

**UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU NATAL**

**AN EXPLORATION OF THE ROLE OF  
NIZENANDE DISTRICT TEACHER  
DEVELOPMENT CENTRE IN SUPPORTING  
PROFESSIONAL TEACHER LEARNING**

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## ABSTRACT

In KwaZulu Natal, District Teacher Development Centres have been set up in order to support teacher learning. This study explored how Nizenande District Teacher Development Centre (DTDC) supports teacher learning. The aim was to investigate what kind of activities teachers engage in, and what resources are accessible to teachers at the centre to enhance teacher learning.

This study was located within the interpretive paradigm and a qualitative case study design was adopted. Purposive and convenience sampling were utilised in this study. Semi-structured interviews and observations were used. I interviewed three DTDC personnel and three IsiZulu teachers from different schools in the same district.

The findings of this study indicate that the resources at the centre were not fully utilised by teachers due to the shortage of trained personnel to run programmes that require the use of the physical resources. Teachers said that they learnt new knowledge and skills from the activities that they engaged in at the centre. The centre offers a venue where teachers meet and learn collaboratively and hold meetings. Teacher learning at the centre is in two forms, one being voluntarily where teachers learn collaboratively in the PLCs, and the other where activities like School Based Assessment (SBA) and Curriculum Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS) moderation workshops, orientation workshop and final examination paper moderation that are imposed to them by the department. The professional development workshops at the centre seem to uplift teachers' knowledge and skills in order to improve learner attainment. After attending the workshops, teachers said that they improved their understanding of developing a proper lesson plan, learnt the new skill of marking and how to structure essay type question for learners' assessment tasks. They acquired this through engaging in several activities that were offered to them by the Department of Education district official. These activities were conducted collaboratively and teachers were allowed to participate in small groups thus enabling them to critically look at their challenges as IsiZulu teachers.

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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

This research explores the role of Nizenande (pseudonym) District Teacher Development Centre in supporting teacher's professional learning. In this chapter, I begin by providing an introduction to the study. This is followed by the background, purpose and the rationale of the study. In the next section, the research questions are outlined. The research methodology is briefly discussed and the chapter ends with a brief overview of the chapters in providing a global view of the study.

### 1.2 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

This study was conducted at the Nizenande District Teacher Development Centre (DTDC) in KwaZulu-Natal. It services schools which are mostly average and dominated by semi-rural to urban schools which mostly are fee-paying schools. There are 175 schools under this district that use the centre. The categorisation of these schools is as follows: there are 130 quintile 4 schools; 15 quintile 3 schools; 13 quintile 2 schools and 17 quintile 1 schools. Quintile 4 and 3 represents the least poor schools which have all the facilities and receives the lowest funding from the government. Quintile 2 and 1 are declared as poorest schools which do not charge school fees and receive highest funding from government. Quintile 1 schools from deep rural areas are completely disadvantaged in terms of facilities and they receive the highest funding from the government. Quintile 2 schools cater for the next poorest in that they are better resourced than those quintile 1 schools. Most of the schools in this district are dependent on government to supply them with human resources for teaching and learning and thus do not pay school fees.

This study investigated how Nizenande DTDC supports teacher professional learning as was instigated by the Department of Basic Education policy (DBE & DHET, 2011). A group of IsiZulu teachers were selected for the study based on my observation that they were consistent in their attendance at the Centre.

### 1.2.1 A BRIEF OVERVIEW ON HOW THE DTDC ORIGINATED

South Africa is rated amongst the lowest level performing countries in Mathematics and Science (Trends in International Mathematics and Science study, 2015, p.2). There are numerous reasons for the under-performance of South African learners. One of the many reasons is situated at the macro-societal level which results from various factors such as the high rate of unemployment, poverty and high rate of HIV/AIDS within communities and social and economic inequalities resulting from years of racial discrimination and injustice (Fleisch, 2007). A Medium-Term Strategic Framework (MTSF, 2014 – 2019) advocates that poor quality education has detrimentally affected black learners and thus prohibited them from access to job opportunities. This framework further elucidates that quality education is pertinent in eliminating poverty and social inequality and, therefore, promoting the country's economic development. The Annual National Assessment (ANA) was a diagnostic tool established by the DOE in ascertaining the level of maths and literacy in the schools (Bansilal, 2012). ANA did not provide the expected results in improving teaching and learning. Some researchers locate the problem to teacher qualifications, as they believe that South Africa is still currently appointing a big number of underqualified teachers (Mukeredzi et al., 2015). Therefore, teachers are the most important agents to the educational systems globally in improving the quality of education. Thus, the country requires teachers “who are well equipped to effectively discharge their roles” (Mukeredzi et al., 2015, p.1). Teacher learning has a significant role in ensuring that quality education is delivered to the learners within South African schools.

These inequalities gave rise to the Integrated Strategic Planning Framework for Teacher Education and Development in South Africa which was published in April 2011 by the Departments of Basic and Higher Education highlighting the significance of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) (DBE and DHET, 2011). This framework was established as a professional development initiative with an intention of improving teaching and learning in schools within South Africa. It was also aimed at overcoming difficulties experienced by teachers in accessing the resources and obtaining support, and access to continuing professional development programmes close to where they live and work. Therefore, DTDCs were established, which are physical sites in the districts around which are easily accessible to teachers from schools in the district. These sites were established so that teachers can access the resources, become meeting points for teacher professional learning communities (PLCs).

The DTDC's will manage the delivery of teacher development programmes (DBE and DHET, 2011).

Du Plessis (2013) maintains that the availability of resources to support classroom practice influences the quality of education provided by the teachers. Hence, the DTDC has tried to bridge that gap by providing various educational resources which might not be accessible to teachers in their schools. Such resources include a computer laboratory, internet access and a library. Therefore, the reason for conducting my study is to evaluate whether this centre is functional as well as in what ways teachers utilise the available resources, and how the Centre supports teacher learning.

The background of this study is suitable for exploring the role of DTDC in supporting teacher learning. Having discussed the introduction and background context, it is imperative to present the purpose of this study.

### 1.3 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to understand the role of the District Teacher Development Centre in the professional development of teachers within the district. The study further aims to explore the nature of teacher learning activities that teachers engage in at the DTDC to ascertain in what ways these activities support teacher development.

### 1.4 RATIONALE

The existing literature on teacher learning seems to fall short in explaining how district teacher development centres in South Africa support teacher learning and professional development. It seems there is no research that has been undertaken to establish how these centres support teacher learning and in determining whether these centres are operational in the South African context. Therefore, this study seeks to investigate the nature of teacher learning that takes place within the DTDC in Sisonke district. I also investigated how this DTDC fulfils the purpose it was set out for as per ISPFTED policy (DBE & DHET, 2011).

The motivation of the study emanates from my personal experience as a district official of attending district sub-committee monthly meetings in the centre but with limited understanding of what the centre is used for and any other purposes apart from the district and provincial meetings. I investigated what other activities take place at the centre and how does it contribute to the professional learning of the teachers. It seems that this kind of study has not been conducted previously in Teacher Development Centres in KZN. There is a dire need to conduct

research on how the District Teacher Development Centres operate. My research will, therefore, try to bridge the gap of this lack of information on the DTDCs in South Africa. Findings of this study could thus benefit district officials, policy makers, teacher development centre manager and teachers in the district as they could advance in their understanding of how the centre can assist in their professional learning. The rationale for conducting this study is to discover the potential of teacher learning in the DTDC, uncover the inference of using the available resources and to understand the nature of activities that take place in the centre as the teacher development strategies.

## 1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND SUB QUESTIONS

My primary question is as follows:

**How does Nizenande District Teacher Development Centre (DTDC) contribute to professionally developing the educators in their district?**

This primary question has led to sub-questions which seek to address the following issues:

- What learning activities and resources are offered in the centre?
- How do the available resources in the centre support teacher learning?
- To what extent do these learning activities contribute to teacher learning?

## 1.6 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

### 1.6.1 METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

This study adopts a qualitative approach which aims to obtain an understanding of how teachers learn in a district teacher development centre outside of their normal school environment. A qualitative research is an approach which seeks to explore and understand individual or group meaning assigned to a social or human problem (Creswell, 2014). Therefore, the researcher conducts the study in a natural setting, builds a composite holistic picture, analyses people's words and gives a detailed view of the participants. It is more descriptive as it works mostly with text and not numbers nor statistics.

### 1.6.2 RESEARCH PARADIGM

This study employs the interpretive research paradigm framework which involves a deeper understanding of human experiences and behaviour, and this paradigm is normally underpinned by qualitative research. According to Wilson (2013, p. 293), "it is a research

paradigm based on a view that all knowledge is based on interpretation and is seen as interpretive”. In the words of Nieuwenhuis (2007, p. 60) “the ultimate aim of the interpretive research is to offer a perspective of a situation and to analyse the situation under study to provide insight into the way in which a particular group of people makes sense of their situation or the phenomena they encounter”. The interpretive approach was adopted because the aim of this study is to inquire *how* the centre has developed teachers professionally as well as *what* activities are offered in the centre to develop teachers.

### 1.6.3 RESEARCH DESIGN, CASE STUDY

I selected a case study research design for this study. The decision to adopt the case study is to get an in-depth understanding of the participants. It also allows the researcher to understand the phenomenon from the participants’ perspective. A case study is defined differently by various researchers. McMillan and Schumacher (2010, p. 344) define a case study as “an in-depth analysis of a single entity”. Yin (2009, p.18) conceptualizes it as “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident”. In the context of this study, the case was the district teacher development centre, as a single entity. The purpose was to conduct a study on how teachers learn in the centre.

### 1.6.4 Sampling

Purposive and convenience sampling was used to select participants. Maree (2007, p. 178) defines purposive sampling as “a method of sampling which is used in special situations where the sampling is done with a specific purpose in mind”. Purposive sampling means that a researcher purposely selects the participants who hold the characteristics that can provide in-depth detailed information needed in the study. The participants were the centre manager, administrative officer and receptionist, selected with a specific purpose in mind because they work there and can provide detailed information about how the centre operates and how are the resources utilised. Convenience sampling is defined as selecting a sample based on the availability of the participants and where they are located (Merriam, 2009). Teachers who have attended the centre more than twice and residing nearby the centre were selected, based on their availability to be interviewed about the activities that are conducted in the centre and how these activities develop them professionally. The study focused specifically on a group of isiZulu teachers who came to the Centre often.

## 1.7 DATA COLLECTION METHODS

Methods of collecting data that were employed in my study are as follows: interviews, observations and document analysis. Data was collected by means of semi-structured interviews and the schedule was developed. Participants' responses were transcribed and analysed. The patterns and trends identified in the data were linked to the findings of other researchers and to the research questions.

## 1.8 DATA ANALYSIS

Yin (2003) posit that data analysis involves breaking data into different categories and searching for patterns. Content analysis was utilised in analysing data using the six steps that are involved namely: familiarisation with the data, coding of data, coding data into categories, reviewing of themes, categorisation and finalisation of themes. Data were organised into categories and themes from semi-structured interviews, observations and document analysis and then were analysed.

## 1.9 OUTLINE OF CHAPTERS

The study is arranged into five chapters presented as follows:

Chapter one presented an overview of the background of the study, the purpose, rationale and the research questions. The research methodology has been outlined.

Chapter two constitutes the literature review and conceptual framework within which the study is framed.

Chapter three elaborates on the research methodology of the study. Research design, data collection methods, including sampling procedures, allocation of participants as well as ethical issues/considerations are discussed.

Chapter four discusses the analysis of collected data through observations, document analysis and semi-structured interviews.

Chapter five presents the discussion and interpretation of the main findings of this study and the conclusions are drawn from the research questions. A summary of findings, recommendations and conclusions are discussed in this chapter.

## 1.10 CONCLUSION

Chapter one dealt with an overview of the background of the study, the purpose, rationale and the research questions. The research methodology has been outlined. The next chapter will focus on literature review and explore the conceptual framework of the study.



## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

The first section of this chapter describes the key concepts that inform this study, namely teacher professional development and teacher learning. The models of professional development are highlighted, followed by a discussion of the features of professional development in order to indicate which model is being adopted at the District Teacher Development Centre (DTDC) in promoting teacher learning. I will further discuss two perspectives of teacher learning that informs this study. The manner in which teachers learn as well as the types of teacher learning activities that teachers engage in during the process of learning as well as the available resources at the centre are discussed. I will conclude the chapter with a description of the theoretical/conceptual framework that is used in the study.

#### 2.2 WHAT IS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT?

Professional development is described as “the process of improving staff skills and competencies needed to produce outstanding educational results for learners” (Du Plessis, Conley & Du Plessis, 2007, p.100). Similarly, Avalos (2011, p10) describes professional development as “a process of learning how to learn, and transforming knowledge into practice for the benefit of students’ growth”. Therefore, professional development is a significant aspect of producing adequate knowledge needed by teachers in improving learner attainment. In the words of Ono and Ferreira (2010), professional development is a process that constitutes formal and informal learning in enhancing knowledge and skills in order to perform professional duties. Thus, professional development can be defined as a process whereby teachers enhance themselves with knowledge so that they can deliver appropriate teaching in order for effective learning to take place. Therefore, professional development is the fundamental aspect of inspiring change among teachers for the improved learner attainment in South African schools (De Clercq, 2008).

