

**UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU NATAL**

**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

**Educator professional development and support in three rural  
and two semi-rural secondary schools in KwaMashu Circuit.**

**Submitted by**

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## ABSTRACT

In this study I undertook to investigate educator professional development and support in three rural and two semi-rural schools in the KwaMashu Circuit. The rationale for the study took into consideration the demands for continuous educator professional development in order to enable the educators to face and overcome current challenges in education. In addition, schools located in rural and semi-rural areas are largely under-resourced, thus necessitating excellent human resource input from the educators. This therefore calls for effective and extensive professional development and support in such disadvantaged areas.

The study employed both qualitative and quantitative designs. Data was gathered from three rural and two semi-rural schools selected through purposive and convenience sampling by means of semi-structured interviews and questionnaires. The data gathered from semi-structured interview were reviewed, coded and organized into categories and themes. Questionnaires were analyzed through frequency counts.

Findings revealed that the participants' understanding of "*professional development*" was that this concept referred to a continuous process whereby educators acquire and improve their knowledge and skills. However, their understanding excluded the importance of other aspects such as attitude, relationships and team work. Findings further revealed that, the only structures they had in the sample schools were *School Development Teams* as stipulated by Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS). However, these structures were said not to be functional with regard to the main focus for professional development but rather, as the findings indicated that the emphasis was on curricular needs. In respect to the role played by School Management Team, findings revealed that respondents were generally satisfied but also indicated an inadequate role in terms of providing time for professional development and opportunities for educators to cascade information.

Recommendations were that circuits and wards need to attend to the misinterpretation of the educators' conceptualization of professional development. The promotion of a formation of effective structures needs to be encouraged. The Department of Education, through the Human Resource component needs to provide specialists to monitor and evaluate the role and responsibilities of structures in schools with the intention to providing direction for effective professional development. Teachers need to have a holistic development. The School Management Team also needs to be encouraged and supported by the Department of Education to play a major role in providing professional development.

## **DECLARATION**

I, the undersigned, Joyce Nozipho Nkosi, hereby declare that this study is my own work and that it has not been submitted before for a degree or examination in any other University and that all the resources I have used or quoted have been acknowledged by complete references

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

January 2008

Joyce Nozipho Nkosi

### **Statement by supervisor**

This dissertation is submitted with/without my approval

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Dr T. Ngcobo

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# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY**

### **1.1 Introduction**

In this study I undertook to investigate educator professional development and support in three rural and two semi-rural secondary schools in the KwaMashu Circuit, Pinetown District, Ethekezeni Coastal Cluster of the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education (KZN DoE). The discussion in this chapter highlights the background, purpose, conceptual and theoretical location of the study, the research objectives, questions, methodology and the structure of the whole report.

### **1.2 Background and Purpose of the Study**

When thinking of professional development in the South African context, it is important to note that for decades education was characterized by the apartheid ideology which promoted inequality both in the curriculum of black schools as well as the development of teachers. This involved separate schools for the different racial groups. Baxen and Soudien (1999) cited in Balfour, Buthelezi and Mitchell (2004:210) state the reason for this inequality was that most South African teachers and school principals were initially educated under the Bantu Education System which was underpinned by Fundamental Pedagogics and inflexible “top-down” policies. Furthermore, the expectations were that teachers were to deliver the curriculum as prescribed by the authorities. Balfour, et al (2004) further claim that this “top-down” approach never gave teachers opportunities to critique, analyze or conceptualize their own professional identities and practice. This therefore created a profession where teacher’s contributions and developmental needs within the school as an organization had been largely ignored.

In addition, Lumby, Middlewood and Kaabwe (2003) claim that South African teachers, especially those in black schools, have had to contend with severe difficulties in rendering professional service to their clients, because of the wretched physical conditions prevailing in their schools. Moreover, the Department of Education School Register Needs 2000 Survey conducted in 1999 indicated that the province of KwaZulu-

Natal has the largest number, one third, of the under-qualified educators in South Africa. As a result, the KZN DoE introduced a policy framework for continuous professional development and support in 2002 in order to rectify this imbalance. The main aims of this policy were as follows:

Firstly, it was to provide quality education by providing educators with on-going professional development and support.

Secondly, it was to encourage teachers and other education professionals to carry on learning throughout their careers to keep up with technology developments, learn different approaches to teaching and learning, manage their sites and advance their career paths.

Thirdly, it was to tackle continuous professional development and support in planned, structured and strategic manner so that educators can rise to the challenges that will occur in the education system in the coming years. (The KwaZulu-Natal Education Policy Framework for continuous Professional Development, 2002).

Furthermore, the Report of the Ministerial Committee on Rural Education (2005) which highlighted the shortage of qualified and competent teachers, the teaching in multi-grade and large classes, under-resourced school facilities, and limited access to professional development programmes for teachers as being specific challenges facing teachers in rural schools.

In addition I have been part of the Senior Management Team in a rural school for more than fifteen years in the Department of Education. This persuaded an interest to develop a better understanding for professional development and support in the context of my employment over this period. As a Deputy Principal, I have had the privilege of managing and teaching in both rural and semi-rural schools in my teaching experience. Therefore, I have been exposed to such educationally disadvantaged schools in my career path. Through my observation, I have an impression that educators who are employed in rural and semi-rural schools are not frequently exposed to professional development

which empowers them with relevant skills and knowledge for the current changes in the education system.

Secondly, when I reviewed the various theses in the library, I did not come across any thesis which researched on professional development and support in rural and semi-rural schools. Apparently, these schools are neglected as compared to their counterparts, namely urban and semi-rural schools.

It was against this background that this study focused on professional development and support in rural and semi-rural schools. The purpose was to contribute towards a better understanding of how professional development is provided in rural and semi-rural schools in KwaMashu Circuit.

### **1.3 Rural and semi-rural schools' conceptual framework**

It is appropriate at this point to provide a conceptual framework of the terms “rural” and “semi-rural” areas in this study. According to the Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary of Current English (1974) rural means the countryside. Rural generally refers to isolated, poor and traditionally administrated areas (see Kozol 1991). Rural schools are characterized by geographical isolation, poverty, and poorly educated parents who are mostly unemployed or self-employed. In rural schools, there is a shortage of well-qualified teachers and classrooms for teaching and learning are inadequate. Also, there is a lack of utilities such as running water, electricity and proper sanitation. All these factors have had an adverse effect on teaching and learning (Kozol 1991). Semi-rural is partially rural, understood as existing on the peripheries of both urban and rural areas. Areas with such social and cultural factors are also referred to as disadvantaged areas. (see Badenhorst and Scheepers 1995).

### **1.4 The theoretical location of study**

Epistemologically, the study was informed by interpretive theory as the intention was to develop a better understanding of educator’s meanings and perceptions relating to

professional development and support in rural and semi-rural schools in the KwaMashu Circuit.

At a conceptual level, the research is informed by a human resource management approach to the management of people. This approach sees people as important and indispensable assets to organizational effectiveness. The human resource management approach therefore emphasizes the continuous development of employees in a planned way to (a) acquire or sharpen capabilities required to perform various tasks association with their present and future expected roles; (b) develop their general enabling capabilities as individuals so that they are able to discover and exploit their own inner potential for their own and/or organizational development purpose, and (c) develop an organizational culture where superior-subordinate relationships, teamwork and collaboration among different subunits are strong and contribute to the organizational health, dynamism and pride of employees (Rao 1985 cited in Saiyadain, 2003).

### **1.5 The Research Goal**

The main objective of conducting this study was to develop a better understanding of how professional development and support is undertaken in rural and semi-rural schools in the KwaMashu Circuit.

### **1.6 Research Questions**

The following key questions formed the focus of the study:

1. What do educators in the selected schools understand by professional development?
2. What structures are put in place in these schools for the purpose of professional development and support?
3. What is the main focus of professional development in these schools?
4. What role do the School Management Teams of the selected schools play in offering professional development?

## **1.7 Research Method**

Discussion in this section includes research approach, research site, targeted population and sample selection, research instruments, data analysis, ethical issues and limitations of the study.

### **1.7.1 Research approach and methodology**

This study employed both qualitative and quantitative research designs. The qualitative design was persuaded by the interpretive approach which assumes that multiple realities are socially constructed through individual and collective definitions (Schumacher and MacMillan 1993). I adopted this approach to attain a detailed understanding of participants' perceptions regarding educator professional development and support in the stated context. A case study methodology was used to gain in-depth understanding of educator professional development and support in the sample schools. The quantitative research design was, on the other hand, used to maximize generalisability within the selected schools through the use of numbers and statistics (McMillan and Schumacher, 1997).

### **1.7.2 Research site, targeted population and sample selection.**

The research site and targeted population comprised of rural and semi-rural secondary schools in the KwaMashu Circuit. The sample consisted of three rural and two semi-rural schools in this population. Selection was done through a purposive and convenience strategy.

### **1.7.3 Research Instruments**

Data were collected by means of semi-structured interviews and questionnaires. The interviewees' were (1) the Principal or, in the absence of the Principal, the Deputy Principal, (2) the chairperson of professional development and (3) a post-level one educator through random selection. The interview technique is a widely used method of gathering data, for some people are more willing to provide information in a face-to-face situation. (Lovell and Lawson 1970). One of the many advantages of using this instrument is that it also provides freedom and flexibility. De Vos and Strydom (1998)

argue that semi-structured interviews are used to gain a more detailed picture of a participant's beliefs, perceptions or account of a particular topic. The questionnaires were administered to all educators and the School Management Teams in the sample schools in order to validate the information gathered from the interviews. Pilot tests of the questionnaires were conducted in order to identify ambiguities and improve the instruments where necessary.

#### **1.7.4 Data Analysis**

The interviews were tape recorded and transcribed verbatim. Thereafter the interview data was analysed using qualitative content theme analysis. A content theme analysis describes the specific and distinctive recurring qualities, characteristics, subject of discourse or expressed concerns (Schumacher and MacMillan 1993). The questionnaires contained closed questions which were analyzed through frequency counts.

#### **1.7.5 Ethical Issues**

For ethical reasons, permission from both the Department of Education and participants' was sought. The participants were assured of confidentiality and anonymity. They were also informed that their participation in this project was voluntary and that they were free to withdraw from the research at anytime without any prejudice.

#### **1.7.6 Limitation**

The study was conducted in five schools only, namely three rural and two semi-rural schools. The very small scale of the sample therefore means that the findings cannot be generalized to all schools within the province. Nonetheless, they may provide pointers for further research. Furthermore, the purpose of this study was to investigate how educator professional development and support is undertaken and understood in three rural and two semi-rural schools in the KwaMashu Circuit.

## **1.8 Outline of the Thesis**

Chapter 1 highlights the background and purpose of the study, conceptual and theoretical location of the study as well as the research methodology.

Chapter 2 reviews the relevant literature on educator professional development. The focus is on the conceptualization of professional development, the purpose of professional development, the approaches of professional development, the aspects of professional development and the role of educational managers in the professional development of teachers. This is followed by a brief presentation of the KZN DoE policy framework and IQMS for school-based educators.

Chapter 3 provides an account of how the study was designed and conducted. The discussion on the research methodology includes the research paradigm, research approach and method, targeted population and sample selection, research instruments, data collection, data analysis, ethical issues and limitations of the study.

Chapter 4 deals with data presentations and discussions of findings obtained from the semi-structured interviews and questionnaires.

Chapter 5 presents the summary of the study and also outlines recommendations and conclusion.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

As indicated in the previous chapter, the main aim of this study was to investigate educator professional development and support in the KwaMashu Circuit rural and semi-rural schools. The purpose of this chapter is to present issues in the literature relating to the development of a better understanding of professional development. The presentation begins with issues linked with professional development in general. These include the conceptualization of professional development, purposes of professional development, approaches of professional development, process of professional development, aspects of professional development and the role of educational managers in professional development. This is then followed by a brief presentation of the Kwa-Zulu Natal Department of Education policy framework and IQMS for school-based educators.

#### **2.2 Professional Development Conceptual Framework**

There are quite a number of related terms that are used to describe Professional Development in education. These include terms such as in-service training (INSET), professional growth, personnel development; on-the-job training and personal development. My discussion below will focus on the various definitions provided by existing literature. The purpose is to present the conceptualization of professional development that framed this study.

Hoyle (1980), Steyn and van Niekerk (2002) and Guskey (2000) define professional development for teachers as those activities designed to enhance the professional knowledge, skills and attitudes of educators so that they might in turn improve the learning of students. Guskey further states that professional development must be intentional, ongoing and systemic. It must also involve various levels of the educators, that is, from post level one to the heads of departments, the deputy principal and the principal. Although Bolam's (2002) definition cited by Bush and Middlewood

(2005) is similar to those of Guskey's, he points to the importance of values in professional development in a school situation, which help educators decide on and implement valued changes in their teaching and leadership behaviour.

Jean Rudduck (1987) cited by Bagwandeen and Louw (1993), on the other hand, defines professional development or professional growth as the capacity of a teacher to remain curious about the classroom; to identify significant concerns in the process of teaching and learning; to value and seek dialogue with experienced colleagues, and to adjust patterns of classroom action in the light of new understandings.

The conception of professional development in this study, as informed by the above, is that it is a continuous process of promoting learning and development among educators inside or outside the school environment, and equipping them with knowledge, skills, attitudes and values to become more effective in their teaching. This implies that the learning development of a teacher is never complete. He or she needs to keep on acquiring new knowledge as the wheel of transformation unfolds. Therefore, professional development needs to be a lifelong process. For example, this means that those teachers whose initial teacher preparations were prior to the introduction of the National Curriculum Statement (NCS) need to be developed and offered adequate support so that they can have a better understanding of the curriculum in order to develop the related values and attitudes needed to implement the curriculum.

