

SCHOOL-BASED CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL TEACHER DEVELOPMENT: A STUDY OF ALTERNATIVE TEACHER DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE IN THE EASTERN CAPE

By

Nana Adu-Pipim Boaduo
Walter Sisulu University
University of the Free State Bloemfontein Campus
South Africa

Abstract

The Education System in South Africa has been undergoing major reform and innovation since 1994. One of these changes is teacher education and training which has taken on some metamorphoses since the demise of the apartheid education system. All colleges of education were phased out in 1996 and the universities faculties of education were tasked with teacher education and training for sustainability. Unfortunately, teacher demand for primary and secondary schools have outgrown teacher supply by the training institutions. Most of the teachers in the field were trained long before the introduction of the Out-comes Based Education (OBE) in 2005. Identifiable problems in the teacher education and training are in-service and continuing professional teacher development initiatives to equip practising teachers with modern technological expertise to be able to implement the Curriculum 2005 and be able to do their teaching professionally. This paper surveyed teacher needs for the continuing professional teacher development and attempted to propose school-based in-service training as an intervention strategy for teacher continuing professional growth and development in the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa.

Key concepts: school-based in-service training, teacher professional development, intervention strategy, in-service teacher education and training

Introduction

Recent changes in the Education System of South Africa have placed new external pressures on school management team and teachers to improve their practice in their sphere of operation. One of the major challenges facing teachers at their schools is to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the school system. Furthermore, they are also expected to attain high levels of pupils' performance. To achieve these processes, schools in the Eastern Cape Province need competent teachers with relevant knowledge, skills and abilities to manage and to develop their learners. Nkuna (2004:5) stresses that: "... the competent teacher must be able to exercise effective discipline, must be able to establish positive relationship with the staff, pupils and parents; must have administrative skills, must have the ability towards innovation, be punctual and trustworthy."

To achieve these, the teachers are expected to have both managerial and professional skills for growth and development. These can be achievable if they do not stop attending in-service training programmes after initial teacher education and training. The Department of Education (DET) is required to develop appropriate intervention strategy for teacher professional development in their schools.

Mavuso (2004) and Boaduo and Babitseng (2007) believe that it must be taken into consideration the professionalism of teachers and the importance of providing opportunities for them to exercise some autonomy in articulating their professional needs. This indicates that teachers should be helped to analyse their professional needs, knowledge and skills and that this should be the starting point for their continuing professional development initiatives. For intervention strategy to achieve its intended objective, stakeholders in the provision of education in the Eastern Cape Province are expected to deliberate on alternatives and choose the relevant in-service education and training (INSET) programmes that will suit their members in their immediate school environment.

Ngobeni (2002:4) has categorised INSET programmes into four namely:

- **School-based in-service:** to help teachers to improve the quality of education in their school.
- **Job-related in-service:** to help teachers to be more effective in their own post; and ...to derive job satisfaction...;
- **Career-orientated in-service:** to prepare teaches for promotion;
- **Qualification-orientated in-service:** to provide teachers with further qualifications.

From the above categories, it is clear that all of them are relevant to continuing professional teacher growth and development.

School-based in-service training of teachers: A theoretical background

To begin with, it is necessary for every school to determine its in-service teacher education and training needs (Boaduo & Babitseng 2007). Only thus can a school's planning for the continuing professional development of its teachers can be sure of translation into positive and participatory action.

Currently in-service teacher education and training of teachers in the Eastern Cape Province is loosely matched to the needs of the varied needs of the various schools incompatibility with their location and accessibility. Only some sporadic workshops loosely organised without the consultation of the affected teachers take place. To Milondzo (2003), keen teachers in many countries have deepened their knowledge and extended their skills by judicious use of subject advisers, inspectors of education, and university staff, external advisors and consultants to their advantage. He further contends that the use of clients and agencies that are outside the school for the professional training programmes for their teachers does not respond to the development needs of the teachers.

