

Professional Development Training Programs by the Northern Cape Department of Education: Impact on Life Orientation Teachers

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ABSTRACT Continuous and intensive professional development training aims at equipping South African Life Orientation teachers with the necessary resources to present the subject, to improve their professional skills and increase their confidence in dealing with the subject. Professional development training is considered to be the result of a learning process which is directed at acquiring a coherent overview of the knowledge as well as the insights, attitudes and repertory that a teacher needs for the everyday practising of the profession. To be effective, the training of teachers should be a seamless life-long experience in equipping them to respond effectively to changes in the economy and in the educational system. This quantitative study investigated the impact of in-service training programs on a sample of sixty Life Orientation teachers. This research was timeous in that it has laid bare not only the shortcomings of the current training programs but also points a way towards redress of the problem.

INTRODUCTION

Things develop at such a tremendous rate in modern education and in life in general (one needs to only contemplate the challenges posed by the new social media in which children immerse themselves) that teachers, according to Adewumi (2012) and Gama (2015), require continuous and intensive professional development training to equip themselves with the necessary resources in order to present their particular subjects, to improve their professional skills and to increase their confidence in dealing with their subjects. South African Life Orientation teachers, in particular, need to participate in such professional development training programs because of the importance of their subject as one of the most significant means to equip learners for coping with the challenges of the future (Rooth and Stielau 2004; Department of Education 2006; Pillay 2012; Martin 2013). The same applies for teachers in Burundi, Botswana and Kenya where professional development training programs comparable to those in South Africa

are offered to teachers. The competencies and skills of teachers in these countries are being developed to enable them to deal with life and socio-political issues that are specific to their respective countries (Dakmara et al. 2008). In developed countries such as Finland, the United Kingdom and Australia professional development training programs are also offered to teachers in accordance with national needs in the context of the various traditions in teacher education and training (Prinsloo 2007; Dakmara 2008; Adewumi 2012).

This paper reports on an investigation that was launched to see whether teachers in a certain area of South Africa were indeed being adequately equipped for their task through ongoing in-service professional development training provided by the Northern Cape Department of Education, in other words, to see if the in-service professional development training programs that these teachers are expected to participate in are indeed effective and successful. The report commences with an outline of the conceptual-theoretical framework on which the

empirical investigation was based, then proceeds to a report of the actual empirical investigation that was done, and then goes on to the findings, a discussion thereof, and concludes with a number of recommendations.

Conceptual-Theoretical Framework

Motswiri (1999), Mtetwa and Thompson (2000), Mutshekwané (2003), Mbunyuza (2005), Adewumi (2012) and Gama (2015) correctly mention that in-service teacher professional development training programs begin with pre-service training, continue through the first few years of teaching and provide opportunities to extend knowledge and skills throughout a teacher's career. Subsequent in-service professional development training programs for teachers include forms of training such as workshops, independent reading in addition to study, conferences and also consultations with experts and peers. International literature on teacher professional development training programs indicates that, regardless of their purpose, such programs have traditionally been delivered in the form of workshops, seminars, conferences and/or courses (Ono and Ferreira 2010; Atta and Mensah 2015). Craig et al. (1998), Adler and Reed (2000), Bertram et al. (2002) and Diale et al. (2014) in turn describe continuing in-service teacher professional development (CEPD) training as comprising of an ongoing range of activities by which in-service teachers and other categories of teacher may improve and develop their personal education, professional competence and their general understanding of the roles which teachers and schools are expected to play in their changing societies.

The concept *continuing in-service teacher professional development training programs* refers to the means through which a teacher's personal needs and aspirations may be met. Such programs allow the system in which the teachers serve to provide opportunities for qualified professional teachers to update and upgrade their professional knowledge, skills as well as the attitude that will enable them to capture developments in the field of, in this particular case, Life Orientation, and to remain in control of the subject (Stoll et al. 2006; Wasserman 2014).

Pretorius and Lemmer (1998), Mutshekwané (2003), Mbunyuza (2005) and Gama (2015) identify the main purposes of such in-service pro-

fessional development training programs as, firstly, to continuously revise teachers' subject knowledge and their capabilities to provide appropriate learning strategies for learners; secondly, to improve teachers' academic, professional and practical knowledge in order to improve their job performance; thirdly, to remedy the shortcomings of poor pre-service teacher training and other problems which surface when a teacher is actually practising the profession; fourthly, to upgrade unqualified and under-qualified teachers to the status of qualified professionals (especially in areas facing a severe shortage of qualified teachers such as mathematics, science and technology); fifthly, to update teachers on changes in information and communication technology, particularly multi-media, geographic information system (GIS), the World Wide Web (www), CD Rom technology and the Internet (electronic communication), and finally, to provide opportunities for teachers to exchange ideas and to work together in defining and solving common problems experienced in their respective work environments. The value of peer interaction among teachers has been emphasised as a means to instil confidence in bringing about change in classroom practices (Larriee and Cooper 2006; Maughan et al. 2012; Diale et al. 2014).