### **2.3 Purpose of Staff Development**

Woodward (1991, cited in Bush and Middlewood 1997) provides four purposes of staff development. According to this author the first of these is to improve current performance and remedy existing weakness. Secondly, the purpose of staff development is to prepare staff for changing duties and responsibilities and to encourage them to use new methods and techniques in their present posts. This includes educators with experience in a certain school but who have a new job description or a new post because of a redistribution of work. Thirdly, the development is to prepare teachers for career advancement either in their school or the education service generally. Lastly, the purpose

of staff development is to enhance greater job satisfaction among the staff. What motivates educators in this case is the desire for satisfaction through a job well-done. For Mwamwenda (1995) cited by Heystek, Roos and Middlewood (2005:38) this is of great importance considering that “a lack of job satisfaction leads to frequent absence from work, behaving aggressively, inclination to quit one’s job, and psychological withdrawal from work.”

## **2.4. Approaches of Professional Development**

The discussion in this section begins with a presentation of five various approaches as presented by Bush and West-Burnham (1994). These five approaches provided an analytical framework in this study. These approaches were used as a blueprint against which I could contrast different approaches found to be existing in the sample schools.

### **2.4.1 Organic Approach**

This approach is rooted in the conceptualization of development as being ‘evolutionary’, and as taking place naturally through social interaction and experience. This involves informed networking and the sharing of information by colleagues. Once there is this interaction amongst educators more knowledge and skills are acquired, thus enhancing their development professionally.

### **2.4.2 Ad-hoc approach**

An examination of this approach indicates that there are instances of the ad-hoc approach or as it is also often referred to as laissez-faire approach. According to Southworth (1984, cited by Bush and West-Burnham, 1994) these approaches are lacking in planning or integration and reflect a very narrow stimulus–response approach to development. They result in reactive and opportunistic type of professional development. It is a spontaneous process which tries to address both school and individual needs.

### **2.4.3 Process-based approach**

The process-based approach includes the models of professional development which emphasize reflection, analysis and self-generated review. Hopkins (1987, cited by Bush and West-Burnham 1994:301) refers to these approaches as being actually developmental because their aim is to enhance practice through a cycle of learning. This results in the testing of potential solutions to problems in practice. This approach also encourages learners to develop and enhance their own development practices. There is, however, the need for underlying values for staff development, such as openness, co-operation; shared ownership and responsibility. (Main, 1985 in Bush and West. Burnham, 1994).

### **2.4.4 Consultancy Approach**

The use of an outside agent in the analysis and development of individual, group or whole organization work is solicited in these approaches. Murgatroyd and Reynolds, (1984 cited by Bush and West-Burnham, 1994) identified three forms of consultancy in education. Firstly, there is consultative assistance given to educators to address technical needs, such as, managerial skills. Secondly, there is content consultation which is non directive in nature and aims to assist sub-groups within the organization to improve practice through improved content knowledge in a given area. Thirdly, there is also process consultation. This is the most extensive form of consulting which is directed at the structures and relationships within the organization as a whole.

The significance of the consultancy approach is that it provides alternative perspectives on organizational and functioning groups within a structure of review and support (Bush and West. Burnham, 1994). Consultation gives opportunity of engaging alternative view points by educators or all concerned until common grounds are reached. It also offers the prospect of overcoming obstacles to changes in professional practices by encouraging change in behaviour and thus hoping that attitude and relationship changes may follow.

#### **2.4.5 Objective Approach**

This approach places emphasis on the needs of the organization other than those of individuals. The needs analysis, therefore, are conducted in terms of competence perspectives as opposed to an imposed perspective. The competence of educators is taken into cognizance. In this instance, staff development is informed by the objectives of the organization. In this way development becomes a means of addressing a deficit in the organization rather than broader personal development. It focuses on specific areas within the school to promote effective changes and improvements in teaching quality.

What was of interest to me in this study was which, if any of these approaches informed professional development in the sample schools and the governmental documents such as Integrated Quality Management System for school-based educators.

### **2.5. The Process of Professional Development**

Every school is expected to have the teaching and learning needs as its primary objective. This cannot be achieved unless the process of professional development involves effective staff recruitment, selection, induction and mentoring.

#### **2.5.1 Recruitment**

For Steyn and Van Niekerk (2002) as well as Dubrin (2002), professional development begins with effective staff recruitment. This process entails all those activities designed to attract the candidates with the right characteristics and skills to fit specific job vacancies. Therefore the purpose of recruitment is to provide appropriate candidates for school needs. Steyn and van Niekerk (2002) warn that the effects of poor recruitment procedures are likely to result in high staff turnover, poor performance and low motivation. Tomlinson's (1997) assertion is that the outcomes of schooling for pupils are conditioned to a large degree by the quality of recruits. Part of my investigation related to the degree to which professional development in the sample schools incorporated the recruitment aspect.

### **2.5.2 Selection**

Selection is intimately linked with recruitment but its objective is somewhat different from that of recruitment. Beach (1985) argues that whereas the goals of recruitment are to create a large pool of persons who are available and willing to work for a particular company, a selection process has rather as its objective the sorting out and elimination of those deemed unqualified to meet the job and organization requirement. According to Syfart (1996) in education selected individuals should have the ability to organize and manage classes, motivate learners, encourage learner involvement and have the knowledge of the subject he or she will teach. If a person lacks all these skills he is regarded as a “poor fit.” Such a person needs extensive professional development to prevent a negative impact on the desired quality of education.

### **2.5.3 Induction**

Steyn and van Niekerk (2002) points out that once selected, new staff members should receive help in the form of a planned induction programme. Castetter (1986) supports this view by pointing out that the most important aim in the induction process is to provide information not fully covered during the recruitment and selection processes. The individual recruiter, for example, may not have been capable of explaining to the recruit all the complexities in a gain position assignment. Rebore (1991) states that the induction process also makes the teacher feel secure and welcome in the sense that he or she becomes part of the team.

Induction also involves equipping newly qualified teachers with knowledge, skills and attitudes which they would need to enhance the quality of student learning. Bagwandeem and Louw (1993) suggest that induction for newly qualified teachers should provide, amongst other things, an orderly, personalized transition from initial training to the realities of teaching in a classroom. It should help to integrate a young beginner teacher into the professional and social milieu of the school and the community in which the school is involved. Heystek, Roos and Middlewood (2005) claim that temporary staff members are often not part of induction in schools.

#### **2.5.4. Mentoring**

Wideen and Andrews (1987) state that the process of mentoring within an induction programme offers an excellent means of establishing collegial support that new teachers need. Anderson and Shanon (1987) cited by Dreyer, Sonnekers and Mc Donald (2003) state that mentoring can best be defined as a nurturing process in which a more skilled or more experienced person serving as a role-model, teaches, sponsors, encourages, counsels and befriends a less skilled or less experienced person for the purpose of promoting the latter's professional and/or personal development. They further suggest that mentoring functions are carried out within the context of an ongoing, caring relationship between the mentor and the protégé.

Whilst the mentor becomes fully responsible for various instructional and socialization activities, the protégé gradually gains competency, confidence, realistic values, experience, self-evaluative skills and curricula knowledge. Ultimately the newly employed teacher demonstrates acquired skills and knowledge by becoming self-directing, self-evaluating, and eventually responsible for the development of his own professional development program (Wideen and Andrews, 1987). This acquisition of knowledge and skills enables both the mentor and the protégé to learn and grow in their profession. This means that both new and experienced teachers benefit from the mentoring system. Mentors benefit in a number of ways. Dreyer et al (2003) state that members may find renewed enthusiasm for staff development and have the opportunity to examine their educational value. Wilkin (1992) argues that when mentoring is used as part of professional development, it provides the protégé with opportunities for meaningful feedback on performance. It also provides the protégé with opportunities for greater effectiveness in classroom work, and with opportunities to observe others as role models in the classroom or in general management activities.

What was of interest to me in this study, was whether any of these processes applied in the educator professional development programmes or activities undertaken in any of the sample schools.

## **2.6 Aspects of professional development**

Aspects that form an integral part of professional development include knowledge, skills, attitudes, relationships and teamwork.

### **2.6.1 Knowledge**

Knowledge has an important role in teacher professional development and competency. For Guskey and Huberman (1995) this aspect refers to subject-specific and pedagogical knowledge. The latter refers to an understanding of how the topics and all other issues within a subject area can be organized and presented for teaching. Adler and Reed (2002) further emphasize that teachers should hold a relatively broad and deep knowledge of the subject they are teaching. Grossman (1990) in Gusky and Huberman (1995) identifies four components of pedagogical knowledge, namely;

The overarching conception of teaching a subject.

Knowledge of instructional strategies and representations.

Knowledge of students understanding and potential misunderstanding and

Knowledge of curriculum and curricular materials.

Wragg (1993) in Stephens and Crawley (1994) warns that teachers, whose subject knowledge lacks secure foundation, are likely to suffer stress. Their view is further that educators therefore need to be nurtured and developed in these aspects so that their teaching becomes effective and contributes to the improved performance of the learners.

### **2.6.2 Skills**

Literature on professional development also indicates that for one to be able to apply acquired knowledge within the work place, one needs to have the necessary skills to do so. These skills should enable the teacher to cater to the needs of the community in which a teacher works. The skills' development of teachers should therefore be of priority for any institution if it is to function effectively. However, according to the Education Training and Development Practices Sector Skills Plan Document (2000) a large number of educators lack critical skills in the Outcomes-Based Education (OBE) teaching methodology, generation of learning materials and assessment of learner

progress. This report also states that the educators lack skills relating to audio-visual information technology, remedial skills and accommodation of diversity. All of these are crucial for addressing barriers to learning and development.

The above shortages imply the need for an intensive staff development programme for most educators in schools. The question that arises is whether there is any focus on developing such teaching skills. Kyriacou (1991) puts it clearly when he argues that the responsibility to develop and extend the teaching skills is not simply the teacher's personal responsibility. Rather, it is also in part the responsibility of those within the school and agencies outside the school to ensure that such development is facilitated as part of teachers' professional development, and is part of staff development at the school as a whole.

### **2.6.3 Attitudes**

For knowledge to be transmitted and skills to be applied correctly, a positive attitude is of vital importance in the institution. Teachers encounter many challenging situations which they need to face both, outside and inside their workplace. The latter may then affect teachers' feelings within their work environments. Davidoff and Lazarus (1997:148) claim that teachers do not "leave their problems outside the gate" when they arrive at school. Steyn and van Niekerk (2002) warn that if teachers adopt negative attitudes, it will permeate or diffuse the whole organization and the school objectives will never be attained. Staff development in this case plays a major role by providing a teacher with appropriate knowledge so that he or she can take pride in his work. This therefore implies that professional development needs to take this into consideration if teachers are to make a positive contribution in the work setting.

### **2.6.4 Relationships**

For the school to be effective there should be healthy relationships amongst all stakeholders such as educators, learners and parents. Building healthy relationships is therefore one of the fundamental skills a teacher needs to possess in order to communicate more positively with learners and colleagues. Professional development

enables both a newly qualified teacher and an experienced teacher to learn how to relate to his and her learners in an acceptable, polite and positive manner. Pretorius and Lemmer (1998) point out that “the primary goal of all teachers should be to build a positive, friendly and supportive relationship with their learners. Many of the needs of learners are non academic and relate to a learners attitude, emotions and a sense of personal self esteem in the classroom. When these needs are met, learning is facilitated.” This implies that a teacher needs to foster a good relationship with learners so that respect, trust and good working environment can be achieved.

In the same manner, Whitaker (1995) also points out that it is our relationships with others that cause our most difficult and emotionally painful moments. He further argues that teachers prefer to engage with those colleagues with whom there is a high degree of commonality and disengage from those whose values threaten them or cause discomfort and anxiety. All this suggests that professional development should aim at having school environments that discourage difficult, strained and hostile relationships but rather encourage polite, intimate and enjoyable relationships amongst educators. Through this latter type of relationship, schools can improve and become more effective.

#### **2.6.5 Teamwork**

Teamwork is also of vital importance for both teacher development and school improvement. Horne and Brown (1997:74) support this idea of teamwork by stating that it allows for a cross-fertilization of ideas and expansion of skills. They further claim that there can be no individual development without teamwork. This implies that the teacher is expected not to work in isolation from other teachers but to share his or her expertise with colleagues. Hargreaves and Hopkins (1991:137) also point out that teamwork leads to better decisions and speedier completion of work through the pooling of expertise and the sharing of tasks to be accomplished. This suggests that when educators learn to work together, they also develop themselves professionally in the process, as a result they become more efficient and the quality of their work is enhanced. Thus this creates better working environments.

Jay (1995 cited by Steyn and van Niekerk 2002) claims that some of the benefits of working as a team are firstly, that it improves morale and motivation and helps to reduce staff turnover. Secondly, teamwork enhances job satisfaction and increases productivity and lastly, it is far easier to overcome problems when everyone is working together. Hargreaves and Hopkins (1991:137) are also of the view that effective teamwork promotes natural respect among teachers. It also creates a climate of trust which encourages the free expression of ideas, suggestions, doubts, reservations and fears. They further state that individual talents and skills are used and teachers are able to discuss alternative approaches and solutions before taking decisions. Professional development in this case is enhanced by opportunities to collaborate with others

It is important to note that teamwork can also be achieved through networking with other schools and by doing so, educators are able to acquire knowledge, skills and techniques from educators in other institutions. They are also exposed to another work environments which sometimes might have similar or different challenges (Goddard and Clinton 1994, cited by O'Neill, Middlewood and Glover 1994:33).

The review of these aspects was important as they form an integral part of professional development, whilst they also formed part of my investigation in this study. The question that arose in this study referred to the degree to which these were addressed in sample schools.

## **2.7 The Role of the School Management Team in Professional Development**

The School Management Team (SMT) comprises the principal, deputy principal and Heads of Department. One of the areas in which the SMT is expected to lead is in ensuring that a positive climate for professional development is created and promoted in a school. This calls for members of the School Management Team to spend quality time planning and designing teacher professional development programmes. Garrett (1997), cited by Tomlinson (1997:31-32), suggests that leaders, which in this instance refers to the SMT, “need to show commitment, and active involvement to teacher development”.

