within which choices about the professional development activities to be offered at school:

- ✓   The school needs to have an aims statement which identifies the essential purpose of the school and guides all those in the school as they carry out their various duties.
- ✓   The school will have to know what is it already doing and how well it is functioning.
- ✓   As a result of this analysis, priorities can be established for the next phase of development planning and, if necessary, the aims statement can be revised.

✓ The plan, when constructed, will identify a manageable number of development targets and establish a timescale for meeting them.

✓ These will be further subdivided into target outcomes or precise objectives together with a clear indication of how and when they are to be achieved.

✓ The target outcomes will be expressed in terms of tasks to be performed by particular people within the school.

✓ Criteria for evaluating how far the tasks have been achieved, resources adequately and appropriately developed and professional development programmes effectively carried out will be built into the plan.

2.2.4.4   The principal as a manager of professional development plan

Du Four and Berkey (1995:2) indicate that a key to school improvement is the willingness and ability of principals to assume the role of staff developers who make it their mission to alter the professional practices, beliefs and understandings of school personnel towards an articulated end. Rathogwa (2006:32) asserts that the principal or head of an institution is entrusted with the task of planning INSET in full consultation with all staff members and such a plan must reflect institutional goals based on the national priorities and developments.

To support this, Dean (1991:33) asserts that the head educator must ensure that educators have been sufficiently involved in its evolution to feel a sense of ownership, planning has to take into account the workload which people already have and plans must include realistic assessment of the time involved to put new ideas into practice.

Greer and Gresso (1996:20) contend that the effective staff development programmes are planned by the principal and educators, with the principal actively participating but not dominating; focused on school improvement; linked with educator supervision; supported with peer coaching; organized to be ongoing and systematic; emphasize active learning; and evaluated carefully. Whenever principals/administrative staff are planning for development activities for staff members, they must involve them in such issues.

Trorey and Cullingford (2002:147) contend that the school management has to prioritize the training needs for the school and to decide which whole school issues are and which are relevant to individual members of staff only. The management will be able to do this only if they consult staff members before they are engaged in any planning.

Furthermore, Craft (1996:42) is of the idea that the introduction of school development planning is an interesting example of an approach that is designed to help schools handle multiple changes. He regards this as an approach that can be used both for providing professional development opportunities as staff collaborates on the plan and to identify future professional development needs. He suggests four essential broad phases that can be found in the school development planning cycle. In order for school to achieve the aim of staff development, everyone has to participate in the decisions that are made about the professional development especially those for whom the programme is planned.

Dean (2002:54) asserts that the tasks of the head educator or professional development coordinator, whether working with a professional development committee or independently, are as follows:

✓ Managing the information about professional development which comes into the school;
✓ Seeing that there is professional development policy and that is it implemented;
✓ Coordinating the professional development programmes' performance review and other sources and relating the development programmes to the school development plan;
✓ Providing leadership for the professional development committee (if there is one);
✓ Assessing the professional development needs of the staff;
✓ Drawing up the professional development programmes and ensuring that every one is aware of what it contains;
✓ Coordinating the evaluation of the professional development programmes and communicating the results to those concerned;

- ✓ Managing the professional development budget;
- ✓ Providing advice, support and training for colleagues contributing to the school professional development programmes;
- ✓ Keeping in touch with those providing INSET outside the school and advising colleagues on appropriate courses for their needs;
- ✓ Ensuring that all staff is kept fully aware of the professional development opportunities available to them, both through courses and through the daily life of the school;
- ✓ Maintaining records of the professional development which has taken place;
- ✓ Providing advice and support for colleagues concerned about their professional development needs;
- ✓ Evaluating the professional development programmes and external professional development courses attended by staff.

Bitzer (2004:200) points out that change is more likely to occur successfully in situations where the leadership is focused on facilitating change, promoting teamwork in inquiry and problem solving, fostering the development of a community of learners and engaging people in setting academic achievement goals and participating in democratic governance.

Effective professional development is possible in situations were the leadership views professional development as one of the important elements for bringing improvement at the institution by showing willingness to provide support for the development of human resources. However, principals as managers and leaders in schools also require proper guidance and support to manage effectively the professional development of their staff. According to Van Niekerk in Marishane (2002:120 leadership qualities and skills need to be developed in order to lead staff members at school level on curriculum change because during the transformation period is when schools need more support and guidance from educational authorities/district officials. The next section will deal with the role of district officials in the professional development of educators.

2.2.5 The role of district officials in professional development

Greer and Gresso (1996:117) indicate that although educators tend to perceive the district supervisors as a somewhat remote and relatively unhelpful professionals who give most attention to maintaining the system as it is, rather than forming it, involving the supervisors in the design and development of the school's programme and working with supervisors to clarify the role they can best play for each group of educators can influence the classroom educator.

To support of this, Fraser (1997:72) maintains that since continuous quality improvement is team-based, the school district senior leadership should organise as a team to learn as much as possible about professional development and its application to public education. Gaining the confidence of educators for the change requires the involvement of the local educator association early in the learning process.

2.2.5.1 District officials as managers of professional development programmes

District officials are tasked with the responsibility of managing the professional development of educators within the whole district. This means that the district officials as managers of PD must have a professional development plan to direct their programme (Desimone et al, 2002b: 267). According to SACE (2007:7), the district coordinators must have a district improvement plan that is informed by the identified needs of educators on the professional growth plan. However, the research done on the implementation of Curriculum 2005 with OBE as its approach in South Africa since 1998 revealed that there was not sufficient participation from grassroots' level in the planning and implementation of change and the district officials did not form part of the planning of such programmes and this led to its failure.

2.2.5.2   District officials as coordinators of professional development programmes

Desimone et al (2002b:267) indicate that the district can play a major facilitating role of communicating the state's instructional policy, thus lending coherence to it and influencing the type and nature of professional development opportunities available to educators. The above discussion indicates that although principals and/or school managers play an important role in the provision of professional development programmes in schools, district officials play a major role in introducing and facilitating the implementation of departmental policies.

**2.3   THE CRITERIA FOR THE DESIGN, PLANNING AND
        IMPLEMENTATION OF SUCH PROGRAMMES**

The design of appropriate professional development programmes is the responsibility of the professional development committee. Dean (1991:33) maintains that the head educator and senior staff of a school are responsible for seeing that their colleagues have the opportunities, support and encouragement to develop their work and therefore those involved in the professional development committee when designing the Professional Development Plan (PDP) must ensure that the design is in line with the established school policy for professional development. In addition, Dean (1991:33) indicates that the development programme should be related to the policies which the school has formulated. The school needs a pattern of review which identifies areas for development. Because this has considerable opportunities for professional development, all educators need to be involved in it.

To support this, Craft (1996:40) points out that all promoters of professional development should pay attention to two fundamental requirements, which are;

- Incorporating the attributes of successful professional development in as many activities as possible;

- To ensure that the ultimate purpose of professional development is less to implement a specific innovation and more to create individual and organizational habits and structures that make continuous learning valued and enhance part of the culture of schools and teaching.

In addition, O'Sullivan *et al* (1990:186) suggest that when designing professional development programmes it is important to remember the following two important functions: improvement of performance in the person's present job; and preparing people for the future opportunities, responsibilities and tasks as well as the intrinsic requirements of educators which include the need to stand back and take a broad, reflective look at the process of education in schools rather than the practice of teaching.

The design of professional development programmes has been found to include a number of steps. Steyn (1999:211) suggests that the professional development committee has the responsibility to design appropriate professional development programmes, which include the following steps:

1   Diagnosing development needs
2   Planning for professional development
3   Implementing professional development programmes
4   Evaluation of professional development programmes
5   Maintenance of professional development programmes

The above professional development steps in the design process has further been elaborated in the ensuing sections.

2.3.1   Diagnosing professional development needs

According to Dunlap (1995:156), before planning for professional development programmes a thorough needs analysis, including staff needs, is required since these needs have differing degrees of impact and they reflect the gap between the existing and the

desired condition. In addition, Welton (2000:14) points out that the role of the staff development co-coordinator is to establish the development needs of individuals and to have the knowledge and ability to promote and support their development within the overall developmental aims of institutions. This will allow them an overview of the developmental needs of the individuals within it and he suggests that this can be done by making time available for informal discussions in which staff may state their needs through; formal development interviews; or the use of assessment forms.

O'Sullivan et al (1990:178) maintain that the design for professional development programmes for educators may involve a staff development cycle of the following six stages: the identification of staff needs; the analysis of staff needs; the creation and design of the staff development programmes in response to the data gathered and analysed; the carrying out of the staff development programmes; the monitoring of the programmes; and the evaluation of the programmes.

Castetter (1996:238) indicates that one way of compiling a list of needs is by using staff meetings, informal discussions, structured interviews, questionnaires, and educator observation and student survey. To support this, West-Burnham and O'Sullivan (1998:99) maintains that a needs analysis provides the crucial information to ensure that professional learning is appropriate, valid and relevant and suggests a variety of techniques that are essentially concerned with the diagnosis on the basis of evidence in order to inform perceptions and to determine action. These may include common elements such as feedback from a coach or mentor through a diagnostic review, results or outcomes of a particular part of the curriculum or course.

Johnston (1995:30) suggests that diverse needs may be revealed by the training needs analysis since it is possible that these needs will reflect the interest and concern of various role players in the school, curriculum needs for specific departments or needs arising from positions or responsibilities, such as when the management team requires leadership training, administrative staff require computer training or novice educators require induction.

In addressing the above statements, SACE (2007:6) asserts that performance standard # 5 in IQMS documents reads: "Training and development projects develop and support educators who identified areas of needs around this performance standard from their Professional Growth Plan and school improvement Plan." This means that in order to do this successfully the district officials have to rely on the IQMS report provided by schools at the end of the year cycle of IQMS in order to plan effective professional development programmes for educators and schools.

The foregoing discussion indicates that the design for professional development programmes depends on the vision as well as policy needs of the school and the staff.

2.3.2 Planning for professional development

Dean (1991:60) maintains that planning for professional development programmes should start by considering it in broad terms. Thereafter, it should be turned into a formal programme of events which involves careful thought about priorities, both for individuals and for the school as a whole. The head educator and senior management of the school should comment on their own priorities before the programme is too far advanced so that everyone is going in the same direction and the decision on what to include in the programme depends on what has been discovered in the need assessment process. Desimone et al (2002b:127) state that planning for professional activities can occur at any level of the formal school district hierarchy and can involve educators and other school staff in a variety of roles.

2.3.2.1 Phases in the planning cycle

Craft (1996:42) suggests that the following four broad phases are important in the school development planning cycle: an audit in which a school reviews its strengths and weaknesses; meetings in which priorities for development are selected and then turned into specific action plan, targets and tasks, each with clearly identified success criteria;

implementation in which the planned priorities and targets are implemented; and evaluation in which the success of implementation is checked.

According to Purvis and Boren (1991:17), the planning of professional development includes the details of the programme such as its objectives; decisions on who will be participating in and who will be conducting the programme; what professional development activities will be conducted; where and when it will be held; resources that will be needed; how delegates will be recompensed for attending and how progress will be measured.

In addition, Welton (2000:123) indicates that planning is of critical importance to the effective management and implementation of professional development programmes. It is essential that managers and professional development coordinators have a thorough understanding of the place of planning in effective management and further suggest that effective management may be constructed as a three-stage cycle which involves planning, action and review. He indicates what each plan will encompass as follows:

✓   Objectives: the goals which are to be achieved, defined in terms of sufficiently detailed and precise to enable others to ascertain whether or not they have been achieved;
✓   Actions: specification of the activities required to meet the objectives;
✓   Resources: identification of the physical resources required to achieve the objectives, the personnel to undertake the activities and the time scale for completion;
✓   Review: whether it will work or not. If not, return to stage 2 or 3;
✓   Preparation: who will do what and when?
Audit: monitor, evaluate and replan if necessary.

According to Castetter (1996:248), the following components are important during the planning phase:

- ✓ Programme content: more consideration should be placed on the theories, concepts and principles of the content and their application;
- ✓ Programme method: how the learning will take place;
- ✓ Locus of programme: whether training will take place on the job or off the job or as a combination of the two;
- ✓ Participation: whether the training approaches will be voluntary or compulsory;
- ✓ Resources: trainers, facilitators, funds, time, materials and organisation.

Dean (1991:60) suggests that if a school is to provide for the development of all staff and also for the school as a whole, a complex plan and programme are needed and the professional development committee must ensure that these become available. The planning programme includes the following activities:

- ✓ state aims
- ✓ create policy
- ✓ assess needs
- ✓ state objectives
- ✓ plan formal programmes
- ✓ state time available for the programmes
- ✓ budget available for the programmes
- ✓ venues available for the programmes
- ✓ decide on events
- ✓ decide for each event
- ✓ decide on possibilities for the programmes
- ✓ plan the informal programmes
- ✓ attendance at courses
- ✓ long award-bearing courses
- ✓ short courses
- ✓ workshops and study programmes
- ✓ INSET provision with other schools.

2.3.2.2   Characteristics of professional development

Steyn (2001:46) points out that professional development can be planned from two perspectives: focusing on correcting professional shortcoming, as well as focusing on creating opportunities for development. In addition, Dunlap (1995:155) maintains that professional development plans and experience should be tied directly to student performance standards and be continuous site-based, job-embedded, educator designed and organizationally focused. He suggests the following five characteristics for effective professional development plans:

✓   view educators as learners and provide space for educators to continually learn about their practice, their students, and their discipline;

✓   support collegiality and collaboration by operating in a collegial context; this being the responsibility of the teaching profession;

✓   make a long-term investment and commitment to educator development;

✓   focus on educator's questions, needs and concerns;

✓   build professional development infrastructures and new approaches to the organization of professional development.

Craft (1996:43) maintains that the capacity of school development planning for enabling schools to handle change, plan for and promote professional development depends on the plan being rooted in a vision of where the school is heading and should be supported by a developmental approach to appraisal.

2.3.2.3   Implementation strategy

Welton (2000:19-20) indicates that that professional development planning should reflect the needs of the institution and of the individuals within it and that a good action plan needs to give detailed consideration not only to innovation intended but to the strategy which will be employed to implement it. Innovation might address questions such as:

✓ Who will benefit from the change, pupils, myself and colleagues, others?

✓ What will the cost be for those affected?

✓ Is the envisaged change easy to communicate to those connected and will they see its purpose?

✓ Will it be possible to adapt the intended outcome to suit altered circumstances?

✓ Will additional or new resources be required?

In addition, Steyn (1999:211) points out that the planning of professional development includes determining the details of the programme. This includes:

✓ its objectives;

✓ decisions on who will be participating and who will be conducting the professional development programmes;

✓ what professional development activities will be conducted;

✓ where and when they will be held;

✓ what resources will be needed;

✓ how delegates will be compensated for attending; and

✓ how progress will be measured.

To support this, Bell and Day (1991:127) suggest that when formulating development plans, schools should ask the following questions: What is the institution doing at present? How does that match what its pupils and society now require? And what changes of the demand are in prospect? Who should be involved in the monitoring of the process? Who will help to establish priorities, taking up some identified needs and not others? They suggest that when planning it is advisable to consider the urgency of need, the importance of developing a community of spirit in the situation and the resources available.

The above discussion indicates that when planning for professional development programmes, the professional development policy should be drawn up through involvement of all those who are going to be part of the programme.

2.3.3   Implementing professional development programmes

Steyn (1999:212) indicates that professional development programmes involve how activities will be carried out in the school, selecting purposeful activities and determining the time span for the programmes, the staff to be involved, how the money will be spent, the physical facilities required, evaluation procedures and structures needed to put the programmes into effect. To support this, Dean (1991:86) points out that before and during the implementation phase of professional development programmes the following activities need to be considered:

- Consider/prepare
- Activities that are to be offered should be clear as well as how they will be offered.
- Speakers: all the necessary arrangements for speakers should be done in advance.

  - ✓ Time plan: decisions about the length of the session as well as the way that time is to be allocated during the programme should be clear.
  - ✓ Grouping: staff members should be grouped according to their professional development needs.
  - ✓ Space plan: arrangements for space should be done according to the course at hand.
  - ✓ Resources: materials should be assembled early.
  - ✓ Handouts may be sent out as preliminary reading or distributed at some stage during the course.
- *Cost course*
  - ✓ Travel and accommodation: when courses are held away from the school the local financial management of the school has to pay for transport.
  - ✓ Food: almost all courses and conferences involve food cost, even if it is only the cost of a cup of tea.
  - ✓ Materials: although some of the materials to be used in courses might be cheap, the cost of hiring tapes can be very high indeed.

- *Speakers and leaders*
  - ✓ Speakers can cost a good deal and as such it is important to establish a mileage rate in advance.
  - ✓ Supply cover: since this is expensive it is necessary for the school to have a small group of educators who know the school and the pupils.

- Evaluation and follow-up may also require resources if the tutors of a course visit the educators who attended during working hours in their classrooms.
  - ✓ Send out information
  - ✓ The information sent out should give a full account of the objectives of the course and details of how the objectives are to be met.
  - ✓ Evaluate
  - ✓ Planned evaluation helps to ensure that it is actually takes place and that it is someone's responsibility to undertake it.
  - ✓ Arrange follow-up activities

According to Welton (2000:136), a plan for the implementation of professional development would begin with a policy document and suggests that the implementation phase should include the impact on practice and the need to monitor and evaluate, revise and adapt. This is further elaborated as:

- INSET: Schools should consider how to monitor INSET provision more closely and systematically.
- Monitoring: Monitoring will enable schools to follow scheduled implementation of professional development policy and include the following: data operational information; financial information, and, information on performance.
- Evaluation: The coordinator should provide a written report on the evaluation of the professional development policy and programme which may include the following information: purpose; context; content; process, and, outcomes.
- Review: The review process should reflect the core aspect of professional development in practice which is to see itself as a learning organization.

In the light of the foregoing discussion, it is apparent that for the effective implementation of professional development programmes, those responsible for the implementation process should follow the planning process. In addition, the implementers must also take into consideration the importance of monitoring, evaluation and review of the professional development program that has/is being implemented. The next section will provide a brief discussion of the evaluation of professional development as one of the stages in the professional development design.

2.3.4   Evaluation of professional development

Evaluation is a historic process which allows judgments to be made on the basis of evidence collected through monitoring and it can play a significant role in analysis of strategic options and in providing evidence for accountability purposes (West-Burnham & O'Sullivan, 1998:122). According to Welton (2000:139), evaluation is a component of development planning and a prerequisite for the preparation of any subsequent plan and should focus on achievements as well as areas that require improvement. Thus, the future of the professional development programme lies in the outcomes of the evaluation of such a programme.