Teacher’s knowledge and practice influence what is learnt in the classroom and therefore have an influence on learner achievement (De Clercq, 2008). This assumption is also supported by Barber and Mourshed (2007, p.16) in maintaining that “the quality of an education system

cannot exceed the quality of its teachers". What teachers do in their classrooms and their professional knowledge impacts on what learners are learning. The National Policy Framework for Teacher Education and Development in South Africa (NPFTEd) emphasises that "all educators need to enhance their skills, not necessarily qualifications, for the delivery of the new curriculum" (Department of Education, 2008, p.4). It is then important to give emphasis on the fact that teacher professional development is an ongoing process where skills and knowledge are continuously updated and upgraded so that pupil learning is enhanced (Steyn & Van Niekerk, 2005).

Drawing from the above views of different scholars it can be inferred that professional development is crucial in enhancing teachers' knowledge, equipping them with new knowledge and refining their skills in order to effect change in the classroom practice.

The next section discusses different models of professional development in the following paragraphs.

## 2.3 MODELS OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

This section provides a brief description of the models of professional development, with their possible contribution to the improvement of classroom practice to the teachers in effecting change and improved learner attainment. Abadiano and Turner (2004) maintain that the traditional methods of teacher professional development including seminars, demonstrations, lectures and conferences produced little evidence of transference of knowledge to classroom practice. Dass (1999) maintains that traditional 'one-shot' approaches to professional development have recently been critiqued for being inadequate and inappropriate in the context of current educational reforms. They are also outdated with the recent research on teacher learning (Lieberman, 1995). The following section provides an overview of the various models of teacher professional development. Kennedy (2005) suggests that there are different models of continuous professional development, for the purpose of this study I focused on the training/cascade and mentoring/coaching models.

### 2.3.1 TRAINING AND CASCADE MODELS

The training model is seen as the most leading method of professional development currently because it affords teachers an opportunity to upgrade their skills enabling them to demonstrate their capability. This model is informed by the cognitive learning approach since individual

teachers receive their training off-site by an expert to improve their skills and knowledge. The teachers are usually regarded as passive recipients in this method of teacher professional development. This method also focuses on standardization as there is a central control by an expert. Knowledge-of-practice is transmitted in a decontextualized setting and there is no evidence of how this new knowledge has been transferred into teachers' practice (Kennedy, 2005).

The Cascade Model is defined whereby an individual receives training and disseminates information to colleagues (Kennedy, 2005). This model seems to link with the training model and it can be associated with a cognitive approach. However, with this method, information is cascaded down, unlike the training model where information gained by an individual is not transmitted to others. Individuals who attended a professional development activity go back to their schools and disseminate what they have learnt to their colleagues. Ono and Ferreira (2010) maintain that this model encompasses training the trainer method, as the information is cascaded from a guru to an expert and flows down to the teachers. Likewise, Chisholm (2000) maintains that cascading entails training of the education development officials who then cascade it to senior teachers, lastly senior teachers train teachers.

It seems that workshops are a common professional development activity at the DTDCs, which is why it will be important to understand to what extent these workshops support teachers' professional learning.

### 2.3.2 MENTORING AND COACHING

Fourie and Meyer (2004, p. 2) define mentoring as "a dynamic and reciprocal relationship in a work environment whereby a more advanced and wiser career incumbent (mentor) helps a less experienced person – usually not a direct subordinate – who has developmental potential (mentee) in some specified capacity". Likewise, Middlewood (2003) describe it as means often used to team a less experienced teacher with the experienced one in enabling the experienced teacher to share their knowledge and skills with the less experienced teacher. Therefore, mentoring can be referred to as a nurturing interaction between a novice teacher and a veteran.

Coaching, on the other hand, is described as "the systematically planned and direct guidance of an individual or group of individuals by a coach to learn or develop a specific skill that is applied and implanted in the workplace" (Fourie & Meyer, 2004, p.5). In the words of Whitemore (cited in Rhodes & Beneicke, 2002, p.301) coaching is "unlocking a person's potential to maximize their own performance. It is helping them to learn rather than teaching

them”. It is suggested that coaches need to be adequately competent to carry out a task and must be afforded adequate time during the process of coaching (Simkins et al., 2006).

Mentoring and coaching models are included in this study because knowledge sharing and guidance offered by veterans to the novice teachers at the Teacher Development Centre was investigated.

## 2.4 PROFESSIONAL LEARNING COMMUNITIES

In an attempt to define Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), Hord (2009) unpacks each of the three words making up the concept. Professional is a person engaging in a successful instructional program to enhance effective learning. Learning is a process of self-development employed by professionals for the improved understanding and growth in knowledge. The community is a group of people participating in activities which encourages them to learn from one another. The term ‘professional learning communities’ is defined as when teachers are ‘critically interrogating their practice in ongoing, reflective and collaborative ways in order to promote and enhance student learning’ (Stoll and Louis, cited in Brodie, 2013, p.6). It seems that PLCs refers to teachers reflecting collaboratively on their classroom practice in order to improve it and enhance learner attainment. Moreover, collaboration is defined as a shared formal gathering by a group of teachers engaging in learning (Brodie & Borko, 2016). The purpose of professional learning communities is to encourage teachers to learn to share ideas, share classroom practice and learn collaboratively (Hirsch, 2012). In the words of Steyn (2013), if teachers work together, they increase their chances of being exposed to new knowledge and ideas, and there is a great chance of their professional development to be improved.

According to the Strategic Planning Framework for Teacher Education and Development in South Africa, the district teacher development centres were envisioned to be the sites where teachers meet as PLCs for meetings and developmental courses (DBE and DHET, 2011). This study investigated whether the centre does provide a venue for teachers to meet as PLCs. The study aims to establish if teachers engage in activities collaboratively at the centre to improve their practice and skills and collaborate on the issues pertaining to teaching and learning for the betterment of learners.

In the next section, I describe the features of effective professional development.

## 2.5 FEATURES OF EFFECTIVE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

Desimone (2011) maintains that professional learning activities that the teachers participate in can improve their teaching practice, contribute to their social, personal and emotional growth and enhance their knowledge and skills. This links to the definition of the participative theory of learning which maintains that, “A learner should be viewed as a person interested in participating in certain kinds of activities rather than in accumulating private possession” (Sfard, 1998, p.6). This implies that teachers’ knowledge and understanding is enforced if teachers become part of an instructional activity.

### 2.5.1 DURATION OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

Desimone, Porter, Garret, Yoon and Birman (2002, p. 81) maintain that, “Professional development is basically an effort designed to ensure that educators are capacitated to teach in the high standard”. The authors further maintain that the duration of professional development activities should be long and consisting of more than one contact session and should involve follow-up programs. This assumption is supported by Cohen (2009) who believes that professional development is a ‘long-term’ process which enables teachers to reflect on their prior knowledge and link it to the acquired knowledge and therefore teachers learn over a period of time. Teachers should be given the opportunity to participate in the activities and enough time to absorb what they have learnt. The length of professional development activity plays a vital role in determining how learning occurs. Thus, isiZulu teachers were interviewed to find out how often they engage in the activities offered at the centre in determining whether the activities are conducted regularly.

### 2.5.2 ACTIVE LEARNING

This core feature concerns the opportunities provided by the professional development activity for teachers to become actively involved in their learning, such as engaging in meaningful discussions, planning, reviewing learners’ work, receiving feedback on their teaching and making a presentation as opposed to sitting passively throughout the lesson (Desimone, 2011). Greeno, Hawley and Valli, Putnam and Borko (cited in Opfer & Pedder, 2011, p. 385) maintain, “Teachers learn most effectively when activities require them to engage with materials of practice”. It is further argued that a professional development activity should engage the material that teachers use in their classrooms such as textbooks. This study investigated how teachers participate actively in the activities at the DTDC and if these activities encourage them to partake or whether there is a one-way flow of information.

### 2.5.3 COHERENCE

It is further argued that consistency should be maintained, and there must be coherence between what teachers learn or engage in at the professional development activity, and other professional development activities as well as with the school and departmental policies and teachers' goals (Desimone, 2011). The professional development activity should ensure that continued professional communication is maintained among teachers and integrates teachers' experiences that are in line with the state standards and assessments as well as teachers' goals (Birman, Desimone, Porter & Garet, 2000). The professional development activity should form part of teachers' daily program, in that what they learn from a professional development activity should be relevant to their syllabus and with what they do in class. Teachers were interviewed in order to determine if what they learn forms part of what they teach and if any new knowledge is gained during the process.

### 2.5.4 COLLECTIVE PARTICIPATION

Garet, Porter, Desimone, Birman and Yoon (2001) state that collective participation is intended for groups of teachers who teach the same grade, subject, are from the same school or are from the same departmental section. According to Atwal (2013) collective participation occurs when teachers interact with one another, through discussing each other's work, through sharing teaching strategies and through undertaking any joint learning. Birman et al., (2000) argue that this professional development activity has its advantages. The first one is that when teachers work collectively they are at liberty to discuss concepts arising from a professional development activity as well as the sharing of problems. Secondly, those teachers who teach the same group of learners are able to tackle their challenges of that particular grade. Lastly, if teachers are from the same school, section or teach the same grade are able to share the same course offerings, curriculum needs and therefore, assessment requirement is most likely to be met and enhance learner attainment (Birman et al., 2000). These authors are emphasising the importance of encouraging collective participation of teachers from the same school, section or grade as opposed to the individual participation of teachers from different schools. Hence, this study investigated the existence of PLC's, subject or grade meetings and if teachers are stimulated to share their teaching strategies in enhancing their classroom practice.

### 2.5.5 CONTENT FOCUS

Professional development activity should focus on improving and strengthening teachers' subject matter content knowledge (Desimone, 2011). This entails that a teacher development

activity should be aimed at focusing on a specific teaching technique for a specific subject and avoids the traditional teaching methods in order to enhance teachers' content and pedagogical knowledge of the subject matter (Birman et al., 2000). I will also observe if the programs conducted are designed such that they allow teachers improvement in the content delivery. Teachers will be interviewed to establish if they gained any new knowledge and new teaching strategies from attending professional development activities at the DTDC.

The next section looks at teacher learning in detail, since the purpose of this study is to explore the role of DTDC in supporting teacher learning.

## 2.6 TEACHER LEARNING

Kelly (2006, p. 506) defines "teacher learning as a process by which teachers move towards expertise". Bakkens, Vermunt and Wubbels (2010) define it as a process whereby teachers engage in activities that transform knowledge. Similarly, Tobin and Jakubowski (1990) define teacher learning as a process of change that transforms teachers' personal images. These definitions imply that teacher learning is an on-going process that does not stop and it brings about change in knowledge. Avalos (2011) highlighted that the definition of teacher learning is somehow similar to that of professional development in the sense that professional development is defined as a process whereby teachers learn how to learn and knowledge is transformed into practice for the improved learner attainment. This emphasises that teachers are the ones who effect that change in their classrooms.

It is maintained that teacher learning can either be formal or informal. Formal learning is the learning that requires proper planning where learning activities are structured and are completed within a specified time (Kyndt, Gijbels, Grosemans & Donche, 2016). Formal learning is defined as "a formal process such as conference, seminar or workshop, collaborative learning among members of a work team, or a course at a college or university" (Mizell, 2010, p. 5).

Marsick and Watkins (1997) define informal learning as the workplace learning which occurs subconsciously in everyday experience. Informal learning occurs when teachers learn in an unplanned, incidental and unintentional manner at work (Fullan & Hargreaves, 1992; Hodkinson & Hodkinson, 2005). Scribner (1999) identifies one type of informal learning as that which involves searching for information on the internet. Informal learning occurs spontaneously, without proper planning and incidental learning in daily experiences (Atwal, 2013). Hence, teacher learning can take place informally where teachers can have a post-

workshop discussion or by even observing one another during the professional development activity. It can also take place formally, where there is a facilitator who follows a structured programme with them. However, it can also happen that a teacher attends a formal professional development activity and not learn anything at all. In this study I was interested in finding out how teachers' learning is supported by attending the centre and engaging in different activities (both formal and informal) as well as using resources available there.

There are two theories of teacher learning namely: the cognitive approach and a socio-cultural approach, which further assist with a broader understanding of teacher learning.