According to Mbunyuza (2005), Du Plessis (2013) and Wasserman (2014), the importance of ongoing teacher professional development training programs lies in equipping teachers with the capacity to respond effectively to major changes in the economy and education system, such as changes in curriculum presentation methodologies, assessment, school organisation and management and to provide for teachers' personal and professional development needs. This is in accordance with practices in all European countries. According to Uzerli and Kerger (2007), there is "unanimous agreement that all teachers should be provided during their career with opportunities to update skills they need to perform their tasks, and thus achieve the aims of a high quality education in their working fields" (also see Wasserman 2014; Gama 2015).

According to Loucks-Horsely et al. (1998), the American Education Research Association (2005), Archibald et al. (2011), DeMonte (2013) and NCERT (the National Council of Educational Research and Training) (2016), the following are some of the key features of high-quality

teacher professional development training programs:

In the first place, such programs are driven by a clear, well-defined image of effective classroom learning and teaching. The emphasis is, for example, on enquiry-based learning, investigations, problem solving and application of knowledge. These programs are based on an approach that emphasises an in-depth understanding of core concepts and it challenges participants to construct new understandings and the means to measure meaningful achievements.

Such training programs also provide opportunities for teachers to build their knowledge and skills and broaden their pedagogical capacity so that they can create better learning opportunities for learners. High quality in-service teacher professional development training programs enable teachers to develop in-depth knowledge of their learning areas and to choose and integrate curriculum and learning experiences.

High quality training programs furthermore provide opportunities for in-depth investigations, collaborative work and reflection, and connect explicitly with other professional experiences and activities of teachers. This means that teachers are not viewed as objects to which professional development training is applied, but rather as an integral part of the professional development training program. To achieve this, teachers' active participation in the professional development training programs is ensured from the planning phase to the evaluation phase.

Such training programs also help build a learning community. Continuous learning is part of school norms and culture; teachers are encouraged to learn and should be rewarded for learning.

In addition to all of this, effective training programs provide support to teachers serving in leadership positions such as mentors or monitors of other teachers, agents of change and/or promoters of reforms. They also provide links to other parts of the education system. For example, teacher professional development training is integrated with other schools, district or local community initiatives. Finally, such training programs enable teachers to continuously assess themselves and make improvements to ensure that every day classroom practice conforms to best practice.

The training programs provided by the Northern Cape Department of Education aim at ad-

ressing best practice in the context of the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS). The CAPS is not a new curriculum but an amendment to the existing National Curriculum Statement (NCS) (Pinnock 2011). According to Du Plessis (2013), the CAPS is an adjustment of **what** to teach and not **how** to teach Life Orientation. "In both NCS and CAPS mention is made of the curriculum conveying the knowledge, skills and values that should be communicated in a post-apartheid South Africa" (Du Plessis 2013: 2). Values to be taught include aspects such as social justice, human rights, environmental awareness and respect for people from diverse cultural, religious and ethnic backgrounds (Pinnock 2011; Du Plessis 2013; Gama et al. 2015). In Life Orientation, the focus is on the study of the self in relation to others and to society. According to Diale et al. (2014) and Gama (2015), success in teaching the subject depends on a holistic approach since it is concerned with "the personal, social, intellectual, emotional, spiritual, motor and physical growth and development of learners and the way in which these dimensions are interrelated and expressed in life" (Prinsloo 2007: 156).

An empirical investigation into the impact of an aspect of in-service professional development training, provided by the Northern Cape Department of Education, was launched on the basis of the above conceptual-theoretical framework.

EMPIRICAL INVESTIGATION

General Aim

The general aim of the investigation was to determine the impact of in-service teacher professional development programs on Grade 10 Life Orientation teachers educators in the process of implementing the National Curriculum Statement and Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement amendment of the Department of Basic Education of the Republic of South Africa.