According to Milondzo (2003), in the 1970's, the potential benefit of school-based in-service training was realized however, it was not articulated for constant articulation. The school's definition of their necessary in-service needs and the laying out of suitable support and development of such needs at school level has been dubbed school-based in-service education. School-based in-service training refers to activities taking place physically within a school in which the team consists of teaching staff colleagues; and the problems tackled are those arising in the school (Robinson 1994). This approach was advocated as a remedy for the deficiencies of traditional in-service training courses. It was argued and demonstrated that a school could identify and tackle its problems in a relevant and professional manner if provided with the support in terms of material and infrastructure.

The nature of school-based in-service education

In-service education should begin in the schools. It is here that learning and teaching take place, curricular and techniques are developed and needs and deficiencies revealed. Every school should regard the continued training of its teachers as an essential part of its task, for which all members of staff share responsibility. Teachers in Eastern Cape Province should initiate the development and growth of this process.

To Ibe (1990) school-based in-service training programmes should be initiated by school principals, the teachers, the support staff, and sometimes the community. Such programmes evolve through participatory and co-operative planning among the school personnel supported by senior administration staff from the head office.

An active school is constantly reviewing and reassessing its effectiveness and ready to consider new methods, new forms of organization and new ways of dealing with problems that arise. They must set aside time to explore these questions, as far as the teachers can manage their resources by arranging for discussion, seminars and workshops with visiting tutors from nearby institutions. It will also give time and attention to induction of new members of staff, not only those in their first year of teaching but all those who are new to the school.

Mabuza (2005) is of the view that this model was developed to make the process of needs analysis easier, and that training could be closely linked to needs so that barriers of negative implantation would disappear. However, the model has the inherent danger of limited application. It can lead to little benefit unless there are good trainers because most of the programme presenters of the courses may not have the experience and expertise required. To Milondzo (2003:23) school-based in-service training must be based on three major premises namely:

- “Teachers should be involved in the identification and articulation of their own training needs.
- Growth experience should be individualized; and
- The single school is the largest and most appropriate unit for educational change.”

To implement the stated model, the members of the school management team (SMT) are expected to perform a vital leadership role in ensuring that a positive environment exists where teachers and other relevant stakeholders can feel comfortable in sharing their concerns and views. Ho (1990:172) suggests that:

“...Educational leaders in the school must value in-service education for teachers. They also need to be provided with the assistance to develop the skills needed to create a positive climate in their schools where communication is valued and encouraged.”

Apart from these strategies, there are also factors which can make school-based in-service education and training to be more effective and appropriate in the Eastern Cape Province schools. The following have been identified by Majozi (2005:6) as important facets in the implementation of school-based in-service education and training:

- Identifying needs and aims
- Identifying priorities

- Establishing a professional tutor role, professional development team and committees, and
- Identifying resources, agencies and methods for articulation and application.”

Lack of some of the positive factors stated above can lead to unsuccessful implementation of the school-based in-service programmes. Some of the problems that hinder the implementation of school-based in-service training could be attributed to the shortage of qualified training personnel, lack of resources and support from the relevant stakeholders and higher authorities. With these problems facing both SMTs and teachers in the Eastern Cape Province the following research questions arose for administration to be able to articulate this study practically.

- Do the members of SMTs have relevant resources to support school-based in-service training?
- Is the Provincial Department of Education (PDE) keen to support school-based in-service training?
- Where do teachers want to attend their in-service education and training courses?
- Are the members of SMT given enough powers to organize professional growth and development programmes for their teaching staff?
- Do schools have policy on in-service education and training?

Objectives

The study spelt out its objectives as follows:

- To identify an intervention strategy that will enhance teacher professional development in the Eastern Cape Province.
- To identify factors that hinders the implementation of school-based in-service education and training in the area of the study.
- To determine present and future staff development needs for the teaching personnel in the Eastern Cape Province.

Research design and methods

The purpose of this empirical study was to gather information in the urban and rural schools in the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa, concerning the implementation of school-based intervention strategy for continuing professional teacher growth and development. This study focused on gathering qualitative and quantitative data from both the members of SMTs and teachers in the area of the study.