Sagie Naicker and Clive Waddy (2002) state that School Management Teams must create and establish an environment to assist all educators to work to their full potential and build interpersonal relationships so that they can work as a team. It is the responsibility of the School Management Teams to ensure that induction and mentoring is taking place in a school and also to ensure that professional development incorporates all developmental aspects.

With regard to the role played specifically by the principal, Guskey (2000) emphasizes that the school principal is a key figure in organization support and change. The author further argues that the principal's behaviour also determines in large part the teachers' perspective towards professional development and their commitment to improvement and furthermore that the principal should provide support by encouraging educators to learn and participate in new programs and activities. Also, he or she should encourage coaching and mentoring relationships, as well as encourage educators to plan collaboratively. Besides being open to new ideas, suggestions and being an attentive participant in professional development activities, the principal needs to facilitate regular follow up sessions and activities.

In a case where educators are upgrading their qualifications as another form of professional development Cawood (cited by van der Westhuizen 1991:278) emphasizes that

A principal should never be suspected of being obstructive in any way as far as improvement in qualifications is concerned. Even if the educational leader becomes the least qualified member of his staff, he should always encourage his colleagues to utilize fully all forms of in-service training as this has a positive influence on teaching quality at his school.

### **2.7.1 Needs Analysis**

Effective professional development involves identifying and prioritizing areas for professional development in the institutions and for individual educators. This helps the school to develop effective professional development programmes. For Oldroyd and Hall

(cited by Kydd, Crawford and Riches 1997:30) “needs identification is the foundation stones of an effective staff development programme.” Authors like Bush and West-Burnham (1994), Steyn and van Niekerk(2002) state that needs analysis should be done at three different levels. The levels are as follows:

- Individual teacher
- Functioning groups, such as the SMTs and other subcommittees within the school
- The school as a whole

This study also sought to find out whether schools do conduct a needs analysis and if they do at what level do they do this.

### **2.7.2 Initiating and monitoring staff development**

Another role of School Management Team regarding Professional Development is that of initiating and monitoring professional development in their schools. According to Davidoff and Lazarus (1997:148) these “must be developed around the particular needs of the individual staff and the school situation and should be linked to the vision.” In addition, Tomlinson (1997:101) is of the view that a school-based continuous professional development programme should develop and accredit staff competence and ensure that the all staff possess the necessary underpinning knowledge and understanding. The developmental programme also helps support staff in applying knowledge in the performance of their managerial function. In addition to this, Wideen and Andrews (1987), state that the programmes should be continuous for them to be developmental.

In conclusion, development programmes need to address both individual educators needs and school needs. Furthermore, for the programmes to be effective they need to be monitored and evaluated in order to determine whether they are achieving their objective.

In respect to the role of the school Management Team it is also of interest in this study to determine to what extent members of School Management Team commit themselves to the implementation of continuous professional development.

## **2.8 Contextual Guidelines for Teacher Development**

### **2.8.1 The KwaZulu-Natal Education Department Policy Framework for Continuous Professional Development and Support Document.**

According to Addler and Reed (2002) the literature reveals that during 1970's and 1980's most of the non formal teacher development activity was in the Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) Sector, however, this is now changing. According to these authors "it is not only formal educational institutions that need to move into the role previously played by the NGO Sector, but also the provincial departments of education" (p32). The authors also suggest that there is need to develop a coherent framework for continuing professional development that integrates all forms of provision and include short courses providing formal qualifications. Their view is that this will help meet national teacher education and development needs.

The KwaZulu Natal Education Department Continuous Professional Development and Support Policy Framework (2003) is in agreement with the preceding paragraph. This policy is underpinned by the principles and values of the National Constitution and legislated policy. The principles that apply to this programme include equity, quality, efficiency, sustainability, partnership, lifelong learning, capacity, relevance and flexibility. The understanding is that for the KwaZulu Natal Education Department to have educators who can provide quality learning for the learners in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, it will have to ensure that continuous professional development needs to strictly adhere to these principles.

The Policy Framework document also emphasizes that an education professional, which is the educator in this case, is a lifelong learner who should have fair access to all opportunities for development, support and career progress. For example, all educators should receive sustained support from learning area specialists. This can be achieved

through partnership and collaboration with independent service providers as well as all education stakeholders such as Unions and School Governing Body members.

Whilst this policy document points out the importance of equity whereby all teachers should have a fair access to Continuous Professional Development and Support to redress disparities inherited from the past, it does however not provide guidelines as to how this may be achieved in rural and semi-rural schools where there are insufficient resources and infrastructure.

Furthermore, programmes which are flexible and appropriate to the needs, working environments, and social conditions of teachers are to be encouraged as laid out in the policy. However, literature recommends that for the programmes to be designed and implemented effectively; an appropriate structure should be put in place and be made accountable. This study also sought to explore whether there are such structures for implementing, monitoring and evaluating professional development in the sample schools.

The KwaZulu Natal Education Policy Framework for Continuous Professional Development and Support Document further stipulates a national requirement for teachers to annually participate in eighty hours of in-service professional development. This is to be through short courses that will empower education professionals with requisite competencies to respond to contextual needs that are identified at school level.

In this document the annual eighty hours allocated for professional development is not clearly structured in terms of how to use these hours. Furthermore, the issues relating to continuous professional development such as recruitment, selection, induction and mentoring need to be addressed. In addition to this, emphasis is not put in terms of all aspects that form an integral part of professional development such as attitudes, relationships and teamwork.

In 2003 The KwaZulu Natal Education Department Policy Framework for Continuous Professional Development and Support Document served as a guide for educator professional development and support in schools. In 2004 Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS) was introduced and implemented as an alternative system for this purpose nationally.

### **2.8.2 Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS) for school-based educators**

The purpose of IQMS, as stated in the *Education Labour Relations Council (ELRC) Collective Agreement Number 8 of 2003* is to identify specific needs of educators, schools and district offices for support and development purposes. It is also to provide support for continued growth. Furthermore, it is to promote accountability and to monitor an institution's overall effectiveness and lastly, to evaluate educator's performance.

The proposed school structures to play significant roles in the implementation of IQMS are as follows:

- The School Management Team (SMT) which consists of the principal, the deputy principal and education specialist (heads of department). The function of this is to ensure that the school is operating efficiently and effectively.
- The Staff Development Team (SDT) which consists of the principal, the Whole School Evaluation coordinator, democratically elected members of the School Management Team and post level one educator. The suggested number could be up to six, depending on the size of the school. The School Development Team plans, oversees, co-ordinates and monitors all quality management processes.
- The Development Support Group (DSG) which for each educator consists of his or her immediate senior and one other teacher selected on the basis of phase, learning area or subject expertise corresponding to the educator's practice. The function of this group is primarily mentoring and support of educators.

With regard to roles and responsibilities of the school-based structures, the KZN DoE Integrated Quality Management System for school-based educators (n.d.), stipulates that the SMT and SDT work together in all matters relating to IQMS and mutually support one another. This document further stipulates that the SDT needs to do the following;

- co-ordinate all activities pertaining to staff development
- prepare and monitor the management plan for IQMS
- liaise with the department in respect of high priority needs such as INSET, short courses, skills programmes or learnerships
- monitor effectiveness of the IQMS and reports to the relevant persons
- oversee mentoring and support by the DSGs
- co-ordinate ongoing support provided during the two developmental cycles each year, and
- complete the necessary documentation for Performance Measurement (PM).

The main responsibility of the DSG on the other hand is to assist the educator in the development and refinement of his or her Personal Growth Plan (PGP) and to work with the SDT to incorporate plans for development of an educator into the School Improvement Plan (SIP). The DSG is also responsible for the baseline evaluation of the educator for development purposes as well as the summative evaluation at the end of the year for Performance Measurement (PM).

According to the *Education Labour Relations Council (ELRC) Collective Agreement Number 8 of 2003*, the Staff Development Team must receive from all DSG's the completed instruments (and agreed-upon ratings) as well as the Personal Growth Plans (PGP's) of each educator by the end of March each year. From this and other information pertaining to school management and administration, the SDT, together with the SMT, must compile the School Improvement Plan (SIP) which groups teachers with similar development needs together. The purpose is to identify specific programmes which are a priority for the school and the educators in the school.

Once the District or Circuit Office has received School Improvement Plans in which each school highlights its specific developmental needs, the office must then incorporate these in its own improvement plan. Schools that have identified similar development needs can be clustered together for the purposes of providing INSET. The officials need to make necessary arrangements and inform schools of the venues, dates and times at which these programmes will be offered. The SMT also needs to inform educators about this and make necessary arrangements for educators to attend. The SMT also needs to assist with broad planning and implementation of IQMS and ensure that school self evaluation is done in terms of the Whole School Evaluation Policy.

## **2.9 Identified Professional Development Studies in Context**

The purpose of selecting these two studies was to look at the findings of other studies in relation to rural and semi-rural schools. The study that links with this is the research conducted by Stout (1996) which indicates that staff development in the public elementary and supplementary schools of the United States is generally misguided in both policy and practice. He further argues that in its current form, it represents an imperfect consumer market in which “proof of purchase” substitutes for investment in either school improvement or individual development. For example, teachers take courses and degrees and participate in workshops to build resumes. These teachers generally participate for salary enhancement, certificate maintenance, career mobility and for gaining new skills and knowledge to enhance classroom performance. Stout further states that content for staff development programme provides some combination of technical and interpersonal of organizational skills. Mentoring plays an important role in assessing the behaviour of a colleague as well as providing suggestions for improvement while, at the same time retaining a peer relationship.

The findings revealed that one of the challenges of staff development is that teachers in urban area have choices and exposures that teachers in remote areas lack. Because staff development delivery is labour intensive, teachers in remote areas must

often travel great distances, rely on local talent, or engage with a variety of “non-traditional” delivery systems.

Locally, Henley (2003) investigated the management of professional development at a secondary school in the City of Durban District. The findings in this study revealed a dire need for continuous professional development which will work towards upgrading educators for an ever changing society. The sample school did not, for example, receive adequate support for professional development from the Department of Education. Respondents felt that departmental courses were poorly run, uninspiring and a waste of time. The findings also indicated a need for the entire staff to be involved in the development process. The findings also revealed insufficient training for School Development Team as well as the ineffectiveness of School Management Team.

A survey conducted by le Roux and Ferreira (2005) on In-Service Education and Training(INSET) workshops offered in Limpopo and Mpumalanga Provinces in the field of environmental Education. The purpose of these workshops was to enhance the teaching skills and to introduce teachers in rural areas to the essence of environmental education and the role that formal environmental education can play to sensitize learners and enable community members to resolve environmental problems experienced in the community in order to support sustainable living.

Findings were that participants had common desire for presenters to provide environmental education teaching material, teaching aids and developed learning programmes ready for implementation. This suggests that teachers perceived themselves to be too inexperienced to meet the demands for the new curriculum and that they were reluctant to take the initiative in introducing new concepts and approaches to their teaching.

Teachers in these rural areas admitted that they often feel frustrated and demoralized because they are isolated. Presenting these workshops was an extremely rewarding experience for them.

## **2.10 Link between professional development and organizational development**

Professional development is very important for organizational effectiveness because part and parcel of organizational development. O'Neill et al (1994), for example, states that educational organizations depend for their success on the quality, commitment and performance of the people who work there. This implies that for the organization to develop it is important to invest in human resources through extensive professional development.

The ultimate goal of a school is to have effective teaching and learning. Professional development therefore creates opportunities for educators to upgrade their subject knowledge, expand their teaching and management skills, master new responsibilities and gain more insights which help them understand the learners and the context in which learning occurs. All this helps to ensure that learners achieve learning to the best of their abilities.

## **2.11 Conclusion**

It is evident from the above discussion that professional development is an ongoing process which helps educators to face new challenging situations. For example, it helps achieve this by fostering meaningful relationships and helping develop specific skills, knowledge and positive attitude that help improve both school and teacher performance. Indications are that this can, amongst other things be achieved through suitably planned and conducted professional development programmes for educators at all post levels within the school. The literature also points out that setting aside adequate time for teacher professional development is imperative as it will facilitate the developmental process so that there is ongoing professional growth and improved practices in every school.

From the above literature review, the questions that arose were whether professional development for educators were practiced or implemented in rural schools in particular, and whether all of the above were being addressed.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter is on methods which were used to investigate how educator professional development and support was perceived to be implemented in rural and semi-rural schools in the KwaMashu Circuit. Research questions were designed to explore the following: firstly, I wanted to explore educators' understanding of professional development. Secondly, it was to investigate structures in place for the purpose of such development in the sample schools. Thirdly, I examined the main focus for professional development in these schools. Lastly, I also wanted to explore the role played by the School Management Teams in offering professional development in the stated context.

I will firstly present the approaches that framed this study. This will be followed by a discussion on the research design which was deemed appropriate for an investigation into educator professional development and support in the afore-mentioned sample schools. This discussion includes issues relating to research approach and method, conceptual and theoretical location of study, targeted population and sample selection, research instruments used, collecting and analyzing data; consideration of ethical issues and dealing with limitations in this study.

#### **3.2 Research approach and method**

A combination of both quantitative and qualitative approaches was used in this study. Although a survey, which is quantitative, was used to develop the desired understanding, some aspects of case study methodology which is qualitative were also incorporated. The qualitative aspects helped make sense or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them (Denzin and Lincoln 2003). The purpose regarding quantitative approach, on the other hand, was to verify and increase objectivity and balance regarding findings from the subjective interview data.

Mouton (2001) states that the aim of using a case study, is to provide an in-depth description of a smaller number of studies. Findings from a case study may not be generalized. On the other hand, a survey is an extremely effective way of gathering data from a large number of cases from which generalization may be made (Lovell and Lawson, 1971). Cohen et. al (2000) refers to it as providing descriptive, inferential and explanatory information. A survey is used to learn about people's attitudes, beliefs, values, opinions, desires and ideas. The combination of both of these approaches and methods in this study therefore enabled both a generalisable and interpretive in-depth understanding of the attitudes, opinions and experiences of my participants regarding educator professional development and support.