Research Design

A quantitative, non-experimental survey was done. A survey was used as it poses a set of questions to participants and then summarises the participants' responses with percentages, frequency counts or more advanced statistical

techniques, if required (Leedy and Ormrod 2001; Creswell 2009). Primary and secondary sources were consulted in reviewing literature on professional development training programs which laid a theoretical basis for the construction of the questionnaire used in the survey.

Study Population and Participants

A stratified, disproportional random sampling technique was used to select a sample of sixty ($n=60$) Grade 10 Life Orientation teachers from a sampling frame of the 250 Grade 10 Life Orientation teachers in the Frances Baard District of the Northern Cape Province of South Africa. The sample accounted for over twenty percent of the total sampling frame. More than eighty percent of the schools included in the sample were historically disadvantaged schools and more than ninety percent of the participants came from historically disadvantaged population groups.

Four historically disadvantaged schools and two ex-model C-schools (relatively historically advantaged) were selected from the urban circuit a sample. A sample of six schools was selected from the rural circuit. Thirty Grade 10 Life Orientation teachers per circuit were selected, thereby giving a sample of 60 Life Orientation teachers.

Data Collection Instrument

A questionnaire was designed for the purpose of the survey. The questionnaire was based on the conceptual-theoretical framework outlined above, and divided into three parts:

- ♦ Part one consisted of nine items intended to glean biographic and demographic information of the participants.
- ♦ Part two consisted of four general items related to the participants' pre-service training experiences of Life Orientation and/or the National Curriculum Statement (NCS) and Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) and of their exposure to professional pre-service programs aiming at improving their capacity to teach more effectively and to implement the curriculum more successfully.
- ♦ Part three consisted of ten items related to the participants' in-service training experi-

ences of Life Orientation and/or the NCS/CAPS and problems that the participants encountered with the current in-service training programs.

Data Analysis

Data collected in parts one, two and three of the questionnaire were analysed with the use of descriptive statistical techniques. Descriptive or summary statistics were used to make sense of the data, that is, to express typical values in the data such as averages, maximum and minimum values and frequencies. As a result of the research design and of these analysis techniques, the findings of this study can only be valid for this particular sample and should not be generalised to all Grade 10 teachers in this particular Province of South Africa or to other teachers in that country.

Reliability and Validity

Descriptive statistics were used to come to conclusions regarding the research questions. No theoretical constructs such as personality, attitude, intelligence, motivation and so on were assessed by the questionnaire and therefore the statistical reliability of the questionnaire was not calculated. However, an effort was made to motivate the respondents to give their honest responses to the items in the questionnaire.

Due to the fact that no theoretical constructs were measured by the questionnaire, the construct validity of the questionnaire was not determined. For the purposes of this study, the content validity of the questionnaire was an important consideration. The questionnaire was therefore very carefully constructed to ensure that the different sections and items would directly relate to the general aim of the research and be compatible with the insights explained in the theoretical framework outlined above.

Ethical Considerations

The research adhered to a number of ethical requirements:

- ♦ All participants were asked to give their informed consent to participate in the research.
- ♦ All participants were informed that their identities would not be revealed.

- ♦ Participants were informed that all information provided by them would be treated confidentially and that the information would not be used for any other purpose except for the research.
- ♦ All participants were clearly informed about the purpose of the research and before the questionnaire administration they were briefed so that they clearly understood what they were required to do when responding to the items in the questionnaire.
- ♦ All the concerned parties gave their informed consent that the research could be done in the schools: the sampled respondents, the principals of the schools in question, the Northern Cape Department of Education and the Ethics Committee of the University under whose auspices the research was done.

FINDINGS

Section 1 of the Questionnaire

Biographical Information about the Participants

The results with regard to the gender of the participants (60% female and 40% male) are consistent with other research findings (Quarts et al. 2008: 218-250), showing that teaching Life Orientation was a female dominated field. Of the participants, eighty-two percent were older than 30 years and the majority of them (73%) did not have marital obligations. The participants were mainly Setswana speaking (65%). As far as participants' pre-service academic qualifications were concerned, slightly more than half of them (52%) possessed only a matriculation certificate and a substantial number (23%) were not even in possession of such a certificate. However, eighty-two percent of the sampled participants were in possession of a recognised teaching qualification; the majority of participants possessed a National Professional Diploma in Education (NPDE). Only six percent had either a Bachelor's degree in Education (3%) or an Honours degree in Education (3%). What is worrying was that twelve percent of the teachers possessed no professional teaching qualification at all. Sixty-two percent of the participants had less than 10 years experience in the teaching profession and twenty percent had between 1 and 5

years experience. Fifty-three percent of the participants were teaching two and three subjects, and seven percent of the participants did not possess a professional qualification in the subjects that they were actually teaching.