In the broad context, research methodology refers to a design where by the researcher selects data collection and analysis procedures to investigate the research problem (McMillan et al, 1993). To supplement the research method, survey techniques such as questionnaires and interviews were employed to gather the required information about the implementation of school-based in-service education and training as an intervention strategy for teacher professional growth and development in the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa.

Data collection and discussion of results

This section is based on scientific techniques employed in collecting and assessing data to indicate factors that prohibit school-based in-service training in the Eastern Cape Province. The information gathered in this section must be applied in a particular context in order to find its relevance. The relevancy will be determined by the participants and accuracy of data collected. According to Mabunda (1995) data analysis aims to translate the information gathered into a form that allows the researcher to develop a thick description of the findings. He goes on to say that analysis also involves interpretation. To support this statement Hongwane (2002:107) asserts that "...analysis refers to examination, investigation, scrutiny, inquiry dissection, breakdown and division of whatever is scrutinized."

The data gathered were subjected to statistical analysis using the Statistical Programme for the Social Sciences (SPSS) to analyse the collected data to answer the research questions. The following deductions could be made from tables:

Table 1: Number of respondents randomly selected.

Items	Number of respondents
Rural	50
Urban	50
TOTAL	100

The fifty randomly selected respondents received questionnaires in both rural and urban secondary schools. The distribution was fifty for both males and females to provide equal responses with bias.

Table 2: The role by clear objectives in school-based in-service education and training

Item	Frequency	Percentage
Q.1 The members of School Management Team should set clear objectives which are relevant and attainable.		
1. Yes	90	90
2. No	4	4
3. Unsure	6	6
	$fx = 100$	100%

In Q.1 forty five of the respondents (90%) agreed that the members of SMT should set clear objectives that are relevant and attainable for school-based in-service education and training. Two of the respondents (4%) disagreed with the statement, while three (6%) recorded unsure.

From these findings it is evident that most of the respondents wanted the members of SMT to set clear objectives that are relevant and attainable for the school-based in-service education and training. This will help to clear some of problems that the staff might encounter in the process of attaining the intended objectives.

Table 3: Leadership style and decision making

Item	Frequency	Percentage
Q.2 Members of the School Management Team (leadership) should foster joint decision making among stakeholders.		
1. Yes	76	76
2. No	16	16
3. Unsure	8	8
	$fx = 100$	100

In Q.2 thirty eight respondents (76%) preferred leadership style that fosters decision making among stakeholders. On the other hand eight respondents (16%) chose to be against it and four (8%) recorded unsure.

The leadership styles of members of the SMT determine their success and achievement in the schools. They have the primary task to work harmoniously with their subordinates so as to attain intended objectives through the school-based in-service education and training. The SMTs in the Eastern Cape Province, are expected to have consensus with their teaching personnel; so as to make the implementation of the school-based in-service programmes run smoothly.

Table 4: The utilization of materials and information gained from school-based in-service education and training

Item	Frequency	Percentage
Q.3 Materials and information gained from school based in-service should be utilized.		
1. Agree	80	80
2. Disagree	4	4
3. Uncertain	6	6
	<i>fx</i> = 100	100

In Q.3 forty respondents (80%) agreed that the materials and information received from school-based in-service education and training should be utilized in various school subjects. Two (4%) opted to be against the statement while only three (6%) were uncertain. The findings show that most of the respondents confirmed that the materials and information gained from the school based in-service training courses should be utilized. The members of the SMT should make it a point that the materials and information gained from school-based in-service and training is applied and used by various subject teachers in their field of specialization.