In addition, Robson (1996:88) contends that an investor in people evaluates the investment in training and development to assess achievement and improve future development because the benefits to the organisation utilising training and development activities must be proven at the level of the individual, the team, or at the sub-institutional level and at the organisational level.

2.3.4.1   Reasons for evaluation of professional development

For evaluation to be effective those involved in the process must know the reasons why it is important for evaluation to be done so that they can participate fully in the process.

Bredeson (2003:142) points out that there are at least seven reasons for the growing interest in evaluation of professional development which include:

- Return on investment in which it is reasonable to assume that taxpayers, policy makers, and practitioners have a vested interest in finding out whether or not they are getting any return on their substantial investment of money, time, and materials in professional development for teachers and administrators.

- Better informed for planning in which policy makers as well as participants and providers of professional development need better information to guide the decisions and choices in the design, delivery, content, context, and intended outcomes of professional development.

- Professional development and school improvement which indicate that evaluation of professional development is important because both practitioners and policy makers want a better understanding of how people learn, develop expertise, change their practice and ultimately influence student learning.

- Linking professional development to cognitive science which provides strong evidence that teachers and administrators like all learners bring distinct prior learning and experiences to new learning and they have different learning styles.

- Evaluating the validity of professional development in which evaluation is seen as a systematic means for gathering and analysing data to assess the validity of those taxonomies.

- Professional learning and changes in practice which relate to what participants in professional development need to know and be able to do, as well as the impact of those learning.

- Professional learning and compensation which entails the legitimacy and equity of alternative compensation systems of professional knowledge, skills and performance. This requires careful attention to the evaluation of professional development and its outcomes.

This means that for effective evaluation of professional development it is important for evaluators to know and understand the reasons for doing such an evaluation process in order to identify those important aspects when planning and designing the evaluation

process. It is equally important that educators and administrators be informed about the reason for doing evaluation.

2.3.4.2 The purpose of professional development evaluation

Dunlap (1995:156) asserts that the following are some of the purposes of professional development evaluation:

- Evaluation gives rise to judgments about the success of the programme and how it affects teaching competence and student learning.

- Evaluation assists decision makers in identifying future professional development activities.

- Evaluation identifies organisational changes which professional development programmes make necessary.

In addition Day and Sachs (2004:294) and Bredeson (2003:151) contend that evaluation of professional development serves the following three purposes in schools:

- The assessment of professional development provides valuable information for planning and goal setting.

- Evaluation guides organisational improvement processes.

- Evaluation of professional learning, addresses important questions regarding the value of significant investment of resources in professional development in education.

Thus, the purpose of evaluation is to find out whether the programme as planned and implemented can yield the outcomes it has been planned for or if it needs some changes in order to provide the expected outcomes. One of the purposes of offering professional development by schools is the desire for school improvements and the evaluation of relevant aspects of school functioning which provides information on the current situation in the school from which guidelines can be derived to steer the process of change and improvement (Van Niekerk in Marishane, 2002:163). According to the National

Education Policy Act (2001:21), continuous self-evaluation can play an important role in the strategy of

School improvement.

The link with school improvement is clear from the following improvement strategies:

- For individual schools, the professional support service must link with the senior management team, the staff and the SGB in order to support the implementation of the quality improvement strategies recommended by the supervisors and identified in the school improvement plan.

- The professional support service must support schools through helping them produce a coherent overall plan of action to address the improvement needs articulated by both the school staff evaluation and the external evaluation reports of the supervisors.

- The professional support service is responsible for retrieving key information from the reports of different schools in a district in order to plan the support and professional development required.

- The evaluation reports and improvement plans should naturally lead to district, provincial, and national improvement plans which address areas needing improvements within specified time frames.

It can be concluded that because quality and effectiveness come from developing the potential and qualities of school staff, therefore it is important for managers and professional development coordinators to monitor, assess and evaluate their staff so that they know what is that their staff needs in order to produce quality work. This means that it is important for school managers and professional development coordinators to know what they need to evaluate and how they intend to do this so that they will be able to assess whether the set objectives have been achieved or not as well as assessing whether the programmes are being implemented as planned.

This means that for effective evaluation of professional development it is required that certain aspects like the planning and design of professional development evaluation have been done thoroughly.

2.3.4.3   Designing professional development evaluation

According to West-Burnham and O'Sullivan (1998:122) and Bredeson (2003:145) in order to design an effective professional development evaluation the following key questions can serve as guidelines for such designs:

- What is the purpose of evaluation?
- Why is the evaluation information important?
- What is the audience for the evaluation?
- Who should evaluate?
- How will evaluation data be gathered and analysed?
- How will the evidence be interpreted?
- How will the findings of the evaluation be implemented?

In addition Dean (1991:182) asserts that there are several issues that a design brief of evaluation of professional development might cover and they include:
- The purpose and possible consequences of evaluation.
- The audience for any summative report.
- The key question.
- The methods of collecting evidence.
- The source of information
- The time available and the deadline.

To support this Bredeson (2003:150) contends that the following key elements support successful professional development:
- Clear, client centered purpose.
- Adequate support capacity

- Rehable and credible methods for gathering and analysing data.
- Feasibility within school/district resources, context, and political realities
- A plan for using the evaluation data that aligns with school improvement goals and supports professional learning and student learning.

This means that for effective design of professional development evaluation it is required that those who will be participating in the process know and understand what the programme should entail as well as making sure that those who are to be evaluated are aware of the programme and its consequences so that there would not be any misconception which might lead to the incorrect evidence. This means that before any stage of evaluation commences, it is important that the whole plan be discussed with those who are to be evaluated and making sure that it is well understood. This requires that before engaging in the evaluation it is important that monitoring be conducted in those areas that will need to be evaluated later and this requires a thorough planning of the whole process of evaluation.

2.3.4.4 Planning professional development evaluation

Dean (1991:182) indicates that if evaluation is to be planned from the beginning of any professional development activity, the professional development committee must be aware of the need to do this and be prepared to allocate funds for the purpose. According to Bredeson (2003:151), the evaluation of professional development is a critical part of school improvement planning and when it is planned carefully and successfully implemented in schools, it will yield vital information for strengthening professional learning.

Welton (2000:137) asserts that monitoring is an essential stage in the planning process of evaluation of professional development and maintain that the following points are important for an effective evaluation of professional development:

- Having implemented the plan, managers need to monitor its progress to see whether objectives have been achieved.

- Monitoring enable professional development coordinators to work towards agreed objectives.

- By measuring and comparing performance against agreed criteria monitoring provides the basis for reflecting on practice.

- Monitoring will provide an insight into the strengths and weakness of professional development policies and programmes.

- Monitoring will provide a framework in which staff can reflect on their own practice.

This means that for effective evaluation of professional development to take place it is required that after the implementation of the professional development programmes a thorough monitoring and review of the progammes offered be done in order to have a clear understanding of what transpired. It is also important that after the monitoring, the managers and coordinators of professional development must provide a report on what they have found.

2.3.4.5   The evaluation report

Day and Sachs (2004:294) point out that for evaluation to be most effective in contributing to learning through CPD, feedback should be provided to participants whenever possible. Providing feedback that is useful to programme developers is also one way of reducing anxiety which has been found to be a problem in many evaluations.

Welton (2000:139) asserts that effective evaluation facilitates the process of recording and reporting to the school leadership on the attainment of targets specified in the school development plan. According to Dean (1991:189), evaluation should result in a report which is considered by the professional development committee, the head teacher and the governors. Welton (2000:140) further indicates that the coordinator should provide written reports on the evaluation of the professional development policy and programme which

can include headings such as; purpose, context, content, process, and outcomes. In addition, Gordon (2004:281) asserts that summative programme evaluation usually results in the writing of a formal report that reviews the evaluations objectives, data sources, data gathering, and data analysis; draws conclusions; and makes recommendations for the programme's future.

In the light of the literature review it can be concluded that the evaluation of professional development requires that those involved in the process should be aware of the reasons for doing such evaluation. This means that the purpose of evaluating professional development programmes must be clear to managers and coordinators of professional development in schools and at district level. In doing so it will enable them to have a clear understanding of what the process should look like and they will be able to identify all the necessary aspects to be included in the design and planning of the evaluation of professional development programmes.

2.3.5   Maintenance of professional development programme

Steyn (2001:58) contends that the importance of this phase cannot be overemphasized. Since educators often attend professional development programmes and learn new techniques but never use them afterwards, it is suggested that the professional development committee should establish periodically whether the new techniques are being applied or not (Steyn, 2001:58).

Day and Sachs (2004:294) assert that in order to maintain CPD, many professions now require individual professionals to demonstrate that they are maintaining at least, and preferable developing, their competence. Day and Sachs (2004:294) further indicate that the newly instituted health professions council, as the regulatory body, plans to institute requirements for CPD at the level of individual registrants from 2006 and many professional bodies have also set up systems of monitoring.

This was also the case in South Africa when the South African Council of Educators (SACE) decided to introduce and coordinate the Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS) and Whole School Evaluation Policy as one way of monitoring and evaluating educator performances in order to identify areas where educators need professional development through its body since 2001. The IQMS is to take place through a designed plan. The school will be informed by the district plan. Summative evaluation by both the school and delegates from the district will take place once at the end of every year for a period of a three year cycle.

According to Gordon (2004:280) summative evaluation assists in helping the school to decide whether the professional development programme has to be continued with minor revisions or major revisions or to discontinue the programme and design an entirely new one for the following implementation. Steyn (2001:47) contends that in order to maintain professional development programmes in schools, principals/school managers must consider their role as educational leaders, to take a lead in creating a climate for professional development by providing opportunities for staff to discuss case studies and good teaching practice, create consensus on the vision of the school and review annual school objectives, encourage experimentation, provide professional development programmes that are purposeful and research based, model a commitment to professional growth, actively involve staff in professional development programmes as well as work for change by means of school wide projects.

In addition Dean (2002:54) points out that the head teacher or professional development coordinator has the responsibility to see that professional development policy is available and is implemented, coordinate the professional development budget, provide advice, support and training for colleagues contributing to the school professional development programmes, maintain records of the professional development which has taken place as well as evaluate professional development programmes and external professional development courses attended by staff

This means that the principal has an important role to play and his knowledge and attitude towards PDP at school will influence the future of professional development programmes that are offered at school in school. The school ought to have a professional development policy and plan as well as the professional development committee that is in operation to facilitate and coordinate the PD programmes.

2.4 SIGNIFICANCE/FINDINGS MADE IN TERMS OF SOLVING THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

The aim of this chapter was to investigate the nature of effective professional development for educators and to identify the criteria for the design, planning and implementation of such programmes, through the study of the literature. The chapter dealt specifically with the following two major topics and the sub-topics which are the nature of effective professional development of educators, and the criteria for the design, planning and implementation of such programs.

2.4.1 Findings and conclusions drawn in terms of the nature of effective professional development of educators

2.4.1.1 Professional development of educators

The literature revealed that professional development is a process that begins with initial educator training and continues throughout the educator's career life span to provide them with relevant and sufficient knowledge, skills and attitude to remain effective in the teaching and learning process. This is to enhance school improvement that will bring about quality education (c.f. 2.2.1).

The conclusion drawn from 2.2.1 is that for educators to remain effective in teaching and learning, it is important that after receiving their initial educator training programmes, they have to undergo continuous professional development that will upgrade their current knowledge, skills and attitudes. Thereby they will be enabled to approach the teaching and learning situation and to meet the changes and challenges brought about by the education

system with full confidence. Continuous professional development will also assist educators and the school to improve their personal performances and to remain competent.

2.4.1.2 Professional development in educator training institutions, In-Service training centres and in schools

The literature revealed that the pre-service stage develops in educators, the basic insight into the profession and the key skills required in various teaching learning tasks and situations (c.f. 2.2.2.1).

The aim of the in-service training centre is the upgrading of in-service educators professionally through regular courses where the competence of serving educators is reviewed, permitting them to keep up with the development of the profession and changing needs of students (c.f. 2.2.2.2). Professional development in schools is a vehicle for achieving school improvement and sustainable change and has to include both individual and organizational development (2.2.2.3).

The conclusion drawn from 2.2.2.1 – 2.2.2.3 is that effective professional development of educators occurs at different situations for different reasons but with one aim in mind which is that of developing educators for quality purposes. The integration of professional development that educators receive at different settings empowers educators with knowledge, skills and attitudes to be effective in teaching and learning. At the PRESET educators are prepared to approach their career for the first time, while at INSET they learn more about new approaches to teaching and learning to adapt to the changes and challenges brought about by the changing education system and policies. In schools educators are developed in areas where they are found not to be performing well in order to bring about quality and improvement in the school.

2.4.1.3 The unique nature of professional development of educators

The literature review revealed that the purpose of professional development is to promote learning process of individuals and the organization as a whole (c.f. 2.2.3.1). As regards

policies for educator professional development, the literature revealed that the changed curriculum and pedagogy of professional development require new policies that foster new structures and institutional arrangements for existing policies in terms of their compatibility with a vision of learning (c.f..2.2.3.2) The literature also revealed that the approaches to professional development depend on the identified developmental needs for individual educators, individual schools, or the national policy that requires urgent attention by the provincial department through the district (c.f. 2.2.3.3).

For effective professional development of educators to take place the purpose of professional development is very important since it will guide the designing of the policy for the programme. This will in turn provide the guidelines as to which approach to use for a particular professional development programme with a specific purpose in mind instead of using the same approach to different professional development programmes. One approach may be relevant to a certain professional development programme but not relevant to the others depending on the purpose of the PDP

2.4.1.4   The role of school managers in professional development

The literature revealed that the role of school managers in the professional development of educators covers their role as instructional leaders, creators of a positive climate for professional development, coordinators of school development programmes, as well as their roles as managers of professional development plan. School managers are expected to show their interest in the professional development of educators and staff and are expected to provide training support to those that are coordinating the PDP by ensuring that the policy for PDP is drawn by those responsible for PDG and also assisting in the designing and planning for such programmes (c.f. 2.2.4.1 – 2.2.4.4)..

The conclusion that can be drawn from the findings in the literature is that principals/ school mangers play a vital role in the effective of professional development in schools. As such it is important that they have adequate knowledge for the effective management of such programmes to ensure school improvement and quality assurance and the support

and guidance they provide to their staff. The education authorities and district officials must make sure that school managers have a thorough knowledge of the professional development of educators.

2.4.1.5   The role of district officials in professional development

The literature revealed that the district officials play a very important role as managers and coordinators of professional development of educators in the whole district, and as such they are expected to have their own plan that should direct the professional development design within the district (c.f. 2.2.5.1 -2.2.5.2).

Without the district professional development plan it will be impossible for the district managers to coordinate the professional development of educators effectively and as such the designing and planning of professional development of educators remain the district managers' responsibility.

2.4.2   Significance and findings made in terms of the criteria for the design, planning and implementation of such programmes

The literature review revealed that the criteria for designing effective professional development of educators include a number of steps which covers: diagnosing development needs, planning for professional development, implementing professional development programmes, evaluation of professional development programmes as well as maintenance of professional development programmes (c.f. 2.3.).

2.4.2.1   Diagnosing professional development needs

The literature revealed that identifying educators or staff needs is a prerequisite for effective planning for professional development programmes. It can be done in any form and analysing these needs is needed in the planning of professional development programmes (c.f. 2.3.1).

Diagnosing development needs of educators is the most significant step in the effective design of professional development of educators and also a prerequisite for all other steps. Whatever development programme needs to be offered to educators depends heavily on what educators need development on and the identification and analysis of the educators' needs will guide the planning and designing of such programmes. Therefore, development coordinators and managers of PD should have a plan on how they intend to conduct the developmental needs of educators in order to can plan their programmes well.

2.4.2.2   Planning for professional development

The literature revealed that for the planning of effective professional development, planners should consider the following phases as important: objectives, actions, resources, review, preparation, audit, monitor, evaluate, and replan (c.f. 2.3.2.1). As regards the characteristics of PD the literature revealed that effective PD can be planned from the perspective of correcting professional shortcomings and creating opportunities for development with a view of the vision of the school in mind (c.f. 2.3.2.2). On the basis of implementation strategy the literature revealed that PD has to reflect the schools' needs, details of the programmes as well as the direction in which the school needs to take (c.f. 2.3.2.3).

The effective planning of PD requires those involved in the planning to consider the purpose of PD. In the process of planning they should focus on the objectives to be met in a particular PDP so that they become more specific in the planning of such a PDP.

2.4.2.3   Implementing professional development programmes

The literature revealed that effective implementation of PDP is only possible if activities to be carried out are purposefully selected during and after the implementation process and by determining the length and periods for such activities to take place. The decision must be made on how monitoring, assessment, evaluation, and review of the implemented

activities will be done. Effective implementation is only possible if the objectives for the programmes have been met (c.f. 2.3.3).

The implementation of effective PD depends on the successfully planned PD taking into consideration the identified and analysed developmental needs of educators and the school. This means that diagnosing developmental needs and planning the PSD progrmmes taking into consideration educators needs are very important for the successful implementation of PDP.

2.4.2.4   Evaluation of professional development

The literature revealed that for effective evaluation of PD to take place, it is important that participants in the evaluation process know the following about PD evaluation which encompasses: reasons for doing PD evaluation, purpose of PD evaluation, the design for PD evaluation, planning , monitoring and preparing for PD evaluation report (c.f.2.3.4)

For effective evaluation of PD it is required that the managers and coordinators of PD must be aware of the impact of evaluation and they have to engage in the process of formal planning and design of such PD evaluation barring in mind the purpose of doing such evaluation. This means that the evaluators of PD must have a policy and plan for PD evaluation to direct their programme.

2.4.2.5   Maintenance of professional development

The literature revealed that in most cases educators do not apply the techniques they have learned in the professional development programmes. This means that in order to maintain and sustain particular professional development programmes, it is suggested that school managers and district coordinators should do regular monitoring and assessment of whether educators are applying the knowledge and techniques that they have learnt during the PDP as this will assist in determine the future of such programmes (c.f. 2.3.5).

The conclusion that can be drawn from the findings is that the monitoring, evaluation and review of PD offered to educators and staff assist in determining whether the objectives of such programmes are being met and/or whether the programme needs to be revised or to be done away with completely. This means that in determining the future of a particular PD it is required that the school or district needs to have a policy and plan for regular monitoring and review of that programme.

The final conclusion is that professional development of educators is the heart of maintaining and sustaining the quality of education. By having a plan and policy for professional development the various education institutions responsible for the professional development of educators maintain and sustain the future of such institutions.

Another conclusion is that all the steps needed for the whole programme are equally important and failure to follow them systematically can lead to the failure of the professional development programme offered. Moreover, the literature has revealed that the knowledge about the professional development of educators by those in charge is very important since lack of it can hinder the effectiveness of the whole process.