### **3.3 Conceptual and Theoretical Location of Study**

Epistemologically, this study was framed by interpretive theory. According to Rador (2002) interpretive theory rests on the premise that in social life there is only interpretation. The interpretative theory was therefore important for this study because it helped me develop a better understanding of meanings, opinions, perceptions and experiences relating to educator professional development in rural and semi-rural secondary schools.

At conceptual level this study was linked with the human resource management approach to 'people' management as opposed to 'personnel' management. This approach sees people as important and indispensable assets (Lumby, Middlewood and Kaabwe 2003). This is particularly important in the field of education where educators are an indispensable asset and their being valued will increase their effectiveness.

Graham and Bennet (1993) cited in Gerber, Nel and Van Dyk (1995) compare the human resource management approach and the personnel management approach by stating that the human resource management approach involves the total development of human resources within the organization. Furthermore, this approach is concerned with the introduction of new activities and the development of new ideas. Lastly, the human

resource management approach has long-term perspectives and attempts to integrate all human aspects of the organization into a coherent whole, thus encouraging individual employees to have an attitude to strive for high performance.

On the other hand, personnel management has short-term perspectives and is generally concerned with the administration and implementation of policies. It also relates to its primary concern with the enforcement of organization rules and regulations rather than with bringing about loyalty and commitment to organizations goals. Human resources development theory is based on the premise that the employees of the organization are continuously helped in a planned way to acquire or sharpen capabilities required to perform various tasks associated with their present and future expected roles; develop their general enabling capabilities as individuals so that they are able to discover and exploit their own inner potential for their own and/or organizational development purpose; and develop an organizational culture where superior-subordinate relationships, team work and collaboration among different sub-units are strong and contribute to the organizational health, dynamism and pride (Rao 1985 cited in Saiyadain 2003).

In addition, the five different approaches to professional development, namely, the organic approach, ad-hoc approach, process-based approach, consultancy approach and objective approach, as presented by Bush and West-Burnham (1994) and discussed in the previous chapter, provided the analytical framework for this study.

### **3.4 The targeted population and sample selection**

The targeted population comprised of rural and semi-rural schools in Kwa Mashu Circuit. The sample consisted of three rural and two semi-rural schools in this population which was selected by means of purposive and convenience sampling. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000) refer to convenience sampling as opportunity sampling in which the researcher simply chooses the sample from those whom she has easy access to. Proximity, time and financial consideration, persuaded me to rely on non-probability, purposive and convenience sampling. The schools that I chose were located close to my place of employment.

The interviewees in all the schools' were the Principals or, in the absence of the Principals, the Deputy Principals. I chose the principals because s/he is the head of the School Management Teams. I also interviewed the chairperson of Professional Development Committee who is responsible for coordinating such development which I was investigating. I also interviewed a post-level one educator as a sample person attending professional development activities, selected by means of a random sampling. The rest of the educators also comprised a sample to validate the information gathered from the interviews.

### **3.5 Research instruments**

Two research instruments were used for gathering data, namely: semi-structured interview and questionnaires. (refer to appendices A and B).

#### **(a) The Semi-structured interviews**

The choosing of the semi-structured interview was persuaded by this instrument's capacity to provide freedom and flexibility in terms of the order in which questions are presented and worded (Lovell and Lawson 1970, De Vos, Strydom, Fouche and Delport 2002). De Vos and Strydom (1998), for example, argue that the researchers use semi-structured interviews to gain a detailed picture of a participant's beliefs, perceptions or account of a particular topic. Tuckman (1972) cited by Cohen et al. (2000) adds that semi-structured interviews provides access to what is "inside a person's head." Schumacher and MacMillan (1993) also adds that semi-structured interviews help build a relationship between the interviewer and the respondent.

I chose semi-structured interviews therefore because through it I was able to get closer to the interviewed participants as I wanted to know their conception, beliefs, opinions, experiences and interpretations, regarding the stated focus of my study.

Another advantage of using semi-structured interview is that it enabled me to "prompt and probe" responses from participants (Neuman 2000). This assisted me in

developing a better understanding of participants' views of professional development at their schools.

A battery operated tape recorder was used to ensure continued data capturing. Lovell and Lawson (1970:20) claim that "the use of tape recorder is undoubtedly the most convenient way of recording the results of an interview." There were nine questions that focused on the key concepts of the study that participants had to respond to. Semi-structured interviews preceded questionnaires. I viewed interviews as being exploratory. What I gathered from these interviews helped me with designing of questionnaires aimed at exploring the generalisability of the findings from the interviews.

#### **(b) Questionnaires**

Questionnaires were distributed to all educators who had not been interviewed in each school. According to Lovell and Lawson (1970), questionnaires are widely used in education to obtain information about current conditions and practices and to make inquiries concerning attitudes and opinions. This statement was in line with my research because I was interested in knowing perceptions, attitudes and opinions of educators concerning educator attitudes and opinions regarding the current practice of professional development in schools.

The strengths of using questionnaires in this study was that it was easier for respondents to respond to a questionnaire than to be interviewed by someone with whom they were not familiar and, therefore, not free to share their views. Moreover, this instrument enabled me to gather large quantities of information in a short space of time. Lastly, Middlewood et al. (1999:146) states that "an additional strength of questionnaires is the benefit of anonymity, particularly where criticism of individuals may be involved. Questionnaires allow staff to raise their voices whilst remaining anonymous."

Closed-ended questions were used. This means that questionnaires required the respondents to choose from answers given as options. Close-ended questions allowed for easy responses, coding and analysis. They also saved time because chances for irrelevant answers were limited to the minimum. The respondents had to tick the relevant box.

### **3.6 Pilot Study**

A pilot study was conducted in order to identify ambiguities and improve the instruments where necessary. Johnson 1994 cited in Middlewood et al (1999), state that respondents need to understand the questionnaire and find it relevant to his or her knowledge, experience and expertise and the researchers need to try out the questions before sending out the questionnaire in its final form. Questions related to this study were piloted in one of the secondary schools in KwaMashu circuit.

### **3.7 Data analysis**

The audio taped semi-structured interviews were first transcribed. The data gathered through these interviews were reviewed, coded and organized into themes and categories in order to get meanings and interpretations. Coding is the process of dividing the data into parts by a classification system (Schumacher and McMillan 1993). Questionnaires were, on the other hand, analyzed through frequency count. Frequency count refers to the system of transforming information obtained from the questionnaires into numbers by counting the number of respondents who give a particular response (Tuckman 1998). I then used a continuous counting scale to tally their frequencies and recorded their occurrences in percentages of grouped data, that is, frequency distribution tables. Schumacher and Macmillan (1993) claim that frequency distributions are very useful for answering many important questions as they enable quick identification of the most and the least frequently occurring scores.

### **3.8 Validity and Reliability**

According to Cohen et al (2000) the attempt to build out validity is essential if the researcher is to be able to have confidence in the elements of the research plan, data acquisition, data processing analysis, interpretation and its ensuing judgment. In this study, I employed both qualitative and quantitative methods for data gathering, namely: semi-structured interviews as well as questionnaires. The use of these two data gathering procedures enabled me to establish the validity of my research through triangulation. For several authors, like Denzin (1978) cited by Schumacher and MacMillan (1993), triangulation is defined as the cross validation among data sources. The use of the two

methodologies therefore was to ensure the validity of responses. Although semi-structured interviews are recommended in terms of probing purposes, questionnaires also strengthen the reliability, as the interviewee might disclose information that may not be so readily forthcoming in a face-to-face, more intimate situation.

### **3.9 Ethical issues**

Ethical consideration in this study began with obtaining Ethical Clearance from the University of KwaZulu-Natal to conduct my research. Cohen et al. (2000) suggest that official permission to undertake a research in the targeted community must be gained. In line with this, permission to conduct the study at the sample schools in Kwa Mashu Circuit was then duly sought from both the KwaZulu Natal Department of Education and the principals.

A letter of consent with a list of terms and conditions to abide by was obtained from the Department of Education Official. Letters requesting permission to conduct the research were sent to all principals of the sample schools. Permission was granted by all. (see appendices C, D, E, and F).

Emphasis was placed on accurate and complete information regarding the investigation so that participants would fully comprehend and be able to make a voluntary and informed consent for participation. Participants were further made aware that they were at liberty to withdraw their participation in the study at any time should they wish to do so. This was as informed by Schumacher and MacMillan (1993) that people should never be coerced into participating in research.

Participants were also informed that they had the right to privacy and that they had the right to decide when, where, to whom and to what extent their attitudes, beliefs and behaviour would be revealed. In addition to this, they were also told that the information received from them would be treated with strictest confidentiality and that participants would remain anonymous. Schools were therefore to be identified by means

of sample codes and participants were not to write their names down nor append their signatures on the questionnaires.

### **3.10 Limitations**

The study was conducted in five schools only. Findings of my research cannot therefore be generalized to all schools in KwaZulu-Natal. However, the KwaMashu Circuit has seven rural schools out of which there are three where the study was conducted. The strength of the study lies in the fact that it can be generalized to this circuit in terms of the number of schools found in rural areas. Furthermore I have also combined both qualitative and quantitative design. This enabled me to generate a better understanding in terms of qualitative and quantitative aspects.

### **3.11 Conclusion**

In this chapter, issues pertaining to the research design deemed appropriate for developing a better understanding regarding my study focus were presented. Also, forming part of the presentation were discussions on who the respondents were and how they were selected in the study. The chapter also included a brief description of the research instruments that were used for data gathering, the procedure that was followed when data was collected and analyzed. The next chapter focuses on data presentation and discussion of findings.

## **Chapter Four**

### **DATA PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSIONS OF FINDINGS**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

The purpose of this chapter is to present and discuss findings that emerged from data collected in this study through interviews and questionnaires. Hence the results of the investigation are presented in two sections, firstly, the interviews and then the questionnaires.

My intention in this study was not to compare educator professional development and support between rural and semi-rural schools but to develop a better understanding of this process in both contexts. Hence my data presentation and discussion of findings does not differentiate between the two. These findings therefore portray an overall view of how professional development is undertaken in both the rural and semi-rural sample schools.

The data of the semi-structured interview is arranged according to themes. For ethical reasons, the names of the school and research participants are kept anonymous. Rural schools are identified as R1, R2 and R3 while semi-rural schools are coded as SR1 and SR2. Interview participants comprised the principal, the chairperson of the School Development Team (SDT) and a post level one educator selected by means of random sampling. For school R1, I interviewed the Deputy Principal because the principal was committed elsewhere. The respondents are identified according to the numbers and alphabets allocated to their school. The principals are classified into their school area, rural or semi-rural and an added letter variable A, such that the rural sample school principals are noted as Respondent 1(R1A), Respondent 2(R2A), and Respondent 3 (R3A) and the semi-rural principals are identified as (SR1A) and (SR2A) respectively. The chairpersons of the school development team are coded as follows R1B, R2B, R3B, SR1B and SR2B. Post level one educators are classified as R1C, R2C, R3C, SR1C and SR2C.

The following table represents the codes for interview participants in rural and semi-rural schools:

School	R1	R2	R3	SR1	SR2
Principal	R1A	R2A	R3A	SR1A	SR2A
Chairperson	R1B	R2B	R3B	SR1B	SR2B
Educator	R1C	R2C	R3C	SR1C	SR2C

#### **4.2 Findings from Semi-Structured Interviews**

The following themes emerged from the data that was collected by means of semi-structured interviews. The themes are presented in terms of the key questions.

##### **Key Question 1: What do educators in the sample schools understand by professional development?**

These are the interview questions which were linked with this question:

- What do you understand by professional development?
- What do you feel are the benefits of professional development in general and in your school in particular?

The following themes emerged in terms of this key question:

##### **An understanding of professional development merely as a knowledge and skills acquisition mechanism.**

The theme that emerged in relation to the first question, which explored participants understanding of professional development, was that most of the respondents viewed professional development as a continuous process, whereby educators acquire and improve their knowledge and skills of teaching. The understanding of the respondents was further that professional development informs educators about new developments within the education system and arms them with new ways of dealing with learners generally and new ways of administering school work.

For instance, R2C said that:

Professional development is the programme designed by either the Department of Education or the institution to equip educators with skills and knowledge they lack. It also capacitates educators about new development within the education system. It should take place continuously.

Similarly to the above, SR1A stated that:

Professional development is the programme to develop teachers, to enrich educators with new knowledge so that they can go to class well equipped to achieve good results. It must be a programme which is continuous throughout the year.

On the other hand: SR1B stated that:

Professional development has got to do with the changes which affect the teaching profession, new ways of teaching National Curriculum Statement (NCS), new ways of dealing with learners generally and new ways of administering school work. It involves all levels of educators and it should be done quarterly in a school.

The respondents emphasized skills and knowledge as the most important things expected to be provided by the professional development in general. When I probed the respondents about skills they were referring to, they indicated that they were referring to skills of approaching the so-called National Curriculum Statement. The finding was that they conceptualize professional development as a programme which enriches educators with the knowledge they have to impart to their learners. This implies that in this way the educator broadens his or her professional horizon by acquainting himself or herself with the latest development in the education system. It is therefore the in-service training of all educators irrespective of their level in order to perform their duties efficiently.

The respondents' understanding is almost in line with Steyn and Niekerk's (2002) conceptualization whose view of professional development is that of an ongoing development programme that focuses on the wide range of knowledge, skills and attitude required to educate learners effectively.

However the findings revealed that the respondents' understanding was on curriculum only. This indicates a limited understanding of professional development. The respondents did not mention the importance of other aspects such as positive attitudes, healthy relationships and effective teamwork.

All in all, indications were that most of the respondents had a common understanding of professional development as being an ongoing programme which enriches educators with new knowledge and skills with the aim of equipping them to face current challenges.

