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# What Organisational Factors are Key to the Enhancement of Career Development of Public School Teachers?\*

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ABSTRACT The objective of this study was to determine the organisational factors, task factors, and career growth factors influencing management of career development amongst public school teachers. The paper utilised a quantitative research approach and data was collected using structured questionnaires. The targeted population comprised 21 public schools with 239 teachers. Simple random sampling technique was used to select 5 public primary and 5 public secondary schools. A representative sample of 145 participating teachers was put together using Krejcie and Morgan sample determination and 126 fully completed questionnaires was received from respondents. Data was analysed using summative methods. Findings revealed that critical factors that enhance the career development of public schools' teachers are training opportunities, continuous studies, feedback regarding career development and career counselling. These results inform the department of basic education to pursue teacher-centred policies and protocols to enforced by the public schools with an eye for the enhancement of teacher career development.

# INTRODUCTION

Teachers have been acknowledged as one of the main actors for realising the objectives for quality education (Iwu et al. 2018: 2). Therefore, it is vital to provide career development opportunities to retain high quality and career-oriented teachers to provide the high-quality education, especially in public schools (Tehseen and Hadi 2015: 233). Tehseen and Hadi (2015) supplement that teachers are makers of future leaders, and hence, organisations such as the Department of Basic Education (DoE) and schools need to consider the effective management of teachers' career development as well as their job satisfaction.

South African public schools face significant challenges in retaining a talented pool of public-school teachers (Makhuzeni and Barkhuizen 2015: 1). Public school teachers perform poorly compared to their private schools' counterparts due to insufficient motivational factors to manage their

career development (Tehseen and Hadi 2015: 233). Many countries that are a part of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), including the highly developed countries such as Australia and the USA, experience shortages of quality teachers and poor performance by these teachers in public schools (Du Preez 2018: 1). This comes against the backdrop that teachers are perceived to be in a critical position to influence the performance of learners (Iwu et al. 2018: 2).

Even though the South African (SA) government provides useful and viable resources to positively lift the standards of the education system (Mupa and Chinooneka 2015: 126), management of career development amongst public school teachers lags. Evers et al. (2016: 38) point out that not having the knowledge about which organisational factors are important to enhance teachers' career development is one of the reasons behind the ineffective teaching in public schools. This paper focuses on finding out "What organisational factors are key to enhancing the management of career development of public-school teachers in the North-West province"?

According to Thomas (2002: 67) and Zajonc (1965), the social facilitation theory is one theo-

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retical framework that provides an in-depth understanding of the impact, if any, of the organisation on people's thoughts, feelings, behaviours, and performances. This paper was anchored on the theory of social facilitation, the role of the public school as an organisation and its management in the career development of public-school teachers. In essence, the theory demonstrates that effects for social facilitation, defined as improvements in performance produced by the mere presence of others, whether these others are an audience or co-actors. The audience effects as interpreted by Zajonc (1965) refer to the influence of the mere presence of passive spectators on a person's behaviour, while co-actor effects refer to the influence of others performing the same task.

Gore et al. (2017: 99) establish that apart from individual factors, the type of school (secondary/primary) and school location (urban/rural) have a significant influence on a teacher's career development and teaching quality. But most public schools' teachers, particularly in the rural provinces of in South Africa, according to Makhuzeni and Barkhuizen (2015: 1), consider leaving the teaching profession because of poor rewards, inadequate performance management and career development as well as compensation of teachers. However, scholars have argued that the rapid changes in the business environment have had a demonstrable impact on the 21st century labour market in more complex and uncertain ways (Wilton 2011; Chin and Shen 2015: 56). However, many nations around the world have undertaken wideranging reforms of curriculum, instruction, and assessment, with the intention of better preparing teachers for the educational demands of life and work in the 21st century (Mestry 2017: 1; Russell and Cranston 2012: 1).