2.5   SUMMARY

This chapter dealt specifically with the literature review based on the nature of professional development. The literature review was aimed at complementing the background provided in the previous chapter. The effective continuous professional development as conducted by developing and developed countries has been briefly discussed. The role of different district coordinators, principals as well as educators in the professional development has been outlined. The literature revealed that although much research has been done on the professional development of educators, there are still serious shortcomings with regard to the professional development of educators. It is also clear from the literature study that new strategies are still needed to provide effective professional development programmes that will meet the aims and objectives of such programmes.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1   INTRODUCTION

The aim of this chapter is to expound the qualitative research methodology as the method used by the researcher to gather data concerning the management of effective professional development of educators for secondary schools in the Thohoyandou/Vhembe district

In the light of the previous chapter based on literature review on professional development of educators, the researcher decided to conduct a qualitative investigation of the current provision of professional development of educators at secondary schools and EMPC's in the Thohoyandou/Vhembe district. She worked from the premise that effective professional development of educators is a key factor to bring about effective teaching and learning in schools, especially in secondary schools.

A qualitative research approach was considered suitable because this study is aimed at gaining understanding of secondary school educators, principals of secondary schools and EMPC facilitators' views about professional development programmes and their impact on their education careers. According to Henning (in Bitzer, 2004:5) qualitative research refers to the type of inquiry in which the qualities, the characteristics or the properties of a phenomenon are examined for better understanding and explanation. The researcher chose this approach because she could talk directly with the participants and, in so doing, could see their reactions and feelings as they responded to different questions. According to Leedy and Ormrod (2001:101), qualitative researchers are often described as the research instrument because the bulk of their data collection is dependent on their personal involvement in their setting.

In this study the information was gathered through interviews based on interview schedules that the researcher prepared before the interviews to guide the interview session.

Although interview schedules were used, the researcher was flexible enough to allow participants to comment and some of the questions were developed as the interviews proceed because of the participants' comments and responses. In order to understand the aspect of professional development in the context of effective teaching and learning, the researcher focused on the design, implementation, purpose and method used for the professional development of educators.

In this chapter the researcher explains how the qualitative research method and design was used to collect, organize and analyze data.

3.2   QUALITATIVE RESEARCH APPROACH

The underlying principle in qualitative research is that the qualitative researcher aims to understand the meaning that people attach to everyday life. Thus, the orientation of qualitative research is that it adopts assumptions about social life, objectives for research and ways to deal with data that are often at odds with a quantitative approach. To support this, Denzin and Lincoln (1994:236) assert that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them.

According to Schumacher and McMillan (1993:372), qualitative research is based on the naturalistic phenomenological philosophy that views reality as a multilayered, interactive and shared social experience. Denzin and Lincoln (1994:236) contends that research inquiry in socio-historical contexts should focus on those life experiences that alter and shape the meanings people give to their life projects. In addition, Schulze (2000:47) indicates that qualitative methodologies share the following three assumptions:

- A holistic view, which denotes the idea that qualitative methods try to understand phenomena in their entirety in a bid to understand the person, programmes or situation.

- An inductive approach in which qualitative research starts with specific observations and moves to the development of general patterns that emerges from the study.

- Naturalistic inquiry, which aims to understand phenomena in their natural occurring states.

According to Schulze (2000:57), data collection in qualitative research is continued until the researcher does not hear any new information and the researcher is the main research instrument. In addition, Neuman (1997:327) indicates that data in qualitative methodology are in the form of words, sentences, and paragraphs.

To support this, Schumacher and McMillan (1993:372) point out that in qualitative methods data involves documenting real events and recording what people say with words, gesture and the tone of their voices. Schulze (2000:47) asserts that while quantitative research concerns itself with representatives, qualitative research requires that data collected must be rich in description of people and places.

According to Denzin and Lincoln (1994:236) qualitative research involves the studied use and collection of a variety of empirical materials: case studies; personal experience; introspection; life stories; interviews; artifacts; cultural texts and productions; observational, historical, international, and visual texts that describe routine and problematic moments and meaning in individual's lives.

In this study interviews were used as the main data collection strategy to gather data from secondary school educators, principals and EMPC facilitators.

3.3   THE RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

Common techniques for data collection in qualitative research include field notes, observation notes, interviews, photographs as well as audio and video recordings, the

study of documents and photo shooting. In this study interviews were used as the main research instrument and interview schedules were used as the prime research tool.

3.3.1   The interviews

An interview is a direct method of obtaining information in a face-to-face situation (Behr, 1983:144). According to Ravhudzulo (1997:115) the interview is flexible and can be easily adapted to a variety of situations and he further asserts that the main reason for the flexibility is the presence of the interviewer who can explore responses with interviewees, ask further questions for the clarification of certain points and control the interview to elicit responses wanted. The interviewer does not follow a rigid structure of the designed interview schedule in that questions are directed by the responses given by the interviewee.

The researcher used interviews to collect data in this study. The researcher started by making all the necessary arrangements for conducting the interviews before embarking on the interviews. The researcher started by gaining access to settings by a way of writing an application letter asking for permission to do research in educational institutions and forwarded this letter to the district senior manager who is regarded as the key person in this research. These letters are included at the end of this document. After being granted permission to do the research, the researcher went to the institutions she had chosen with the letter and made appointments. The researcher prepared interview schedules and used them as basis for the tape recorded interviews.

Henning (in Bitzer, 2004:74) states that if a researcher has planned the interview well and if the overall design logic of the inquiry is clear, the interviews may be scheduled for specific times at specific venues. The social interaction that constitutes the interview can progress only if the researcher has managed the logistics of the venture well. According to Babbie and Mouton (2006:290), the following seven stages are important in a complete interview process:

- Thematising in which the researcher can clarify the purpose of interviews to be explored;

- Designing in which the researcher lays out the whole process including considerations for ethical dimensions;

- Interviewing in which the actual interview take place;

- Transcribing in which the researcher writes the text of the interviews;

- Analyzing where the researcher determines the meaning of gathered materials in relation to the purpose of the study;

- Verifying wherein the researcher checks the reliability and validity of the materials;

- Reporting in which the researcher tells others what has been learnt.

Fontana and Frey (in Denzin and Lincoln, 1994:645) state that interview is one of the most common and powerful ways whereby we try to understand our fellow human beings. It includes the following forms: individual face-to-face verbal interchanges, group interchanges and telephone surveys and can be structured, semi-structured or unstructured. In addition, Schulze (2002:60) indicates that interviewing is the most common method of data collection in qualitative research methodology.

Schulze (2000:82) further asserts that there are four kinds of interviews in qualitative research: unstructured interviews; non-directive interviews; structured interviews and the focus group interview. In this study the researcher used unstructured interviews as well as focus group interviews to collect data from selected secondary school educators and EMPC facilitators.

According to Babbie and Mouton (2006:290), a qualitative interview is an interaction between an interviewer and a respondent in which the interviewer has a general plan of inquiry but not a specific set of questions that must be asked in particular words and in a particular order. In addition, Babbie and Mouton (2006:288) asserts that a qualitative

interview is essentially a conversation in which the interviewer establishes a general direction and pursues specific topics raised by the respondent.

Schumacher and McMillan (1993:427) maintain that question content varies because of different research purposes and problems, theoretical frameworks and the selection of participants. They further suggest that interview questions can focus on experience or behavior, opinions, values, feelings, knowledge, sensory perceptions and the individual's background or demographic information. The researcher in this study used an interview guide to direct the interview but some questions were not used as they appeared in the interview guide; they were reframed to suit the setting.

Neumann (1997:373) maintains that there are three types of questions in an interview, i.e. descriptive, structural and contrast questions. Neuman (1997:251) further asserts that questions are usually in one of the following forms: structured, semi- structured or unstructured. She indicates that in semi- structured questions, the question is phrased to allow for individual responses in that it is an open-ended question but fairly specific in its intent.

According to Du Plooy (2001:175), an interview is a transitory relationship between an interviewer and an interviewee and the interview schedule or interview guide is used during a telephone or personal interview which contains both open- ended and closed items. In this study an interview schedule was used during the personal interviews, all interviews were done face-to-face.

Although the interview schedule was used during the interview sessions, there was flexibility during the interview since the participants were allowed to ask questions and the researcher had to deviate from the logic of the questions as in the guide due to some of the responses given by the participants. Interviews were conducted with secondary school educators and principals of selected secondary schools around the Thohoyandou district, as well as EMPC facilitators from one of the four EMPC's in the district.

3.3.2 Construction of interview schedule

The researcher constructed interview schedules for different participants. The interview schedules consisted of questions related to different participants and questions ranged from seven to fifteen for educators, principals and EMPC's facilitators respectively. The interview schedules were prepared before the interview sessions. The participants were interviewed in different settings and at different times.

3.3.3 Piloting the interview schedule

Before the administration of the interview process the researcher conducted a pilot test of the interview schedule with a few selected people who are similar to the participants in the study. This was done to identify weaknesses in the interview schedule, to practice interview skills such as fluency in questioning and to improve the questions' potential for eliciting relevant rich information.

3.3.4 Administering the interview schedule

The researcher used an interview schedule as the main research tool and as such data in this study was collected by means of interviews. Tape recording and note-taking were used to preserve information collected during the interviews. All the participants agreed that the tape recorder be used during the interview. The recorded interviews were transcribed and coded at a later stage. The following participants were involved in the interviews:

- EMPC facilitators were seen as elite interviewees. According to Schumacher and McMillan (1993:427), an elite interviewee is a person who is considered to be influential, prominent and well informed in an organisation or community. EMPC facilitators were chosen in this study because the main purpose of EMPC's is to provide the professional development of educators on a continuous basis. They are always first to be informed about changes in the education system and/or

curriculum in comparison to principals since they operate hand in hand with district coordinators.

- Secondary school principals were seen as key informants. According to Schumacher and McMillan (1993:427), key informants are individuals who have special knowledge, status or communication skills who are willing to share this information with the researcher. Principal were chosen because they are responsible for staff development and have more information about school issues since they observe the teaching and learning situation and educators' daily experiences.

- Secondary school educators were seen as career and life history interviewees. According to Schumacher and McMillan (1993:427), career and life interviews elicit life narratives of individuals and are used by anthropologists to obtain data about a culture. In this study secondary school educators were interviewed because they were able to describe their experiences about professional development programmes.

3.4   THE DESIGN OF THE PRESENT STUDY

Neuman (1997:31) maintains that the design describes the procedures for conducting the study, including from whom, and under what conditions the data will be obtained. In addition, Babbie and Mouton (2006:74) asserts that a research design is a plan or blueprint of one intends conducting the research. According to Janesick (in Denzin and Lincoln 1994:385-386), the following are characteristics of qualitative design:

- Qualitative design is focused on understandings given to social settings, not necessarily making predictions about those settings.
- Qualitative design sometimes requires that the researcher develop a model of what occurred in the social setting.
- Qualitative design incorporates informed consent decisions and is responsive to ethical concerns.

- Qualitative design incorporates room for description of the role of the researcher as well as a description of the researcher's own biases and ideological preferences.

- Qualitative design requires the construction of an authentic and compelling narrative of what occurred in the study and the various stories of the participants.

- Qualitative design requires the researcher to become the research instrument, i.e. the researcher must have the ability to observe behaviors and the skills necessary for observation and face-to-face interviewing.

In the light of the above characteristics, the researcher provides a statement of subjectivity as experienced during the study.

3.4.1   Statement of subjectivity

In qualitative research, the researcher is the main research instrument since s /he is the one who conducts face-to-face interviews with the participants .Neuman (1997:354) indicates that the researcher is the measuring instrument for measuring data and therefore the researcher should be alert and sensitive to what happens in the field. Schulze (2002:57) maintains that the qualitative researcher becomes immersed in the phenomenon studied and the researcher is the main data collection instrument. Neuman (1997:354) warns that researchers cannot achieve immersion without bringing subjectivity into play. This requires researchers to be disciplined and more focused when it comes to recording data. The researcher is an educator in a school in the Thohoyandou district and was therefore empathetic to educators' viewpoints during the interviews.

Moreover, the researcher was personally concerned when she realised the way professional development had been conducted since she was involved in both primary and secondary schools during the implementation of new curriculum and the National Curriculum Statement (NCS). According to Fontana and Frey (in Denzin and Lincoln 1994:636), personal experience reflects the flow of thoughts and meanings that people have in their immediate situation which can be routine or problematic.

The researcher wrote personal notes about personal experiences in the field. According to Neuman (1997:397), personal notes serve the following three functions: they provide an outlet for the researcher and a way to cope with stress; they are a source of data about personal reactions and provide the researcher a way to evaluate his or her experience. Neuman (1997:397) further indicates that qualitative researchers should be sensitive about what to include as data and should admit their own subjectivity, insight and feelings.

The aim of the study was to understand the experience of professional development from the participants' point of view, i.e. secondary school educators, principals and EMPC facilitators in the Thohoyandou district. Tesch in Schulze (2002:65) indicates that qualitative researchers seek to construct descriptions of total phenomena within their various contexts and to generate from these descriptions the complex inter-relationships of cause and consequence that affect human behavior and their beliefs about the phenomena.

3.4.2 Choice of participants

Sayre (2001:40) indicates that in qualitative research, finding participants may not be an easy task and is time consuming. Qualitative researchers look for people who are willing to share their thoughts to help them illuminate, interpret and understand the phenomenon better. In addition, Schulze (2000:56) points out that in qualitative research, the researcher carefully handpicks participants who would be able to give him/her information about the phenomenon under investigation. As the researcher gains more insight into the phenomenon, the researcher will redefine sampling on an on-going basis.

According to Lemmer and Van Wyk (2004:266), the use of a small sample is common in qualitative research where the aim is depth and not breadth. In this study a small sample of sixteen participants was chosen. This was because the study was aimed at detailed understanding of secondary school educators and principals as well as EMPC facilitators' experience of professional development programmes. The sample was composed of the following participants as described in the next section.

3.4.2.1   Localizations of participants

The Thohoyandou district is a district covering five circuits clusters, each with about nine 9 secondary schools and four EMPC's. The researcher chose participants from three different circuit clusters from the district. The researcher tried to cover schools from different geographical settings since Thohoyandou district covers a wide area with semi-urban, rural and remote rural areas.

The researcher applied for permission to conduct this research in the respective schools and the EMPC's and forwarded this to the district senior manager of the Department of Education in the Thohoyandou district on the 28 July, 2006. The permission for involvement of the secondary school educators and principals as well as EMPC facilitators was received on the same day as permission had been already granted by the Limpopo provincial department. The researcher forwarded the letter of permission to the circuit managers for the selected schools. Arrangements were then made with individual schools and educators involved in the research. As regards the EMPC's, arrangements were made with the person responsible for research conducted in the institutions.

The following participants were chosen for the research:

- *Four facilitators* from one of the four EMPC's in the district were chosen. The EMPC was chosen because of its history as the only in-service training centre in the district since 1986 before it was merged with the colleges and became an EMPC. Facilitators from this EMPC were seen as participants most likely to yield fruitful data on the aspect under study. Individual interviews were conducted with the four facilitators. This was done because each one of them was responsible for a different section of professional development in the EMPC and a focus group interview was not possible.

- *Three secondary school principals* were chosen because they were seen as participants who observe behavior unavailable to the researcher. One principal was

from a secondary school that has a history of obtaining the best matric results in the province and he was thought to be able to yield useful information. The other principal was selected because his school has been improving its performance for the past four years after having obtained a 0% for the 2000 matric results. The researcher chose these principals with the view that she too would yield important information. The third principal was from a secondary school that has not been performing well for more than four consecutive years. An individual interview was conducted with each principal.

- *Thirteen secondary school educators* were chosen as participants in the study. Of the thirteen educators six where from a secondary school which has a record of maintaining good matric results for the past ten years; four educators were from a secondary school that has not been performing well; while the remaining three educators were from three different secondary schools that were not performing well.

Of the six educators from a well performing school, two had taught in the same school for more than fifteen years, the other three had taught in the same school for more than five years, while one had been working in the same school for two years. Three were from the General Education and Training Band (GET) and the other three were from the Further Education and Training Band (FET).

The other four educators were from the schools that have not been performing well for over a period of three years. All the four educators have been working in the school for more than eight years. The other three educators had taught for more than thirteen years respectively while one has been teaching for a period of eight years. These educators were chosen from three schools that have not been performing well for three consecutive years and more.

Three educators from three different schools that were not performing well were also chosen. The researcher decided to interview educators from different schools that are not

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performing well to get a deeper understanding from them. One was from the (GET) while the other two were from the FET. A focus group interview was conducted with these four educators. Two sessions of focus group interviews were conducted with educators from the two schools. Educators from different school were interviewed in three individual sessions.

The researchers' data consisted of interviews on tape recordings, handwritten notes taken while in the field and direct observational no
tes taken immediately after leaving the field. The observation notes were then ordered chronologically with dates, time and place on each entry to the setting. The notes served as description of what the researcher had heard and seen. All the tape recorded information was later transcribed and the notes clearly hand written.

3.4.2.2   Individual interviews with EMPC facilitators

Four EMPC's facilitators from the same EMPC responsible for professional development of educators in the district were interviewed. All the four facilitators were interviewed in their offices. The interviews were conducted during office hours and were scheduled to suit participants' schedules. All the four interviews were conducted on the same day. The researcher started by introducing herself and the reason of the interview to all the facilitators after which it was then suggested that because they offer different kinds of professional development programmes, it would be wise to interview them individually.

The researcher asked permission to use a tape recorder during the interview and a tape recorder was used for all the interviews. The interviews proceeded without any interruption and cell phones were switched off.

3.4.2.3   Individual interviews with principals

Three principals from secondary schools around the Thohoyandou/Vhembe district were interviewed: Principal A's school has been/is being performing very well; principal B's school has been improving its performance for the past four years, while principal C's school has not been performing well. The researcher used individual interviews with principals as they were experiencing their work differently and the researcher wished each principal, especially Principal C, to be open in the absence of the others. Interviews with principal A and B were conducted in their school offices while the interview with principal C was conducted in her home late in the afternoon. The researcher also respected the privacy of principals. The researcher agreed with each principal on the date, time and place for the interviews. All the interviews proceeded without any interruption.

3.4.2.4   Focus group interview with educators from the school that is performing well

An arrangement for educators to be interviewed was made by the school prior to the interview. Six educators were interviewed (three from the GET; three from the FET). Two were females and four were males. Their teaching experience ranges from three to eighteen years. Two educators had served in the school for more than ten years while the remaining four had been at school for not less than three years.