Table 5: Motivation and school-based in-service education and training

Item	Frequency	Percentage
Q.4 The members of School Management Team should always motivate his teaching personnel to upgrade their knowledge.		
1. Agree	78	78
2. Disagree	12	12
3. Uncertain	10	10
	<i>fx</i> = 100	100

In Q.4 thirty nine respondents (78%) agreed that members of the SMT should motivate their teaching personnel to upgrade their knowledge while performing their duties in school. Six respondents (12%) disagreed with the statement. Five (10%) recorded uncertain. The role of the members of the SMT is not to lead their subordinates only but also to motivate them to further studies. They must also be encouraged to upgrade their knowledge through school based in-service education and training. Senior staff members should always be available and accessible to give guidance to their juniors.

Table 6: School-based in-service education and training courses should have a strong links with present

Item	Frequency	Percentage
Q.5 There should be a link between school-based in-service education and training and pre-set courses.		
1. Agree	84	84
2. Disagree	6	6
3. Uncertain	10	10
	<i>fx</i> = 100	100

In Q.5 eighty four respondents (84%) agreed that there should be a strong link between school-based in-service education and training programmes and pre-set courses. Six (12%) disagreed with the statement, while ten (20%) of the recorded uncertain.

From the information in table 6, it is clear that most of the respondents believe that there should be a strong link between school-based in-service education and training and pre-set courses should be valuable. The above statement calls for the organizers of the school-based in-service education and training in the Eastern Cape Province to narrow the gap between pre-set and school-based in-service education and training programmes so as to have continuity in both academic and professional development.

Table 7: School-based in-service education and training is preferable to those organised centrally by the Department of Education

Item	Frequency	Percentage
Q.6 Is the school based in-service training preferable to those centrally organized by the Department of Education		
1. Agree	92	92
2. Disagree	2	2
Uncertain	6	6
	<i>fx</i> = 100	100

In Q.6 forty six respondents (92%) preferred school-based in-service education and training to the one centrally organized by government officials. One (2%) opted to be against the statement, while three (6%) of the respondents recorded uncertain.

From these findings it is evident that most of the respondents want to attend their in-service education and training courses in their schools. The members of the SMT and senior staff members are in a good position to organize and supervise school-based in-service programmes. This is because the teachers understand the culture and climate of their respective schools better than the government officials do. School-based in-service education and training encourages team work among teachers who teach the same subjects at different schools. It also helps eliminate inconveniences of leaving learners at their schools without teacher and also to minimize travelling costs for course attendance.

Table 8: Resources and school-based in-service education and training

Item	Frequency	Percentage
Q.7: Do you have enough resources in your school?		
1. Yes	6	6
2. No	92	92
3. Unsure	2	2
	<i>fx</i> = 100	100

In Q.7 forty six respondents (92%) revealed that they do not have resources in their schools. Three (6%) claimed to have resources while one (2%) was unsure.

The findings reveal that most of the schools in the area of the study do not have resources and there are no specifically trained personnel to oversee continuing professional teacher

development. It may be concluded from the general consensus of the respondents that the PDE has a role to play in the provision of physical resources and teaching-learning materials and the establishment of resource centres in all the educational district of the Eastern Cape Province.

Summary of findings

In the survey respondents responses revealed, among other things, the following that need attention of the education authorities for immediate action to address the problems to allow for the implementation of school-based in-service education and training of the teaching personnel in Eastern Cape Province.

- There is acute lack of resources of all types in varying degrees in urban and rural schools.
- The SMTs are of the view that school-based in-service education and training for their teaching personnel should be instituted as soon as practicable.
- The teachers confirmed the need for school-based in-service education and training programmes for their professional growth and development in their schools because it is convenient and cost effective.

Recommendations

On the basis of the findings listed from the survey the following recommendations are made:

- The PDE should, without further delay, establish committees to oversee school-based in- service education and training as an intervention strategy for the professional growth and development of teachers in the Eastern Cape Province.
- The PDE should pay more attention to providing resources to schools; so as to enhance school-based in-service education and training in the place of work.
- Liaisons between the PDE, members of the SMTs and teachers on the bases of cooperation should be encouraged.
- Effective and social dimensions of school-based in-service education and training should receive attention as well as the intellectual aspects of it.
- Attention should be focused on school-based in-service education and training programmes that aim to change teacher professional growth and development in schools so as to enhance higher level of professionalism.