### **The significance of professional development**

Another theme which emerged in relation to the benefits of professional development in general and in the participants' school in particular was that respondents viewed professional development as being beneficial to educators in their schools because it helps them to be in line with the developments of the curriculum. One respondent, that is SR2B stated that:

A teacher who attends professional development workshops always comes back being a better person because she or he gains confidence and her or his self-esteem is boosted. He or she becomes competent in his or her work and this leads to good performance in the school.

In addition to the above response, SR1A stated that:

In most cases when educators are developed professionally there is a substantial change in the behaviour because attitudes and human relations are also improved.

Besides what is stated by the above respondents, SR2C also said that:

Educators are able to share brilliant ideas and valuable information when they discuss issues of concern as well as challenges they encounter in their profession.

SR1C stated that:

An educator who is not developed or does not develop himself or herself, becomes stagnant and sometimes resists any change.

From the above findings, it is noted that educators in the sample schools regard professional development as of significance in their teaching since they are able to share ideas and valuable information with their colleagues who are in the same context.

**Key Question 2: What structures are put in place in these schools for the purpose of professional development and support in the sample schools?**

One theme emerged in relation to this key question, namely:

**Lack of effective structures for professional development in the sample schools.**

With regard to the question that sought to find out the structures that were put in place for the offering of professional development and support in sample schools, most respondents claimed that there were no proper and effective structures put in place for the offering of professional development and support in their schools. The structures which are in schools are STDs and DSGs as required by IQMS. To support this claim R3C stated:

Structures are on papers but how effective they are, is another question.

Similarly to the above SR1C said:

Structures are there but are not functional. I think the reason being that there is no proper plan in place. Teachers are also demotivated.

The above responses are an indication that there are no active and effective coordinators to steer the ship of professional development in schools. The lack of planning may be impeding the whole programme and progress of professional development in these schools. The existence of structures for professional development is emphasized by Moreland and Withington (1987), who advise schools to establish their own staff development committee to assist and work with the School Development Committee (SDC) in organizing and coordinating staff development.

R2B stated that the only structure that they have is the School Development Team (SDT) which was formed as a requirement for Integrated Quality Management System.

This team is expected to be responsible for the development of the educators as well as for the school improvement.

R2B stated the following:

Up to now I think we have run up to the dead end because right now what has happened is that, educators have indicated their areas of development in their Professional Development Plan(PDP) but no development has taken place. We have no skills to take the process further. There is really a need for an urgent intervention by the Department of Education.

The findings revealed that there is lack of capacity by the structures to perform their roles and responsibilities in the sample schools. This is contrary to the expectation of the Department of Education, as contained in the Education Labour Relations Council (ELRC) Collective Agreement Number 8 of 2003, which the structures operating within the school need to plan, oversee, coordinate and monitor all activities pertaining to staff development.

### **Key Question 3: What is the main focus for professional development in the sample schools?**

One theme emerged in relation to this key question, namely:

#### **Curriculum as the main focus for professional development in sample schools**

In response to the question regarding the main focus for professional development in sample schools the majority of respondents stated that the main focus of professional development in their schools is on curriculum development and curriculum transformation.

R3B said:

The main focus is on subject content and methodology.

Whilst SR1A, R1B stated that their main focus on professional development was on academic issues specifically the curriculum in general, R3A mentioned that the emphasis is on subjects like Mathematics, Physical Sciences, Travel and Tourism and Information Technology. After probing about the significance of these subjects, the

respondent stated that it was because the main aim is to afford learners an opportunity to further their studies in meaningful and relevant fields as required by our country.

The above view is not in line with Gazda, Asbury, Balzer, Chiders and Walters' (1991) who state that human relations or interpersonal communications skills are of primary importance in effective teaching, as well as in effective living. They further emphasize that the development of such skills must be given attention at least equal to that currently devoted to materials, methods, and media in programmes of pre-service teacher education. They further state that in-service education must also focus on further enhancing teachers' interpersonal communications skills.

One respondent, that is, SR2B voiced out her concern that:

Whilst the focus is on educators becoming the best practitioners in their teaching, it is also important that they should also be developed in areas such as attitude, human relations, communications etc so that there is always that rapport amongst them as they work as a team in a school generally. The way educators relate to one another in my school is sometimes not at all acceptable.

The above concern necessitates that educators need to be holistically developed. Professional development should incorporate all its aspects, such as attitude, relationship and teamwork. What was also of interest in this study was to find out to what degree these aspects were incorporated in professional development as they form integral part in teaching and learning.

#### **Key Question 4: What role do the School Management Teams of the sample schools play in offering professional development?**

These are the questions which were linked with this question:

- Are there any site-based professional development programmes in your school?
- What else can you say about professional development in general and about the departmental programme in particular?
- What challenges does your school encounter in providing professional development and how does it respond to these challenges?

- What support does the Governing Body provide in ensuring that educators are professionally developed?

There are five themes that emerged in relation to this key question, namely:

**The minimal role of the School Management Team in offering professional development.**

The theme that emerged with regard to the question on the role of the School Management Team in the sample schools was that of the minimal role by the School Management Teams. The majority of the respondents stated that there is no vital role played by the School Management Team. Newly appointed educators are not given any mentoring and induction. The respondents stated that in most cases the newly appointed are left to fend for themselves in their new environment. They further said the Heads of Department only specialize in their own learning areas or fields as a result they do not give enough support to other teachers of other learning fields within their department due to the lack of knowledge. Respondents also stated that educators are not given time to report back to other educators after attending the workshops because there is no time allocated for that.

R2(C) said:

I've been privileged to be a member of School Development Team, as well as the member of the School Management Team, there is so little that the School Management Team has done in addressing the needs of educators and their development. If I can say we have done A, B, C, I would be very unrealistic and being unfair to the question.

SR2C said:

I believe that School Management Team should be the people who are driving the whole development process in the sense that they are the ones who have to plan, organize and coordinate programmes to help develop the educators. They have to diagnose and analyze the needs of the staff, after which they have to organize relevant people who can address the needs of the staff. But so far nothing has happened.

Findings from these responses suggest that there is no vital role played by the School Management Team in offering professional development, since they are expected to spend quality time to thoughtfully plan and design effective teacher professional

programmes. This is contrary to the view of Garret (1997), cited by Tomlison, (1997), who suggests that leaders

Need to show commitment and active involvement to teacher development. By actively sponsoring teachers' new ideas and helping them to plan and prepare implementation, leaders are developing a supportive work environment. (p.31-32)

Contrary to the above findings, few respondents of which were the principals, that is, R1A, R2A, R3A, SR1A and SR2A, were of the idea that there is a role played by School Management Team in offering professional development, for instance, to quote one of them R2A mentioned the following:

The Heads of Department act as mentors because they are the people who have to ensure that in their respective departments' educators are empowered, and that educators are in line with the developments that are taking place in their learning areas. Newly appointed educators are placed under the care and guidance of the Heads of Department.

With regard to the question related to programmes which are site-based as part of the role that need to be played by the school management team the theme that emerged was the lack of school initiated development programmes. Most respondents in all sample schools stated that the programme that they have at the moment is that of Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS) which was introduced by the Department of Education and which also has to be conducted along the parameters laid down by the department.

R3A said:

We only attend workshops organized by the department which are not enough because they are once off events.

Similarly, SR1C stated:

Our school does not have programmes for professional development except that of Integrated Quality Management which was implemented two years ago. There is nothing tangible concerning programmes. Teachers try to develop themselves on their own and help each other; otherwise there is nothing we can identify as a programme in this school.

With regard to the programmes initiated by the school itself the respondents clearly stated that there was none. Educators in the sample schools only attend workshops organized by the department.

Contrary to the above SR1A claimed:

The school has a professional development programme which educators attend once a week although they are not faithful to attend it regularly. Sometimes we invite a member of the union to help us in some issues.

Though there were such claims that there were professional development programmes in sample schools, most of the respondents who claimed to have programmes in their schools were principals. I believe that they were referring to the programmes initiated by the District or Circuit. They could not state clearly the kind of programmes initiated specifically by the school.

### **Ineffectiveness of Site-based Developmental programmes including Integrated Quality Management Systems as a site-based development programme in schools.**

Another theme which emerged in relation to the departmental programme was the ineffectiveness of Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS), which is an alternative Departmental programme for professional development, most of the respondents indicated that it is not at all effective since it is linked with monetary benefit. At a managerial level and at post level 1, the appraiser (the educator) is the one who chooses the Developmental Support Group (DSG) within their school. The respondents stated that since there is rating scores that determine whether the educator is entitled for salary progression or not, at the end of the day the salary progression is 1% that matters to them and not professional development per se.

R2C voiced out his concern that:

We, as educators, were promised by the Department during the introduction of the IQMS that it was going to develop us in areas where we felt we should be developed. But up to now nothing has happened in terms of addressing educator's needs and the professional development.

In addition to this, SR2B stated:

It even creates conflict when an appraisee demands higher scores he or she does not deserve and that leads to unhealthy human relations in the work environment. Moreover, the programme is never monitored and no-one so far is held accountable. The areas of development that were identified by educators have never been addressed up until now.

The above findings revealed that Integrated Quality Management System is perceived as only being very good on paper but that it is not achieving its objectives. The view was that the members of the School Management Team do not seem to play any leading role as this is site based professional development.

### **Challenges facing schools in providing professional development and support**

In response to the question regarding challenges facing school in providing professional development and support the respondents indicated a non-availability of time for professional development and year plan of the school does not accommodate it.

R1C stated that:

The problem is time that is not available for professional development. Teachers always work under pressure to meet the due dates of the work expected from them. as a result, developmental issues are put aside.

Another factor which is impeding professional development as stated by the majority of the respondents was that they had to travel long distances from school to home, therefore they fail to utilize hours after school since they always rush for public transport. They further stated that, teachers are not willing to attend workshops if conducted on weekends.

R1A said:

Teachers are also not willing to attend workshops, more especially if it is during weekends because they feel it interferes with their own time.

Two of the respondents raised the issue of poor communication. Their responses were that there is sometimes a delay by the Department, the district or the circuit to send invitations to the educators to attend workshops as a result educators miss some of the workshops.

R3C claimed that:

We do not get invitation for the workshops in time. Sometimes you are told by other colleagues from other schools.

Respondents also stated that in other instances workshops are held in far places where it becomes impossible for the teacher to attend if the information arrives at the eleventh hour. Another concern was raised by one respondent who said that sometimes they are informed of some of the workshops verbally by other colleagues. It then becomes difficult for the School Management Team to allow educators to attend. They always want a circular to that effect. In this way they also become a barrier.

Respondents also said that there are educators who do not want to engage themselves in professional development activities.

R3A stated:

Some of the teachers are not faithful to attend workshops. Although educators go to the workshop venues it has been noted that they spend a few hours and simply disappear during the course of the session

Similarly to the above, R3A, said:

Some educators are also unwilling to involve themselves in programmes of this nature.

Respondents further alluded to the fact that some of the educators resist new approaches of teaching and learning. Although they sometimes comply but they always display a negative attitude. Some educators do not feel at ease to state their weaknesses. Hence it becomes difficult for the School Management Team to monitor and to render assistance to such educators.

Furthermore, one of the respondents stated that their school policy allows the educators to be assisted financially when they attend professional development

workshops but they have never been helped, they are always told by the principal that funds are limited they cannot use them. With regard to how they responded to challenges there was no substantial response to this.

Besides the above, the respondents also raised concern about structures like libraries and resource centres which are not available in the area.

### **Minimal contribution by School Governing Bodies towards educator professional development**

With regard to the question in relation to support provided by the School Governing Body in offering professional development theme which emerged was the minimal contribution of the School Governing Body (SGB) for educators professional development. One respondent, R2C, voiced out his concern that sometimes when the member of the School Governing Body sees an educator going out of the school premises during the school hours he or she thinks that an educator is going to attend to his or her personal matters.

He (R2C) also said:

I don't know of any support offered by the Governing Body except that they allow a certain amount of money from the school's budget to be used for the workshops.

One other thing that was raised by the respondent, R2B, was that the only problem with them is that they do not question whether the money was used fruitfully and also find out whether there is any documentary proof to that effect. However, four respondents said that the School Governing Body is supportive in a sense that they provide funds for educators to attend workshops in the school budget. So in principle they are supportive. One other thing that was raised by the respondent, R2B, was that the only problem with them is that they do not question whether the money was used fruitfully and also find out whether there is any documentary proof to that effect. This is support that one would expect from the School Governing Bodies in schools.

### 4.3 Analysis of the educators' questionnaires

The questionnaire was administered to all educators, except for those who were interviewed, in all of the five sample schools. Rural school 1 (R1), consisted of 10 educators. One educator was on special leave, therefore 9 questionnaires were distributed and all were returned. Thus the response in this school was 100%. Rural school 2 (R2) also had 10 educators, all of which completed the questionnaires. This translated into a 100% response rate. Out of the total of 27 educators that were targeted in rural school 3 (R3), only 21 responded to the questionnaires. This gave me a response rate of 78% in this school. . In the semi-rural school 1 (SR1) there were 20 educators who were initially willing to participate, but out of the 20 questionnaires distributed, only 13 were completed and returned. This gave a 65% response rate. Semi-rural school 2 (SR2) had a bigger number of educators, comprising 40, out of which 30 completed the questionnaires, thus a 75% rate of response from this sample school. All in all, there were 40 completed questionnaires from rural schools and a total of 43 from semi-rural schools. Out of the 110 that were distributed, this translated into an overall return rate of 76%.

Table 1A: **Respondents in all schools.**

	<b>R1</b>	<b>R2</b>	<b>R3</b>	<b>SR1</b>	<b>SR2</b>	<b>Total</b>
Deputy Principal	0	0	1	1	2	4
HOD	2	2	4	0	2	10
Educators	7	8	16	12	26	69
Total	9	10	21	13	30	83

Thus from the above statistics, out of 110 questionnaires that were distributed, 83 were completed and 27 were not returned. This gave me 76% total response, which is deemed adequate for a meaningful conclusion. For every answer, respondents were required to tick in the block corresponding to their views.