These educators were chosen because they were seen as participants who would yield the most information regarding professional development and the school's good performance. A focus group interview was conducted with all the six educators. The focus group interview was conducted as an open conversation on a specific topic in which each participant made comments, asked questions of other participants or responded to comments by others, including the moderator. The group interaction consisted of verbal and non-verbal communication and an interplay of perceptions and opinions that stimulated the discussion without necessarily modifying or changing the ideas and

opinions of participants (Ferreira & Puth in Rathogwa, 2006:167). The interview went without any interruption.

3.4.2.5   Focus group interview with educators from the school that is performing poorly

On the first day of asking permission to conduct interview at the school the principal assigned all the arrangements to a senior educator. On the day of the interview four educators gathered in the staff room where the interview took place. On arrival in the staffroom the researcher introduced herself and the purpose of the interview. Of the four educators three were from the FET and one was from the GET; two were males and two were females. Their teaching experience ranged from six to seventeen years. All the educators have been serving at the school ever since they started teaching. The researcher chose this school because she wanted to understand the reason of the school's under performance in relation to professional development. The interview went well except for noise made by learners at the end of the afternoon studies.

3.4.2.6   Individual interviews with educators from three different schools that are performing poorly

The three educators from different schools were interviewed at their own homes after an agreement was reached. All the interviews were conducted late in the afternoon. The interviews were also tape recorded. All the above participants were chosen by means of purposeful sampling. Schumacher and McMillan (1993:378) indicate that purposeful sampling refers to a process of selecting information rich cases. The researcher chose participants who are rich in information and more knowledgeable and informative about the professional development of educators.

The researcher visited the various schools and the EMPC with the district letter and discussed the purpose of the research with the head of institutions who in turn referred her to the relevant people responsible for such arrangements, which included venue, time, date

and the people to be involved All the interviews started after permission has been granted by the district and the various institutions during August and September 2006.

Before the researcher could embark on the interview, the researcher requested permission from the district senior manager by letter. The acting district senior manager in turn wrote a letter to the chosen institutions to allow the researcher to proceed with the interviews. The researcher took the district letter with her to the circuit officials of the chosen schools who then informed the school managers about her planned visit to schools.

3.4.3   Data collection

In this study data were gathered by means of semi-structured interviews which lasted for an hour using an interview guide which was supplemented by an interview schedule. A tape recorder was used in all the interviews. According to Schumacher and McMillan (1993:432) tape recording the interviews ensures completeness of verbal interaction and provides materials for reliability checks. In addition, Neuman (1997:368) maintains that tape recordings can supplement the research by providing a close approximation to what occurred and by providing a permanent record that the researcher can view. Nieswiadomy (1987:48) points out that through tape recordings, the total interview process can be captured and the interviewer is free to observe the participants.

In addition to tape recorded information the researcher also used field notes. Schumacher and McMillan (1993:433) indicate that the use of a tape recorder does not eliminate the need for taking notes to help re-formulate questions and probes. According to Neuman (1997:636), jotted notes are described as short, temporary memory triggers such as a phrase, or drawings taken inconspicuously, often scribbled on a convenient item.

The researcher also used direct observational notes in order to have a clear understanding of how participants reacted towards a particular form of question, since participants react differently to different questions and noted their tone of voice. Neuman (1997:363)

indicates that direct observations notes are that are written by the researcher immediately after leaving the field.

In this study the researcher's data consisted of interviews on tape recordings, hand written notes taken while in the field as well as direct observational notes taken immediately after leaving the field. The notes were then ordered chronologically with date, time and places on each entry to the settings. The notes served as a description of what the researcher saw and heard in concrete specific terms. All tape recordings were later transcribed.

3.4.4   Problems encountered during the interviews

- It was difficult to arrange a focus group interview with EMPC facilitators since some felt that they will not be able to share their views in front of others. As such the researcher ended up having individual interviews with the four facilitators who were willing to share their views and experiences in private.
- It was also difficult to hear the recorded information since some participants did not want to speak loudly during the interview session and as such it was very difficult to transcribe such information. However, the researcher was able to do so with the help of the notes written during the interview.
- Some participants especially the educators wanted the researcher to provide them with answers to some questions. But after encouragement, they became more vocal.
- Some educators especially those from the under-performing schools wanted to be given the interview schedule so that they could answer it on their own and give the answers to the researcher.

3.4.5   Transcribing the data

According to Silverman (in Denzin and Lincoln, 1994:829), in interviews researchers usually work with written transcripts as audio-tapes are usually transcribed prior to analysis. Schumacher and McMillan (1993:432) maintain that the primary data of

qualitative interviews are verbatim accounts of what transpires in the interview session. In addition, this Schumacher and McMillan (1993:433) assert that the final record contains accurate verbatim data and the interviewer's notation of non-verbal communication with initial insights and comments to enhance the search for meaning.

In this study all interviews were tape recorded and later transcribed and became the primary data source for analysis conducted by the researcher. Observation notes and field notes were typed immediately after the interview and later transcribed. The final record included dates, place, time and participants' codes, accurate verbatim data as well as the interviewer's notation of non-verbal communication with initial insights and comments to enhance the search for meaning.

3.4.6   Analyzing the data

According to Fontana and Frey (in Denzin and Lincoln, 1994:639), qualitative researchers study spoken and written records of human experiences, including transcribed talk, film, novels and photographs. In addition, Babbie (1990:304) indicates that the process of analysis is largely a search for patterns of similarities and differences followed by an interpretation of those patterns.

According to Seale (1999:112), data analysis is the process of bringing order, structure, and meaning to the mass of collected data. Seale (1991:112) further points out that the most fundamental operation in the analysis of qualitative data is that of discovering significant classes of things, persons, events and the properties that characterized them. Henning in Bitzer (2004:126) maintain that data analysis in qualitative research is an ongoing process, because before the researchers begin with analysis, the data are transcribed and these transcriptions are then organized into segment or units, and then compared to build and refine categories, to define conceptual similarities and to discover patterns. The researcher starts by transcribing the interviews and then reads them several times in order to identify units of meaning, labels them, groups them as codes and these codes were categorized into themes.

In this study, data were analyzed according to the following steps of Tech's approach described in Schulze (2002:65):

- Get a sense of the whole by reading through all transcripts. Jot down ideas as they come to mind.
- Select one interview and go through it asking: What is this about? and thinking about the underlying meaning. Write down your thoughts about the meaning of each piece of information in the margin.
- Do this for several participants. Make a list of all the topics. Cluster similar topics together. You could identify major topics, unique topics and leftovers.
- Take the list and return to the data .Abbreviate topics by means of codes and write these codes next to each segment of data in the transcribed interview. See if new categories and codes emerge.
- Form categories by grouping topics together. Determine relationships between categories.
- Make a final decision on the abbreviation of categories and codes. Alphabetize codes.
- Assemble all the data material for each category in one place.
- Recode existing data if necessary.

Findings were interpreted in the light of the theoretical framework and within the context of the literature review. In this study immediately after the researcher had transcribed the data from the tapes and after reading them several times, she then arranged the transcribed data into the following three categories: Knowledge; Experience; and Attitudes. These categories were then consolidated into the following themes which included: criteria for designing; planning; and implementation of professional development programmes for secondary school educators and EMPC facilitators. In addition, the researcher discussed aspects of the results that were consistent with previous research and theoretical explanations.

3.4.7   Reliability in qualitative research

Schumacher and McMillan (1993:385) indicate that in qualitative research reliability issues are addressed when researchers are designing their studies as well as in their data collection strategies. They further highlight that in qualitative research reliability refers to the consistency of the researcher's interactive style, data recording, data analysis and interpretation of participant meaning from data.

According to Seale (1999:147) reliability can be divided into the following two categories:

- Internal reliability, which means the degree to which other researchers would match the given constructs to data in the same way as the original researchers did.
- External reliability, which refers to the explicability of the entire study.

Marshal and Rossman (1989:38) maintain that the researcher's task is to try to overcome a variety of threats to reliability. According to Schumacher and McMillan (1993:386-388), the following aspects are used by qualitative researchers in their designs to enhance reliability: researcher role; informant selection; social context; data collection strategies; data analysis strategies, as well as analytical premises

In this study the researcher adhered to the following to enhance reliability:
- Researcher role: the site that the researcher chose was one where she was not familiar to the participants and this did not threaten the participants' reliability.
- Informant selection: the researcher provided a detailed description of the informants as well as how they were selected.
- Social context: the researcher described the physical, social, interpersonal and functional issues by indicating the type of people involved in the study, the place for the study, times and dates when research took place.

- Data collection strategies: the researcher provided a precise explanation of how data were collected by describing the various interview methods as well as the observation techniques.

- Data analysis strategies: the researcher provided a detailed description of how data were analyzed by providing a retrospective account on how data were synthesized.

- Analytical premises: the researcher made explicit the conceptual framework which informed the study and from which findings from prior research could be integrated.

3.4.8   Validity in qualitative data

According to Neuman (1997:369) validity is the confidence placed in the researcher's analyses of data as accurately representing the social world in the field. Denzin in Le Roux and Maila (2004:138) maintain that to ensure validity, confidentiality must be assured as the primary safeguard against unwanted exposure and, as such, personal data ought to be secured or concealed and made public only behind a shield of autonomy.

Two kinds of validity are considered in research: internal validity and external validity. According to Schumacher and McMillan (1993:395), internal validity refers to the degree to which the explanations of the phenomena match the realities of the world. Leedy and Ormrod (2001:103) assert that internal validity of a research study is the extent to which its design and the data that it yields allow the researcher to draw accurate conclusions about cause and effect and other relationships within the data. Schumacher and McMillan (1993:395) further indicate that internal validity in qualitative designs is the degree to which interpretations and concepts have mutual meanings between the participants and the researcher.

External validity, according to Schumacher and McMillan (1993:395) was achieved as follows: the researcher used a case study design in which she did not aim at generalizing the results but at the extending understanding. Leedy and Ormrod (2001: 105) maintain that external validity of a research study is the extent to which its results apply to

situations beyond the study itself and the extent to which the conclusions drawn can be generalized to other contexts.

In this study the researcher tried to overcome threats to validity by using the following tactics as suggested by Schumacher and McMillan (1993:391):

- Lengthy data collection strategies: the data collected were read several times to provide opportunities for continual data analysis, comparison and corroboration to refine ideas and to ensure the match between the participants and the research-based categories and participants' reality.
- Participants' language: interview questions were phrased closely to participants' language and where an explanation was needed the researcher provided them.
- Field research: observations and interviews were conducted in the natural settings and did reflect the reality of life experience more accurately.
- Disciplined subjectivity: the researcher did self-monitoring and wrote her statement of subjectivity at the beginning of the study.
- Verbatim accounts: the researcher has presented extensive direct quotations from the data to illustrate participants' meanings.

3.5   SUMMARY

The content of this chapter was based on a discussion of the qualitative methodology as the method used by the researcher to investigate professional development as implemented in the Thohoyandou district. The researcher explained how participants were selected as well as the procedures followed when data were collected using interviews. The researcher also indicated the reason for limiting the participants and why the participants involved in the study were chosen. The researcher classified the participants according to their roles and responsibilities in the teaching and learning process.

In addition to the research design, the chapter included a section on data analysis, reliability as well as validity in qualitative research. Despite the problems that were

encountered during the interviews, the researcher is of the opinion that the results are valid and reliable.

In the next chapter the researcher discusses the presentation of findings.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.1   INTRODUCTION

The aim of this chapter is to present and describe the data generated during the individual and focus group interviews, supplemented by observation notes taken before and during the interviews with participants described in the previous chapter. The participants were four EMPC facilitators; three secondary school principals; and thirteen educators from secondary schools. This chapter deals with the following sections: characteristics of the participants; significant themes; quotations from participants' statements/phrases that emphasize participants' meaning and discussion on each theme.

4.2   CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PARTICIPANTS

This section provides the participants' responses in relation to their teaching experience, subjects/learning areas, phase/band, type of institution/school and its geographical location. The participants in this study have been affected by the professional development of educators in different ways.

4.2.1   EMPC Facilitators

Four facilitators from one of the four EMPC's in the Thohoyandou district were interviewed. The facilitators have been identified as A, B, C, and D. Facilitators A and B are responsible for professional development on curriculum development for the GET and FET bands for history and biology. Both the two facilitators are males. Facilitator C is responsible for the Shoma project and CASS for GET and FET educators. She is a female. Facilitator D is responsible for curriculum development in Agricultural science in FET and school governance. Their characteristics are given in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1

FACILITATORS	A	B	C	D
No of years as facilitators	3	3	3	3
Professional development section	Curriculum development section	Curriculum development section	Shoma and CASS	Management and curriculum development
Learning areas	Social sciences	Natural sciences	All GET and FET LA's	Natural sciences and management
Phase / band	FET&GET	FET&GET	GET&FET	FET

4.2.2 Principals from secondary schools

Three principals from secondary schools from the Thohoyandou district were interviewed. They are identified as principal A, B and C in this study. Principal A is from a secondary school that has been performing well for the past 10 years; principal B is from a secondary school which has been performing poorly for the past four years and principal C is from a secondary school that has been improving its results for the past five years after obtaining a 0% in matric results in 2000. Principal A and B are from secondary schools while principal C is from a technical high school. Their characteristics are given in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2

PRINCIPALS	A	B	C
Sex	Male	female	Male
No of years as principal	13	3	8
No of educators	18	8	15
No of learners	624	317	423
Geographical location	Semi-Urban	Rural	Rural

4.2.3 Educators from the school that has been performing well

Six educators from the above mentioned school were interviewed. Three educators were from the GET band while the other three were from the FET band. Unlike facilitators and principals, educators in this study were identified as T1 to T13. This has been used to can be able to distinguish educators from the effectively performing and the poorly performing schools. Educators from this school are denoted by T1 to T6. Their characteristics are given in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3

EDUCATORS	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6
Sex	Male	Male	Female	Female	Male	Female
Teaching experience	17	12	7	15	3	8
Learning areas	Biology	Geography	Math's	LLC2	Technology	Economic &Management Sciences
Grades	11-12	12	10&11	8&9	8&9	8&9
No of learners taught	214	109	231	284	284	284

4.2.4 Educators from schools that are performing poorly

Individual and focus group interviews were conducted with educators from schools that were not performing well. A focused group interview was conducted with four educators from the same school and after this the researcher decided to conduct individual interviews with other three educators from various schools that were not performing well to obtain more in-depth information. T7 to T10 has been used to describe educators from the same school while T11 to T13 describe educators from other schools. Their characteristics are given in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4

EDUCATORS	T7	T8	T9	T10	T11	T12	T13
Sex	M	M	M	F	M	F	M
Years of Experience	15	13	18	8	17	15	5
Learning Area/s	Agric/ science	LLC2	Geography	Math's	Biology	Business Economics	Technology
Grade/s	11&12	8&9	10&11	12	12	10&11	8&9
No. of learners	83	98	89	36	128	155	207

4.2.5 Significance of the experience of the participants

Participants in this study were affected by professional development differently. Facilitators were expected to provide professional development to educators based on the implementation of the new curriculum after the educator training colleges were merged into EMPC's. They had previously served as college lectures. Principals in turn were expected to play an active role as staff developers to ensure effective and successful implementation of new policies such as IQMS and NCS. Educators had been faced with continuous series of training workshops from the district level on the new curriculum since the introduction of C2005 with OBE as its methodology.

4.3 THE DESIGN OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES

All participants in this study expressed their feelings and understanding on the design of the professional development programmes as they had experienced them from their own point of view.

4.3.1 Aspects considered when designing the professional development programmes

The following people should be involved in the design of professional development programmes:

Facilitators: Facilitators in this study indicated that the professional development programmes that they offered to educators since they became EMPC's facilitators are designed at the provincial level. Facilitators indicated that although EMPC facilitators work together with the district officials, on a par with them, they were never involved in the design of the professional development offered to educators. This is supported by facilitator B who said:

> *Ja, it is true that we are responsible for the professional development of educators at the whole district but the issue of designing the programmes is out of the district scope because neither the district officers nor facilitators are involved when the programmes are designed at provincial level.*

The facilitator C who is responsible for the Shoma project confirmed*:*

> *Mmm...well, the programme that we are offering here at the centre, everything is done by the people from Shoma because the computer are programmed by them and all the lessons have been arranged for educators and we do nothing when it comes to designing the programme but ours is to decide on the days and time for the different sessions that's all.*

Facilitators further indicated that since they had been assigned the role of providing curriculum development programmes to educators, there have been no other professional development programmes such as improving the educators' knowledge and skills as the

facilitators used to organize before the former in-service training college was merged with other colleges and became an EMPC. Because they work hand in hand with district officials, no work plans have been drawn up to direct the professional development of educators at a district level in the Thohoyandou district. Facilitator D said:

> *This is because we have been working on the basis of the provincial plan which does not provide much on other professional development plan except the once for the implementation of the new curriculum and policies.*

Principals: Principals in this study indicated that they do not have a document that indicates the whole process of professional development and as such they did not design any specific programmes. They do not know what should be included in the design; moreover, they had never been told anything about this since they worked in the position. Principals indicated that they did not know it should have been included in the overall development plan of the school.

This is supported by a statement raised by principal B who said:

> *We never know that we need to have this document in the school and we thought it is the department's responsibility to see to it that they provide schools with this and as such we have been following the IQMS process ever since its introduction although we have not been doing much about it.*

Principals indicated that they were never called to a meeting where they were told what was to be done regarding the design of professional development programmes.

Educators: Educators indicated that they knew nothing about the document concerning the professional development offered to them. They said if there had been people who should have known something about it, it was the school management. In response to the

question of whether they had been invited at district level, educators said that possibly other educators from another circuit cluster had been invited but their cluster had not been invited.

This is supported by a statement given by T2 who put it like this:

> *Ja, we don't know maybe other educators were consulted on this issue because the district has so many circuit clusters perhaps educators were selected to represent us in one way or the other we don't know. What we know is that this is the district and facilitators duty and that's all.*

Discussion

The facilitators were given the task of providing professional development of educators in the whole district when the EMPC's were formed after 1998. This meant that they were expected to make sure that everything that concerned the running of professional development within the district was in order. O'Sullivan et al (1990:186) suggests that when designing professional development programmes, it is important to remember the following two important functions: improvement of performance in the person's job; and preparing people for the future opportunities, responsibilities and tasks as well as the intrinsic requirements of educators, which includes the need to take a broad, reflective look at the process of education in schools rather than the practice of teaching.

However, this is only possible if those whose needs are to be met have been consulted or form part of the design process. Facilitators in the study revealed that the professional development programmes that are designed at provincial level do not cater for developing educators' knowledge on their job as research indicates but are mainly focusing on the cascading of the new policies. This is because no consultation is necessary when the new policies are to be implemented. However, the district should see to it that the needs of educators are covered in the training of the policy. Thus, the facilitators together with the district officials should have devised some means to ensure that in addition to the

programmes that are designed at provincial level, they draw up their own programmes as a team comprising of coordinators and facilitators. Dean (1991:33) maintains that the design of appropriate professional development programmes is the responsibility of the professional development committee. At district level the committee should comprise of facilitators, district officials, principals and educators; but this is not the case in the Thohoyandou district.