Conclusion

This study revealed that the problems concerning the use of school-based in-service education and training as an intervention strategy for continuing professional teacher growth and development in the Eastern Cape Province schools needs further in-depth investigation. Some of the problems revealed were elicited by this research study. From the findings one can conclude that there is urgent need for immediate introduction of school-based in-service education and training for teachers in the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa. Furthermore, the value of this study will not be determined by the number of recommendations given above, but by the improvement in the quality and effectiveness of in-service education and training provision brought by the implementation of the recommendations postulated in this study. It is believed that the recommendations and suggestions made will be taken into consideration by the authorities concerned so that, in the

final analysis, the school-based in-service programmes for the continuing professional teacher development and growth could prove to be a dynamic catalyst for the improvement of education in the province in particular and generally in the whole country.

References

- Adams, E. (Ed.). (1975). *In-service education and teachers centre*. Oxford: Pergamon Press.
- Ary, D Jacobs, L.C. and Razavieh, A. (1990). *Introduction to research in education*. New York: Hart, Renhart and Winston.
- Bagwandeem, D.R. & Louw, W.J. (1993). *Theory and Practice of in-service education and training for teachers in South Africa*. Pretoria: Van Schaik.
- Boaduo, N.A.P. & Babitseng, S.M. (2007). Professionalism of teachers in Africa for capacity building towards the achievement of basic education: Challenges and obstacles for introspection. *The International Journal of Learning*, Vol. 14, No. 3, pp. 35-41.
- Hongwane, V.A. (2002). A critical appraisal of the teaching of social sciences in the Escourt District of Kwazulu-Natal. Unpublished M.Ed. Dissertation, UNIQWA: Phuthaditjhaba.
- Ho wa Kam. (Ed.). (1990). *Improving the quality of the teaching profession*. Singapore: ICET.
- Ibe, M.D. (1990). School-based staff development programmes: Theoretical Base and Realities. In Ho, W.K. (Ed.) 1990. *Improving the quality of the teaching profession*. Singapore: ICET.
- Mabunda, G.K. (1995). Managing change in school. Paper presented at the principal's regional conference, Giyani community Hall, 15-16 September 1995.
- Mabuza, B.M. (2005). Teachers' participation in staff development. Paper presented at the principals, Regional conference. Grasskop, 12-13 August 2005.
- McMillan, J.H. & Schumacher, S. (1993). *Research in education: A conceptual introduction*. New York: Harper Collins College Publishers.
- Majosi, J.V. (2005). School-based in-service training. Paper presented at the principals, Regional conference. Grasskop, 12-13 August 2005.
- Mavuso, H.H. (2004). Managing change in the secondary schools. Paper delivered at Manyeleti Game Reserve, 28-31 May 2004.
- Milondzo, K.S. (2003). The principal's role in the development programmes for the teaching staff in the Far North of the Limpopo Province. Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, University of the Free State (Qwaqwa campus).
- Ngobeni, N.B. (2002). School-based in-service Education: An approach to staff development in Limpopo Province. Paper delivered to the TUATA Regional conference. Giyani community Hall, 16-17 September 2002.
- Nkuna, J.N. (2004). A model for training teachers in the rural schools. Paper delivered to the Principal's conference. Giyani Chanchulani Hall, 15-17 October 1999.
- Robinson, M. (1999). Teacher education in South Africa. *Journal of Education for teaching*, (25), 11-23.

Dr. Nana Adu-Pipim Boaduo FRC, Senior Lecturer: Faculty of Education, Department of Continuing Professional Development, Walter Sisulu University, Mthatha Campus and Affiliated Researcher, Faculty of Education, Centre for Development Support, University of the Free State Bloemfontein Campus: South Africa. Email: pipimboaduo@live.co.za or pipimboduo@yahoo.co.uk.