## Section A

**Responses to Section A provided biographical details of participants.**

### 1. The rank or position of respondents

Out of the 83 respondents, 14 (17%) were members of the Schools' Management Teams' (SMTs) while 69 (83%) were at Post Level One. The questionnaire was administered to all the different levels, except for principals, as presented in Table 1.

**Table 1: Respondents in all schools**

1.1 Deputy Principals	4
1.2 Heads of Departments	10
1.3 Educators	69
Total number in all schools	83

### 2. The teaching experience of respondents

The findings as presented in Table 2 below, indicate that 68 of the 83, (81,9%) educators had been teaching for a period that ranged from 6 to above 20 years and above. Thus the length of service points to the reliability and integrity of the responses in terms of familiarity with professional development practices at schools.

**Table 2: Participants teaching experience in years**

School	Less than 5	6 – 10	11 – 15	16 – 19	20 and above	No response	Total
R1	5	3	0	0	1	0	9
R2	1	0	6	2	1	0	10
R3	2	2	2	2	11	2	21
SR1	3	4	5	1	0	0	13
SR2	0	4	11	8	5	2	30
Total	11	13	24	13	18	4	83
%	13,2	15,6	28,9	15,6	21,6	4,8	

### **3. The area at which the schools were situated**

The responses indicated that 40 (48,2%) of the respondents were from the rural schools and 43 (51,8%) were from the semi-rural schools. The number of educators in all rural schools is less than the number in semi-rural schools due to the fact that the total enrolments of the learners in rural schools are smaller when compared to those in semi-rural schools.

### **4. Nature of participants' employment by educator**

The results reveal that 72 (86,7%) of the educators were on permanent positions and only 2 (2,4%) were on temporary posts. However, 9 (10,8%) did not respond to this question.

**Table 3: Nature of participants' employment by educator**

<b>School</b>	<b>Permanent</b>	<b>Temporary</b>	<b>No response</b>	<b>Total</b>
R1	7	0	2	9
R2	9	0	1	10
R3	18	1	2	21
SR1	13	0	0	13
SR2	25	1	4	30
Total	72	2	9	83
%	86,7	2,4	10,8	

### **5. Teaching qualification**

The findings reveal that almost all educators had the minimum qualification of matric plus a three year teaching diploma stipulated by the Department of Education. Policy Handbook for Educators (2003) states that in order to qualify for appointment as an educator a person must have at least a recognized three year qualification which must include appropriate training as an educator.

**Table 4: Participants' teaching qualification**

<b>Teaching Qualification</b>	<b>R1</b>	<b>R2</b>	<b>R3</b>	<b>SR1</b>	<b>SR2</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>%</b>
Less than Matric + 3 year Diploma	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Matric + 3 year Diploma	4	5	6	6	14	35	42,2
Degree + Teacher Qualification	3	5	13	6	13	40	48,2
Other (Matric + 4 year Diploma)	1	0	2	1	3	7	8,4
No Response	1	0	0	0	0	1	1,2

## **Section B**

**6.** Section B relates to the participants' understanding of professional development.

**6.1 Question: Do you understand professional development to refer to/ mean: knowledge acquisition, upgrading of teaching methods, workshops of changing curriculum, development in all identified needs, emotional and social development, all of the above or other?**

As presented in the table below, the findings were that the majority of the educators (62,7%) in the sample schools were of the opinion that professional development means knowledge acquisition, upgrading of teaching methods, workshops on changes (curriculum), development in all identified needs as well as emotional and social development. On the other hand, 12% of them indicated that professional development means the upgrading of teaching methods whilst 10,8% felt that it refers to workshops on changes (curriculum), 6% was of the view that it meant knowledge acquisition. Only 2,4% did not respond.

**Table 5: Participants understanding of professional development**

<b>School</b>	<b>R1</b>	<b>R2</b>	<b>R3</b>	<b>SR1</b>	<b>SR2</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>%</b>
Knowledge acquisition	1	0	1	2	1	5	6
Upgrading of teaching methods	2	1	3	1	3	10	12
Workshops on changes (curriculum)	1	0	2	3	3	9	10,8
Development in all identified needs	0	0	1	0	3	4	4,8
Emotional and social development	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
All of the above	5	8	14	7	18	52	62,7
Other	0	0	0	0	1	1	1,2
No response	0	1	0	0	1	2	2,4
<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>83</b>	

## 6.2 Question: How do you rate the importance of professional development for educators?

Data presented in Table 6 indicates that 89,2% of respondents rated professional development as being very important, whilst 8,4% rated it as being important and that only 2,4% did not respond to this question. This validates findings from the interviews where respondents also raised the importance of professional development. The results imply that educators are aware of the importance of professional development in their career. The above results are in line with Huberman and Guskey's (1995) observation in that while there hasn't been great recognition of the need for ongoing professional development, nowadays, in-service training and other forms of professional development are a component in nearly every modern proposal for educational improvement.

Table 6: The importance of professional development

School	R1	R2	R3	SR1	SR2	Total	%
Very important	8	8	19	13	26	74	89,2
Important	1	1	2	0	3	7	8,4
Not important	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
No response	0	1	0	0	1	2	2,4
Total	9	10	21	13	30	83	

## 6.3 How often should professional development take place in your school?

The responses, as presented in Table 7, indicated that 38, 5% of the participants felt that professional development should take place once a term. Twenty four percent of the educators felt that it should be once a month, 18% felt that it should take place fortnightly and 16,8% indicated it should be once a year. Only 2,4% did not respond. What is significant about these responses is the degree to which they relate to response in 6.2. For instant "once a term", does not appropriately relate to "very important."

**Table 7: Participants attendance of professional development**

School	R1	R2	R3	SR1	SR2	Total	%
Fortnightly	0	8	3	0	4	15	18
Once a month	2	1	6	1	10	20	24
Once a term	7	0	8	8	9	32	38,5
Once a year	0	0	4	4	6	14	16,8
No response	0	1	0	0	1	2	2,4
Total	9	10	21	13	30	83	

#### **6.4 Question: Who do you think should receive professional development?**

Data presented in Table 8 indicates that 98,8% of the questionnaire respondents, irrespective of levels, are of the view that all educators should receive professional development. This response reflects Bagwandeen and Louw's (1993) view that as long as knowledge about education continues to evolve and new techniques and devices are established, there will be something new for the teacher to learn, regardless of his qualifications or years of experience.

**Table 8: Educators who should receive professional development**

School	R1	R2	R3	SR1	SR2	Total	%
Post level one educators	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Heads of Department	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Deputy Principals	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Principals	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
All of the above	9	10	21	13	29	82	98,8
No response	0	0	0	0	1	1	1,2
Total	9	10	21	13	30	83	

#### **7 Question: How often have you attended workshops on professional development?**

Most of the respondents (79, 5%), pointed out that they did not frequently attend workshops relating to professional development. In addition to this, 6% of the

respondents implied that they have never attended these workshops whilst 1,2% did not respond.

**Table 9: The participants' attendance of workshops on professional development**

<b>School</b>	<b>R1</b>	<b>R2</b>	<b>R3</b>	<b>SR1</b>	<b>SR2</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>%</b>
Frequently	1	4	4	0	2	11	13,3
Sometimes	7	5	17	11	26	66	79,5
Never	1	1	0	2	1	5	6
No response	0	0	0	0	1	1	1,2
Total	9	10	21	13	30	83	

### **Section C**

This section relates to perceptions about structures that are in place in the sample school to address continuous professional development.

#### **8. Question: Who do you think should hold responsibility for professional development in schools?**

About 83,1% of the respondents said that professional development is the responsibility of the Department of Education, the Principal, the School Management Team and the individual educators while 12% felt that it is the responsibility of the Department of Education only. Only 2,4% stated that it is the responsibility of the School Management Team, whilst 1,2% referred it to the principal as being held responsible for professional development in schools. Individuals that did not respond comprised 1,2% of the participants. Although the majority of the participants (83,1%) felt that it was a combined responsibility of the Department of Education, the principal, the School Management Team and individual educators, the finding was that some (15,6%) of the educators did not view it as also their responsibility to develop themselves. This is contrary to the view by Pollard (2005) that effective teachers reflect about their own performance and progress and that of their pupils and take responsibility for their own ongoing development.

**Table 10: Educators held responsible for professional development in schools**

<b>School</b>	<b>R1</b>	<b>R2</b>	<b>R3</b>	<b>SR1</b>	<b>SR2</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>%</b>
The Department of Education	1	0	2	0	7	10	12
The Principal	0	0	1	0	0	1	1,2
The School Management Team	0	0	0	0	2	2	2,4
Individual Educators	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
A combination of all the above	8	10	18	13	20	69	83,1
No response	0	0	0	0	1	1	1,2
Total	9	10	21	13	30	83	

**9. Question: Do structures such as Development committees exist in your school to ensure that professional development takes places?**

Table 11 indicates that 44,6% of the respondents felt that structures at their school that were for the purpose of professional development were not functional, whilst 12% indicated that there were no such structures at their school. The former practice perception is contrary to Steyn and Niekerk's (2002), view that it is important to establish a professional development committee whose responsibility is to design and implement professional development programmes that are going to reflect the needs of all staff members.

It is also, contrary to the KwaZulu-Natal Policy Framework's (2003) calls for the establishment of sufficient support structures to enable educators to fairly access development and support programmes.

On the other hand, 42,2% of the respondent felt that structures were functional. The majority of the respondents therefore where off the view that structures were ineffective and this validates responses gathered from the interviews.

**Table 11: Structure that exist and function in order for professional development to take place**

<b>School</b>	<b>R1</b>	<b>R2</b>	<b>R3</b>	<b>SR1</b>	<b>SR2</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>%</b>
Exist and functional	6	4	5	4	16	35	42,2
Exist but not functional	3	5	15	5	9	37	44,6
Do not exist	0	1	1	4	4	10	12
No response	0	0	0	0	1	1	1,2
<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>83</b>	

### **Section D**

Responses to Section D provide the main focus of professional development.

#### **10. Question: To what extent does your school offer professional development in curricular needs, knowledge, skills, relationships, attitudes or emotional and social development?**

In analyzing and comparing all the listed aspects, I found that 36 (43,3%) of the respondents were of the opinion that curriculum needs were offered to a full extent. The other aspects were rated as follows: knowledge by 35 (42,2%) participants, skills by 43 (51,8%) participants, relationship by 39 (47%) participants' attitude by 37 (44,6%) participants, emotional and social development by 41 (49,4%) participants. Although the majority of the respondents indicated a high partial extent in all the concerned aspects, a combination of the percentages of those who stated professional development was not at all offered and those of whom were not sure including those who did not respond, carried a weight of negative response. What is contrary to what is suggested by Fullan (1990) cited by Kydd, Crawford and Riches (1997), that staff development is only effective if viewed holistically to include the personal and professional lives of teachers.

**Table 12: The extent to which schools offer professional development**

	<b>Full Extent</b>	<b>Partial Extent</b>	<b>Not at All</b>	<b>Not Sure</b>	<b>No Response</b>	<b>Total</b>
Curricular needs	36	35	8	2	2	83
Knowledge	31	35	11	2	4	83
Skills	18	43	14	5	3	83
Relationships	18	39	17	6	3	83
Attitude	16	37	19	8	3	83
Emotional and social development	11	41	21	7	3	83

**11.1 Question: Which aspect do you regard as most emphasized in relation to professional development in your school? Is it curricular needs, knowledge, skill, relationship, attitudes, emotional and social development or all the above?**

The majority of respondents (63,9%) were of the opinion that curricular needs, knowledge, skills, relationship, attitudes, emotional and social development are most emphasized for professional development in their schools whilst only 15,7% felt that it is curricular needs that are most emphasized in this respect. A few of the respondents (4,8%) felt that it is knowledge and attitude while 3,4% claimed that it is skill and relationship that were important.

These findings link with the views by Kyriakon (1991) that the reality of life of a teacher requires a prioritizing and monitoring of the whole range of issues (if he is to do) his job effectively. This incorporates healthy relationship and positive attitude within the school. Guskey and Huberman (1995) add that the emotional life of a teacher is central to teacher development. These authors' view is that this aspect can have negative effects with regards to teaching if not positively attended to.

**Table 13: The most emphasized aspects for professional development**

School	R1	R2	R3	SR1	SR2	Total	%
Curricular needs	2	1	2	2	6	13	15,7
Knowledge	0	0	3	0	1	4	4,8
Skill	0	0	1	0	2	3	3,6
Relationship	0	0	1	0	2	3	3,6
Attitudes	1	0	0	0	3	4	4,8
Emotional and social development	0	0	0	0	2	2	2,4
All of the above	6	9	13	11	14	53	63,9
No response	0	0	0	1	0	1	1,2

### **11.2 Question: Indicate your exposure to workshop(s) organised by the Department of Education on curriculum development.**

The response revealed that the majority of the respondents (59%) often attended curriculum development workshops, whilst 38,6% of the respondents said they seldom attended these. A mere 2,4% claimed to have never attended such workshops.

The above indicates that workshops on curriculum development are not being attended as often as they should. The importance of exposure to workshops according to Bagwandeem and Louw (1993) is the catalyst for changing behaviour in terms of building confidence, strengthening corporative efforts and working relationships' among educators. Also, workshops generate creativity and critical thinking. The findings therefore indicate that teachers in the sample not exposed to this as they rarely attend these workshops.

**Table 14: Educators' exposure to workshops organized by the Department of Education on curriculum development**

School	R1	R2	R3	SR1	SR2	Total	%
Often attended	4	9	12	7	17	49	59
Seldom attended	5	1	9	6	11	32	38,6
Never attended	0	0	0	0	2	2	2,4
Total	9	10	21	13	30	83	

### **11.3 Question: Indicate your exposure to courses on subject policy development and management.**

Only 8,4% participants indicated that they had never attended courses relating to subject policy development and management. About half of the respondents (44,6%) indicated that they were often exposed to such courses while another 44,6% also claimed that they seldom attended such courses. A small percentage (2,4%) offered no response to this question as presented in the table below. This reflects an imbalance of exposure to these advantageous courses where Bubb (2005) states that one of the big advantages of a course is that actually being out of the school building and atmosphere gives people some time to think and to reflect on their work. When well chosen, a course is one of the ways to gain a good level of professional development quickly.