### 2.6.1 THE COGNITIVE APPROACH

Putnam and Borko (2000) argue that a cognitive approach to teacher learning advocates a view of teacher expertise located in individuals' mind, and separates the acquisition of knowledge, skills and understanding from their practice. Cognitive perspective does not consider the context in which teacher learning occurs as well as individual teachers' identity (Kelly, 2006). According to the cognitivist approach for the novice teacher to become an expert, they need to learn professional knowledge and be able to apply it in classroom practice (Kelly, 2006). Cognitive theory supports a linear model of teacher learning in assuming that a teacher attends a workshop or a professional development activity thus acquiring knowledge and skills, which in turn, change their practice and apply what they have learnt in order to improve learner performance. This approach to teacher learning entails that individuals acquire skills; knowledge and understanding in one setting, often specifically designed for that purpose, and subsequently transfer it somewhere else. This is evident in the formally planned learning activities (Kelly, 2006). Therefore, teachers attending the centre engage in different activities in equipping them with knowledge and they are expected to transfer it to their own classrooms. The cognitive approach to teacher learning is concerned with the individual and the manner in which sense occurs in the individual's mind and accommodation of experience (Putnam & Borko, 2000). According to this approach, teachers who attend teacher development workshops gain knowledge at the centre and are then expected to transfer it to their classroom contexts. In this study I asked isiZulu teachers whether new knowledge gained at the centre is indeed being transferred to their classroom practice.

### 2.6.2 THE SOCIO-CULTURAL APPROACH

The socio-cultural approach holds a different understanding of teacher learning to that of the cognitive approach that knowledge resides within the mind of an individual. In contrast, the



socio-cultural approach maintains that learning is enculturated, and is about participating and interacting with other people (Putnam & Borko, 2000). Situated learning theorists posit that how a person learns and the context in which learning takes place becomes a fundamental part of what is learnt (Lave & Wenger, 1991). The socio-cultural theory assumes that the context in which teacher learning occur plays a significant role (Kelly, 2006). Likewise, Putnam and Borko (2000) concur that learning is situated and thus the physical and social context in which learning occurs forms a fundamental part of learning. They are of the view that knowledge is shared amongst people. Putnam and Borko (2000, p. 5) assert, “Learning is stretched over or distributed across teachers, students, conceptual artefacts (theories) and physical artefacts (books)”. This idea of teacher learning seeks to improve the linear model by taking into consideration the other complexities that influence teacher learning. Socio-cultural theories view “a learner as a person interested in participating in certain kinds of activities rather than accumulating private possession” (Sfard, 1998, p. 6). It is argued that teacher learning is not an individual entity but it takes place in a community of practice where teachers learn by sharing with other individuals in the community (Lave & Wenger, 1991). They believe that learning is bound to occur if it is group initiated, where learners share ideas and participate in a group. I observed if teachers learn in collaboration at the centre by participating in activities which requires them to interact with one another in moderation and workshop activities.

I concur with Sfard (1998) in maintaining that teacher learning is a process that should involve both cognitive and socio-cultural approach, as both are valuable to teacher learning. Cognitive approach alone is inadequate for understanding teacher learning since it does not take into consideration the social context in which teacher learning occurs. As Bertram (2011) puts it that teachers learn by both acquiring skills and knowledge as individuals and by learning collaboratively in the social settings. Hence, my study is informed by both these approaches as they are crucial in the process of teacher learning.

## 2.7 TYPES OF SELF INITIATED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Teacher learning is enforced by the support that teachers receive from the resources in which they themselves construct, from school or which they receive from out-of-school context (Hobbs, 2012). The following paragraphs outline different types of self-initiated teacher learning activities that teachers may engage in during the process of learning. There are three types of self-initiated learning which are knowledge exchanging, learning by experimenting

and learning by environmental scanning (Lohman & Woolf, 2001). These activities were included in this study with an aim to identify whether any of them are carried out at the centre.

### 2.7.1 KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGING

Lohman and Woolf (2001, p.65) define knowledge exchanging as an activity which involves “sharing and reflecting on others’ practice and experiences”. The main aim of knowledge exchanging and reflecting is to address teachers practice through feedback obtained from different sources (Kwakman, 2003). This is believed to occur when teachers share resources amongst each other and reflect on their experiences of classroom practice. Through the sharing of ideas and resources, teachers acquire knowledge, skills and strategies to deal with problems encountered in their practice and how they could address them. This study investigated whether teachers share ideas by exchanging information at the centre and whether physical resources are obtainable in order to support teacher learning and enhance change in their practice. This assisted in responding to research question 1 “What learning activities and resources are offered in the centre?”, as well as in addressing the third order outcome as per the conceptual framework which I describe later in section 2.8.

### 2.7.2 LEARNING BY EXPERIMENTING

This learning activity entails that teachers reflect on their experiences and devise strategies to amend their teaching practice (Lohman & Woolf, 2001). Learning by doing and experimenting means that teachers do not only acquire new knowledge but they implement new ideas as well (Kwakman, 2003). Research studies have revealed that structured activities that inspire teachers to reflect on their practice and experience are a useful technique in teacher professional development (Desimone et al., 2002). These activities are referred to as a reflection-on-practice where teachers reflect on their teaching experiences with each other in order to try out new techniques. In this instance, their reflections are, therefore, a tool for their professional development and enhancement of the skills in order to become more effective. I observed teachers’ interactions while engaging in activities, with an aim to see if reflecting on their experiences does trigger new awareness to new methods of curriculum delivery to answer research question 2.

### 2.7.3 LEARNING BY ENVIRONMENTAL SCANNING

This activity involves scanning of the external sources out-of-the school context learning environment in order to gain professional knowledge and skills and keep up with new ideas

and changing policies (Lohman & Woolf, 2001). Teachers engage in this activity by using available resources including searching on the internet for educational information relating to their subject, new methods of teaching and scanning of materials including pamphlets and worksheets in order to upgrade their knowledge. According to Guloba, Wokadala and Bategeka (2010), resources are the available tools used during a lesson or an activity. In the interest of this study, resources that are used include artefacts (books, pamphlets, charts, worksheets and computers) as well as the use of the internet. Teachers are able to collect new information from outside the school context. The use of resources does not only promote teacher learning and nurture understanding but it also transforms it (Putnam & Borko, 2000). This activity links with my study because, I investigated what resources are available at the centre, which links back to the research question three, which is, how do these resources support teacher learning.

The focus of my study is to explore what teachers learnt, the nature of learning activities that teachers engage in and how they use the available resources in the DTDC. These types of learning activities are useful for my study because they assist in addressing my main research questions and exploring how teachers learn using available resources at the centre and what do they learn. This study is prompted by the need to investigate whether the use of resources improved teachers' knowledge and skills as well as how this process unfolded. The policy document states that the DTDCs should be sites where teacher's access shared resources, sites where they attend CPD course and meeting points for PLCs (DBE and DHET, 2011). The literature reviewed that teachers use a variety of resources from within the school context and out of school context in their teacher learning (Hobbs, 2012). This study investigated if the activities and resources provided by the DTDC support teacher learning, as well as to what extent the teachers engage in self-initiated learning activities at the DTDC.

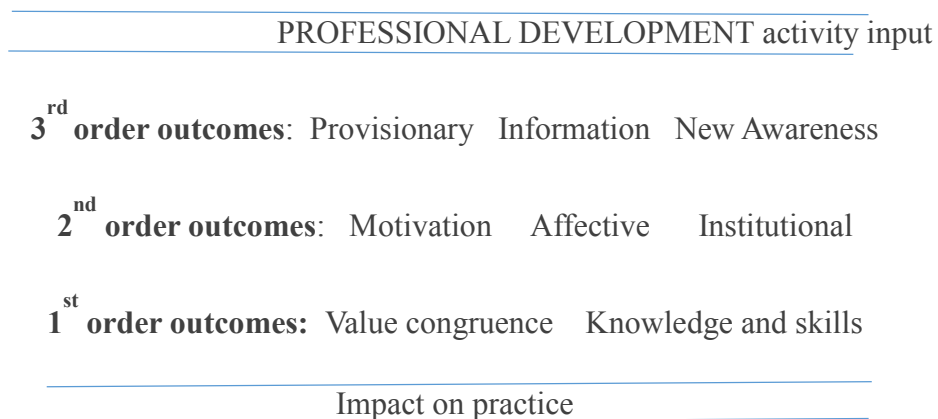
The next section will discuss the conceptual framework.

## 2.8 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The conceptual framework of this research adapted Harland and Kinder's (1997) model of nine INSET outcomes, which comprise of information, provisionary outcomes and new awareness (third order outcomes), motivation, affective and institutional (second order outcomes), value congruence, knowledge and skills (first order outcomes) and impact on practice. This framework is adapted on the basis that it will be used to describe the three levels of outcomes obtainable from a professional development activity upon interviewing teachers. It assisted in

investigating the extent to which the activities that teachers engage in and the available resources support teacher learning. Teacher professional development is intended for teachers to acquire new knowledge and implement what they have learnt to change their classroom practice thus leading to improved learner achievement. The following table of model of outcomes clearly specifies how teachers' experience the outcomes of professional development activities. It constitutes three levels namely: the first order, the second order and the third order outcomes.

Harland and Kinder (1997)'s model of PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT outcomes



The third order outcomes consist of:

- Material and provisionary outcomes, which refers to physical resources obtainable from a professional development activity such as worksheets, pamphlets and hand-outs. These outcomes can contribute either positively or negatively to making teachers change their classroom practice. Thus, obtaining these resources does not guarantee the change of classroom practice if the other outcomes are not yet realised.
- Informational outcomes relate to whether the knowledge acquired by the teachers at the professional development activity is relevant to the curriculum development as set out by the policy.
- New awareness pertains the manner in which professional development activity triggered any new awareness to new methods of curriculum delivery and created a perceptual and conceptual shift from the teacher's previous beliefs.

The second order outcomes constitute:

- Motivational and attitudinal outcomes which acknowledge the change in attitude and motivational factor resulting from the professional development activity. The focus here is whether teachers were inspired and motivated to implement new ideas or

whether they felt overwhelmed and demoralised after attending a professional development activity.

- Affective Outcomes concerns teacher emotions of a learning experience. It determines whether a professional development activity contributed to teachers' feeling eager in wanting to try out new methods of teaching or whether they felt disheartened. If they were excited, it means it is a positive affective outcome, which is complemented with knowledge and skills in order to implement what was learned. If they felt disheartened, they lack confidence and are demoralized after a professional development activity.
- Institutional outcomes, constitute that attending a professional development activity should result in a collective impact to groups of teachers and their classroom practice. There should be a shared vision and close collaboration among colleagues where the acquired knowledge is implemented in schools. There are consensus and support among the groups of teachers.

The first order outcomes include:

- Value congruence that seeks to identify whether the information received at a professional development activity matches with teachers' values and beliefs, thus enabling them to apply what they have learnt to their context. If that what was learnt from a professional development activity clashes with their values and beliefs it is unlikely for them to implement it in their school context.
- Knowledge and skills refer to whether teachers did gain a deeper level of understanding curriculum delivery methods.

Harland and Kinder (1997) maintain that a professional development activity should achieve all nine outcomes in order to lead to a change in classroom practice. If a professional development activity only represents only one order of outcomes and other outcomes are not met, it is, therefore, least likely to lead to a change in classroom practice. However, in this study teachers were not observed in their classrooms but the focus was on establishing whether the activities are designed in such that they improve teachers' classroom practice.

This framework was used to formulate the interview questions in order to determine different kinds of resources teachers receive and use from attending professional development activities at the centre and to determine to what extent, do they say these resources impact in their classroom practice. The aim of the interview questions was to establish whether teachers feel inspired to implement the new ideas learned, is there a collective impact on their

institutions and whether they gain any deeper level of understanding with regards to new methods of curriculum delivery after attending professional development activities at the centre.

## 2.9 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I discussed the literature pertaining to the key concepts that inform this study, namely teacher professional development and teacher learning. I highlighted the models of professional development and discussed the features of professional development in order to indicate which method is adopted at the centre in promoting teacher learning. This chapter further discussed two theoretical perspectives of teacher learning that informs this study, which is cognitive and socio-cultural theories. The ways in which teachers learn as well as the types of teacher learning activities in comparison to the activities that teachers engage in during the process of learning and the use of available resources at the centre was outlined. The chapter was concluded with a description of the theoretical/conceptual framework that is used in the study.

The next chapter discusses the research design and methodology.

## CHAPTER 3

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

#### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter explains the methodological approach and research design used to research a District teacher professional development Centre. It outlines the qualitative research methodology employed in the study. Moreover, ontological and epistemological underpinnings related to the research paradigm are highlighted. Following this is an explanation of the interpretive paradigm which informs this study. I then explain the types of the case study, its characteristics, strength and weaknesses and the sampling strategy used in selecting participants. Lastly, the chapter presents the data collection methods employed, data analysis, limitations, trustworthiness and ethical considerations of the study.

#### 3.2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

##### 3.2.1 RESEARCH APPROACH

This is a descriptive qualitative study which aims to gain an understanding of how teachers learn in a district teacher development centre outside of their normal school environment. Qualitative research is an approach which seeks to explore and understand individual or group meaning assigned to a social or human problem (Creswell, 2014). The author further maintains that the researcher conducts the study in a natural setting, constructs a composite universal picture, analyses people's words and gives detailed views of the participants (Creswell, 2014).

McMillan and Schumacher (2006, p. 315) assert that qualitative research is “an inquiry in which researchers collect data in face-to-face situations by interacting with selected persons in their settings”. Merriam (2009) further states that qualitative research comprises a variety of philosophical orientations and approaches. This means that the goal of qualitative research is to understand why certain behavioural patterns occur in the manner that they do and the meanings attached to it. The features identified in this definition are relevant to this study because it focusses on a small group of teachers who visit the teacher development centre to learn. Teachers were interviewed in order to gain their perceptions of effectiveness in using

the teacher development centre. The aim of the study is not to generalize the results to a population since it is a single case qualitative study, but to bring clarity on how people create meaning in a specific context.