Creating the right working environment and conditions such as flexible teaching hours and teachers' learners' ratio would foster teachers' career development and these conditions are also a prerequisite for the survival of the organisation in the modern-day business environment (Lejeune et al. 2016: 308). Research by Evers et al. (2011), Evers (2012) and Evers et al. (2016) categorises a healthy working environment into cultural and social-psychological relation factors. Cultural factors constitute learning climate and team membership, whereas Iwu et al. (2014: 839) deem psychological factors to relate to teacher job satis-

faction, which improves when the organisations' investment in teachers' career development other than just classroom teaching. Pepliñska et al. (2011: 33) argue that a good organisational career management system is important not only for the employees but also for the organisations. Furthermore, a good career match between employees' skills and their tasks, the efficient use of their potential, as well as to an organisations' ability to attract more qualified and ambitious career candidates for vacancies has a positive contribution to the quality of teaching and learning in schools. Lejeune et al. (2016) furtherm echo this sentiment and opined that, implementing career development plans has become one of the most common organisational solutions for supporting learning in the workplace. Beausaert et al. (2011) caution on the 'right conditions' for effective career development among employees.

Even though most of the modern-day schools in South Africa have introduced personal development plans to support employees career development (Lejeune et al. 2016: 307), public schools, especially in South Africa are still lagging on this initiative. In this regard, those involved in the governing of public schools have a role to play in teachers' career development. Governance of public schools in South Africa is the responsibility of principals, school governing bodies and the Department of Basic Education. Lejeune et al. (2016: 308) argue that business leaders are only rethinking their organisational learning essentials but not putting much attention to organisational factors influencing management of career development amongst employees. Lejeune et al. (2016) further suggest that for organisations to remain competitive in terms of efficiency, the organisations must foster career development among their employees. Therefore, the aim of this paper is to investigate factors that are key to career development of public-school teachers in South Africa.

#### METHODOLOGY

This paper utilised a quantitative research approach in which primary data was collected from public school teachers using a survey questionnaire. This was done to gather information on organisational factors influencing management of career development from a sample of public

schools' teachers in the JB Marks district in the North-West Province of South Africa and thereby enabling generalisation and inferences on public schools.

The targeted population was all the teachers in both public primary and secondary schools in the JB Marks sub-district in the North-West province. The JB Marks sub-district has a total of 21 public schools with a population of 239 teachers. A simple random sampling technique was used to select a representative sample of public schools' teachers. A list of all the public schools' and teachers in the sub-district was obtained from the North-West department of education of which five public primary schools and five public secondary schools were randomly selected as per Maree (2014: 173) and a representative sample of 145 participating teachers were selected based on Krejcie and Morgan's (1970: 607-610) work on sample size determination using the following formula:

$$n = \frac{p(1-p)N. \mathcal{X}^2 \alpha(1)}{d^2(N-1) + p(1-p)\mathcal{X}^2(1)}$$

Where: n = sample

Proportion (p) = 0.50 (for maximization)

N = Total population

d = Error margin (degree of accuracy) = 5% = 0.05

 $\chi^2_{\alpha}(1) = \chi^2_{0.05}(1) = 3.841$  and p = 5% = 0.05. Using the total population, N=239 teachers in the JB Marks district, the estimated minimum representative sample size was determined as follows.

$$n = \frac{0.5(1-0.5) (239)(3.842)}{0.05^{2}(239-1)+0.5(1-0.5)3..842} = \frac{229.56}{1.56} = 145 \text{ teachers}$$

A self-administered survey questionnaire was used to collect quantitative data. The questionnaire constituted a 12-item scale to obtain empirical data on organisational factors for teacher career development in public schools. This was measured on a five-point Likert-type response scale, conforming to Kumar (2011: 160), ranging from 1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree. The data collected was analysed using a Summative Analysis.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The personal information of teachers (gender and home language), educational and career background were analysed (highest level of qualification, qualifying teacher, total years of teaching, and school type) and presented in Table 1.

The result revealed that 57.1 percent of the teachers were females compared to 42.9 percent males. Half (50.4%) of the teachers indicated Setswana as their home language, whereas the remaining half were split between English (9.6%), Afrikaans (12.8.%) and other languages (27.2%) such as Shona, Xhosa, Zulu and Bemba. Literature has demonstrated that age, gender, school type (secondary/primary), school location (urban/rural) and years of teaching experience have a significant influence on teacher's career development and teaching quality (Gore et al. 2017: 99).

From Table 1, it was deduced that majority (42.1%) of the teachers holds a bachelor's degree as their highest qualification, followed by those with a postgraduate degree (34.1%). The majority (88.9%) of the teachers were qualified professionally trained teachers. More than a fifth (22.2%; N=28) of the teachers have been in this profession for more than 16 years. These results therefore indicate that teachers with more years of working experience are more likely to have experience career development in this profession compared to those with less years of workings experience. This result are in line with a study conducted by the Drpartment of Basic Education (DoE 2017) whose findings reveals that early career teachers made the decision to leave the teaching profession quickly, typically within three months or less than a year from when they first started working due to inadequate career development while more experienced teachers were less likely to leave the teaching career, as there is a prospect of alternative career development in the long-run in the same profession due to experience in the profession.