In addition, Craft (1996:40) argues that all promoters of professional development programmes should attend to two fundamental requirements: incorporating the attributes of successful professional development in as many activities as possible as well as ensuring that the ultimate purpose of professional development is less to implement a specific innovation and more to create individual and organizational habits and structures that make continuous learning valued and enhance the culture of the school and teaching. Facilitators in the study pointed out that since they were told that their role is to train educators on the basis of what the provincial department informed them, they considered what they were doing was enough. As such the professional development programmes offered to educators in the Thohoyandou district did not provide various activities as required. This means that the facilitators together with district officials in the Thohoyandou district were unable to design effective professional development programmes for their educators. This indicates that they did not know what educators needed and as such, they have to rely on the programmes designed for them at provincial level.

Principals in the study revealed that they did not have a formal document that denoted the design programme for professional development programmes. According to Steyn (1999:209), professional development can only be successful if it is carefully designed and implemented. Greer and Gresso (1996:117) suggest that involving the supervisors in the design and development of programmes introduces useful insights from the district perspective. However, principals in this study indicated that they did not involve anyone because they did not design any programmes for educators that required specific steps to be followed during the implementation.

Educators showed their lack of information as regard the design of professional development. However, the research suggests that it is important that educators be involved in the whole process of professional development. Schools must have a professional development committee that is responsible for the overall process of professional development.

4.3.2   Diagnosing professional development needs

Facilitators in this study indicated that they did not engage in a needs analysis to find out what educators within the district require. They plan for the training workshops on the basis of the provincial plan. Moreover, the programmes that they have offered to educators so far are based on the implementation of the new curriculum and policies. Thus, they do not see any reason to do needs analysis because the information at hand consists of new aspects that educators have not practiced. There was no use to find out from educators what they needed before conducting the workshops.

Facilitators also indicate that they are expected to run their training programmes immediately after attending the provincial meetings and cannot first find out what educators and the schools need. The provincial department does not provide them with a plan beforehand but only when a need arise for the implementation. It is forwarded to them via the district officials for immediate effect. This is supported by facilitator A who said:

> *Eh, it is not possible for us to find out from educators what their needs are*
> *in a proper way because since we are given instructions from the province*
> *to offer training on a particular aspect. You find that there is no chance to*
> *can first go to schools to identify the real needs of educators.*

The principals who were interviewed point out that they do needs analysis of educators. As soon as they realize that learners are not performing well in a subject, they sit down

with the educator concerned and find out the cause and take it from there. Principal C said:

> *Ja, we do investigation when realizing that learners are not performing, we sit down with the educator or subject committee to find out what might be the problem or cause and from there we start finding ways to assist the educator. If it means hiring the outside educators during school vacations we do so and if it requires coaching the educators maybe on giving learners more written work or changing the approach to teaching we do so but as regard appointing an outsider this is done for grade 12 only.*

Discussion

Needs analyses provide crucial information to ensure that professional learning is appropriate, valid and relevant. Techniques such as feedback from a coach or a mentor through diagnostic reviews, results or outcomes of a particular part of the curriculum or course are essential to provide evidence (West-Burnham & O'Sullivan, 1998:99). However, interviews with facilitators in this study revealed that no diagnostic reviews were done after the training workshops that were conducted with educators.

According to Bridges and Kerry (1993:72), in order to create strategies for developing effective educator creativity, it is important to identify those elements of educator training programmes which, whatever their main focus, help to develop a sense of creativity as a personal normality and, as a necessity, practical responses to some of the daily challenges of the classroom. During training workshops facilitators and district officials should have done needs analyses to find out what made educators fail to implement the new curriculum to improve workshops and avoid a national problem.

According to Desimone et al (2002b:1272), information about educators' needs should assist in setting goals and objectives for professional development and evaluation data

should provide one means for determining whether professional development activities are moving educators towards these goals.

Principals interviewed in this study analyzed the educators' needs and assisted educators on that basis. Steyn (2001:50) maintains that professional development programmes require an intensive systematic analysis of needs so that areas of professional development can be selected and planned for and in this way the development training gap between actual staff performance and desired staff performance can be identified.

4.4   THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

This section presents the facilitators, principals and educators' knowledge and experience of the professional development plan as revealed in the interviews. The facilitators, principals and educators' role in the development plan will be indicated as well as the planning process.

4.4.1   The facilitators' role in the professional development plan

Facilitators in this study indicated that providers of the professional development programmes for educators in the district must have a professional development plan that is guided by the district policy. Facilitators indicated that they do not have a professional development plan; they have a policy which they call a work plan that is informed by the provincial plan. Facilitators indicated that, although they do not have their own plan designed specifically to cater for educators within the district, they work according to the provincial plan because they do not provide other programmes other than those given by the province.

Facilitators also indicated that it is difficult to develop a professional development plan of their own for the whole year because they work according to the instructions from the province, which are usually immediate. Even if they would want to use their plan, it would clash with what the province requires. They are always called for extensive

provincial meetings which are coupled with training workshops which they have to conduct as soon as they arrive back from meetings.

To support this facilitator C said:

It is very difficult to have our own plan that has to inform us on what to do and how to do that because even if we can have a plan we can not come up with the exact time and date of when we shall be doing what we planned at the EMPC level for if we decide that we have done this with educators and we inform them through circulars that we will be visiting them at schools when that time arrive we find that we are committed with other things that have been brought to us by the province and have to be dealt with immediately before the due date so we have to postpone our plan always and we become unreliable to educators and they in turn no longer rely on us.

Discussion

The district can use indicators strategically to shape and target their local priorities. Strategic planning includes developing goals and objectives and delineating how progress towards achieving goals will be measured. This is the key to successful professional development programmes. Conducting needs assessments of educators serves as an important step in planning a professional development strategy that accurately addresses the strengths and weaknesses of educators in a particular district (c.f. 2.3.1). The quality of professional development is believed to increase when educators and providers are held accountable for outcomes of professional development and when professional development is evaluated on the student outcomes (Desimone et al 2002b:1272).

However, the interviews with facilitators revealed that facilitators do not prioritize their activities in terms of the objectives they intend to achieve. They indicate this is because of the provincial department, which does not allow them to work on the programme they

design to suit the situation. They assert that the provincial department is complicating things in such a way that it is also difficult for them to prioritize the programme according to the needs of educators. The main purpose for the existence of EMPC's is to provide professional development programmes to educators who are already in the teaching field on a continuous basis according to needs. The facilitators must have a thorough knowledge and understanding of the needs of educators to provide the relevant professional activities.

4.4.2   The role of principals in the professional development plan

All principals in the study indicated that they do not have a professional development plan in their schools and further indicated that they have been using the school development plan for IQMS since its introduction. Principal B said:

> *I think it is important to have the professional development plan in the school, but it is a new aspect that we were not aware of it and we thought that this is the policy that the department has to provide to school. Eh, we did not think of it as something that we have to do ourselves since we know that ours is to allow educators to attend workshops organized by the district and that is why we have the school development plan as is required for IQMS.*

Principals in this study indicated the inconsistency of the PD plan as employed by the district and EMPC facilitators since there is no link to what they are doing in schools. To support this, Principal A said:

> *The programmes that are provided to educators at district level are mostly based on the implementation of new policies and curriculum yet we have to support educators on what we see as the desired aspects of educators but this is very difficult since we are not so sure of what they learn in district workshops.*

In addition, principal C said:

> *Ja, in our school we only fit this programme when the need arise like when*
> *learners are failing tests or when learners are becoming say uncontrolled.*
> *Ja, that's it.*

Discussion

Welton (2000:133) maintains that a plan for the implementation of professional development would begin with a policy document which reflects a school management team's desire to value and support its staff. Lack of knowledge on the issue led to an absence of PD plans in schools.

According to Dean (1991:33) the head educator and senior staff of a school are responsible for seeing that their colleagues have the opportunities, support and encouragement to develop in their work and should establish and maintain a school policy for PD. In addition, Greer and Gresso (1996:12) states that to achieve the goals of quality teaching, principals should ensure that certain approaches and support are provided for all educators and they should plan for and implement staff development programmes to promote quality teaching.

However, principals in this study have shown to have done very little when it comes to making sure that the professional development programmes are adhered to as one of the school's priorities. The principals in the study indicated that they do not have a specific plan to be followed when they are to engage in professional development programmes in school. Bell and Day (1991:19) maintain that in order for a school to meet its professional needs, it has to produce a school plan which shows how it intends to implement the new national curriculum. The choice about the professional development of educators should be located in the overall policy for the school.

Bell and Day (1991:19) further indicate that the development plan must contain a clear view about how educator development can contribute to the implementation of the plan. Principals in this study have pointed out that there is nothing they can do about the implementation of the new national curriculum since they are just informed that it has to be implemented. No further explanation of the details and no training on the new national curriculum were offered to principals. Only learning area educators, grade educators and those principals who are teaching managed to attend such workshops.

The department should have been aware that leadership training and development for principals is important before the implementation of the new system/curriculum. Professional development should have been introduced to principals by the district officials.

4.4.3 The professional development planning process

The participants in this study were affected by the planning process of professional development.

4.4.3.1 Facilitators' views and experiences of the professional development planning process

Facilitators in the study indicated that the role of facilitators for district educators was assigned to them when the educator colleges merged and became EMPC's. Thus, this has been new to them. All the facilitators pointed out that the planning of professional development programmes at EMPC level was done according to the core provincial plan.

Facilitators responsible for NCS indicated that all unit members were involved in the planning process in which those who are responsible for the GET draw up the plan together. Those in the FET do the same to prepare for the workshops they are to conduct on an immediate basis. As facilitator A said:

All unit members are involved in the planning process. The GET sit down and draw a work plan on the basis of the provincial core plan. Eh, and the same happens to facilitators responsible for FET.

When asked if they involved educators in the planning process, facilitators indicated that only trainers and district officials are involved in the planning of the professional development activities and programmes. As regards the Shoma projects, facilitators indicated that they do not plan anything since the people from Shoma programmed the computers and prepare the lessons and the audio visuals. The trainers/facilitators only arrange for the dates of the programme and organize the participation of educators according to the GET and FET bands as to who will attend the morning and afternoon sessions. Facilitators do not offer these programmes for all the five days since they have other work to do on other days.

Discussion

The planning phase for professional development programmes includes the details of the programmes, its objectives, decisions on who will be participating and who will be conducting the professional development programmes, what professional development activities will be conducted, where and when it will be held, resources that will be needed, how delegates will be compensated and how progress will be measured (Dunlap, 1995:156).

In addition, Welton (2000:137) indicates that monitoring is an essential stage in the planning process and it provides the basis for reflecting on practice, and the scheduled implementation of the professional development policy. The facilitators indicated that they do the planning process on the basis of the provincial plan and are aware of the objectives and the time schedule.

However, research indicates that efficient and effective professional development programmes are planned from the district level, although a consideration of the provincial

and national objectives are regarded important. Facilitators in the study have indicated that the planning process is immediate implementation of training workshops; they do not plan ahead nor make contingency plans. Their planning is not directed by specific needs for the educators within the district but it is generalized for the need of educators in the province. Diagnosing the needs of educators within the district before engaging in the planning process would ensure successful training workshops at all times.

4.4.3.2 Principals' views and experiences of the professional development planning process

Principals in this study indicated that since they did not have the professional development plan in schools, their planning process has not been done formally. Thus, not everyone in the school is aware of the professional development activities offered to colleagues as there are no organized workshops or seminars at school level except for individual coaching which would last for half an hour or less.

Principal C said:

> *After talking to the educator concerned and find that the educator need more assistance which the school is unable to provide we arrange for an outside educator to come and assist the educator by showing him/her how to teach learners as well as how to approach different topics. And the arrangements cover money to compensate the hired educator on the training cost transport as well as food. This is only done for grade 12 educators in most instances.*

Principals indicated that they did not realize it is important to have a document as basis for provision of professional development and did not have a committee responsible for the whole process of professional development in their school. Neither the department, nor the circuit managers nor the district officials had ever asked them for this document when they visited schools or through circulars.

This is supported by the statement by principal B who said:

> *I never knew that it is the school's responsibility to design a programme*
> *for professional development of staff, I thought this was the department*
> *responsibility since they have also given us a programme for IQMS, to me I*
> *thought this is the programme we have to follow to assess educators work.*
> *Oh, another thing is that ever since the people from the department have*
> *been visiting our school they never ask us about this document or how we*
> *are doing to support educators.*

The principal also indicated that they do not have professional development committees. When asked how they plan for new educators coming to the school principal A said*:*

> *Eh, what we usually do is to let the HOD concerned take the educator to*
> *the class for classroom lesson observation and also when going to the*
> *science laboratory he does the same."* In addition, principal C said: *'Ja,*
> *what we do is that myself together with SMT members sit down with the*
> *new educator and orientate him/her on general matter pertaining at our*
> *school, i.e. the school performance, our target standard, discipline,*
> *conduct and behavior and also read to him what his responsibilities are*
> *From the handbook manual for educator and labor law and that's all we*
> *do and this we do before the educator is taken to classes.*

Discussion

Craft (1996:42) suggests that the following four broad phases are important in the school development planning cycle: the audit - in which the school reviews its strengths and weaknesses; constructions - in which priorities for development are selected and then turned into specific action plan, targets and tasks, each with clearly identified success

criteria; implementation - in which the planned priorities and targets are implemented; and evaluation - in which the success of implementation is checked.

Principals in the study further indicated that although they plan for the professional development of educators, they only do this for the educators concerned and not for the whole staff and do not find it necessary to follow the correct procedures as indicated above. Greer and Gresso (1996:21) suggest that the most effective staff development programmes are planned by the principal and educators with the principal actively participating but not dominating. They focus on school improvement, link with educator supervision, are supported with peer coaching, are organized to be ongoing and systematic, emphasize active learning and are evaluated carefully.

However, principals indicated that no effort is made to involve educators in the planning of the support programmes they offer to educators. Moreover, they do not plan such programmes for the whole staff.

According to Purvis and Boren (1991:17) the planning of professional development includes the details of the programmes such as its objectives, decisions on who will be participating in and who will be conducting the programme; what professional development activities will be conducted; where and when it will be held; resources that will be needed; how delegates will be recompensed and how progress will be measured. Although principals indicated that they do not have a plan to direct their professional development programmes, they did explain how they try and implement training in their schools which involved some of the programme detail.

Castetter (1996:248) assets that the following components are important during the planning phase: programme content; programme method; locus of programme; participation and resources. The interviews with principals revealed that because the planning of professional development occurred randomly, no formal planning that involved the planning cycle was done in their school since this was not included in the school budget activities.

It is important that principals should consider this kind of planning if they intend to provide quality professional development to the staff as a whole and for individual educators to avoid disruptions during the year. Moreover, the school management must involve educators in the planning of the professional development programmes.

4.4.3.3 Educators' views and experiences of the professional development planning process

Although facilitators and principals had already indicated that they do not involve educators in the planning process, the researcher also questioned educators in this regard. Educators in the study indicated that they were never involved in the planning of such programmes. They were not offended because they felt the school decided what would benefit the school. They felt it was the task of management and the district to plan support programmes to keep them abreast of what the authorities require. They also maintained that they would have little to contribute to such planning.

This is motivated by T11 who said:

> *I do not see the problem because as the school managers, what ever they do they know it is for the benefit of the school and with us as educators we know nothing about it and even if they would have ask us what we think we will still not know what can suit the school best because we are the one who need support another thing is that we don't know what the programme requires.*

Discussion

Experts agree that educator involvement in the planning contributes to high-quality professional development and can help in ensuring that professional development addresses skills that educators need and employs the learning strategies they find most

useful. Educators revealed that they were never included in the planning of professional development offered at school and at district. These educators did not find a problem with their lack of involvement when it comes to the professional development programmes. However, educators suggested that if they had to be involved they would like a say in how and when they want the programmes to be offered.

Interviews with educators revealed that they do not know that it is their responsibility to make sure that the support they get is what they need. This indicates that the district officials should ensure that this message reaches educators in the right way otherwise the education crises will continue. Day and Sachs (2004) assert that those who wish to reform educational practice cannot simply tell educators to teach differently but the educators themselves must assist with design change. To do so they ought to acquire a rich knowledge of subject matter, pedagogy and subject specific pedagogy and they must come to hold new beliefs in these domains.

4.5   THE IMPLEMENTATION OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The participants in this study where interviewed to find out how they experienced the implementation of professional development of educators in their situations.

4.5.1 Facilitators' experiences as managers and coordinators of professional development

Knowledge: Facilitators in the study indicated that the professional development programmes they provided to educators are mainly based on the implementation of the new curriculum and policies. In describing their knowledge of the content, facilitators indicated that they did not feel the knowledge of the cascading of new policies was adequate since they had attended a provincial meeting on the new curriculum for a week. After this meeting, the information they received had to be transferred to educators within a very short period of time. Facilitators said that when faced with a situation of this kind it

was difficult to be confident when conducting the training workshop but this is what was expected of them irrespective of the consequences. To motivate this facilitator D said:

> *Ja, it is not as easy as one may think because as facilitators we know that educators are relying on us to give them the best we can, and when one is confronted with a situation that he is unable to answer some of the questions asked by educators it is too embarrassing. But all this is happening because we do not get the information in time wherein maybe we can have amply time to discuss issues that may need more attention and as such sometimes we are forced to tell educators that we are just ambassadors in this situation and we can not deny the fact that we will not be able to answer all of the questions educators may require further explanation.*

Facilitators expressed strong feelings about not having received proper training before they embark on conducting workshops. This was supported by facilitator B who said:

> *Can you imagine a situation wherein we attend an information meeting which last for three days on something that have been prepared for a year or so yet it is expected that one is required to grasp the whole information which is still going to be delivered over a period of more than a year within a week's time?*

Approaches: Facilitators indicated that the approaches that they have been using since the introduction of NCS were training workshops and seminars. It was decided that they should be conducted in hotels and Aventura resorts during school vacations and weekends. In addition, facilitators and district officials also offer short courses which last for two to three hours at EMPC centers as well as circuit cluster centers. Facilitators indicated that as regards the participation of educators at centers, educators do not come in large numbers when compared to training workshops conducted in hotels where the participation ranges from 90% to 98%.