The qualitative research design studies in depth one phenomenon of interest for the enhanced understanding of that particular phenomenon from the participants' perspective (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). The phenomenon of interest for this study is teacher learning that occurs in the DTDC. The qualitative approach is suitable for this study because it interprets teachers' perspectives of how DTDC supports teacher learning. Another reason for employing a qualitative approach is the fact that this approach uses a variety of data collection methods, such as interviews, observations and document analysis (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). All the mentioned methods were employed for this study. Thus, this research is a typical qualitative research because it uses different forms of collecting data, which yields to the richness of data which, therefore, result in a broader understanding of the phenomenon in question (Best & Kahn, 1993).

### 3.2.2 ONTOLOGICAL AND EPISTEMOLOGICAL UNDERPINNINGS

Maree (2007, p.53) defines ontology as the "study of nature and form of reality or truth". The ontological underpinning of qualitative research focusses on people's interactions and the motives behind their relationship (how and why they interact with each other). The findings are, therefore based on what the participants tell the researcher. Hence, in this study, I interacted with the teachers and other informants in the teacher development centre in order to make meaning of how the teacher development centre supports teacher learning.

Epistemology focusses on the method one employs in knowing the reality (Maree, 2007). Qualitative researchers such as Maree (2007) believe that the way of knowing reality is by exploring peoples' experiences regarding a specific phenomenon and by looking at human events holistically in an attempt to locate individual actions in their cultural context. Teachers were interviewed in order to discover how the activities that they engaged in at the centre assist them in becoming better teachers thereby interpreting their perceptions and make meaning of their experiences.



### 3.2.3 RESEARCH PARADIGM

A paradigm is defined as “a set of assumptions or beliefs about fundamental aspects of reality which gives rise to a particular world-view” (Maree, 2007, p. 47). According to Weaver and Olson (2006, p.460) “paradigms are patterns of beliefs and practices that regulate inquiry within a discipline by providing lenses, frames and processes through which shared framework of viewing and approaching the investigation and research of social phenomena”. Similarly, Neuman (2014, p.96) asserts that “a paradigm is a general organizing framework for theory and research that includes basic answers”.

This study employs the interpretive research paradigm which involves a deeper understanding of human experiences and behaviour (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2012). This paradigm uses qualitative research. In the context of this study, its purpose was to interpret the learning experiences of teachers at Nizenande DTDC. According to Wilson (2013, p.293), “it is a research paradigm based on a view that all knowledge is based on interpretation and is seen as interpretive”. The interpretive paradigm was adopted because the aim of this study is to inquire *how* the teacher development centre supports teacher learning as well as *what* activities are offered in the centre in order to develop teachers. This paradigm enabled the researcher to gain an understanding of teacher learning and the experiences of teachers attending the centre. There are certain methods of data collection, which are used by the interpretive paradigm; those include interviews, observations and document analysis (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2012). Therefore, this study used these methods in collecting data because they are within the interpretive paradigm.

### 3.2.4 CASE STUDY RESEARCH DESIGN

I utilized a case study research design for this study. The decision to adopt the case study was to get an in-depth understanding of the participants. McMillan and Schumacher (2010, p. 344) define a case study as “an in-depth analysis of a single entity”. Yin (2009, p.18) conceptualizes it as “an empirical enquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident”. Similarly, Rule and John (2011) attest that a case study is an in-depth methodical study of a specific case in order to yield information. Moreover, Merriam (2008, p. 40) affirms that by defining a case study as “an in-depth exploration of a bounded system (e.g. activity, event, process or individuals) based on extensive data collection”. Therefore, if the phenomenon under investigation is not intrinsically bounded it is then not a case. This study

explored the role that the DTDC played in supporting teacher learning thus revealing the bounded characteristics of a qualitative case study.

Similarly, Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2012) maintain that case studies can be subjective because they rely on the researcher's interpretation of what he or she observed. Yin (2009) defines a case study involving exploration of a phenomenon by employing various data collection methods. In this regard, a researcher is enabled to observe multiple qualities of a phenomenon in question. In this study, more than one tool for collecting data was used namely: interviews; observations and document analysis.

#### 3.2.4.1 TYPES OF CASE STUDIES

Several scholars have classified case studies according to different types. Stake (cited in Cohen et al., (2012) classifies three main types of case studies: intrinsic case studies, instrumental case studies and collective case studies. On the same note, Yin (2009) classifies three types of case studies namely: exploratory, descriptive and explanatory. The exploratory case study is a condensed case studies executed prior to a large-scale investigation has been implemented. A descriptive case study is detailed and focused whereby questions and prepositions about a phenomenon are carefully analysed and expressed at the inception. The explanatory case study does not only explore and describe the phenomenon but it can also be employed in order to explain casual relationships and develop a theory. In this study, the exploratory case study was employed as it is an appropriate research design. It was aimed at conducting an in-depth study of teachers in order to explore teacher learning that takes place at the DTDC.

#### 3.2.4.2 CHARACTERISTICS AND FEATURES OF CASE STUDIES

Merriam (2009) distinguishes three characteristics of case study: particularistic, descriptive and heuristic. The particularistic feature infers that a case study focusses on a particular event, situation or educational phenomenon that the researcher intends to investigate. The case itself becomes imperative for what it represents or what it might reveal about the phenomenon. The descriptive feature implies that the end product of a case study becomes a rich description of the phenomenon that is investigated. Therefore, the findings of this study will provide a rich description of how DTDC supports teacher learning. Lastly, the heuristic feature entails that a case study can provide meaningful insight that enhances knowledge of potential readers about the phenomenon under investigation and new meanings can be discovered and can be confirmed.

Hitchcock and Hughes (cited in Qi, 2009) share the same sentiments as Merriam (2009) in maintaining that there are various features of case studies which are: They provide the composite description of events about the topic under investigation as well as their analysis. They provide a rich description of events of the cases under investigation presented in a written report form. Individuals or groups become their main focus in order to obtain their understanding and perception of events and the researcher becomes the fundamental part of the case under investigation. They attempt to provide a rich case when presenting a report.

#### 3.2.4.3 STRENGTH AND WEAKNESSES OF CASE STUDIES

All research designs can be defined in terms of their comparative strength and weaknesses. Nisbet and Watt (cited in Qi, 2009) provide further clarity on the advantages of using a case study approach in research. These advantages notably are: case studies are understandable to the public as they are written in the simple and everyday language; they can be assumed by a single researcher without relying on the whole team for assistance and they are comprehensible and are truthful. Maree (2007) views the ability of a case study to apply multiple sources and methods for collecting data as one of its strengths. However, the author also views a case study to be dependable on a single case as its weakness because it makes it difficult to generalize the results.

Nisbet and Watt (cited in Qi, 2009) concur that the findings may not be generalized except for the case where they are used for additional research by other researchers. The latter authors further identify a few of these weaknesses by indicating that despite endeavours to address flexibility, however, the results can easily be influenced by the researcher's biases and subjectivity. In addition, they maintain that it is not easy to validate the results and thus are inclined to be influenced by the researcher's biases. In conducting my study, I have used the strengths to the best of my ability and take into consideration the weaknesses entailed by the case study.

### 3.3 SAMPLING STRATEGY

This section discusses the procedure used in selecting participants. Purposive and convenience sampling was employed to select participants. Maree (2007, p.178) describes purposive sampling as "a method of sampling which is used in special situations where the sampling is done with a specific purpose in mind". Participants who hold specific characteristics needed for the research study are 'handpicked' (Cohen et al., 2012). Likewise, Curtis et al., (2014) posit that in a purposive sampling, a researcher selects participants who have more information

on the topic in question. The DTDC centre manager, an administrative officer and the receptionist were selected because they work there and would be able to provide information on how the teacher development centre operates.

Convenience sampling is defined as selecting a sample of participants based on their availability and where they are located (Merriam, 2009). Cohen et al., (2012) advocate that convenience sampling is sometimes named accidental sampling which involves selecting the closest or easily available individuals as your participants. Three isiZulu teachers who have visited the centre more than twice were conveniently selected because they were easy to find at the centre to shed light as to what activities are conducted in the centre and how these activities develop them professionally. The participants in this study were easy to locate since they were all from the neighbouring schools, which was convenient for me to contact them for follow up interviews. Cresswell (2014) and Neuman (2014) both concur that the selection of participants is based on the fact that participants are readily available and conveniently accessible and possesses the characteristics needed for the study.

### 3.3.1 PROFILING OF PARTICIPATED DTDC PERSONNEL

**Table 1: Profile of the district teacher development centre personnel**

<b>Participant</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Designation</b>	<b>Post Level</b>	<b>Qualifications</b>	<b>Work Experience</b>
1	F	Centre Manager	12	HED (Library Science)	35
2	F	Receptionist	5	Public Relations	28
3	M	Administrative Officer	7	BTech (HRM)	14

### 3.3.2 PROFILING OF PARTICIPATING TEACHERS

**Table 2: Profile of IsiZulu Teachers**

Teacher	Gender	School	Post Level	Qualifications	Teaching Experience
Mpume	F	Freedom H.	1	B.Ed	1
Londiwe	F	Sunshine H.	1	BCOM, PGCE	13
Nathi	M	Excellence H.	1	BA, BED(Honours)	19

The Centre Manager has been working for the Department of Education for 35 years. Out of the 35 years, she has been teaching for 28 years and has been a Centre Manager for 7 years. She initially qualified for a Secondary Teachers' Diploma in Education (STD). Whilst teaching, she furthered her studies and obtained a Higher Diploma in Education (HED) in Library Science.

The receptionist has been working at the nearby Primary school for 8 years before she was appointed at the centre. She joined the centre in 1985 before it was converted into a District Teacher Development Centre and has been working there up to date. She holds a Public Relations Diploma which she obtained from a Further Education and Training College.

The Administrative Officer has been working for the Department of Education for 7 years. He was previously employed at a District Office for 3 years before he joined the centre. He holds a Diploma in Human Resource Management (HRM) and later furthered his studies and obtained a BTech Diploma.

Mpume is a novice teacher who has been teaching for a year. She holds a Bachelor of Education Degree and has just started her teaching career at Freedom High School.

Londiwe has been teaching for 13 years in three different schools. She started teaching at Sunshine High 3 years ago. She holds a Bachelor of Commerce Degree and a Post Graduate Certificate in Education.

Nathi has an experience of 19 years in the teaching profession and has taught in various schools. He started teaching in Excellence High in 2008. He holds a Bachelor of Arts Degree and Bachelor of Education (BEd Honours Degree).

## 3.4 DATA COLLECTION METHODS

Methods of collecting data employed in this study are interviews, observations and document analysis.

### 3.4.1 INTERVIEWS

An interview is defined as interview as “a two-way conversation in which the interviewer asks the participant questions to collect data and learn about the ideas, beliefs, views, opinions and behaviours of the participant” (Maree, 2007, p. 87), enabling the interviewer to view the world through the eyes of the interviewee. (Refer to Appendix A for the interview schedule). The author identifies three types of interviews in qualitative research namely: open-ended, semi-structured and structured interviews. Moreover, McMillan and Schumacher (2010) categorise interviews into three types: the informal conversational interview, the interview guide approach and the standardised open-ended interview. The author further mentions that the interviewer can use probing strategies for clarification and for verification of whether what the interviewer heard is exactly what has been said by the interviewee.

In the context of this study, a semi-structured interview was selected and an interview schedule was developed with the assistance of four fellow Master of Education students. The interview questions in the schedule were formulated according to the research questions and probing was guided by what transpired during the interview process. A semi-structured interview is defined as - an interview which “usually require the participants to answer a set of predetermined questions” (Maree, 2007, p. 87). This type of interview allows for probing and further verification of answers. In addition, Cresswell (2012, p.217) maintains that a qualitative interview “occurs when researchers ask one or more participants general, open-ended questions and record their answers”. The main aim of the interview is to discover participants’ thoughts, how they feel about something (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006). Using interviews in this study has afforded the participants an opportunity to express their views and experiences without being restricted by the researcher’s perspectives and the findings from previous studies.

#### 3.4.1.1 ADVANTAGES OF A SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW

Engaging in interviews to collect data has its own advantages and disadvantages. The first advantage of using interviews is that the interviewer can gain in-depth information by probing enabling him or her to rephrase the questions that are not clear to the interviewer (Cohen et al., 2012). Secondly, the interviewer is able to observe the behaviour of an interview throughout

the interview process (Brynard, Hanekom & Brynard, 2014). Thirdly, the interviewer is in control of the situation enabling her to ask specific questions from which she can extract the information that she requires (Creswell, 2012). It is maintained that face-to-face interviews allow the interviewer an opportunity to obtain visual clues for when the interviewee experiences certain levels of comfort or discomfort during the interview by observing their body language (Coleman, 2012).