**Table 15: Educators' exposure to courses on subject policy development and management**

<b>School</b>	<b>R1</b>	<b>R2</b>	<b>R3</b>	<b>SR1</b>	<b>SR2</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>%</b>
Often attended	5	4	9	2	17	37	44,6
Seldom attended	4	5	9	10	9	37	44,6
Never attended	0	1	3	1	2	7	8,4
No response	0	0	0	0	2	2	2,4

## **Section E**

This section on findings regarding questions that explored the role of the School Management Team in the sample schools.

### **12. Question: Indicate the role played by the School Management Team in the implementation of the professional development and support programme.**

In response to this question, 21,7% of the respondents felt that the role of the school management team was to only plan for professional development and support whilst 16,9% were of the opinion that the team was only required to develop a supportive work environment. However, the majority (55,4%) felt that School Management Team's role was a combination of the above. Only 6% did not respond to this question. This is in line with literature reviewed as the role of School Management Team is to plan and create

a supportive environment towards educators. A conclusion that may be drawn from these responses is that the School Management Teams in the sample schools play an active role regarding professional development as indicated by (55,4% and 21,7%), 77.1%.

**Table 16: Role played by School Management Team for professional development and support programme in schools**

School	R1	R2	R3	SR1	SR2	Total	%
Plan a programme for professional	0	2	5	2	9	18	21,7
Develop a supportive work environment	3	3	2	2	4	14	16,9
A combination of the above	5	4	12	9	16	46	55,4
No response	1	1	2	0	1	5	6

**13. Question: Are there any developmental programmes put in place by the school management team?**

The respondents who acknowledged that there were such developmental programmes in place comprised 49,4% of the participants whilst 41% had a “no” response. Only 9,6% did not respond to this question.

**Table 17: Developmental programmes put in place by the School Management Team**

School	R1	R2	R3	SR1	SR2	Total	%
Yes	8	6	8	5	14	41	49,4
No	0	4	11	4	15	34	41
No response	1	0	2	4	1	8	9,6

**14.1 Question: How would you rate the support given to educators by the School Management Team on professional development with regard to induction, mentoring and teamwork?**

Responses indicate that the participants were generally satisfied with the support provided by their School Management Team’s regarding professional development. For example, this was apparent with ratings in relation to “good” ratings for induction

(36,2%), mentoring (38,6%) and teamwork (37,4%). However these responses viewed the support from a positive perspective as opposed to that of the interviews which stated the minimal support.

**Table 18: The rate of support given by the School Management Team on professional development with regard to induction, mentoring and teamwork**

School	Very good	Good	Fair	Poor
Induction	10 (12%)	30 (36,2%)	25 (30,1%)	15 (18,1%)
Mentoring	7 (8,4%)	32 (38,6%)	22 (26,5%)	19 (22,9%)
Team work	11 (13,3%)	31 (37,4%)	26 (31,3%)	12 (14,5%)
No response				3 (3,6%)

#### **14.2 Question: Does the school management team offer educators opportunities to talk about their individual needs in relation to professional development?**

In response to this question, 37,3% responded that they were offered whilst 13,3% claimed that this was not applied at their own school. About half (47%) stated that they are sometimes offered opportunities to express their individual needs whereas 2,4% did not respond. These findings imply that opportunities of expressing educators' individual needs are not as available as proposed in literature. Steyn and van Niekerk (2002), for example, suggest that a thorough needs analysis of educators is required so that areas for development can be selected and planned. Their view is that involving teachers in helping to determine their individual development or training needs can enhance the success and effectiveness of the professional development programme.

**Table 19: Opportunities offered by the School Management Team for educators to talk about their individual needs in relation to professional development**

School	R1	R2	R3	SR1	SR2	Total	%
Yes	2	2	8	3	16	31	37,3
Sometimes	5	5	10	9	10	49	47
No	0	3	3	1	4	11	13,3
No response	2	0	0	0	0	2	2,4

**15 Question: Are educators encouraged by the SMT to attend external developmental courses/workshops, especially when they address identified school needs?**

The majority of respondents (72,3%) were of the opinion that they were encouraged to attend these workshops but 19,3% of them felt that they were only sometimes encouraged to do so with only 6% saying that they were not. Only 2,4% of the respondents offered no response. These responses indicate a full support from the School Management Teams. Literature reviewed stated that the School Management Teams need to encourage and support teachers to develop themselves.

**Table 20: Encouragement of educators by the School Management Team to attend external developmental courses/workshops, addressing identified school needs**

<b>School</b>	<b>R1</b>	<b>R2</b>	<b>R3</b>	<b>SR1</b>	<b>SR2</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>%</b>
Yes	7	7	15	5	26	60	72,3
Sometimes	0	0	5	8	3	16	19,3
No	0	3	1	0	1	5	6
No response	2	0	0	0	0	2	2,4

**16. Question: Are educators encouraged and given opportunities to cascade the information gained from the workshop(s)?**

The findings indicated that 49,4% were of the opinion that they were sometimes encouraged to cascade the information from the workshops, whilst 41% claimed that they were. A small portion (7,2%) felt that they were not encouraged and given opportunities to cascade the information while 2,4% provided no response. A conclusion that can be drawn from these responses is that educators do get opportunities to cascade the information although they feel that the time given is not adequate. This may hinder the process of sharing ideas, which is important in rural and semi-rural schools.

**Table 21: Time allocated for educators to cascade information gained from the workshop(s)**

<b>School</b>	<b>R1</b>	<b>R2</b>	<b>R3</b>	<b>SR1</b>	<b>SR2</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>%</b>
Yes	7	3	10	5	9	34	41
Sometimes	0	5	10	8	18	41	49,4
No	0	2	1	0	3	6	7,2
No response	2	0	0	0	0	2	2,4

**17. Question: Indicate the status of a networking programme related to professional development between your school and other schools.**

A quarter of the respondents (24%) stated that networking between their school and other schools did not exist at all whilst 56,6% said it did exist but was not fully utilized. Respondents proving no response comprised 2,4%. Thus implies that they had no knowledge of such a structure. Only a small fracture of the respondents (17%) indicated that they knew and fully utilized the networking programme. These findings are in agreement with Bubb's (2005) view, who insists that the opportunity to network with other teachers and broaden horizons is an important factor for professional development. This author's view is that meeting up with a wide range of educators can be of great importance and can give a broader perspective in teaching and that this enables educators to find out more about other schools.

**Table 22: The status of a networking programme related to professional development between your school and other schools**

<b>School</b>	<b>R1</b>	<b>R2</b>	<b>R3</b>	<b>SR1</b>	<b>R2</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>%</b>
Exists and fully utilized	2	1	4	2	5	14	17
Exists but not fully utilized	5	6	23	9	4	47	56,6
Does not exist at all	0	3	12	2	3	20	24
No response	2	0	0	0	0	2	2,4

**18. Question: Is continuous professional development allocated time in school?**

About a third of the participants (36,1%) noted that time is allocated for continuous professional development but that it was not utilized for this purpose. Another 36,1% stated that there is no time allocated at all for this purpose whilst 24,1% of the participants said that time is allocated and utilized. Only 3,6% of the respondents did not respond.

**Table 23: Time allocation for professional development in schools**

<b>School</b>	<b>R1</b>	<b>R2</b>	<b>R3</b>	<b>SR1</b>	<b>SR2</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>%</b>
Allocated time and utilized	3	5	5	3	4	20	24,1
Allocated time but not utilized	0	2	6	4	18	30	36,1
No time allocated at all	3	3	10	6	8	30	36,1
No response	3	0	0	0	0	3	3,6

**19. Question: Is there a resource centre in your area to support educators' professional development?**

Few of the respondents (10,8%) indicated that a resource centre was available and being fully utilized within their area, whilst 66,3% stated that such a centre did not exist at all. A fifth of the respondents (20,5%) said there was a resource centre available but that it was not being fully utilized. This finding is not in line with requirements stipulated by the KwaZulu Natal Department of Education Policy Framework (2003) which calls for the establishment of Teacher Resource Centres and library collections in all districts, particularly in previously underdeveloped parts of the province.

**Table 24: Availability of resource centre in the area**

<b>School</b>	<b>R1</b>	<b>R2</b>	<b>R3</b>	<b>SR1</b>	<b>SR2</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>%</b>
Exists and fully utilized	1	0	0	2	6	9	10,8
Exists but not fully utilized	0	1	3	1	12	17	20,5
Does not exist at all	6	9	18	10	12	55	66,3
No response	2	0	0	0	0	2	2,4

#### **4.4 Conclusion**

The majority of the respondents, 62,7%, understood the concept of professional development as referring to the knowledge acquisition, upgrading of teaching methods, workshops on curriculum changes, development in all identified needs, and emotional and social development. The findings further revealed that the respondents regard professional development as of primary importance in their teaching and learning. Their view was that professional development should take place once a term. However, findings from the interviewees indicated that their understanding of professional development is the acquisition of knowledge and skills and that the emphasis is on curricular needs only, furthermore it should be continuous as opposed to once a term.

With regard to structures (SDT's etc) 44,6% of the respondents indicated that there are structures but they are not functional whilst 42,2% of the respondents claimed that they are functional. The comparison of these two percentages indicates the ineffectiveness of these structures at the sample schools. In relation to questions pertaining to the main focus of professional development in the sample schools 43,3% which is the highest percentage of "Full Extent" was given to curricular needs while other aspects such as attitude, relationships are given less consideration.

As far as the role played by the School Management Team, respondents were generally satisfied with the support provided by the School Management Teams in terms of external workshops, induction, mentoring and teamwork.

The indication from the above findings is that educators in rural and semi-rural schools do not have sufficient access to professional development due to the lack of resources and long distances which they have to travel,

The summary of this study and recommendations emerging from findings are dealt with in the next chapter.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY OF THE STUDY AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter offers a summary of the study and recommendations emerging from the study.

#### **5.2 Summary of the study**

In this study I set out to investigate teacher perception on how educator professional development and support is undertaken and understood in three rural and two semi-rural schools in the KwaMashu Circuit. The focus was firstly, on the participants' understanding of professional development. Secondly, it was to find out what structures are put in place for the purpose of educator professional development. Thirdly, it was to determine if they were aware of the main focus for professional development and lastly, the role of the School Management Team in offering professional development and support in the sample schools.

The study employed both qualitative and quantitative design. The quantitative aspect was by means of a survey which was used to develop generalizations within the schools. The qualitative aspect on the other hand incorporated a case study methodology. The purpose was to develop an in-depth understanding of the issue of focus. Data was collected from three rural and two semi-rural schools selected through purposive and convenience sampling by means of semi-structured interviews and questionnaires. The analysis of the data from the interviews were reviewed, coded and organized into themes and categories in order to develop a better understanding of their meanings and interpretations regarding the participants' perceptions of professional development in their schools. Questionnaires were analyzed through frequency count. The limitation of the study was that it was confined to only five schools in one circuit. However, the strength of the study lies in the fact that it can be generalized to this circuit in terms of the number of schools found in rural areas and that the qualitative aspect offers a better

understanding regarding professional development in this circuit. Ethical issues were considered.

### **5.3. Conclusions**

This section is about conclusions emerging from the findings presented in the previous chapter regarding the key research questions in this study.

#### **Key Question One: What do educators in the selected schools understand by professional development?**

Conclusions drawn in this study were that participants' conceptualization of professional development was limited. For example, the participants conceptualized professional development only as a programme designed by the Department of Education to equip educators with skills and knowledge regarding new approaches and methods of teaching that currently relates to the National Curriculum Statement (NCS). The participants did not mention or include the importance of values and attitudes as some of the authors did in their definitions. However, the respondents' views were that professional development should take place continuously.

#### **Key Question Two: What structures are put in these schools for the purpose of professional development ad support?**

The conclusion in respect of this key question was the selected schools did posses structures would enable effective professional development. For example, the only structures relating to professional development that all sample schools had in place were the School Development Teams (SDTs), which were formed as a prerequisite for IQMS, initiated by the Department of Education. However, these structures were said not to be functioning as stipulated in the IQMS document.

#### **Key Question Three: What is the focus of professional development in these schools?**

Another conclusion in this study was that professional development in the selected schools needed a more holistic approach. The main focus for professional development in all the sample schools was on curricular needs, namely curriculum

development and curriculum transformation and subject content and methodology. It can be noted that findings, from both the interviews and questionnaires, were that aspects such as relationships, attitude, teamwork, emotional and social development are not given equal attention yet they form integral part of professional development. The emphasis is on curriculum needs only.

**Key Question Four: What role do the School Management Teams of the schools play in offering professional development?**

In respect to role played by the School Management Teams of the sample schools in offering professional development, the conclusion was that the participants felt that this was not sufficient. Data from the questionnaires indicated that participants were generally satisfied in terms of mentoring, induction and teamwork. The data presented however, that the participants felt that the SMTs conducted their role inadequately in terms of providing time for professional development in the year plan, whilst findings from the interviews revealed that there was a minimal role played by the School Management Team in terms of the above.

However, the respondents further stated that the Heads of Department assist teachers in subjects in which they are specialized in although they sometimes lack knowledge with regard to other subjects within their department.