Duration: As regards the duration of the professional development programmes that they offered, facilitators indicated that the duration of programmes varies because for the GET band, they provide seminars which are offered at hotels during weekends from Friday afternoon until Sunday noon. For the FET they offer training workshops at hotels for the whole week during school vacations, but sometimes when the need arises they do this during school days at EMPC's for two days after noon i.e. after 12h00 pm.

Monitoring: Facilitators indicated that it is difficult to do formal monitoring because they offer professional development workshops throughout the year. After July they are faced with CASS moderation at schools. As soon as the process of CASS is over, educators are busy with learners' exams and CIA's. Moreover, the time for doing monitoring is also coupled to the budget by the department who provides them with a budget during the second quarter of the year for both school visits and training workshops. So facilitators rely on individual feedback when they meet educators.

Evaluation: Facilitators indicated that the evaluation that they do is not based on how the schools implement what was learnt in training workshops since they never visit schools to check the progress. When they come back from the workshops, they do a SWOT analysis at the beginning or end of the year and consider other strategies to improve on their training workshops.

Discussion

Facilitators in this study revealed that the provincial department pressure to implement the new curriculum at the specified time compelled them to conduct training workshops without adequate knowledge. Bagwandeen (1993:66) argues that there is a serious shortcoming because the knowledge and training acquired by INSET tutors and facilitators is poor. According to the information given by the facilitators, the provincial department should have provided them with retraining courses based on the new curriculum in advance to give them ample time to study the content before embarking on

the training of educators. Facilitators complained of not being confident in their work in front of educators because a lack of certainty.

According to Williamson and Lemmer (2003:142), the government has to support the changes towards curriculum autonomy through curriculum development centres which will increase the effectiveness of curriculum development through joint cooperation, coordination and assistance. Facilitators indicate that the way in which information on curriculum implementation was given to them did not provide adequate information needed to effectively transfer it to educators.

Moreover, no time was given for them to familiarize themselves with the new curriculum documents when first introduced to them. Carl (1995:68) maintains that curriculum developers may approach the process of curriculum development from a particular orientation and their views are based on particular principles that give direction and sense to the relevant process.

From what the facilitators have indicated all training for educators was conducted following the workshop approach at hotels or Aventura resorts from morning till late in the afternoon. No attempt was made give courses, seminars or conferences at night. Because facilitators did not have time to go through the documents, they only realised during workshops that the profiles and other learner documents required greater effort from educators to master before the implementation process. Most terminology was not familiar to educators.

Facilitators indicated that the training workshops that they offered to educators based on the new curriculum implementation were offered to educators once before the implementation year. Another session was offered to educators for specific learning areas or grades during the implementation process. Thereafter, educators should attend circuit cluster meetings in which they should develop lessons jointly.

Carl (1995:72) argues that curriculum development cannot be dealt with on a hit-and-run basis where changes are brought about haphazardly. The district officials and facilitators should have made an effort to provide, in addition to the provincial plan, strategies for more workshops based on curriculum development.

Facilitators indicated that no monitoring nor evaluation of the content covered by workshops was done by either district officials or facilitators because they did not regard this as important. They felt that the training they provided was based on new things that educators had not yet practiced in their teaching and no pilot project was done. The district did not have a strategic plan to guide them. Desimone et al (2002b:127) suggests that evaluation data should provide one means of determining whether professional activities are moving educators towards goals set for the professional development training programmes.

To support this, Williamson and Lemmer (2003:150) indicate that when the Northern Territory embarked on the implementation of the new curriculum they stared with a pilot project of educators and to support the new curriculum implementation, the pace of the programme was monitored and a series of evaluation data collected from the pilot educators which revealed that profiling involved a great deal of work for educators.

However, facilitators indicated that they had no time to do monitoring and evaluation.

4.5.2   The principals' experiences as staff developers

Principals in this study indicated that they do not have a thorough knowledge about professional development. Thus, they did not realize that it was important to set formal procedures to follow in order to provide professional development of a high standard to educators.

When asked how they deal with the issue of support staff, they indicated that they only consider it when the need arises. This is supported by a statement given by principal C who put it in this way:

Ja, when a new educator comes to the school, we sit down as the management team and give him a short introductory information session about the general school information, and from there we read him his responsibilities as written in the policy handbook for educators and labor law. From there one of the SMT member will take the educator classroom orientation and the overall school buildings and surroundings. And from there the educator will be accompanied to classes were s/he will be teaching by educators who were teaching the learning area in the particular class if the educator is present.

In addition to this principal A said:

Mmm... when there are certain things that we feel need to be addressed that concerns the school progress then we sit down as a staff and discuss this jointly and try to find ways to deal with the matter as a staff and then we work it from there.

Principals further indicated that they do not offer support programmes for the staff as a whole but they rely on the workshops that are provided at the district since every educator attends. However, they still come up with ways to motivate their staff. Principal B put it like this:

Although we do not put much effort when it comes to supporting the staff as a whole we usually talk about the schools goal more often during staff meetings that we offer at the beginning and end of every quarter.

In addition, Principal *C s*aid*:*

> *Well, in our school this is what we do every year in January we organize*
> *an outing which we call bosberaad for the whole staff and the grade 12*
> *learners in which we invite motivational speakers and education*
> *specialists to come and talk to educators and learners away from school.*

As regards monitoring and evaluation, principals indicated that this is one of their responsibilities and as such they do this on a continuous basis. However, certain aspects like lack of adequate knowledge on the new curriculum inhibit them from working successfully but they do monitor and evaluate educators and learners' work. But they do not have a head of department for all the learning areas/groups and do not know everything in every learning area.

This was motivated by principal C who said:

> *We do monitoring and evaluation of educators and learners work and*
> *when we realize that an educator is not performing according to the*
> *standard we set for our school and after offering support and assistance*
> *and realize that it is not changing anything then the following year that*
> *educator if s/he has been teaching higher grade we then take him to lower*
> *grade.*

Discussion

Interviews with principals revealed that little professional development is provided to the staff; however, principals indicate that they do offer professional development support to individual educators. Principals indicate that the lack of adequate knowledge of the professional development of educators inhibits them from doing what is required of them as principals. Trorey and Cullingford (2002:153) assert that the challenge for current school managers and others involved in professional development is to guide the

professional and personal development of all staff towards a sophisticated understanding of an effective learning environment.

According to Greer and Gresso (1996:12), to achieve the goals of quality learning for all students, principals should ensure that certain approaches and support are provided for all educators. As the planners and implementers of staff development programmes, they should apply the research on adult learning keeping in mind that they are working with adults, not young learners.

Although principals indicated that they employ certain approaches to support the staff, they do not plan this together with the staff. They just decide what they think is good for the school not taking into consideration that educators as adults must have a say in whatever is planned or decided on behalf of them.

Moreover, principals indicated that they do not have a committee that is responsible for the overall professional development of the staff nor a formal programme that they follow whenever they implement the programme to staff. Greer and Gresso (1996:12) suggest that principals should make both informal and more systematic observations of classrooms in which they should tentatively determine skill level of each educator. Such information could be important to them in deciding how to individualize supervision. In addition, Vrasidas and Glass (2004:3) suggest that educators' needs will be served when they are able to make connections between their work and professional development through continuing education.

Welton (2000:196) suggests that the role of a professional development coordinator is central to the planning and implementation of professional development in order to negotiate successfully the relationship between individual and institutional needs. As revealed by interviews with principals, no development committees have been formed at school level and principals decide on what educators require after talking to them. Not much effort is made to support the staff during the year except for the outings that take place at the beginning of the year.

4.5.3   Educators' experiences of professional development

Educators in the study indicated that they learn a lot from the support programmes that they participated in especially cluster meetings. This is because they are able to decide how they want the meetings to take place and each one in turn actively participates. To support this, T4 said*:*

> *Eh, we are given time at school to go and attend the cluster meeting which is arranged by the educators themselves and this is where they share their knowledge and experiences of what challenges they are phasing in their teaching and hoe they can deal with them. Another thing is that we also develop lessons together showing each other how to approach different topics differently.*

Unfortunately some educators do not attend cluster meeting because ever since they were told to initiate this after coming back from workshops due to various problems. In particular, it has been difficult for those grade 12 learners alone.

This was motivated by T8 who said:

> *In our school we are only nine and as an educator who is also teaching grade 12 it is very difficult to attend the cluster meeting and another thing is even those educators who are not teaching grade 12 they are not attending because the schools that are clustered with our school are not engaged in this programme.*

As regards the programmes offered at district level, educators indicated that they were about the new curriculum and had been most useful. Without them, they would not have understood terminology or the new documents. But they found that they were too passive during the workshops, the workshops were long (7h00 a.m to 17h: 00 p.m) and they were

exhausted after the workshops. Moreover, the approaches used in the workshops were unsuitable: they require more demonstrations. Educators further suggested that they should be asked for suggestions about the format of training. T13 said:

> *Mmm, we understand we do not have to tell them what to do but I think it is better for them to decide with us how the workshops are to progress so that whatever is done we know we are also part of the whole process and as such we do make it a success.*

Discussion

Educators in this study revealed that they are satisfied with the cluster meetings which help them with their teaching. According to Vrasidas and Glass (2004:3), professional development for educators has to involve opportunities for educators to share their expertise, learn from peers, and collaborate on real-world projects. Dean (1991:70) maintains that secondary schools need to give thought to ways of timetabling which release groups of educators for developmental activities particularly related to school and departmental needs. Educators have indicated that they are given time to attend the cluster meeting yet some are unable to do so because of the circumstances at their school.

As regards the district workshops, educators indicate that if they could change the way they are offered, it will be of more important to them and provide opportunities for learning. They requested participation in the design of the workshops in conjunction with the facilitators.

4.6   THE IMPACT OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ON EDUCATORS

All the educators who were interviewed in this study expressed their ideas on how the professional development programmes were offered to them and largely agreed on the knowledge and skills, the new approach to teaching and learning as well as the level of their performance in their work.

4.6.1 Educators' knowledge and experiences of their work in relation to professional development

Educators indicated that during their attendance of the support meetings at circuit clusters, they learn a lot from each other as they were able as they were able to share their classroom experiences, ways of dealing with a particular situation and how they approached certain topics. As educator 5 said*:*

> *We learn a lot from each other as we share our experiences in the real teaching class because each one is able to view his problem and we tackle it together and another thing is we assist each other on specific topics that all facilitators educators also indicate that they learn a lot because they are also taught how to prepare their lesson and some of the out comes are explained in a way that they find it easy to apply this in their work. One educator from a school that is performing well when asked what are they benefiting from professional development programmes that are being offered at district level said: Oh, a lot, eh, about the NCS policy, we are enquiring more knowledge about the NCS policy, we are acquiring more knowledge about the curriculum, method and strategies for OBE principles. But I think I think we shall have gained more knowledge if they changed their approach of running these kind of workshops because we did miss some of the topics due to tiredness because in this workshops we turn to be overloaded with new things during a small time.*

All educators had already attended training workshops based on the implementation of the new curriculum. Unfortunately no educator had attended the Shoma project training course. But when asked about what knowledge they were acquiring in cluster meetings, educators indicated that they enjoyed the cluster meetings more than the training workshops offered at the district.

Discussion

To serve educators' needs professional development must embrace a range of opportunities that allow educators to share with one another and connect their learning to the context of their teaching (Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin 1996:206). To support this, Vrasidas and Glass (2004:3) suggest that professional development for educators should involve opportunities for educators to share their expertise, learn from peers, and collaborate on real- world projects. In-service education provision in South Africa has been poor and a major reason is that educators who know most about their own needs have had too little to say about them (ANC policy, 1994:46).

Vally and Spreen (1998:16) contend that most educators were generally critical of rigidly organised workshops and found them of limited benefit to classroom practice. Educators in this study revealed that they learn more in the cluster meetings that they had attended because they share their knowledge and experiences with each other. As regards the training workshops provided at districts, educators indicated that, although they have acquired knowledge based on the new curriculum and its terminologies, they prefer the structure and format of cluster meetings.

Educators indicated that they wanted to share their knowledge and experiences about what is happening in their classrooms with facilitators so that they can assist them to deal with it. However, this was not the case in the workshops that they have attended. Darling – Hammond and McLaughlin (1996:202) further assert that professional development should extend beyond mere support for educators' acquisition of skills or knowledge to providing occasions for educators to reflect critically on their practices and fashion new knowledge and beliefs about content, pedagogy and learners.

This requires that facilitators to apply the concept of unity in diversity. They have to shape the training activities in such a way that educators will be able to apply the knowledge to suit their situations...

4.6.2   The educators' experiences of the teaching and learning situation

Educator strongly indicate that although they were introduced and trained how to approach the teaching and learning situation, they still wanted to use the traditional method of teaching. They said that they felt that the new method of teaching was difficult to use as their learners lack communication   skills and their vocabulary was very limited as regards the medium of instruction. Educator T11 said*:*

> *Our learners are performing poorly in math's and science and the moment*
> *we apply much of the mathematical literacy approach the performance is*
> *deteriorating more and more and at the level in which they are now we*
> *don't now what to do because whenever we try and use the new approach*
> *as required by the new curriculum learners performance is going down*
> *and this for sure is discouraging us as educators so we felt it is better to*
> *stick to the old teaching method which we know better than this new one.*

This was supplemented by educator T13 who said:

> *Other problem that is making us not to know how to use the new methods*
> *and techniques one frustrating things is that they do not understand the*
> *question in the question paper but when we read them aloud they are able*
> *to give correct answers this clearly shows that they do no understand the*
> *question because they can't read English well.*

Educators also indicated that the facilitators do not demonstrate to them how to teach their learners using these new methods and techniques. They merely ask educators to sit in groups and discuss certain aspects, such as forms of assessment and report back on behalf of the group. One educator said:

> *I think if the trainers can use several lesson topics to demonstrate to us*
> *how we have to use this in our real classrooms maybe it would be easier*

for us to apply this when we come back to schools but because we are being told that is what we are expected to do yet without being shown as to how well we are to do this the problem will remain that we will end up not doing this at all.

Discussion

Educators in secondary education should be equipped with skills to handle change and renewal. Thus, basic and continuous professional development programmes will have to provide the flexibility to perform in new learning environment (Bitzer, 2004:199). In addition, Chisholm, Motala and Vally (1993-2000:222) assert that a serious problem of INSET is the failure to prepare educators adequately to meet the difficulties they will encounter on their return from such courses and the neglect of systematic procedures for following up these experiences within schools. In addition, Day and Sachs (2004:49) indicate that successful professional development efforts are those that help educators to acquire or develop new ways of thinking about learning, learners, and the subject matter, thus constructing a professional knowledge base that will enable them to teach students in more powerful and meaningful ways.

Educators in the study revealed that they were unable to apply the teaching methods and techniques they were taught to use in training workshops because the facilitators did not demonstrate to them and only told them what to do. Moreover, facilitators did not bother to come to schools to see how they are doing. Smith and Desimone (2003:119) argue that the quality of professional development plays a critical role in increasing educators' knowledge and skills and in changing existing teaching practice. This has not been the case with the training workshops offered to educators at district level. Thus, educators do not practice the new teaching methods in their teaching and learning. Desimone et al (2002b:127) suggest that involving educators in planning can ensure that professional development addresses the skills that educators need and ensure that they employ the learning strategies they find most useful.

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The interviews done revealed that no effort was made to involve educators in the planning of the professional development programmes by those who were providing the programmes.

4.6.3 The effect of professional development in the teaching and learning situation

Educators indicated that the professional development that they have been receiving since the introduction of C2005 had contributed a great deal to the ineffectiveness of the teaching and learning process. Since they have been trying to practice the new ways of teaching as required by the new curriculum, things have never been the same in teaching and the learners' understanding has been deteriorating.

To support this educator T8 said:

> *We are no longer sure of what is the right thing that we should do because whatever we do does not yields fruitful result to the learning situation .Learners in grade 10 can't even read a simple three word sentence what is that we can do to make them scenarios that they are suppose to come up with answers from them.*

In addition, educator T12 said:

> *The learning areas that we are teaching are all in English and the more we do away with the traditional way of teaching the more problems are created in the learners performance because as I am saying our learners are unable to work a simple mathematical expression involving addition and subtraction how then can one expect that learner to workout a mathematical literacy problem, I think something should be done about this.*

Educators indicated that this clearly explained the grade 10 and 12 results in which a high rate failure resulted because of the way the training programmes were coordinated at district and provincial level. All educators raised their concerns about lesson planning and the inability to employ the appropriate assessment techniques and forms. They merely pretended that they had done this correctly so that they could give the learners CASS marks. Educators further indicated that their teaching and learning experiences have lowered their teaching morale to such an extent that they do not go to class because they want to make things happen but just because they have to do this as their job. Moreover, this is impacting classroom discipline.

Discussion

Unless educators are equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge of implementing environmental learning in schools, learners will not be provided with meaningful learning experiences that benefit the environment and the process towards sustainable development (Le Roux & Maila, 2004:237). This was due to the lack of educator involvement in the implementation of the professional development programmes and the lack of demonstration by facilitators.

The interviews revealed that the way the programmes are being offered has affected the learners' performance negatively. Darling-Hammond and McLaughlin (1996:202) argue that because teaching for understanding relies on educators' ability to see complex subject matter from the perspective of diverse students, the know-how necessary to accomplish this vision of practice cannot be prepackaged or conveyed by means of traditional top-down training strategies

4.7 ATTITUDES TOWARDS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

4.7.1 Facilitators' attitudes towards professional development

Facilitators in this study expressed their opinions on how they feel as trainers for professional development of educators in the Thohoyandou district. All facilitators indicated that they were merely told that the colleges in which they had been lecturers would be merged and become EMPC's for all educators within the district and they had to provide professional development programmes for educators.

This was after the disbandment of the former educator training colleges and facilitators were no longer sure about their future. They indicated that although they were expected to provide professional development of high quality, this had not been the case. They hoped this would improve when they have been moved to circuit offices. Facilitator C said:

> *Ja, I think things we will be in order as soon as we move to circuit offices because we will be near schools and we will be able to plan for educators needs and not just for the sake of just doing that.*

When asked how they are coping with these new changes, they said every reform is accompanied by challenges. They endeavored to stay positive and they hopes to provide better support after the process of the new curriculum implementation is over and they have adjusted to the new tasks. Moreover, the lack of subsidized transport is also creating problems because it very difficult to move from one school to another as they are located far from the center. If the department offers them government subsidized transport, it will make things easier. More, they experience a lack of funds from government and as such it is difficult for them to benefit schools and educators because they have to wait for the department's allocation which is done during the second quarter.

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Finally, being given departmental instructions too late does not allow facilitators enough time to plan their work thoroughly. If this was changed, it would improve the service they are rendering to educators.