#### 3.4.1.2 DISADVANTAGES OF A SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW

Some of the disadvantages of interviews include that most people do not want to commit themselves, to tell the truth (Brynard et al., 2014). It may also happen that the information provided during the interview could be ‘filtered’ through the participants’ perspective and she might be providing information that she wants the interviewer to hear. The interviewee might be intimidated by the presence of the interviewer such that the responses he or she provides could be influenced by the presence of the interviewer (Cresswell, 2012). Mertens (2005) asserts that interviews are expensive and time-consuming.

I secured appointments with the interviewees in order to avoid interviews to clash with their professional work. The interviews were scheduled to last between thirty and forty minutes in order to avoid for them to feel agitated. Three teachers were interviewed within a week, whilst the receptionist and an administrative officer were interviewed a week later.

The transcriptions of the recorded interviews were sent to the participants to check for errors and add on the answers that they provided during the interview. This process allowed for the opportunity of member checking by the participants.

#### 3.4.2 OBSERVATIONS

As mentioned previously, observation is the second method of collecting data in this study that was used in order to verify information obtained during the semi-structured interview. An observation is defined as “the systematic process of recording the behavioural patterns of participants, objects and occurrences without necessarily questioning or communicating with them” (Maree, 2007, p.84). Curtis, Murphy and Shields (2014, p.131) affirms that by maintaining that observation is a data collection method whereby the researcher records “the interaction between people, patterns of behaviour, speech, rituals and environment”. (Refer to Appendix B for the Observation Schedule).

McMillan and Schumacher (2010) mention that observations are expensive, time-consuming and can affect the behaviour of the participants. The authors further maintain that an observer needs to be trained in enabling him or her to record and analyse data accurately. Furthermore, Burton and Bartlett (2009) posit it is difficult to observe a large number of participants and it is challenging for some researchers to observe and transcribe simultaneously. Unlike interviews, observations do not present an opportunity for probing in order to gain clarity. Brynard et al., (2014) argue that the group may be intimidated by the presence of an observer and thus a real-life behaviour might not be reflected. Moreover, Maree (2007) asserts that observations are subjective and they only focus on a specific event.

#### 3.4.2.1 TYPES OF OBSERVATIONS

I visited the centre for eight afternoons and stayed for four hours each day to observe how often teachers visit the centre. My first visit to the centre was on the 9<sup>th</sup> of February 2018 where I came to observe who comes and what they come to do in the centre. My second visit took place on the 12<sup>th</sup> of February followed by another visit on the 16<sup>th</sup> of March. During my observation, I discovered that there was a pattern where IsiZulu teachers seemed to have been visiting the centre very often, and they were then selected for the study. I was able to observe three IsiZulu workshops, Orientation workshop was on the 16<sup>th</sup> of March, moderation workshop took place on the 8<sup>th</sup> of August and paper 1 to 3 memorandum discussion workshop was three days long from the 3<sup>rd</sup> to the 5<sup>th</sup> of December. I recorded my observations on paper and I also took field notes and transcribed the activities that teachers engaged in.

Maree (2007, p. 84) identifies four types of observations as follows:

- *Complete participant* – the researcher is a passive participant observing from a distance and is referred to as an ‘outsider’.
- *Observer as a participant* – the researcher is part of the group but his or her role is mainly observing patterns of behaviour in order to understand their social dynamics.
- *Participant as an observer* – the research is part of the research as an ‘insider’ or a participant and may intervene during the process to make changes in the dynamics.
- *Complete participant* – the researcher is completely involved in the situation in such that those that are being observed become unaware that they are the subjects being observed.



I have observed teachers as a complete observer at the teacher development centre during their practical activities that they did and this was done through a structured observation as it is appropriate for my study. I was observing behavioural patterns of the teachers when executing their learning activities, the quality of available resources like the computers in the computer laboratory and books at the processing centre, the conditions of infrastructure as well as how often do teachers attend at the centre. A prepared observation schedule attached under the appendix was used during the observation. Data collected during observation was recorded on the observation schedule.

#### 3.4.2.2 ADVANTAGES OF OBSERVATION

Brynard et al., (2014) state that observations produce a detailed description of participants' experiences by interpreting the meanings of their real life-behaviour. McMillan and Schumacher (2010) further mention that observations become undisruptive if an observer becomes passive as non-participant. In addition, Cohen et al., (2012) posit that observations are a flexible data collection tool and are likely to produce authentic data. Observations enable the observer to collect detailed data within the minimum period (Burton & Bartlett, 2009).

#### 3.4.3 DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

Creswell (2014) maintains that documents of an organization or institution are a useful source of information for a qualitative study. McMillan and Schumacher (2010) argue that document analysis is an operational plan which is used to scrutinize data collected from various texts. Document analysis was used as the third method of data collection used in this study. I selected this method because it assisted me in analyzing written communication that may clarify the phenomenon under investigation for the benefit of this research study (Maree, 2007). The important documents analysed for this study included annual reports, agenda, faxes, email messages, memoranda, attendance register of teachers who visit the centre on a daily basis, minutes of meetings of DTDC personnel, departmental circulars, curriculum management planning and lists pertaining the number of workshops conducted on a monthly basis was collected from the centre manager and analysed.

I used document analysis for the reason that this method has the potential of verifying information contained in these documents by observing what really happens in the centre in comparison to what the participants' state. This method allows for the opportunity of revealing essential information that the participants could not provide during the interview. Attendance registers were analyzed and were compared against my observations of teachers' attendance in

order to determine the number of teachers attending the centre on a daily basis. I also went through the minutes of the meetings to establish what the DTDC is used for, what issues are being discussed in relation to teacher learning. The recorded information was used to answer the research questions.

Selected documents were analysed which was followed by organization of data and coding process in order to identify common themes. Relevant themes that have emerged from the study were analysed.

#### 3.4.3.1 ADVANTAGES OF DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

Document analysis is inexpensive compared to other data collection methods because data has already been gathered in the documents; the researcher is left with only analyzing and evaluating it (Bowen, 2009). In that regard, the researcher is saved time for transcribing because it is a written evidence (Cresswell, 2014). One major advantage of document analysis is the fact that it contains constant information, which is not influenced by the presence of the researcher as opposed to interviews and observations (Merriam, 2009).

#### 3.4.3.2 DISADVANTAGES OF DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

Document analysis does not always produce adequate information to answer research questions (Bowen, 2009). The information contained in the documents might not be authentic or accurate and might be incomplete (Cresswell, 2014). In addition, it may be difficult to interpret or understand its content because the documents are not intended for the research but are mainly organizational materials (Merriam, 2009). It turned out that many of the documents, such as the minutes of meetings were discussing organizational matters and there was nothing relating to the research topic of professional learning. However, attendance registers of workshops were helpful to see what kinds of workshops were offered at the Centre.

### 3.5 DATA ANALYSIS

McMillan and Schumacher (2010) describe data analysis as the process of arranging data into different categories in order to identify relationships and make meaning with data. Similarly, It is maintained that the purpose of collecting data is to “examine the application and operation of the same issues in different contexts” (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007, p. 461). The aim of collecting data in this study is to determine commonalities and differences from the participants’ responses. The authors further assert that data analysis involves the process of reducing and interpreting raw data. In the context of my study, I reduced data obtained from

the participants' observations, interviews and document analysis by transcribing and coding it into clusters and inductively analysed in order to identify outcomes that the teachers achieved from the activities that they engaged in. The audio recordings were transcribed verbatim.

The following are the steps required to analyse data according to Cresswell and Stake, (as cited in Leedy & Ormrod, 2005, p.136):

- *Organization of details about the case:* The specific “facts” about the case are arranged in a logical (e.g., chronological) order.
- *The categorisation of data:* Categories are identified that can help cluster the data into meaningful groups.
- *Interpretation of each case:* Specific documents, occurrences, and other bits of data are examined for the specific meanings they might have in relation to the case.
- *Identification of patterns:* The data and their interpretations are scrutinised for underlying themes and other patterns that characterize the case more broadly than a single piece of information can reveal.
- *Synthesis and generalizations:* An overall portrait of the case is constructed. Conclusions are drawn that may have implications beyond the specific case that has been studied.

For the purpose of this study, these steps were utilised in analysing data collected from interviews, observations and document analysis, which is reported in the next chapter. Key concepts from Harland and Kinder's (1997) typology of professional development outcomes were also used to analyse the data.

### 3.6 TRUSTWORTHINESS

Trustworthiness is an important aspect of a qualitative research. Lincoln and Guba (cited in Maree, 2007) define trustworthiness as the manner in which a researcher portrays the findings of the study to the community as of high quality and value. Rule and John (2011) further identify measures of ensuring quality in the research study namely: peer checking (interpretation of data by other peers), member checking (verification of accounts with participants to ensure accuracy) and the use of multiple sources of data collection methods. I have engaged in multiple methods of collecting data, which are interviews, observations and document analysis of the written material for triangulation purpose. This has then led to the study to be more trustworthy. Furthermore, I engaged my peer researchers, supervisor and participants to assist in interpreting data which also enhanced trustworthiness and thus

increased the validity of the research. Another method of ensuring validity is by receiving feedback from others such as my supervisor. Data collection instruments that were used ensured the validity and reliability of my research findings because more than one instrument was used. Thus, this enabled the researcher to verify the data collected as well as enhancing triangulation (Cohen et al., 2012). Likewise, the observation and interview schedule provided trustworthiness between the actual activity and the data that was recorded.

I also presented my positionality as a researcher to my participants to avoid confusion that could be created by my position as a district official. Another strategy that I embarked on to ensure the trustworthiness of the case study is to keep field notes during the research. I went back to the participants after I have analysed data for verification, allowing them to correct errors and clarify where I could have misinterpreted their explanations of their experiences.

### 3.7 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Punch (2009) posit that there are bound to ethical issues when conducting an empirical research because data is collected from people. Similarly, Gray (2009) state that it is crucial to respect the privacy, rights and dignity of the participants when collecting data as well as analyzing and presentation of the research findings. Furthermore, Walter (2013, p.73) maintains that “ethics is concerned with the establishment of a set of moral standards that govern behaviour in a particular setting or for a particular group”.

A permission to conduct this research study was granted by the KwaZulu Natal Department of Basic Education (KZN). I was also granted access to the schools serving under the district of my research site. I received permission from the University of KwaZulu Natal Ethical Clearance Committee (see Appendix B) and a Code of research ethics as per the University was observed.

#### 3.7.1 INFORMED CONSENT

Neuman (2014) defines an informed consent as the permission granted by the participants to partake in the research study after they have been provided with all the facts relating to the study. In addition, Punch (2009) states that participants should be well informed about the purpose of the study before they give consent to participate. Furthermore, they should also be made aware that participation is voluntary and they can withdraw at any given stage of research if they wish to do so (Seidman, 2013). Letters of consent were presented to the participants with an explanation of the entire process and were afforded an opportunity to read them and

ask questions where clarity is needed. The letters were then signed by each participant before interviews and observations were conducted.

### 3.7.2 CONFIDENTIALITY AND ANONYMITY

Walter (2013) defines confidentiality as to conceal information gathered from the participants and ensuring that it does not link them. The district teacher development centre, as well as the participants, were allocated pseudonyms so that their identity was not revealed. The collected data was kept confidential from the public and there is nothing linking the centre and the participants to the information provided. I informed and ensured the participants that they were not exposed to any form of physical or psychological harm during the process of the study. I conducted an interview with the teachers in the afternoons so that the normal daily activities were not disrupted (Cresswell, 2014). I was also granted permission to take photos around the centre. The real name of the centre was concealed to ensure anonymity. The photos taken at the centre are discussed in the next chapter.

### 3.8 POSSIBLE LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

In this study, there could be some limitations that might be encountered. Firstly, my position as a departmental official (Education Specialist) could present the conflict of interest to teachers. To alleviate this, I explained to participants that the interviews and observations are not for the evaluation of their work, but to examine teacher learning that occurs in the teacher development centre for the purpose of my study. Moreover, I have selected a different district that I do not work for, where the teachers do not know me. Furthermore, the Centre manager that I interviewed might have been tempted to say good things about the DTDC because she or he is in charge of the centre. By interviewing other staff members and my observation I was able to compare and establish whether what the centre manager said was indeed what occurs in the centre.

The other limitation was that research findings cannot be generalised because they were based on subjective interactions with a small of a sample of participants who were selected from one district, therefore, would not represent the population of all the district teacher development centres in the whole province.

### 3.9 CONCLUSION

This chapter outlined the methodological approach and research design to research teacher professional development. The qualitative research methodology selected in the study was

discussed. Moreover, ontological and epistemological underpinnings related to the research paradigm were elucidated. Following this was an explanation of the interpretive paradigm which informs this study. Furthermore, the types of case study, its characteristics, strength and weaknesses and suitability of the selected methodological approach to this study were explained. Thereafter, a sampling strategy that was used in selecting participants was explained. Lastly, data collection methods employed, data analysis, trustworthiness, ethical considerations of the study and possible limitations were presented.