Section 2 of the Questionnaire

Pre-Service Training Opportunities in Life Orientation (LO) and the National Curriculum Statement (NCS), including the Amendment of the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS)

On the issue of pre-service training opportunities in Life Orientation (LO) and/or the National Curriculum Statement (NCS) including the amendment of the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS), the findings showed that the majority of the participants (65%) had not received any training whatsoever in this subject.

The Quality of Pre-Service Training Programs in LO/NCS, including the CAPS Amendment

When the participants were requested to rate the quality of the planning and timing of their pre-service training program offered by the Northern Cape Department of Education, fifty-two percent rated it as poor and an additional fifteen rated the planning and timing of the training program as very poor, giving it a total poor rating of sixty-seven percent. Eighteen percent of the participants rated the planning and timing component of the training program as average and only fifteen percent rated it as good. The majority of the participants rated the planning and timing as poor.

Participants were also requested to rate the quality of the program facilitators (departmental officials) in terms of course content and presentation skills. Fifty-eight percent rated the course content to be of poor quality, twenty-nine percent rated it as average and only thirteen rated it as either good (4%) or very good (9%). On the issue of rating the program facilitator's presentation skills, almost half (48%) rated presentation skills of poor quality and an additional nine percent rated these skills as very poor. Forty-three percent of the participants rated the facilitators' presentation skills as average.

Another important aspect related to the quality of pre-service training in LO/NCS, including the CAPS amendment, that the participants were

requested to rate was the quantity of course support material. Forty-eight percent rated the quantity as inadequate (poor), and an additional twenty-nine percent rated the quantity as very poor, suggesting that the quantity of the course support material was significantly less than what would normally be expected.

Another aspect of course support material which participants were requested to rate was the timing of the availability of the course material. Seventy-six percent rated the timing as poor (38%) or very poor (38%). This suggests that the course support material was being made available too late to be of any value to the participants.

As far as the class application relevance of the pre-service training programs was concerned, hundred percent of the participants indicated that the training programs had no relevance for class application. In fact, eighty-one percent of them rated the programs as very poor in terms of their class application relevance.

As far as the funding of the pre-service training programs was concerned, all the participants (100%) rated the funding as either poor (62%) or very poor (38%).

An important component of pre-service training which the participants were requested to rate was the quality of the after-training support services. The findings show that hundred percent of the participants did not receive any after-training support from the course facilitators, school or district office.

Relevance of Pre-service Training for Addressing Classroom Application Problems

This item focused on whether pre-service training in LO/NCS and CAPS amendment adequately addressed the participants' classroom problems. The results indicate that ninety-two percent of the participants either disagreed (47%) or strongly disagreed (45%) that these programs were effective in addressing their classroom application problems.

Section 3 of the Questionnaire

In-service Training in Life Orientation (LO) and the NCS/CAPS

Section three of the questionnaire dealt with the in-service training of teachers in Life Ori-

entation (LO) and the NCS/CAPS. The results indicated that all of the participants had attended in-service training in LO/NCS over the previous year.

Level of Active Participation in LO/NCS and CAPS Amendment In-service Training Programs

Results indicated that ninety-two percent of the participants rated their participation as low or very low. It is difficult to explain such a low level of participation in a training program, because one assumes that any training program would be based on a training needs analysis. The results reveal that ninety-three percent of the participants rated their participation level during the implementation phase of in-service training programs in LO/NCS and CAPS amendment as either low (48%) or very low (45%). All participants (100%) rated their participation levels during the after-training phase as either low (47%) or very low (53%).

Quality of Recent In-service Training Programs

Participants were requested to rate the quality of the most recent in-service training programs that they had attended.

The funding component was rated by all participants as either poor (57%) or as very poor (43%). The funding of a program tends to affect its quality in many dimensions, such as the quantity, quality and timeous availability of support material and overall sustainability. A second aspect of the planning of an in-service professional development training program that participants were asked to rate in terms of quality was the notice period. Adequate notice is necessary as it gives teachers time to adjust their teaching loads and to develop the necessary peace of mind to give the in-service professional development training program the attention it deserves. Eighty-five percent of the sampled teachers rated the notice period of the most recent in-service training program they had attended as either poor (63%) or very poor (22%). The third and final aspect of the planning of in-service training programs that participants were asked to rate was the duration of the training program. Sixty-five percent of the participants rated the length of the program as poor and thirty-five percent rated it as average.