Discussion

For effective implementation of the professional development training programmes offered at district level, the department must offer the necessary support to those who are implementing the programmes Facilitators have indicated that although they are very interested in the role they are playing in the district, if factors that have been raised are not dealt with, it will be impossible for them to provide professional development of a high standard to educators (c.f. 4.7.1)..

4.7.2   Principals' attitudes towards professional development

All principals interviewed indicated that they see professional development of educators as important to schools. But principals indicated that they lack of knowledge to provide programmes competently and thus, develop their schools.

Principals blamed the district for this. Most of the problems that they are experiencing with their educators are due to their lack of knowledge on how to offer assistance and support to their educators. Principal B said:

> *I don't know if other principals know about this because ever since I have been in this position there has never been a meeting or course that we attended as principals wherein we were advised on how to offer support to our staff except that which concerns the introduction of IQMS and I have never had any one talking about these among those that we meet to share experiences.*

Principals felt they are not getting any support from their circuit managers and no meetings have been organized for them to come together and learn from each other.

Discussion

Principals should exchange ideas and share successful practices with each other, especially in the initial stage of programme development and work together to foster each other's professional development (Greer & Gresso, 1996:116). However, principals in the study revealed their lack of knowledge on how professional development programmes can be effectively run as well and they seldom come together as principals to share ideas and experiences.

According to Darling-Hammond and McLaughlin (1996:203), the changed curriculum and pedagogy of professional development requires new policies that foster new structures and institutional arrangements for educator learning, the strategic assessment of existing policies in terms of their compatibility, a vision of learning as constructed by educators and professional development as a life long inquiry based on collegial activity. Principals indicated that most changes in schools have created a need for support for principals on how to effectively manage these changes.

However, the way things are done is so complicated that principals themselves are unable to offer appropriate assistance to educators. Principals find this embarrassing and frustrating because they cannot monitor and evaluate the educators and learners' work satisfactorily in order to improve the learner performance.

4.7.3   Educators' attitudes towards professional development

Educators in this study indicated that professional development programmes that are offered to them helps somewhat in handling change especially with the new curriculum. But the organization of programmes is not satisfactory because of the time scheduling of and methods used in the workshops. The training programmes offered at district level are

conducted for the whole day with very little time given for a break. They cannot concentrate for such a lengthy period. Moreover, these workshops do not offer them opportunities to participate; much of the time is spent by facilitators presenting information without demonstration.

Educators felt that if workshops of this kind are to be successful, an effort should be made to invite educators' views on the arrangements. Educators are compelled to attend some programmes for fear of disciplinary steps if they do not attend.

Discussion

Desimone et al (2002b:129) suggest that the involvement of educator in planning for professional development at district level can help to ensure that topics and learning activities in professional development programmes address areas of knowledge and skills that are relevant to educators' district wide. However, the interviews indicated that the district officials never had a plan of their own and did not involve educators in the planning.

Moreover, educators indicated that they have never been asked by anyone from the district about their needs as educators. Educators revealed that their participation in cluster meetings brought about more changes and a greater impact on their teaching when compared to the district workshops.

Educators also indicated that although they do not received organised support programmes in school, the coaching sessions given by the principal and the management are far much better compared to the district programmes. After attending the coaching sessions, learner performance improves and in some cases the management arranges for an outside expert to offer assistance. This information assists them when they meet to plan and develop their lessons.

4.8   CONCLUSION

This chapter presented the qualitative research data on the professional development for secondary school educators in the Thohoyandou district. The data were collected by means of interviews guided by interview schedules which the researcher used during the interviews with the research participants.

Based on the above findings and analysis of the data, the participants revealed the strengths and weaknesses of the professional development programmes provided in the Thohoyandou/Vhembe district in terms of the criteria for the design, planning and implementation of effective professional development of educators. This finding requires the attention of the Provincial Department of Education as the main provider of the overall planning of such programmes.

The next chapter deals with an overview of the investigation and the recommendations arising from this study.

CHAPTER FIVE

OVERVIEW OF THE INVESTIGATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1   INTRODUCTION

The aim of this chapter is to present an overview of the investigation and recommendations. In the light of the presentation and discussion given in the previous chapters, this chapter presents a general overview of the investigation to indicate that the aims of the research as expressed in chapter one have been met. The experiences of facilitators, principals and educators as elicited from interviews conducted are described together with the recommendations for improving the way in which professional development can be managed. The researcher concludes with some important areas which require further research.

5.2   OVERVIEW OF THE INVESTIGATION

The restructuring of the education system has introduced drastic changes to many education institutions (c.f. 1.2.1). The curriculum was changed to fit the new education system. The new curriculum required a shift in emphasis in the approaches to teaching and learning (c.f.1.1). This in turn meant a shift in emphasis in the professional development of educators. The implementation of the new curriculum requires that those who are responsible should follow the correct procedures and the involvement of all stakeholders responsible in planning the whole process (c.f. 1.1).

In this section, an overview of the study is presented in the light of the research problem set forth in 1.3. The researcher set out to investigate the following:

(a)   What is the essence of an effective continuous professional development programme for educators? What are the factors that need to be considered in the design, planning and implementation of such programmes?

(b)   What is the nature of professional development programmes for secondary school educators in the Thohoyandou/Vhembe district of the Limpopo province?

(c)   What are the developmental needs of secondary school educators in the Thohoyandou/Vhembe district and what are the educators' perceptions of the quality and relevance of the current programmes offered?

(d)   How can the programmes implemented be improved to ensure effective teaching and learning?

A literature study provided the theoretical basis for the study (cf. Chapter two). Furthermore, the implementation and management of professional development for secondary school educators in the Thohoyandou/Vhembe district was explored by means of a qualitative investigation using selected educators in five secondary schools, principals in three of the selected secondary schools as well as facilitators from an EMPC in the Thohoyandou/Vhembe district. Interview schedules were used to gather data (cf. Chapter 3; Appendix F).

5.2.1   A theoretical basis for the professional development of educators

A literature review was done in order to understand the implementation of professional development of educators for the implementation of the new curriculum as well as the maintenance of effective teaching and learning (c.f. 2.3.3). The literature review showed that school managers and district officials responsible for the professional development of educators play an important role in ensuring that educators receive professional development of high quality through thorough planning, designing and implementation of the professional development programmes. The role of school managers and district in the

management and implementation of professional development included: drawing up the professional development plan; professional development policy; planning the professional development process; designing the professional development programmes; as well as implementing the professional development programmes (c.f.2.3.5)

This study showed that both principals together with district coordinators and facilitators play a very important role for the management of appropriate, quality professional development programmes to educators.

Knowledge and experiences of the management of the professional development of educators in schools and at district level in Thohoyandou district have been discussed (c.f. 4.5.1 &4.5.2). This involved the general provision of professional development and the management thereof in the Thohoyandou district. The Thohoyandou district has experienced various problems in the effective management of the professional development programmes: a lack of a professional development plan for district coordinators and principals; lack of a professional development policy (c.f.4.4.1); poor design of programmes and lack of proper implementation procedures which includes the absence of evaluation and diagnosis of educators' needs (4.3.2); poor involvement of relevant people in the stages for preparation for professional development at school and district level; and the inability to provide professional development to support educators' effectiveness in the teaching and learning situation. Lack of adequate training support for district coordinators on curriculum development; lack of preparation time for conducting training workshops by the district coordinators; unsubsidized transport and late allocation of funds contributed to the problems (4.7.1). Lack of knowledge on professional development by principals led to their inability to plan professional development (4.7.2). Most problems are also being encountered in other districts in the province and the country as a whole.

5.2.2 Professional development in South African schools

Professional development of educators has been used to supplement the pre-service training of educators since the beginning of educator training. However, the greater demands on programme provision are the result of the transformation of the education system in South Africa since 1994. The experiences of other countries in relation to the implementation and management of professional development of educators based on the new curriculum development were also discussed (c.f. 1.1). Professional development of educators has not only impacted the quality of teaching and learning in schools but also the motivation of educators and level of learner performance in South African schools especially in the Limpopo Province (c.f.1.2.1). The way in which professional development of educators is handled is frustrating to educators who are not equipped with strategies to apply in the teaching and learning situation.

5.2.3 The role of the district in professional development of educators

The role played by the district coordinators in the professional development of educators is discussed (c.f. 2.2.5). These include their role as managers and facilitators for professional development of educators and their role as coordinators of professional development programmes.

5.2.4 The role of principals as staff developers

The role of principals in the professional development of educators is discussed (c.f. 2.2.4). These include the principal as instructional leader, the principal as creator of a positive climate for professional development, coordinator of school development programmes and manager of professional development plan.

5.2.5   The research design

The researcher used a qualitative research design to investigate the management of professional development of educators in the Thohoyandou district (cf. 1.4 & 3.2). Four EMPC facilitators, three secondary school principals and thirteen secondary school educators were selected. The researcher received permission to interview all these participants. Individual interviews with EMPC facilitators (cf.3.4.2.1), the principals (cf.3.4.2.2), three educators (cf.3.4.2.5) as well as two focus group interviews with educators (cf.3.4.3.3 &3.4.2.4) were conducted. Data gathered were transcribed and analyzed according to eight steps of Tech's approach (cf.3.4.5). Data collected were then categorized into themes relating to management; professional development plan (cf.4.4.1 & 4.4.2), the planning process (cf. 4.4.3.1 & 4.4.3.2.), designing (cf. 4.43.1 & 4.3.2), implementation experiences of professional development (cf. 4.5.1, 4.5.2 & 4.5.3), attitudes towards professional development (cf. 4.7.1, 4.7.2 & 4.7.3) and impact of professional development to teaching and learning (cf. 4.6.1, 4.6.2 & 4.6.3). The synthesis of the main themes was undertaken and the important findings were drawn.

5.3   SYNTHESIS OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The themes uncovered through qualitative research are synthesised in this section and combined with prior research and the theory review in chapters two and three. The findings relate to the management of professional development in the Thohoyandou district.

5.3.1   The role of district coordinators and principals in the professional development of educators

The findings of the study revealed that district coordinators and facilitators are not able to perform their role effectively as they do not plan for the programme they are to provide and lack adequate information on what they are to provide in the training workshops. All facilitators complained of not being given enough time to prepare and they lack subsidized transport to perform their job. As regards principals, the findings in this study revealed

that principals lack adequate knowledge on how to provide professional development and support to educators and the staff as a whole. Principals complained that the district did not make information available (c.f. 4.4.1 & 4.4.2).

Recommendation

Based on the literature review and the qualitative investigation (c.f. 2.2.4 & 2.2.5), it is recommended that:

District official and coordinators must ensure that they have their own professional development plan to direct them and must be sure of what is required to be efficient and successful district coordinators. Beside the provincial meetings, they should also upgrade themselves in their fields (c.f. 2.2.5.1).

Principals should be provided with information on how to manage the professional development of educators and to be advised which course to take in order to master the topic (c.f. 2.2.4.4).

District coordinators and principals should strive to develop themselves as managers and facilitators for educator professional development programmes by attending seminars and conferences organized by NGO's as well as by reading and studying documents related to the current education policies. Principals should make sure that they work together with the school management and design their own school professional development policy that suits the situation in their school. They can only do this if they have thorough knowledge of professional development (c.f.2.2.4.4).

It is recommended that both the district officials together with school principals should cooperate in the management of the professional development of educators.

5.3.2   Professional development plan

The findings in this study revealed that both the principals and the district coordinators did not have a professional development plan to manage the programme effectively. The district used the plan based on the provincial plan. Principals did not have a plan and only considered the IQMS plan; however, this kind of plan is not included in the school's year planning or strategic planning (cf.4.4.1 & 4.4.2) The findings revealed that since the schools do not have a school development plan, formal development training and support to educators is not organized and is only done when the need arise. This does not result in professional development of good quality.

Recommendation

The district officials

Based on the literature review and qualitative investigation it is recommended that the district coordinators and facilitators should have a district development plan which is directed by the provincial plan. This should, however, be adjusted to their situation to guide them on what, how and when the programme should be organized so that they are able to prioritize their activities (c.f. 2.2.5.1, 2.2.5.2 &4.4.2).

Principals

As regards principals, it is recommended that when principals do their year plan based on the strategic plan, they should follow the development plan in their activities and include the policy on professional development in the school policy. The district must ensure that each school has a professional development policy and professional development committee and make sure that the policy is followed when professional development is offered to educators and staff (c.f. 2.2.4 & 4.2).

5.3.3   Professional development planning process

The study revealed that no formal procedures are followed when the professional development of educators is done at both school and district level. At present the directive to conduct professional development arrives without sufficient time for the facilitators to plan and prepare. Similarly, the principals do not have a school policy to direct their professional development programmes. When the need arises the school management has to provide programmes which do not follow any set procedure. Moreover, no identification of educators' needs is done as educators are not involved in the planning process. Decisions about what kind of support educators need is decided top-down. Facilitators complained that it is very difficult to engage in the formal planning procedures because they have to wait for the district's instructions (cf. 4.4.3.1). Principals do not engage in the formal planning process because they feel professional development is not their concern (cf. 4.4.3.2).

Recommendation

It is recommended that educators' needs be identified and educators should be included in the planning process so that they can share their views on the kind of support they need. It is also recommended that facilitators must have their own strategy to base their professional development programmes in addition to those given by the provincial department (c.f. 2.3.1).

5.3.4   Professional development design process

The research revealed that the design of professional development in the Thohoyandou/Vhembe district is done on the basis of the provincial plan. No effort has been made at district level that involves the inclusion of those to be trained including educators (cf.4.3.1).The district at present is only offering professional development to educators based on the implementation of the new curriculum and new policies. No other

effort has been made for provision of other kinds of programmes to assist educators (cf. 4.3.1).

As regards the design of professional development at school level, the research revealed that no formal procedures are being followed when designing programmes and the programmes are not directed at improving results at schools (cf.4.3.2). The principals as staff developers in schools do not know what is expected regarding the design process (cf.4.3.2).

Recommendation

It is recommended that the district coordinators should devise strategies that will allow them to design professional development programmes for educators within the district as to offer relevant training support (Desimone et al 2002a:81). This must be based on their own professional development policy and plan to direct the design of programmes. Similarly, principals must have a professional development committee responsible for coordinating the drawing up of a professional development policy and plan that will inform the professional development design (c.f. 2.3).

5.3.5   The implementation of professional development

District coordinators

The findings of the study revealed that the implementation of professional development was focused on the introduction and implementation of the new curriculum. Facilitators as district coordinators indicated that implementation is done without adequate time for preparation. They were taken from the former training colleges to become facilitators and the job was new to them as it required thorough training and adequate knowledge in order for them to successfully implement professional development (cf. 4.5.1). Facilitators in this study revealed that not enough time was granted to them to acquaint themselves with the knowledge they gained during the cascading training workshops offered at provincial

level. The cascading training took place the very same year as the implementation of the new curriculum (c.f.4.5.1).

The research also revealed that the professional development of educators in the district was done at hotels and Aventura resorts and offered as workshops and seminars. These gave little chance to practice or demonstrate teaching and learning as it occurs in school. The training does not allow for educators to work as a group in order to learn from each other because of the venues (cf. 4.5.1).

The research also revealed that inadequate time was granted for the training. The training usually takes three days whereas facilitators have been trained for a week. As regards monitoring and evaluation, the research revealed that no monitoring and evaluation was done by the facilitators or district officials before and after the implementation of the professional development of educators (cf. 4.5.1).

Principals

As regards principals, the research revealed that not much is being done at school level regarding professional development for the staff. This was illustrated by the principals' lack of knowledge of staff development and the lack of a policy on monitoring and evaluation at both district and school level. Lack of knowledge on the new curriculum and new education policies inhibit monitoring and evaluation as an important part of the principal's task (cf. 4.5.2).

The research also revealed that educators are not consulted during the implementation process to air their views about what has been planned for them since they are not involved in the process of professional development (cf. 4.5.3).

Recommendation

It is recommended that the department should give the district coordinators enough time to plan for the implementation of professional development of educators by providing them

with the necessary information prior to the implementation of new curricula and policies. The provincial departmental should exercise discretion regarding the venues for the training workshops, their duration as well as the aspects to be covered. It is also recommended that the district must design their own professional development programmes and not rely on the ones from the province. What the provincial department prepares is based on the needs of the whole province and may not suit district needs (4.5.1).

It is also recommended that, in addition to the professional support that principals get from the district, they should undergo other professional development support offered by the private sector and attend the South African Principals' Association (SAPA) conferences to inform them of current developments with regard to staff development programmes.

Principals should upgrade by taking other courses related to professional development offered at universities as this will provide them with opportunities to offer professional support to their staff. The principal should build a healthy relationship with colleagues as this will give them opportunities to share their experiences. In this way they can offer each other professional support since formal monitoring and evaluation is not operative because of the implementation of new policies, such as IQMS (2.3.3 &4.5.2)..

Educators should be involved in the whole process of professional development starting from the planning stage since their views are very important. They know what they need and how they wish programmes to run (c.f. 4.5.3).

5.3.6   The impact of professional development on educators

The research revealed that educators gained more knowledge and experience when attending the circuit cluster meetings which they arranged themselves because they planned the content and could prepare themselves (cf. 4.6.1).

The research also revealed that, although educators benefited from the training workshops conducted at district level on the new curriculum as regards terminology, the information on the policy documents was inadequate. The research revealed that the knowledge that educators got in the workshops was abstract and was not clearly demonstrated to them. Too much information was given within a short period of time.

Moreover, the timetable did not allow them time to share their problems. They suffered from information overload and were exhausted after workshops. They were unable to relate this information to the real learning situation (cf. 4.6.1).

Teaching methods

As regards the teaching methods and skills the research revealed that educators learn more about teaching methods and skills when they share with each other about how they approach different topics, learning outcomes and assessment standards during the circuit cluster meetings they organized for themselves. As regards the district training workshops the research revealed that little was learned about teaching methods and skills because no practical demonstrations were given by the facilitators especially as regards assessment. Moreover, educators are not given the opportunity to practice what they have learnt before they leave the workshops (cf. 4.6.2).

The research also revealed that the professional development offered at district level had impacted negatively on the teaching and learning situation because educators are unable to apply what they have learned in the district workshops. Thus, they fail to use the new approach. This caused frustration to both educators and learners as educators lose confidence and learners fail to perform.

Recommendation

It is recommended that before the district embarks on the professional development of educators, they should invite educators from different circuit clusters within the district to discuss strategies and aspects that should be covered in the professional development

programmes (c.f.4.6.1). It is recommended that, in addition to the training workshops offered for the implementation process, the district coordinators must offer more specific learning area workshops so that they can train educators offering such learning areas and given them opportunities to learn how to approach the different assessment standards and assessment forms for that learning area. Moreover, it is recommended that educators be allowed to apply the knowledge and skills flexibly not just be forced to apply what has been devised by the curriculum developers in their absence (c.f 4.6.1).