The next chapter presents data analysis of collected information and the findings are presented.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

#### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the qualitative data gathered through semi-structured interviews and observation of Grade 12 IsiZulu teachers in the centre while they conducted their activities are presented and analysed. Firstly, the interview transcripts were read frequently against the classroom observation to determine the commonalities and dissimilarities from the data. This was followed by the coding and classification of data in order to find common themes which represented participants' views. The three DTDC personnel (Centre manager, receptionist and admin officer) and three of IsiZulu teachers (Mpume, Londiwe and Nathi) were interviewed.

#### 4.2 HISTORY AND CONTEXT OF THE NIZENANDE DISTRICT TEACHER

##### DEVELOPMENT CENTRE (DTDC)

The Nizenande District Teacher Development Centre (DTDC) is situated in an urban area of Durban which was previously set aside as only for people designated as Indians under apartheid. It was established in 1983 as a teachers' centre. It was aimed at uplifting the community surrounding the centre. While operating as a teacher's centre it offered programmes such as Adult Basic Education Training (ABET) classes, computer literacy classes for the community in general, provided a venue for meetings and study groups and provided access to learners to use the internet in order to access information.

In 1987 the centre was then converted into a teacher district developmental centre. When the centre was converted it was aimed at developing teachers' instructional skills and provide them with proper ICT training. It services a working-class community and some of the schools in the community pay school fees while other schools do not pay school fees. The centre offers a venue for training workshops for teachers and departmental meetings. It is equipped with whiteboard screens and data projectors to lend out to the subject advisors when facilitating workshops.

#### 4.2.1 THE PERSONNEL IN THE DTDC

According to The Minimum Norms and Standards for Provincial Teacher Development Institutes and District Teacher Development Centres in South Africa policy, staffing is a critical constituent for well-functioning of the centre. The policy stipulates that there should be at least nine staff per DTDC (DBE, 2015). The centre manager indicated that her centre consists of four departmental paid staff members and two non-departmental paid members of staff, which contrast with the policy. There is a centre manager, a receptionist whom she regards as her PA as she does most of the PA duties, admin officer, processing centre coordinator, a handyman, a cleaner and two security guards. However, there is no programme coordinator and an ICT specialist as per policy requirements. I have also observed that the staff is very helpful, enthusiastic and enjoy working at the centre. This was evident through the vigour displayed during the interview sessions. The minutes of the staff meeting held on a monthly basis indicate that they discuss their organisational matters and there are no issues pertaining teacher professional development.

#### 4.2.2 ACCESSIBILITY OF DTDC TO TEACHERS

The centre is located in an urban area within close proximity of the schools it services. It is situated in a central area where public transport is accessible to the community and teachers. The roads leading to the centre are tarred and the public transport drops you off at the gate. However, there is no signage on the road indicating where the centre is which makes it difficult for the centre to be identified by someone who has never visited the centre previously.

#### 4.2.3 SAFETY AND SECURITY

There are two security guards on site for 24 hours. All the rooms on the ground floor are secured with burglar proofing and all the classroom doors are burglar proofed. They are all fitted with fire extinguishers. It is surrounded by appropriate fencing all around. Most schools are within close proximity to the centre. There are two entrance automated gates which are controlled by a 24-hour security guard. Each entrance gate has parking of forty cars each. Sometimes both the parking lots get full so that teachers park their cars outside the gate.



**Figure 1: Parking**



**Figure 2: Security Guard**



#### 4.2.4 INFRASTRUCTURE

The infrastructure of the centre is well maintained and the handyman on site ensures that the centre is kept neat. The centre is huge and consists of three rows of double storey buildings. It is vibrant and feels like a place of learning. The reception area looks and feels very welcoming. There is a sufficient number of toilets which are in a very pleasant condition with running water. There are two halls in which one operates as a boardroom while the other one is a conference room. There is a mobile library bus which distributes books to the schools that do not have a library for a specified loan period and collects them back. There is also a processing centre which is used to process the books before they are dispatched to schools. Those books are received from Education Library Information and Technology Services (ELITS), which is a sub directorate within the Department of Education which ensures that schools are provided with resource material.

**Figure 3: Mobile Library Bus**

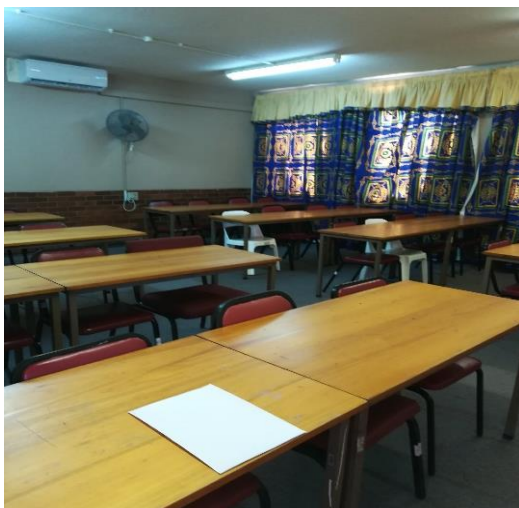


**Figure 4: Processing Centre**

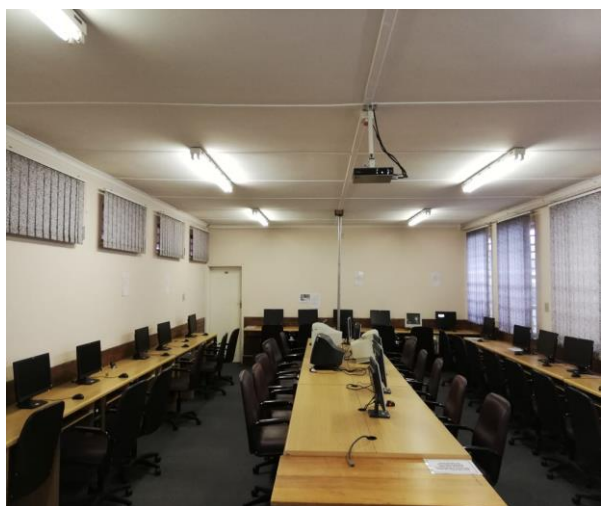


There are twenty-four air-conditioned classrooms which are booked by the subject advisors for the meetings and workshops for subject teachers. The classrooms are spacious and can accommodate up to thirty-five teachers in a room. They are equipped with sufficient power, however, there are no generators or solar energy as a back-up for when the power is off. The classrooms are also used as a venue to conduct distance classes as well as well writing National Examinations for the postgraduate degree by the University of North West. The rooms are very busy and make the centre look like a place of learning. There is also a conference room which is huge and mostly used for the subjects consisting of a bigger group of teachers. The conference room can accommodate up to sixty teachers. The centre also has a fully fitted computer laboratory which has twenty-five computers in a working condition, however, the interviewed teachers indicated that they have never used it.

**Figure 5: Classrooms**



**Figure 6: Computer Laboratory**



In this section, I will be presenting and analysing data obtained from participants' interviews and observations regarding teacher learning and learning activities. The following themes are described from the interview and observation data:

#### 4.3 THE PURPOSE OF THE CENTRE: A MEETING VENUE

The Integrated Strategic Planning Framework Teacher Education and Development in South Africa Policy (2011-2025) stipulates that the centre should be a meeting point for Professional Learning Communities (PLC), the site where teachers can obtain shared resources as well as a

venue where curriculum support staff can operate (DBE and DHET, 2011). The participants who were staff and those who are teachers displayed a similar understanding of what the purpose of the centre is. All the DTDC personnel revealed a common understanding of what the purpose of the centre is. It appears from the response of the centre manager that she believes that the purpose of the centre is to offer support in terms of providing a venue for the teachers to attend workshops, departmental meetings and carry out Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) and School-Based Assessment (SBA) moderation. She further mentioned that the centre should also provide resources to the teachers which are not accessible to them at their schools. Moreover, the centre manager stated that: “district teacher development centres are just a conversion of name from teacher centres and former colleges of education, there is nothing teacher about them”. She believes that the centres were just a change of name and they only assist the department to conduct their meetings as opposed to offering different programmes aimed at developing teachers professionally. According to her, the centre does not provide most of the resources as set out to provide.

Similarly, the receptionist alluded that the purpose of the centre is to offer a venue to the teachers so that subject advisors can be able to facilitate workshops in assisting teachers to keep up to date with the current curriculum.

Likewise, the admin officer stated that the centre offers a venue for teachers to meet and his responsibility is ensuring that it is readily available and kept clean for the booked meeting or workshops. He highlighted that the workshops offered in the centre are aimed at improving learner achievement. He also mentioned that the department officials use the venue at no charge. However, there are private tutors who facilitate matric classes, as well as the University of North West which conducts their distance learning classes in the afternoons and they pay for the venue. Therefore, the centre is able to generate funding from those external institutions, even though there is that minimal portion which they receive from the department.

Similarly, teachers have limited understanding of what the purpose of the centre is to them. All the interviewed teachers have the common understanding that the centre offers them a venue to meet for workshops and moderation. They are not aware that apart from offering a venue, they should also access shared resources at the Centre as per Minimum Norms and Standards policy stipulation (DBE, 2015).

This finding reveals that the DTDC personnel have a comprehensive understanding of what the purpose of the centre is. However, the financial constraints limit them to offer adequate

services as specified in the policy, which is providing shared resources to the teachers. On the other hand, teachers have a limited understanding as to what the purpose of the centre is. They believe it is simply a venue for meeting purposes. They are not aware that the centre is a venue where they can access shared resources over above the meeting point for continuing professional development courses.

#### 4.4 RESOURCES IN THE CENTRE

According to the DTDC personnel, the resources that are available at the centre are not functional. The teachers have also indicated that they have never used a library and a computer laboratory at the centre. The DTDC personnel maintained that financial constraints are the greatest hindrance in providing teacher professional development. They echoed the same convictions that the availability of resources relies entirely on funds. They further maintained that the staff complement at their centre does not allow them to conduct their work effectively.

The centre manager indicated that there is a computer laboratory which is not functional any longer since there is no money to pay for the person to facilitate computer literacy classes for teachers, as happened previously. She stated that the computer laboratory had internet which is a useful resource for teachers to download information that would keep them up-to-date with new developments regarding the CAPS curriculum as well as other teaching aids. There is no internet facility at the centre anymore and no person to run computer literacy classes to teachers. She maintained that without these pertinent resources the centre is not sufficient to conduct professional development effectively. The admin officer noted that the University of North West has internet access restricted with a password accessible to their students only. This is found to be contrasting with the policy as it maintains that the computer laboratory should be equipped with internet access that is accessible to all teachers using the centre. It also presents some inconsistency as the centre is a departmental facility aimed at developing teachers, however, it seems to be benefiting private institutions more than the teachers. The receptionist put it as follows:

*To be honest, I do not see that much of resources available, there was a radiographic centre with a photocopying machine which was leased annually for bulk printing. Teachers were using it to make copies of the material received from workshops, copies of class tests and exam papers. The centre does not have that facility anymore since there are no funds available to lease the machine anymore. Furthermore, there was a library here previously which became outdated because there was no money to buy books leading it to close down.*

Moreover, the admin officer cited that there was a science laboratory in which a subject advisor would come and conduct practical experiments with the teachers who were closed down because it became difficult to maintain it.

The teachers who were interviewed maintained that they are living in a period which requires them to be technologically advanced, therefore, they would appreciate it if there could be a workshop offered to them that would enrich their knowledge of computers. They also maintained that access to the internet is an important requirement for them so that they can upgrade their content knowledge by searching for the most recent information about the subject. The resource material that the subject advisor provides them with includes CD's to download additional educational information, CAPS documents, annual teaching plans, work programmes, past years question papers, memorandum of past papers, pamphlets and study guides from the workshops. Nevertheless, teachers seem to have not been aware of what resources should be accessible to them at the centre as per policy document (DBE and DHET, 2011).

#### 4.5 LEARNING ACTIVITIES AT THE CENTRE

This section elucidates the learning activities that are offered in the centre. The DTDC personnel mentioned that the activities that run in the centre range from General Education and Training (GET) and Further Education and Training (FET) phase orientation workshops, School Based Assessment moderation, Principal's meeting and Circuit Managers meetings. According to the three IsiZulu teachers, the activities that they engage in at the centre are moderation workshop; orientation workshop and memorandum discussion workshops.

##### 4.5.1 ORIENTATION WORKSHOP

The nature of the orientation workshop is intended to orientate teachers and give them direction about what they supposed to be teaching throughout the year. Sixty-eight teachers from different schools within the same district attended this workshop. Out of the sixty-eight teachers, only three participated in this study. The subject advisor commenced this workshop by laying the ground rules as to what is expected from the teachers to teach, the resource materials that teachers are expected to use for the subject, the assessment methods that are used as well as how the cluster meetings should be conducted. The workshop focused on how to prepare a proper lesson plan and on how to formulate assessments for quarterly tasks and the final examination. The subject advisor gave them an activity whereby they each prepared a lesson plan using a new approach learnt from the same workshop and conduct a lesson to their

peers. This is found to be corroborating with the first category of learning by experimenting, which encompasses learning by trying out new approaches with an aim of refining ones' teaching practice (Lohnman & Woolf, 2001). She highlighted that this exercise gave her confidence and she was so enthusiastic to try out this new approach to her learners back at school.