Furthermore, the respondents felt their schools did not allocate time for professional development. However, the conclusion was that the SMTs in these schools did encourage the participants to attend workshops aimed at professional development and which were organized by the Department of Education through the circuit office. The respondents however viewed these workshops as sometimes being of no value to them. They therefore do not take them seriously because they feel that such workshops or development programmes are imposed on them as they are not involved when they are initiated. The feeling was that sometimes these do not address the specific needs for teacher development. It is obvious that in this case a needs analysis needs to be undertaken for the workshops to have a positive impact on developing teachers. For

example in line with this Fullan (1991) is cautious against one-shot workshops. His view is that these are ineffective as their topics are frequently selected by people other than those for whom the in-service is intended. He further states that the majority of programmes involve teachers from many different schools but there is no recognition of the differential impact and negative factors within the systems to which they must return.

The data also revealed that the educators are expected to cascade information gained from the workshops to the Heads of Department and their subject colleagues in their schools. Participants expressed their concern that sometimes they do not even get the opportunities to cascade what transpired at the workshops due to time constraint as they cannot interfere with the daily routine of the school.

#### **5.4. Recommendations**

On the basis of the above conclusions the following recommendations are suggested concerning educator professional development and support in the context of focus in this study:

##### **5.4.1 Educator conceptualization of professional development.**

It is recommended that the Education Department through their districts, circuits and wards attend to the misinterpretations of the educators' conceptualization of professional development by providing extensive in-service training. The feeling is that the misinterpretations may lead to malpractice.

##### **5.4.2 Professional development structures.**

In view of the fact that there is non functionality of the structures in schools, it is recommended that the programme for the promotion of the formation of effective professional development structures must be encouraged. The recommendation is that the Department of Education, through its specialists, need to consider monitoring and evaluating the role of the structures with the intention of providing direction for effective professional development in rural and semi-rural schools. The recommendation is further

that there be time set aside for continuous professional development in the school year plan and also be available on the time tables in these schools for structures to function.

#### **5.4.3 Focus of professional development in schools.**

Emphasis need to be on holistic development on the role of both staff and the School Management Team since, that is, an understanding which is going to incorporate all issues of professional development. The view is that this will help educators to be competent and confident.

#### **5.4.4 The School Management Team role.**

The above conclusions regarding the role of School Management Teams in rural and semi-rural schools suggest that SMTs in this context need to be encouraged and supported by the Department of Education through circuits and wards to play a more effective role in offering professional development.

In achieving all this, the Districts need to work in collaboration with provincial department to establish resource centres for rural schools to address educators' shortcomings such as lack of resources and travelling long distances to get information to upgrade themselves.

### **5.5 Recommendations for Further Research**

- This was an exploratory study of only five schools in KwaMashu Circuit. It is therefore recommended that a survey be conducted to explore educator professional development and support in all rural and semi-rural schools in KwaZulu-Natal.
- Furthermore, the KwaMashu Circuit also comprises of townships and semi-urban schools. It is therefore recommended that these schools also be studied if we are to develop a better understanding of professional development in the whole of this circuit.

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SCHEDULE  
SEMI – STRUCTURED INTERVIEW

**Title:**

***Educator professional development and support in three rural and two semi-rural secondary schools in KwaMashu Circuit.***

*The purpose of this interview is to collect information about educator professional development and support in secondary schools. The information you supply will be treated confidentially and will be used for research purposes in part of the completion of my M.Ed. studies*

It would be appreciated if the Principal or his/her Deputy, Chairperson of the School Development Team and one post level 1 educator avails himself or herself for an interview which will last for 45 minutes. This interview will be conducted in your school.

# Interview schedule

## Semi-Structured Interview

**NB: All information will be treated as confidential.**

### Questions

1. What do you understand by professional development?

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2. What programme does the school have for professional development?

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3. What structures are put in place for the offering of professional development and support in your school?

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4. What do you feel are benefits of professional development in general and in your school in particular?

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5. What is the main focus for professional development in your school?

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6. What is the role of the School Management Team in offering professional development?

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7. What support does the Governing Body provide in ensuring that educators are professionally developed?

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8. What challenges does your school encounter in providing professional development and how does it respond to these challenges?

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9. What else can you say about professional development in general and about the departmental programme in particular?

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## **QUESTIONNAIRES**

**It would be appreciated if the following participants complete this questionnaire.**

- 1. The Deputy Principal of the school.**
- 2. All Heads of Department**
- 3. All post level one educators**

**NB: Kindly provide as much details as possible to your answers**

All information on this questionnaire will be treated with confidentiality and the names of all participants will remain anonymous. Names of the schools will not be disclosed.

Participation is voluntary and you are free to withdraw at any time should you wish to do so. A decision not to participate will not result in any form of disadvantage.

## **Questionnaires**

### **Section: A**

#### **Biographical Details**

Please place a tick ( ✓ ) in the relevant block.

<b>1.Present rank or position</b>	
1.1 Principal	
1.2 Deputy Principal	
1.3 Head of Department	
1.4 Educator	

<b>2.Teaching experience</b>	
2.1 less than 5 years	
2.2 6 – 10 years	
2.3 11 – 15 years	
2.4 16 – 19 years	
2.5 20 years and above	

<b>3. Is your school situated in a</b>	
3.1 Rural area	
3.2 Semi-rural area	

<b>4.Nature of employment</b>	Permanent	Temporary
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#### **5.Kindly state your teaching qualifications**

Matric	
Matric + 3 years Diploma	
Degree + Teacher's qualification	
Other (State)	

## Section: B

### Educators understanding of professional development

6

#### 6.1 Do you understand professional development to refer to/mean?

Knowledge acquisition	
Upgrading of teaching methods	
Workshops on changes(curriculum)	
Development in all identified needs	
Emotional and social development	
All of the above	
Other	

#### 6.2 How do you rate the importance of professional development?

Very important	
Important	
Not important	

#### 6.3 How often should professional development take place in your school?

Fortnightly	
Once a month	
Once a term	
Once a year	

#### 6.4 Who do you think should receive professional development?

Post level 1 educators	
Heads of Department	
Deputy Principals	
Principals	
All of the above	

**7 How often have you been workshopped on professional development?**

Frequently	
Sometimes	
Never	

**SECTION C**

**Structures put in place**

**8 Whose responsibility do you think is professional development?**

The Department of Education	
The Principal	
The School management Team	
Individual Educators	
A combination of all the above	

**9 Indicate the status of structures put in place at your school to ensure that professional development takes place (e.g. Developmental committees)**

Exist and functional	
Exist but non-functional	
Do not exist	

**SECTION D**

**The main focus of professional development**

**10 To what extent does your school offer professional development in the following areas:**

	Full extent	Partial extent	Not at all	Not sure
Curricular needs				
Knowledge				
Skills				
Relationships				
Attitudes				
Emotional and social development				

**11 Which aspect do you regard as most important for professional development in your school? (e.g. curriculum, co-curricula activities, etc.)**

Curricular needs	
Knowledge	
Skill	
Relationships	
Attitudes	
Emotional and social development	
All of the above	

**11.1 Indicate your exposure to workshop(s) organized by the Department of Education on curriculum development**

Often attended	
Seldom attended	
Never attended	

**11.2 Indicate your exposure to courses on subject policy development and management by your school/department/phase.**

Often attended	
Seldom attended	
Never attended	

## SECTION E

### Role of the School Management Team

**12 Indicate the role played by the School Management Team in the implementation of the professional development and support programme,**

Plan a programme for professional development	
Develop a supportive work environment	
A combination of the above	

**13 Are there any developmental programmes put in place by the School Management Team in your school?**

Yes	
No	

**14 How would you rate the support given to educators by the School Management Team on professional development, with regard to the following?**

	<b>Very Good</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Fair</b>	<b>Poor</b>
Induction				
Mentoring				
Team Work				

**14. Does the School Management Team afford educators opportunities to talk about their individual needs?**

Yes	
Sometimes	
No	

**15 Are educators encouraged by the School Management Team to attend external developmental courses/workshops especially when they address identified school needs?**

Yes	
Sometimes	
No	

**16. Are educators encouraged and given opportunities to cascade the information gained from the workshop?**

Yes	
Sometimes	
No	

**17. Indicate the status of a networking programme related to professional development between your school and other schools?**

Exists and fully utilised	
Exists but not fully utilised	
Does not exist at all	

**18. Is continuous professional development allocated time in your school?**

Allocated time and utilised	
Allocated time but not utilised	
No time allocated at all	

**19. Is there a resource centre in your area to support educators?**

Exists and fully utilised	
Exists but not fully utilised	
Does not exist at all	

**Thank you for your participation in this exercise.**

## APPENDIX C



RESEARCH OFFICE (GOVAN MBEKI CENTRE)  
WESTVILLE CAMPUS  
TELEPHONE NO.: 031 – 2603587  
EMAIL : [ximbap@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:ximbap@ukzn.ac.za)

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16 JANUARY 2007

MRS. JN NKOSI (871874751)  
EDUCATION

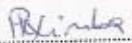
Dear Mrs. Nkosi

**ETHICAL CLEARANCE APPROVAL NUMBER: HSS/06665A**

I wish to confirm that ethical clearance has been granted for the following project:

"An investigation into continuous professional development and support for educators in rural and semi-rural secondary schools in KwaMashu Circuit"

Yours faithfully

  
MS. PHUMELELE XIMBA  
RESEARCH OFFICE

## APPENDIX D



PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL  
ISIFUNDAZWE SAKWAZULU-NATALI  
PROVINSIE KWAZULU-NATAL

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
UMNYANGO WEMFUNDO  
DEPARTEMENT VAN ONDERWYS

Tel: 033 341 8610  
Fax: 033 341 8612

Private Bag X9137  
Pietermaritzburg  
3200

228 Pietermaritz Street  
Pietermaritzburg, 3201

INHLOKOHHOVISI

PIETERMARITZBURG

HEAD OFFICE

Enquiries:  
Imibuzo: Sibusiso Alwar  
Navrao:

Reference:  
Inkomba: 0167/06  
Verwysing:

Date:  
Usuku:  
Datum: 24/05/2006

### RE: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

#### TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This is to serve as a notice that Joyce Nozipho Nkosi (871874751) has been granted permission to conduct research with the following terms and conditions:

- That as a researcher, he/she must present a copy of the written permission from the Department to the Head of the Institution concerned before any research may be undertaken at a departmental institution.
- Attached is the list of schools she/he has been granted permission to conduct research in. however, it must be noted that the schools are not obligated to participate in the research if it is not a KZNDoE project.
- JN Nkosi has been granted special permission to conduct his/her research during official contact times, as it is believed that their presence would not interrupt education programmes. Should education programmes be interrupted, he/she must, therefore, conduct his/her research during nonofficial contact times.
- No school is expected to participate in the research during the fourth school term, as this is the critical period for schools to focus on their exams.

for SUPERINTENDENT GENERAL  
KwaZulu Natal Department of Education

## APPENDIX E



PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL  
ISIFUNDAZWE SAKWAZULU-NATALI  
PROVINSIE KWAZULU-NATAL

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
UMNYANGO WEMFUNDO  
DEPARTEMENT VAN ONDERWYS

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Private Bag X9137  
Pietermaritzburg  
3200

228 Pietermaritz Street  
Pietermaritzburg, 3201

INHLOKOHHOVISI

PIETERMARITZBURG

HEAD OFFICE

Enquiries:  
Imibuzo: Sibusiso Alwar  
Navrae:

Reference:  
Inkomba: 0167/06  
Verwysing:

Date:  
Usuku:  
Datum: 24/05/2006

To: JN Nkosi  
University of KwaZulu-Natal  
Private Bag X03  
Ashwood  
3065

### RE: APPROVAL TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

Please be informed that your application to conduct research has been approved with the following terms and conditions:

That as a researcher, you must present a copy of the written permission from the Department to the Head of the Institution concerned before any research may be undertaken at a departmental institution bearing in mind that the institution **is not obliged to participate** if the research is not a departmental project.

Research should not be conducted during official contact time, as **education programmes should not be interrupted**, except in exceptional cases with special approval of the KZNDoe.

The research is **not to be conducted during the fourth school term**, except in cases where the KZNDoe deem it necessary to undertake research at schools during that period.

Should you wish to extend the period of research after approval has been granted, an application for extension must be directed to the Director: Research, Strategy Development and EMIS.

The research will be limited to the schools or institutions for which approval has been granted.

A copy of the completed report, dissertation or thesis must be provided to the RSPDE Directorate.

Lastly, you must sign the attached declaration that, you are aware of the procedures and will abide by the same.

for SUPERINTENDENT GENERAL  
KwaZulu Natal Department of Education

**APPENDIX F (1)**

F1702 Impisi Grove,  
Ntuzuma Township  
P.O KwaMashu  
4360  
29 March 2006

The Principal

Dear Sir

I am registered as a Masters student in the school of Education at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Edgewood Campus, in the current academic year. The programme is a two year degree which involves course work and dissertation.

I would be grateful if you could grant permission for me to undertake the research in your school next year (2006).

The dissertation would entail undertaking research in the area of Management. My research topic is:

**Educator professional development and support in three rural and two semi-rural secondary schools in KwaMashu circuit.**

The objective of this project is to develop a better understanding as to how continuous professional development is developed in rural and semi-rural school. It is also to contribute towards the knowledge related to staff development.

I would like to conduct the research as from April to May.

The study will involve interviews and self completion questionnaires. This will involve: The principal or deputy principal, Heads of Department and post level one educators.

A participant is at liberty to withdraw from participating at any stage and for any reason. A decision not to participate will not result in any form of disadvantage. Participation is voluntary. Participants will remain anonymous and the information gathered will be treated with confidentiality.

Should you have any concern about the project, please contact Doctor Thandi Ngcobo of the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Edgewood Campus on 031-2602494.

Thank you for giving attention to my request

Yours faithfully

J.N. Nkosi

Tel no: 031-5101039 (W)  
031-5092874 (H)  
0824855065 (cell)  
Student no: 871874751

<b>APPENDIX F (2)</b>
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**Declaration Form**

**I..... (full names of participant) hereby confirm that  
I understand the contents of the document and the nature of the research project,  
and I consent to participating in the research project.**

**I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time, should I  
desire.**

.....  
**SIGNATURES OF PARTICIPANTS**

.....  
**DATE**