Participants were also requested to rate the quality of the training program facilitator's work with specific reference to selection of course content and the presentation skills. The majority of participants (60%) reported the course content to have been of average quality and only eighteen percent reported it to have been good. Regarding the facilitator's presentation skills, the majority of the participants (78%) rated it as poor, while the remaining twenty-two percent rated it as average.

Another major aspect related to the quality of in-service professional development training programs is the nature and availability of support materials. Participants were requested to rate course material in terms of three criteria, namely quantity, quality and timing of its availability. Participants rated the quantity of the support material as either poor (70%) or very poor (30%). In many cases participants reported that they had been required to share support material. Participants also rated the quality of the support material as either poor (87%) or very poor (13%). The last criterion that participants were asked to rate was the availability of course material. The majority of the participants (94%) either rated it as poor (77%) or very poor (17%). Support material which is not available or arrives too late greatly reduces the value of the training program.

The participants were also asked to rate the relevance of the in-service professional development training programs in terms of assisting teachers to solve practical classroom problems. The majority of the participants (68%) rated this aspect as either poor (40%) or very poor (28%). An in-service professional development training program that has very little practical relevance can be regarded as a waste of time and resources. Program facilitators are supposed to be modelling techniques that teachers could use in classroom practice.

The last aspect of the in-service professional development training programs that participants were requested to rate in terms of quality was the matter of after-training support services. Sixty-eight percent of the participants reported that the after-training support services were poor, and thirty-two percent rated them as very poor. One important way through which program facilitators can determine whether training outcomes have been achieved is by conducting

regular after-training classroom visits and by rendering the necessary support.

The question whether the school management team was offering after-training support services to teachers by, for example, regularly visiting those teachers who had just come back from an in-service professional development program, revealed that the majority of participants (85%) reported not having received such support. Sixty-three percent of the participants rated this aspect as poor and twenty-two percent rated it as very poor. It appears as if district offices had not offered any after-training support to teachers as well. Fifty percent of the participants reported services rendered by district offices as poor and the other fifty percent reported it as very poor.

Participants were furthermore requested to rate their attitudes toward LO/NCS and CAPS amendment in-service professional development training programs soon after attending such training programs. The results indicated that fifty percent of the participants had either a very negative, or a negative (18%) attitude towards LO/NCS and CAPS amendment in-service professional development training programs soon after attending such training programs.

Classroom Application

Participants were asked to rate the extent to which the LO/NCS and CAPS amendment in-service training programs helped them to address their classroom problems. Eighty-three percent of the participants either disagreed (60%) or strongly disagreed (23%) with the statement that the LO/NCS and CAPS amendment in-service training programs they had attended had helped them to address their classroom problems.

Participants were also asked to give information about the extent to which follow-up LO/NCS and CAPS amendment in-service training programs were designed to build on previous training programs. Results indicated that more than half (58%) of the participants strongly disagreed (10%) or disagreed (48%) with the statement that follow-up LO/NCS and CAPS amendment in-service training programs were designed to build on previous training programs.

Information was furthermore asked about the frequency of teachers' attendance of follow-up LO/NCS and CAPS amendment in-service training programs. The majority of the participants

(62%) reported that they attended follow-up LO/NCS and CAPS amendment in-service training programs during every school holiday. Twenty-two percent were uncertain as to how frequently they attended LO/NCS and CAPS amendment in-service training programs.

Responses about the attainment of a professional development qualification in teaching reflected that thirty-eight percent of the participants had attained a professional development qualification in teaching during the previous three years, without the assistance of the department. The majority of the participants (62%) had not obtained any qualification and cited financial incapacity as the main reason.

Participants' opinions about taking responsibility for professional development reflected that only thirty-three percent of the participants thought that they themselves were definitely responsible (18%) or responsible (15%) for their own professional development. Thirty-seven percent reported that the Northern Cape Department of Education was responsible and thirty percent thought that they and the Northern Cape Department of Education were jointly responsible for their professional development. The results suggest that, despite the widespread discourse about life-long learning, many teachers still have a long way to go in accepting responsibility for their own professional development.

Participants' opinions were asked about their current professional development capacity to implement the NCS for Grade 10 Life Orientation successfully. The majority (63%) of the participants rated their current professional development capacity to implement the NCS for Grade 10 Life Orientation successfully as either low (28%) or very low (35%). This state of affairs is alarming because a teacher's perceived professional development capacity to implement the NCS and CAPS amendment successfully will affect his/her confidence and self-esteem in class. Thus, it can be concluded that the majority of participants doubted their abilities to teach LO successfully to Grade 10 learners.