#### 4.5.2 MODERATION WORKSHOP

All the interviewed teachers indicated that they meet every term and spend four hours on each moderation workshop at the centre. The moderation workshops are aimed at developing teachers on matters such as how literature is taught and to check the quality of teachers' marking of learners' assessment tasks. It is very pertinent that teachers are trained on how to teach literature as it forms part of the content that is taught as part of the curriculum. Each moderation workshop is led by the subject advisor where he checks whether teachers have prepared learners' assessment tasks which accord with the syllabus and meets the CAPS curriculum standards. The teachers who attended this workshop were the same teachers who attended the orientation workshop. They also worked on how to phrase questions for assessments, how to teach learners structure of essay writing. The subject advisor had brought previous examination papers to engage in this activity. Nathi mentioned that during the moderation workshop all Grade 12 IsiZulu teachers in their cluster bring in a sample of marked learners' scripts and exchange them amongst themselves in ensuring standardisation and consistency in teachers' marking. This activity can be associated with the second category of learning, which is learning from knowledge exchanging with others. Kwakman (2003) asserts that learning through knowledge exchanging is collaboration and encourages interaction with other people by sharing information.

#### 4.5.3 ISIZULU FINAL EXAMINATION PAPERS 1, 2 &3 MEMORANDUM

##### DISCUSSION WORKSHOP

These workshops were aimed at discussing the three examination papers that were written by grade 12 IsiZulu final examination 2018. The workshops were attended by forty-five IsiZulu teachers who received appointment letters as markers. The subject advisor emphasised the importance of understanding the fundamentals of being a marker as mistakes conducted during the process of marking would impact negatively on the future of learners. The three participants for my study were amongst the forty-five appointed teachers. Teachers were then divided into groups and given an activity where they had to answer an already written question

paper and present the answers to the rest of the class for discussion. Teachers applauded working in groups and maintained that they acquired a lot of information especially from those teachers who had marked previously. There was a lot of interaction amongst teachers as those teachers who were not first time markers were willing to share information with the newly appointed markers. This is corroborated in Lave and Wenger (1991) in purporting that teachers can learn through interacting with other teachers. It is regarded as exchanging knowledge because teachers are exposed to different methods in which a question could be approached. One of the teachers, Mpume put it as follows:

*I used to be very frustrated when my learners fail my subject or when they score very low marks. Memorandum discussion workshops have taught me that some answers might be expressed slightly different from the memorandum, and I should be accommodative of the answers conveying the similar idea. Hence, I have learnt a new skill of marking.*

The findings suggest that out of the three categories of teacher learning mentioned above, only two categories seem to be in existence at the centre. Teachers as participants indicated that they were not following the correct marking procedure, they were not marking correctly as per marking grid and they also took it for granted that they teach the subject. The memorandum discussion workshop has uncovered the new skill of marking.

#### 4.6 ISIZULU TEACHERS AS PROFESSIONAL LEARNING COMMUNITY

The purpose of Professional Learning Communities (PLC) is to encourage teachers to learn to share ideas, share classroom practice and learn collaboratively (Hirsch, 2012). Upon my observation, I noted collaboration amongst IsiZulu teachers from various high schools as they were discussing a novel breaking it into several elements. They would constructively argue as to who is the main character and on the elements that make up the novel. Eventually, they agreed collectively on the main character and the elements of a novel. This activity is regarded as self-initiated as teachers are the ones coordinating the programme. The three interviewed teachers belong to this PLC which they established themselves after they all met at a moderation workshop and saw the need to continuously meet out-of-moderation. The teachers indicated that the centre assists them by providing them with a central venue to meet regarding that they are all coming from different schools.

Professional development is enhanced if teachers are able to spend time whether be formal or informal with their professional leaders (De Clercq, 2008). All teachers noted that they receive formal learning which is facilitated by the subject advisor. They elaborated that the manner in

which the formal learning activities that are organised have a great impact on how they learn. In addition, they also stated that they also learn informally by sharing information with other teachers during their casual conversations before or after formal learning activity. This type of learning is initiated by teachers themselves, it is unplanned and happens by chance. Londiwe explained as follows:

*I was able to raise my concerns and discuss my challenges with the more experienced teachers freely in seeking advice, and they would gladly provide working solutions to my challenges faced at school. I have formed a good relationship with these teachers at the centre as isiZulu team in which that relationship exists even out of the centre.*

As stated by Villegas-Reimers (2003) that teacher professional development works well where there is a culture of support. Nathi added that being part of the PLC's has improved his quality of teaching and he produced good results for his matric classes in 2017. He indicated that he was not confident in teaching poetry but coming together as IsiZulu teachers and engaging in poetry collaboratively during memorandum discussion workshop has made his life much easier. He said that participating in this activity has uncovered new knowledge and skills. He mentioned that sometimes when reading a poetry book, one tends to understand it differently, however, when interacting with other teachers you get different perspectives and new interpretation which is different from your own understanding of the poem.

This finding points out that IsiZulu teachers participate collaboratively in activities that encourage them to learn from one another in improving their classroom practice. This accords with the policy as it had a vision of the DTDC being a meeting venue for PLC's. It is evident that IsiZulu teachers engage collaboratively in the activities.

#### 4.7 CONCLUSION

This chapter presented data analysis and interpretation of the findings of this study based on the collected data. Data was gathered through interviews, observation and document analysis. Interview questions gave rise to the themes which prompted analysis. Findings from the collected data were presented in relation to the research questions. These findings are broadly discussed in the next chapter.

The next chapter focusses on the summary of main findings together with the recommendations and the conclusion.



# CHAPTER FIVE

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

This study explored the role of Nizenande District Teacher Development Centre in supporting teacher's professional learning. The study focussed on acquiring perceptions from the teachers on how they learn using the available resources at the centre and what activities they engage in to support teacher learning. In chapter four I presented findings generated from data collected through the semi-structured interviews and observations with three teachers and three DTDC personnel. In this chapter, I use the conceptual framework Harland and Kinder (1997) typology of nine possible outcomes of learning activities throughout this study in answering my research questions. This is followed by the recommendations for the study. The limitations of the study are then highlighted together with concluding the chapter.

#### **How does the Nizenande District Teacher Development Centre contribute to professionally developing teachers in their district?**

This primary question has led to sub-questions which seek to address the following issues:

- What learning activities and resources are offered in the centre?
- How do the available resources in the centre support teacher learning?
- To what extent do these learning activities contribute to teacher learning?

I drew from Harland and Kinder's (1997) model of nine INSET outcomes which I discussed in detail in chapter 2, to answer my research questions. These outcomes comprise of material and provisionary outcomes, information outcomes (third order outcomes), new awareness, motivational and attitudinal outcomes, affective outcomes, institutional outcomes (second order outcomes), value congruence outcomes and knowledge and skills outcomes (first order outcomes).

## 5.2 RESEARCH QUESTION 1: WHAT LEARNING ACTIVITIES AND RESOURCES ARE OFFERED IN THE CENTRE?

This study investigated a range of IsiZulu workshops that were conducted during the year 2018. Each of these workshops had a specific aim. The participants' interviews and observations indicate that teachers participate in a range of learning activities such as orientation workshop, moderation workshop and memorandum discussion workshop. The professional learning activities that teachers often engage in are formally planned by the Department of Basic Education and led by the subject advisor. The formal learning activities include orientation workshop, School-Based Assessment (SBA) and Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) moderation and memorandum discussion. These workshops are conducted at the centre following a structured programme which was developed by the subject advisor. The findings further indicate that CAPS moderation workshop seem to be the key activity and attendance at this workshop is compulsory for the teachers and is monitored by the signing of attendance register. The moderation workshops are aimed at evaluating whether teachers are marking the SBA tasks in accordance with the CAPS guidelines. Teachers would each bring a sample of marked scripts along with a memorandum and Continuous Assessment (CASS) grid so that the subject advisor and master teachers would check the quality of the marking and that the marks were entered correctly on the grid. This activity is more administrative and focusses in ensuring that teachers comply with the departmental standards. It is not easy to ascertain whether any new knowledge was acquired by teachers.

The teacher participants mentioned that the orientation workshops which are held at the beginning of the year are aimed at offering guidance to them on how to teach in accordance with the CAPS curriculum, what to teach for each term and how to prepare assessment tasks. Teachers noted that the orientation workshop encourages them to share their teaching experiences which transpired when they were learning by experimenting. During this activity, teachers were given a task whereby they had to draw up a lesson plan and present it to their fellow teachers. According to Kwakman (2003), learning by experimenting refers to both learning in the classroom and outside the classroom environment and involves trying out new teaching methods in order to improve classroom practice. Teachers said that this experience has taught them to use new approaches to curriculum delivery. They also mentioned that they were very eager and motivated to go back to their respective schools and try out the new lesson plans and new methods of teaching that they learnt from fellow teachers. According to Harland

and Kinder (1997), this would be addressing 3<sup>rd</sup> order of outcomes because new methods of curriculum delivery arose as well as the 2<sup>nd</sup> order of outcomes in the sense that teachers were inspired and motivated to try out new ideas at school. Teachers mentioned that they received new information on how the curriculum works, how to structure an examination paper and new skill of assessing was learnt. In my opinion, learning new curriculum methods of delivery suggest that professional learning has transpired because applying new methods of delivery will impact classroom change.

The memorandum discussion of IsiZulu papers 1, 2 and 3 that was conducted in November led by the subject advisor was intended at discussing the three national examination papers that were written by the Grade 12 learners. Those teachers who were appointed to mark were invited to attend these workshops which ran over three days. The three participant teachers from the appointed group attended the workshop. The emphasis of the workshop was on equipping teachers on how they should mark learners' examination scripts against the memorandum. Teachers had to each bring their own formulated an exemplar memorandum and would be discussions around how teachers should have responded to certain questions. It seems the main objective of these workshops was administrative and making teachers conform to the marking standards. Teachers received marking pens and memorandum as resources, this situation is in line with the third order outcome (Harland and Kinder, 1997). However, there is no evidence that this outcome contributed positively to classroom practice. Hopefully, it would mean that their assessment practice will improve and that the skill of marking learnt from this activity will be applied in marking their learners' tasks at schools.

While most activities offered at the centre are formal, some of them are informal, unplanned and are initiated by the teachers themselves. Teachers reported that they meet at the centre out of their free will as the Professional Learning Committee (PLC). They indicated that they saw a need for such kind of engagement and this relationship was formed during the formal workshops and the team of IsiZulu teachers from different schools was formed. These teachers share the same vision of seeing learners within their district producing good results. They mentioned that they interact collectively in mentoring novice teachers and in discussing challenges they are faced with in interpreting and teaching of literature. As Hirsch (2012) puts it, the aim of the PLC's is to encourage teachers to learn to work collaboratively and share their classroom practice. Teachers' responses indicate that they have learnt to work in a group and new knowledge was gained which has been implemented in their classrooms and has positively

changed their classroom practice as they now do things differently. Harland and Kinder (1997) second-order outcome suggest that attending a professional development activity should result in a collective impact on a group with the same vision working as a team.

### 5.3 RESEARCH QUESTION 2: HOW DO THE AVAILABLE RESOURCES IN THE CENTRE SUPPORT TEACHER LEARNING?

The study revealed that the lack of funding is the contributing factor to inadequate human resources and non-availability of physical facilities for professional development at the centre. Steyn (2005) state that resources play a major role in planning and conducting professional development programmes. According to my observations, the physical resources are available at the centre, however, teachers do not utilise them. The DTDC personnel indicated that they do not have money to pay for a trained person to run programmes like computer literacy classes and science experiment lesson that they use to offer previously. From the data that was collected, it seems that most teachers view the centre as the venue for workshops. The physical resources available at the centre are computer laboratory and science laboratory of which teachers indicated that they do not utilise. This is found to be contradicting the policy which envisaged centres to be providing these resources so that teachers can utilise in order to support teacher learning (DBE, 2015). This under utilisation of resources affects teacher learning as the availability of teacher learning resources enhances curriculum delivery. This then impacts negatively on teacher learning and effecting teacher change in classroom practice. Resources such as the internet assist teachers by allowing them to explore knowledge individually in surfing for information relating to the subject that they teach that they can use in enhancing their teaching in the classroom. Teachers stated that if the computer laboratory at the centre was equipped with internet connectivity accessible to them, it would have benefited them in searching and downloading more teaching materials that could effect change in classroom practice. Harland and Kinder (1997) assert that a professional development activity should trigger new awareness to new methods of curriculum delivery. I believe that if the centre was equipped with internet, teachers would have searched and found new information useful to their teaching to effect change in their practice.

On the other hand, teachers noted that the worksheets and CD's that they received from a professional development activity afforded them an opportunity to practice newly learnt skills

in their classroom, as well as in exploring with the new knowledge that they received. They stated that they can confidently structure a proper lesson plan, develop an essay type of question and to use a new method of curriculum delivery which they have learnt from a professional development activity. They added that the work schedule that they were provided with offered them guidance as to what is expected of them to teach throughout the year. Additionally, the lesson plans that were used in teaching fellow teachers were exchanged amongst one another. In doing so they were exposed to various methods of curriculum delivery. Thus, allowing them an opportunity to apply what was learnt from the workshop to their classroom practice.