5.3.7 Attitudes towards professional development

The research revealed that facilitators like their job as coordinators and facilitators of professional development at district level. However, facilitators are not satisfied with the fact that they have to always work according to the plan of the provincial department and they are also not satisfied with the topics which focus almost exclusively on the implementation of new policies. They are unhappy about the lack of subsidized transport (cf. 4.7.1).

Research revealed that although principals lack adequate knowledge on the professional development of staff, they show interest in the topic and desire to learn more about the issue (cf. 4.7.2). Educators revealed that they feel that it is important to have professional development and wish to be involved in the whole process of planning such programmes at school and district level (cf. 4.7.3).

Recommendation

It is recommended that facilitators be allowed opportunity to exercise control over the professional development of educators at district level without interference by the provincial department (c.f. 2.2.5, 2.2.5.1 &2.2.5.2). Directives from the province should reach district coordinators in time to allow them time to plan and prepare their professional development. It is also recommended that the provincial department arrange

subsidized transport for facilitators since sometimes it is required of them to transport resources/materials and equipment to workshops.

As regards principals, it is recommended that they be given the necessary support in order to effectively provide the necessary professional development to the staff. It is suggested that principals acquaint themselves with documents related to development of staff and share their experiences with other principals (c.f. 4.3.1). It is also recommended that principal include the professional development programmes for their staff in the school strategic plan and school year plan (c.f. 2.2.4.4). Educators should also upgrade themselves by attending conferences and seminars offered by non-governmental organisations and enroll for distance education (cf.4.7.3).

5.3.8   Final recommendation

Based on the literature review and the qualitative investigation, the researcher recommends that:

- The management and planning of professional development for secondary school educators should be concerned about their needs to ensure effectiveness in the teaching and learning process taking into consideration the challenges that teachers are facing in their classroom.
- The principle of exclusivity is integral to the new curriculum and OBE. Therefore, teacher training institutions and INSET centres are very important and they should be transformed to suit the current education system to provide newly qualified teachers with appropriate approaches, methods and skills required in inclusive and OBE classes.
- It is advisable to offer INSET programmes to experienced teachers and education managers through continuous courses, workshops, conferences and seminars to upgrade and update them regarding current education demands so that they remain active in their career and effective in their teaching and learning situation.

- The management of professional development must encourage experienced teachers to be intrinsically motivated, to engage in the departmental and non departmental academic programmes as well as enroll at technikons and universities to further their studies and develop professionally on an ongoing basis.

- The planning and design of PRESET and INSET should offer training programmes that will provide teachers with access to appropriate and relevant knowledge, approaches, teaching methods and strategies that will give them confidence in the teaching and learning process.

- Designers and planners of professional development should involve teachers in the overall process.

5.4   LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The main aim of this research was to identify the criteria for the effective continuous professional development of educators and to determine ways of improvement of the programmes as implemented in secondary schools in the Thohoyandou/Vhembe district of the Limpopo province in terms of secondary school principals, educators as well as district coordinators (EMPC facilitators) (cf.1.3.1).

The findings have been reported in detail in chapter 4 of this document. The selected small number of participants is the most obvious limitation of the study. Purposeful sampling was used to select principals, educators and EMPC facilitators in the Thohoyandou Circuit cluster in the Thohoyandou/Vhembe district. These participants were selected on the basis that they were willing to share their experiences. This implies that different results might be obtained from different participants in other circuits' clusters around the Thohoyandou /Vhembe district.

The researcher used individual interviews with EMPC facilitators (cf. 3.4.2.1), principals (cf. 3.4.2.2), focus group interviews with educators from same schools (3.4.2.3 & 3.4.2.4) and individual interviews with educators from different schools (cf. 3.4.2.5). Other methods of data collection could have been used in investigating the issue. However, the

rich data obtained may be used for further research. Data collected illustrate the way in which professional development of educators is being managed in the Thohoyandou/Vhembe district. Moreover, certain themes categorized in chapter 4 contributed to a better understanding of the way in which professional development of educators is being managed in Thohoyandou/Vhembe district and indicated areas where more research is still needed (cf.5.3.)

Other possible shortcomings were identified and included the following:

- Some of the tape recorded interviews were not audible so it was difficult for the researcher to transcribe and interpret them. The researcher had to rely on the notes taken during the interviews.
- Some participants wanted the researcher to leave the interview schedule for them to answer without the interview process.
- It was difficult to conduct a focus group interview with EMPC facilitators so the researcher had to conduct individual interviews with the facilitators from different departments.
- Although arrangements were made before the interview dates, some participants withdrew.
- It would have been useful to interview district officials/coordinators and circuit managers to obtain their point of view as coordinators of professional development. However, this was beyond the scope of this study.

5.5   SUMMARY

The aim of the study was to assess the existing practice of effective teaching and learning in secondary schools in the Thohoyandou district through continuous professional development of educators. The study was based on secondary schools in the Thohoyandou area as one of the circuit clusters in the Thohoyandou district although an attempt was made to include schools in other circuit clusters. The challenge that we face in the

democratic South Africa is to create strategies for professional development programmes that will prepare educators for the changing education and training system.

The findings of this study served to illustrate many of the above comments. It is hoped that in some small ways these findings can contribute to more attention being paid to future policy implementation especially the policy on the professional development of educators.

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Appendix A: A letter to the principal whose school is performing well

Enq: Munonde LC   P.O. BOX 1372

Cell No: 0731879256   SIBASA

                                                                        0970

                                                                        16 AUGUST 2006

Dear Sir/Madam

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH INTERVIEW

I kindly request permission to conduct a research interview with you.

Presently I am a registered student for the Master of education Degree (Med) in Education Management at the university of South Africa (UNISA).In order to meet the requirements of this degree I am expected to conduct a research interview and submit a full dissertation related to this.

My research topic is "Effective teaching and learning in secondary schools of the Thohoyandou district through continuous professional development programmes". Thus this research requires that I interview you as one of the principals whose school is performing well. I also request that the interview be tape recorded to save time and to ensure that I do not miss useful information during the conversation.

I assure you a complete anonymity and confidentiality of every response you will make.

I hope that my request will be taken into consideration.

Yours Faithfully

MUNONDE LC (Ms)

APPENDIX B: A letter to the Technical High School principal whose school has been improving

Enq: MUNONDE LC (MS)   P.O.BOX 1372
Cell: 073 187 9256   SIBASA
                                                                                    0970
                                                                                    16 AUGUST 2006

Dear Sir/ Madam

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH INTERVIEW

I kindly request permission to conduct a research interview with you.

Presently I am a registered student for the Master of Education (Med) in Education Management at the University of South Africa (UNISA). In order to meet the requirements of this degree I am expected to conduct a research interview and submit a full dissertation related to this.

My topic is "Effective teaching and learning in secondary schools of the Thohoyandou district through continuous professional development programmes." Thus this research requires that I interview you as one of the school principal whose school has just improves its performance for the past five years. I also request that the interview be tape recorded to save time and to ensure that I do not miss useful information during our conversation.
I assure you a complete anonymity and confidentiality of every response you will make.
I hope my request will be taken into consideration.

Yours truly,
MUNONDE LC (MS)
Student No: 850 995 - 6

Appendix C: A letter to the principal whose school is performing poorly

Enq: MUNONDE LC (Ms)   P.O.BOX 1372

Cell No: 073 187 9256   SIBASA

                                                          0972

                                                          16 AUGUST 2006

Dear Sir/Madam

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH INTERVIEW

I kindly request permission to conduct a research interview with you.

Presently I am a registered student for the Master of Education Degree (Med) in Education management at the University of South A Africa (UNISA). In order to meet the requirements of this degree I am expected to conduct a research interview and submit a full dissertation related to this.

My topic is "Effective teaching and learning in secondary schools of the Thohoyandou district through continuous professional development programmes." Thus this research requires that I interview you as one of the principals whose school is not performing well. I also request that the interview be tape recorded to save time and to ensure that I do not miss useful information during our conversation.

I sure you a complete anonymity and confidentiality of every response you will make.

I hope that my request will be taken into consideration.

Yours truly,

MUNONDE LC (Ms)

Student No: 850 995 - 6

Appendix D: Letters to EMPC facilitators

Enq: MUNONDE LC (Ms)   P.O.BOX 1372

Cell No: 073 187 9256   SIBASA

                                                                0970

                                                                16 AUGUST 2006

Dear Sir/Madam

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH INTERVIEW

I kindly request permission to conduct research interview with you.

Presently I am a registered student for the Master of Education degree (Med) in education Management at the University of South Africa (UNISA). In order to meet the requirements of this degree I am expected to conduct a research interview and submit a full dissertation related to this.

My topic is "Effective teaching and learning in secondary schools of the Thohoyandou district through continuous professional development programmes". Thus this research requires that I interview some of the EMPC's facilitators responsible for the professional development of educators in the district. Ilso request that the interview be tape recorded to save time and to ensure that I do not miss useful information during our conversation.

I assure anonymity and confidentiality of every response you will make.

I hope that my request will be taken into consideration.

Yours truly,

MUNONDE LC (Ms)

Student No: 850 995 - 6

Appendix E : Interview Schedules

The following questions that focused on the participants' behavior, knowledge, experiences, and perceptions were posed during the interviews:

1.   **The principal whose school is performing very well**

-      What is your role as a coordinator of school development plan in your school?
-      Does your school have a professional development plan? If no Why?
-      If the answer above is yes, who do you involve in the planning, designing and implementation of professional development programmes?
-      What professional development programmes do you offer to educators, and why?
-      When do you offer these kinds of programmes?
-      How many hours do these programmes take?
-      What criteria do you use to monitor, evaluate and review performance management?
-      How often do you assess school system performance?
-      What are you doing to ensure that the school remains a learning institution?
-      Do you have a school development plan in your school? And what activities are included in it? If not, why?
-      What are you doing to ensure that the school remains one of the most performing schools in the country as is already is?
-      What advise can you give to those schools that are not performing well around the district?

2.   **The principal whose school is improving its performance**

-      What is you role as a coordinator for school development plan in your school?
-      Does your school have a professional development policy and plan? If no why?
-      If you do have what constitute your policy?

- Who are involved in the planning, designing and implementation of professional development of professional development programmes?
- What professional development programmes do you offer to educators, and why?
- When and where do you offer these kinds of programmes?
- For how long do your programmes lasts?
- What follow-up programmes do you offer to educators?
- What criteria do you use to monitor, evaluate and review performance management?
- How often do you assess school system performance?
- What have you done to improve the school performance from were it have been in the past?
- Since when have you been having a school development plan and what made you to have it if you do have?
- What activities are included in your school development plan?
- What do you think have been the most contributing factor for these performances in your school?
- What are your plans to ensure that the school keeps on improving its performance?
- What advise can you give to those schools whose performances is deteriorating year after year around the district?

3.   The principal whose school is performing poorly

- What is your role as a school development coordinator?
- Does your school include a professional development plan in your school development plan?
- Who do you involve in the planning, designing and implementation of professional development programmes?
- What professional development programmes do you offer to educators, and why?
- How and where do you offer these kinds of programmes?
- What criteria do you use to monitor, evaluate and review performance management?

- Do you have a policy to assess school system performance?
- Is every one at school aware of this policy?
- What do you think is the reason for poor performance in your school?
- What efforts have you made to change the situation in your school?

4.   EMPC facilitators/district coordinators

-

- Do you have a professional development policy for educators in your vicinity?
- How is the policy designed?
- What professional development programmes do you offer to educators?
- How do you plan for such programmes and who are involved in the planning of these programmes and why?
- How are these programmes offered to educators?
- What are the approaches that you use to conduct your training programmes?
- What is the degree of attendance and/ or participation by educators?
- What criteria do you use to measure achievement of the purpose of your training programmes?
- To what extent is the professional development training programmes that you provide to educators being achieved?
- What follow- up programmes do you provide to educators?
- What support do you get from the district officials?

5.   Educators from the school that is performing well

- What are your roles and responsibilities as educators?
- How effective do you think you are in the teaching and learning process?
- What do you think is the reason for your performance?
- Do you receive any professional development support?
- If yes what kind of support do you get and who provide this?
- What are you gaining from these professional development programmes that are being offered?

- Does your school have a professional development policy? If yes, what aspects are included in the policy?

- Who are involved in the planning and design of the school professional development policy?

- How is monitoring and evaluation of your work done at the school?

- What is your attitude towards assessment of your work by the management of your school and other departmental officials?

- What do you think is the reason for outstanding performance in your school?

- What do you think should be doe to ensure that the culture of teaching and learning is promoted in our schools?

6.   Educators from schools that are performing poorly

- What are your roles and responsibilities as educators?

- How effective do you think you are in the teaching and learning process?

- What do you think is the reason for your performance?

- Do you receive any professional development support?

- If yes, what kinds of professional support do you get? If no, what do you think is the reason for not getting these kinds of support?

- Is the professional development support that you are getting helping you to perform better in the teaching and learning? if yes, how? And if no, Why do you say so?

- Does your school include a professional development policy and plan in the school development plan?

- Are you as educators consulted or involved in the planning of professional development programmes?

- If no, what do you think is the reason?

- What do you think is the reason for poor performance in your school?

- Does the school have a plan for monitoring and evaluation of educators and learners work?

- If no, how is monitoring and evaluation done in your school?

- What is your attitude towards assessment of your work by school management and other department officials?
- What do you think should be done to improve your school's performance as well as of other schools that are in the same situation like yours in the country?

Appendix F: Interview between the researcher and educators from the school that is performing poorly

T7, T8, T9, T10

(NB R stands for researcher and T stands for educator followed by the number stands)

R – Tell me; what are your roles and responsibilities as educators?

T9 - Well, I believe our role and responsibilities as educators are to learners with the best quality education through giving them the knowledge they require and this we can do by preparing our lesson before going to classes.

T8 – Our responsibilities as educators I think is to be in class and teaching learners, giving those exercises and homework and also marking learners work.

R – What do you think T7?

T7 - Ja I believe that to be a educator one has to support learners with their activities, guide and advise them about their future and showing them the importance of school in addition to engaging in the classroom activities.

R – What about providing feedback to learners assessment work, don't you think it is another important role of the educator?

T10 – OH, yes that is important too because if we just give learners work without giving them feedback they will never know were they have made mistakes.

R – How effective do you think you are in your work?

T10 – Mmm, I personally cannot say I am not being effective even though learners are not getting good results but I am trying My best to make my teaching and learning effective it

is just that learners do not like my subject and as such they do not give it much time to study it

T8 - Since I am teaching in OBE classes and everything appears to be new what I can say is that I have been battling to make my work effective but this is not easy especially when one is unable to assess learners according to the new curriculum policy document on assessment.

T9 – Ja the same applies to me because ever since learners who were doing OBE in grade 8 and 9 and had to change back while in grade 10 everything turn so badly and the teaching we use to give our children had been twisted the other way round and we are no longer confident in what ever we do while in class with learners and the grade 12 results are very bad.

R—OH, I see so you think the reason for your ineffectiveness is this changed curriculum?

T10 – Mmm, Ja this is another aspect though there are also issues like that ever since the issue of lot of new policies that have been introduced lot has happen to us as educators especially that of redeployment is one of the sensitive issues that had great impact in the performance in our school because we have lost four educators some of them were expert in other grade 12 subjects instead we have to get educators who have been teaching in primary school ever since they started their career. and some came and had to teach grade 12 class and this is one thing which has weaken our results and lowered the school performance. In addition, in the year 2003 the principal left us for a job at the university and this left us with no principal until the principal was appointed in 2005.

R – I can see you have gone through a lot, but tell me have anything been done to support you professionally?

T7 – Eh, we cannot say that we are getting the necessary professional development support that we are able to overcome the situation we are facing but we have been attending district workshops.

T9 - And another thing is that we are also getting support from colleagues and other educators outside our school

R – Is that all, what about the professional development support from the school management or senior staff members?

T7 – eh, I think that's all one can say and as regard the professional support on the part of the school management the answer is definitely no, there is nothing one can say we are getting except for report from the meetings and workshops that the principal and the management attend.

R – Does your school have a professional development policy or plan?

T10 – Ah, not that we educators know and if this is there it must be known by the school management.

T8 – Yes, we cannot say it is not available because some of the things we are told that its not our responsibility and ours is to be in class and teach so we are not allowed to question some of the school documents.

R – do you want to tell me that your opinion as educators are not important in that you are not involved in the planning of the major school activities that you have to be part of when the implementation process take place.

T9 – not that we are not consulted in everything but there are other issues that we find ourselves taken by surprise.

T10 – another thing is that sometimes we are just informed that things will been done as planned without our knowledge.

R – From what you are saying it is clear that you do not receive formally planned professional development support but you do at times get individual support?

T7 – OH, yes we do sometimes get support through coaching when learners have written tests and it is realised that they are making no progress then we are called individually by the management and after a tough conversation we are being coached as to how we can approach our work but this can sometimes happen may ones in two years time.

R – I see it seems there is a serous problem; what do you think is the reason behind all this?

T9 – Well the thing is we do not work as a team even at the management level they are not working as a team and as such everyone does as s/he pleases and since not much time is given on monitoring educators and learners work educators has loosen their belts and there is also lack of discipline and control for learners so even if they do not do their work no follow up is done to make sure that learners do their work properly.

R – You said you do attend district workshops, tell me how supportive has this been to enable you improve your teaching and learning performance?

T 10 – Well although the knowledge and skills that we learn at the district workshops are very difficult to relate to the classroom practice, the workshops are vey important because we learn the meaning of different terminologies that we have to use in the policy documents for NCS and also how to use the policy document.

T7 – Yes we do learn new knowledge and skills but the problem is that the trainings that are provided at district takes more hours with a large amount of information that we end up forgetting the most important information when we come back to school.

T8 – Another thing is that trainers don't give us chance to explain the problems that we experiences in the real teaching and they also do not show us how we should do this when we come to school and as such we end up not preparing learners as required by assessment guidelines which becomes a problem when we have to submit CASS for moderation for grade 10-12 and we end up just giving learners marks for something they did not work and this further contribute to final year results in these grades especially when learners go to grade 12.

R – OK, what do you think should be done to ensure that the professional development that you get assist you in becoming more effective in the teaching and learning which will bring about better performance?

T9 - Ja, I think it will be better if the trainers at the district workshops discuss with us what we think we need support on and how we would like that support to be given to us because they are just training us on something that we are unable to apply in the class and this does not serve the purpose of the workshop.

T10 – Mmm, another thing that should be done is that the management should encourage the spirit of team work and also include the policy on professional development of educators in the school development plan and make this known to the staff.

T8 - The school should support us and listen to us rather than discourages us since this reduces educator morale and lowered the educator performances.