DISCUSSION

In summary, the following findings emanated from the study: The majority of the participants had not received any pre-service training in LO/NCS and CAPS amendment. In general, the quality of the pre-service educator profes-

sional training programs was evaluated as poor. The following factors contributed towards this negative evaluation: poor planning and timing of the programs; inadequate funding to attend the programs; poor course content; poor presentations by program facilitators; inadequate quantity of course material; poor quality of course material; inadequate provision of after-course material and after-training support, and poor classroom application potential of programs. These findings tie in with those of studies done on teacher professional development in Botswana (Moswela 2006) and Namibia (Mushaandja 2006) in which the low quality of teacher professional development training programs as well as the limited financial resources available for such programs were emphasized.

All the participants had attended in-service teacher professional development programs for teaching LO/NCS and CAPS amendment. The majority of participants rated their levels of participation during the planning, implementation and after-training phases of the in-service training programs as low to very low. In general, the quality of the in-service teacher professional training programs was also evaluated as poor. The following factors contributed towards this negative evaluation: the programs were inadequately funded; the notice periods were too short; the programs were too lengthy; the course content was of average quality; facilitators' presentation skills were poor; the quantity, quality and availability of the course material were poor; the relevance of the in-service training professional development programs in terms of assisting teacher to solve practical classroom problems was poor; the after-training support services were poor, and the majority of the participants had a negative attitude towards LO/NCS and CAPS amendment in-service professional development training programs soon after attending such training programs. These findings lend support to a study done in Botswana on teacher professional development training programs on the basis of which Moswela (2006) suggests that teachers should be involved in determining the course content of programs.

The majority of the participants were also of the opinion that attending the LO/NCS and CAPS amendment in-service training programs did not help them to address their classroom problems. This again ties in with Moswela's (2006) findings on the basis of which he advises that teachers know best what their needs are in terms of improving their skills and competen-

cies in order to perform their tasks and thereby achieve the aims of a high quality education.

More than half of the participants in the study reported here disagreed with the statement that follow-up LO/NCS and CAPS amendment in-service training programs were designed to build on previous training programs. The majority of participants reported that they had attended follow-up LO/NCS and CAPS amendment in-service training programs every school holiday. The minority of the participants had attained a professional development qualification in teaching during the last three years without the assistance of the department. The minority of the participants reported that they themselves were responsible for their own professional development. The majority of participants also rated their current professional development capacity to implement the NCS and CAPS amendment for Grade 10 Life Orientation successfully as low.

CONCLUSION

The quality of in-service professional training development programs is impacted by a variety of factors, *inter alia* in-service teacher professional development training programs having a rather small effect on the classroom practice of teachers and not being modelled along profiles of best practice; the pedagogical skills required by teacher to successfully implement the NCS and CAPS amendment have not been specified; the programs are poorly funded, and the schools are poorly managed and under-resourced. These and other shortcomings of in-service professional development programs could be overcome by taking a multi-stakeholder approach. This research suggests that in-service teacher professional development training programs attended by Grade 10 Life Orientation teachers might improve their skills and knowledge regarding the content of the subject Life Orientation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the above findings, the following is recommended:

1. Recommendations Regarding the Department of Education

The Department of Education should involve all stakeholders in its efforts to achieve the expected outcomes of Life Orientation. Teachers,

especially those with inadequate qualifications in the subject, whether experienced or not, should receive special attention. The Department should also attend to the removal of all barriers that prevent success in the teaching of Life Orientation, including the lack of funding and inadequate planning and presentation of training programs for teachers. In this process, cognisance should be taken of the feedback provided about the success of training opportunities by those teachers who took the time to attend.

2. Recommendations Regarding Teacher Education Institutions

To rectify the poor quality of teacher education and timing issues, facilitators need to be patient and supportive to teachers in need of LO/NCS and the CAPS amendment, particularly the previously disadvantaged teachers. Teacher education institutions also require the necessary information, support, funding and quality training to be able to acquire the desired outcomes with the attendees to these courses.

3. Recommendations Regarding Teachers

The Grade 10 teachers' subject knowledge of/in Life Orientation should be improved as far as possible. This could be achieved by the institution of district forums for such teachers. Teachers should also be assisted to learn lessons from previous Grade 12 examinations and to apply their new insights in their teaching of the subject.

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