#### 5.4 RESEARCH QUESTION 3: TO WHAT EXTENT DO THESE LEARNING ACTIVITIES CONTRIBUTE TO TEACHER LEARNING?

Lohman and Woolf et al., (2001) assert that teacher learning is enhanced if teachers engage in activities that are initiated by them on-site, as opposed to those activities which are conducted outside their workplace led by an outside person. However, Guskey and Yoon (2009), are of the view that engaging an outside person who is regarded as an expert increases the possibility of bringing about teacher change in the classroom practice. The CAPS moderation workshops seem to be prescriptive in nature as the activities that teachers engage in are initiated by the subject advisor and teachers do not have control of their own learning. Teachers reported that they received new information and material from this professional development activity. It appears as if there is not much of self-initiated learning that takes place at the centre which enhances positive change in classroom practice. This situation is in line with Harland and Kinder's (1997) third order of outcomes because teachers obtained resources from a professional development activity.

Teachers further elaborated that they obtained worksheets and summary notes which assisted them in the teaching of literature. Thus, resulting them to gain confidence and credibility in teaching literature. They mentioned that during the PLC workshop they engaged a lot with analysing novels, short stories and poetry has afforded them an opportunity to uncover new knowledge which enhanced their classroom practice. They stated that one seems to interpret poetry differently when reading it individually, however, group discussions exposed them to different interpretations of each poem. Resulting them to be motivated to go back to the classroom and present their lessons with a positive attitude. Harland and Kinder's (1997) second order outcomes posit that being motivated and gaining confidence from attending a

professional development activity is an affective outcome and an indication that new knowledge and skills were acquired. The fact that a professional development activity contributed to teachers' eagerness in trying out a new approach of delivery indicates that there is a great possibility of classroom change.

The DTDC personnel indicated that the centre does have the required physical resources such as the computer laboratory and a science laboratory, however, these resources are not functional. The teacher participants noted that they were not aware that such facilities exist in the centre and should be accessible to them in order to support their learning. They mentioned that gaining access to these physical resources would have made their life a lot easier because some of them teach Physical Science subject which is a scarce subject. They mentioned they would have benefited a lot by having an expert conducting such experimental activities to them in enriching their knowledge of the subject. Lack of physical resources may negatively impact teacher classroom change. According to the policy, the sites were envisaged to provide such physical resources to teachers (DBE, 2015). This indicates that the third order material and provisionary outcomes (Harland & Kinder, 1997) was met to some extent because the physical resources are there but are not utilised for its purpose. This entails that there is no guarantee that teachers would change their classroom practice because this outcome was not fully realised.

Teachers mentioned that they procured work schedules from the subject advisor which keeps them up-to-date with the current curriculum and gives them a sense of direction with what is expected of them to teach. They further maintained that engaging in these activities has promoted greater work commitment and has taught them to work collaboratively and allowed them to share their best practices. Moreover, they said that engaging in these activities has improved their knowledge and new skills were learnt. For example, a skill of selecting learners to partake in oral presentation examination. They highlighted that they also learnt new teaching methods from observing fellow teachers conducting lesson to them as part of an activity. The new methods of teaching that they learnt were implemented in their classrooms. Exchanging one another's lesson plan enabled them to draw up a proper lesson plan which is concurrent with the curriculum. The novice teachers stated that they are mentored by the senior teachers to become more effective. According to Harland and Kinder (1997), the third order outcomes maintains that obtaining resources from a professional development activity does not guarantee a change of classroom practice if the teacher did not receive new knowledge. This indicates

that the first order outcome was met because teachers indicated that they received new knowledge of new curriculum delivery methods and a skill of selecting learners to participate in the oral presentation was learnt.

## 5.5 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study was limited to a small purposively selected sample of IsiZulu teachers who regularly attend workshops at the centre. Selection of only three teachers is another limitation to this study, as the other teachers did not want to avail themselves for interviews. The study focused on the views and experiences of IsiZulu teachers and cannot make claims about other teachers who use the centre. A noteworthy limitation is the fact that I utilised the limited target population of the school teachers which could not be representative of all schools within the district. Therefore, it is difficult to generalise findings beyond three teachers that were interviewed. It is then important that further studies be piloted in other districts and provinces in order to institute what needs to be done to sustain teacher learning in all the District Teacher Development Centres.

## 5.6 RECOMMENDATIONS

This study explored teacher learning in one centre with only IsiZulu teachers. I recommend that further research studies be conducted on a larger scale to compare DTDC's in other districts and other provinces in order to get insight from a wider view. The centre should be proactive in organising events with an aim of raising funds and not be dependent on the Government subsidy. The DBE should assist the centres in ensuring that the available resources are fully functional and funding is allocated for the professional development activities which are set to take place.

## 5.8 CONCLUSION

In this section, I used the conceptual framework of Harland and Kinder (1997) to answer my research questions. The main aim of this study was to explore the role of Nizenande teacher development centre in supporting teacher learning. The findings of this study indicated that IsiZulu teachers said that they learnt new knowledge and skills and have displayed great interest in the orientation workshops, CAPS moderation workshops, memorandum discussion workshops and the PLC workshop that they attended at the centre. The study was able to also

find that the subject advisor was very influential in the success of these professional development activities because he was providing information relevant to the current curriculum at these workshops.

Lastly, the other finding was that this study indicated that out of the three learning activities described by Lohman and Woolf (2001) that were discussed in chapter two, only two of them, namely learning by experimenting and knowledge exchanging were featured in these workshops. Teachers also learnt how to teach literature differently as well as assessment. Teachers are at the forefront of classroom change and learner attainment, they need to be well versed with curriculum change and continuously upgrade their skills and knowledge. I conclude that the centre supports teachers in keeping to date with curriculum coverage and in effect change to classroom practice by conducting these workshops.



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## APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

### INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR TEACHERS USING THE DISTRICT TEACHER DEVELOPMENT CENTRE

Date of interview: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Centre: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Section A: Biographical details

Name of teacher:

School name:

Years of teaching:

Grade taught:

Subjects:

How far is your school from the Teacher Development Centre? \_\_\_\_\_

How do you travel from your school to the Centre? \_\_\_\_\_

#### Section B

1. What do you think is the purpose of the teacher development centre?
2. In the last year (since Feb 2017), how often have you visited the centre?
3. What do you come to do at the Centre? [probe: what activities such as content workshops or moderation or finding resources]

4. Tell me about a recent workshop / moderation process that you attended at the Centre.  
(Probe: who facilitated the workshop, what was the purpose of the workshop, what was the focus of the workshop, how long did the workshop last, who attended the workshop)
5. What did you gain from the workshop / moderation process – (new materials/resources; if so, how did you make use of the materials/resource to better your learning development?)
6. What new knowledge did you gain from attending that workshop /moderation?  
[Probe: Can you provide a clear example of this knowledge? E.g. new content knowledge?]
7. Did you gain any new skills from attending the workshop /moderation? If so, what new skills?
8. Are you able to use the new knowledge and skills in your classroom? If yes, can you give some examples?  
If not, can you explain why?
9. Have you become more motivated or inspired to teach as a result of attending a workshop / moderation session?  
If yes, can you provide details?
10. Do you use the library or the computer centre?
  - a) If yes, for what purpose? [probe: to download curriculum documents, to find teaching resources; to study]
  - b) How often did you use the library in 2017?
  - c) If not, why not?
11. What is your main reason for coming to the Centre? Does it play an important role in your professional development?

12. What prevents you from using the Centre more?
13. Does your subject advisor/ principal/ colleagues encourage you to use the Centre?
14. What do you think that the Centre could do to support teacher development better?

# **INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR LIBRARIAN/ CENTRE MANAGER/ COMPUTER LAB MANAGER**

## **Section A: Personal Information**

Gender

Age Range

Highest Professional Qualification

Highest Academic Qualification

Position at the Centre

Length of Service at Centre.

## **Section B**

1. How long has this Centre been operational?
2. What is the purpose of the teacher development centre?
3. What do teachers come to the Centre to do?  
[Probe: can you tell me a bit about these activities e.g. Who facilitates the various activities?]
4. In what ways do you think that these activities benefit teachers and their professional development?
5. What are the resources that are available at the centre for teachers? [Probe: do you think teachers are aware that these resources are available?]
6. How do these materials/resources support teachers' professional learning?
7. Can you provide me with any reports/stats of how many teachers
  - a) use the library every day?
  - b) use the computer centre every day?
  - c) visit the centre to attend workshops every day?
8. Do you think that the centre is functioning well? Why do you say this?
9. What hinders the centre from functioning well?
10. How would you like the Centre to improve over the next two years?
11. Who else uses the Centre besides teachers? For what activities?

## APPENDIX B: OBSERVATION SCHEDULE OF THE CENTRE

[**Note about taking photographs:** ask permission to take photographs. Do not include faces of people in the photographs, as this has ethical implications for using the photos in your thesis.]

No. of meeting rooms in the Centre

No. of offices for staff

Other rooms/ offices

What resources are available for teachers? Photocopier?

Is there a computer lab? How many computers? Printers? Internet connection?

Is there a library? Approx. how many books?

What kind of books (e.g. textbooks? Reference books? For which subjects/ grade level?

(Take photos of the shelves)

Look inside a selection of books. Are there date stamps to indicate that these have been borrowed by teachers?

Is there a well-tended garden?

## APPENDIX C: UKZN ethical clearance letter



25 January 2018

Mrs LPP Shange 217080215  
School of Education  
Edgewood Campus

Dear Mrs Shange

Protocol reference number: HSS/0011/018M

Project Title: Exploring the role of District Teacher Development centre in supporting teacher's professional learning

**Full Approval – Expedited Application**

In response to your application received 21 December 2017, the Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee has considered the abovementioned application and the protocol has been granted **FULL APPROVAL**.

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment /modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

The ethical clearance certificate is only valid for a period of 3 years from the date of issue. Thereafter Recertification must be applied for on an annual basis.

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

Yours faithfully

.....  
Professor Shenuka Singh (Chair)  
Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

/pm

cc Supervisor: Professor Carol Bertram  
cc Academic Leader Research: Dr SB Khoza  
cc School Administrator: Mrs Tyzer Khumalo

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Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee  
Professor Shenuka Singh (Chair)

Weetville Campus, Govan Mbeki Building

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Website: [www.ukzn.ac.za](http://www.ukzn.ac.za)

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# APPENDIX D: LETTER GRANTING PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE KNZ DOE INSTITUTIONS



**education**

Department:  
Education  
PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL

Enquiries: Phindile Duma

Tel: 033 392 1041

Ref.:2/4/8/1396

Mrs LPP Shange  
PO Box 683  
Edendale  
3217

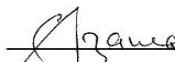
Dear Mrs Shange

## PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE KZN DoE INSTITUTIONS

Your application to conduct research entitled: **"EXPLORING THE ROLE OF A DISTRICT TEACHER DEVELOPMENT CENTER IN SUPPORTING TEACHERS' PROFESSIONAL LEARNING"**, in the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education Institutions has been approved. The conditions of the approval are as follows:

1. The researcher will make all the arrangements concerning the research and interviews.
2. The researcher must ensure that Educator and learning programmes are not interrupted.
3. Interviews are not conducted during the time of writing examinations in schools.
4. Learners, Educators, Schools and Institutions are not identifiable in any way from the results of the research.
5. A copy of this letter is submitted to District Managers, Principals and Heads of Institutions where the Intended research and interviews are to be conducted.
6. The period of investigation is limited to the period from 27 November 2017 to 09 July 2020.
7. Your research and interviews will be limited to the schools you have proposed and approved by the Head of Department. Please note that Principals, Educators, Departmental Officials and Learners are under no obligation to participate or assist you in your investigation.
8. Should you wish to extend the period of your survey at the school(s), please contact Miss Phindile Duma at the contact numbers below
9. Upon completion of the research, a brief summary of the findings, recommendations or a full report/dissertation/thesis must be submitted to the research office of the Department. Please address it to The Office of the HOD, Private Bag X9137, Pietermaritzburg, 3200.
10. Please note that your research and interviews will be limited to schools and institutions in KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education.

(Please See List of Schools Attached)

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**Dr. EV Nzama**  
Head of Department: Education  
Date: 28 November 2017

**KWAZULU-NATAL DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

Postal Address: Private Bag X9137 • Pietermaritzburg • 3200 • Republic of South Africa  
Physical Address: 247 Burger Street • Anton Lembede Building • Pietermaritzburg • 3201  
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## APPENDIX E: PLAGIARISM SIMILARITY INDEX REPORT

Final Dissertation			
ORIGINALITY REPORT			
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SIMILARITY INDEX	INTERNET SOURCES	PUBLICATIONS	STUDENT PAPERS
PRIMARY SOURCES			
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<b>2</b>	<b>uir.unisa.ac.za</b> Internet Source		<b>1%</b>
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