In terms of school location, more than a third of the teachers are teaching in schools located in townships (39.7%; N=50) and rural areas (38.1%; N=48), while the rest (22.2% N=28) of the teachers are in schools located in the cities. Furthermore, more than half (56.3%; N=71) of the respondents are teaching in the secondary school circle, while 43.7% (N=55) of the respondents are teachers in the primary school phase.

#### **Career Development of Teachers**

This section investigated the role of individuals and organisations in teacher's career devel-

Table 1: Educational and career background of teachers

Variable	Subscale	N	%
Q3. Highest level of qualification (N=126)	NSC	8	6.3
	National diploma	22	17.5
	Degree	53	42.1
	Postgraduate certificate	43	34.1
Q4. Are you a qualified teacher? (N=126)	Yes	112	88.9
	No	14	11.1
Q5. Total years of teaching (N=126)	Less than 1 year	8	6.3
	1-2 years	16	12.7
	3-5 years	27	21.4
	6-10 years	23	18.3
	11-15 years	24	19.0
	16 years and above	28	22.2
Q6. Location that best describes your workplace (N=126)	City	28	22.2
	Town	50	39.7
	Rural area	48	38.1
Q8. School type (N=126)	Primary school	5 5	43.7
	Secondary school	71	56.3

Source: Researchers' own data

opment. According to Bicaj and Treska (2014: 369), the role and importance of individuals, organisations as well as life-long learning as part of teachers' personal and professional career development are essential factors especially in promoting the school image, improving teacher performance, and enhancing the quality of teaching as shown in Table 1. In terms of career development, majority (44.8%) of the teachers cited their principals as the main persons that contributed to their career development, while 23.2 percent are of the opinion that their career development is shaped by their own self effort. This is in line with a study conducted in USA by Yoo (2016) whose findings reveal that teacher's self-efficacy was one of the main fac-

tors that contributed towards their professional career development.

# Organisational Factors Influencing the Career Growth of Teachers

This paper was set out to determine the organisational factors influencing management of career development amongst public school teachers in South Africa. Teachers were asked to rate their perceptions using a five-point Likert-type response scale. The results of the data gathered, and the results presented in Table 2.

Table 2 reveals that majority of teachers agreed job training and development (61.1%),

Table 2: Organisational factors that contributed to management of teachers' career development

Variables	Agreement	Neutral	Disagreement
Q9. Career training and development (N=126)	61.1%	8.7%	30.2%
Q10. Training courses and seminars (N=126)	89.7%	8.7%	1.6%
Q11. Study leave to further my qualifications (N=125)Missing (N=1)	83.7%	12.0%	4.0%
Q12. Feedback regarding my career development (N=126)	85.7%	12.7%	1.6%
Q13. Access to mentoring/coaching (internal or external) (N=126)	97.6	1.6%	0.8%
Q14. Staff working co-operatively (N=126)	92.1%	6.3%	1.6%
Q15. Being treated fairly (N=126)	94.4%	4.0%	1.6%
Q16. Availability of educational facilities such as office space and internet (N=126)	89.7%	7.9%	2.4%
Q17. Total compensation systems (N=126)	84.2%	15.9%	2.4%
Q18. Secondment to other work areas or organisation (N=126)	77.8%	19.0%	3.2%
Q19. Career counselling (N=126)	77.0%	20.6%	2.4%
Q20. Promotion (N=126)	84.9%	11.9%	3.2%

Source: Researchers' own data

training courses and seminars (89.7%), study leave to further education (83.7%), feedback regarding career development (85.7%), access to mentoring/coaching (97.6%) and staff working cooperatively (97.6%) were the major organisational factors that contributed towards the management of their career development. A further majority agree that staff working co-operatively (92.1%), being treated fairly (94.4%), availability of educational facilities such as office space and internet (89.7%), total compensation systems (84.2%), secondment to other work areas or organisation (77.8%), career counselling (77.0%) and promotion (84.9%) are the main organisational factors influencing the management of their career development.

# Task Factors Contributing to Career Development of Teachers

This paper further determines the task factors, which potentially enhance public school teachers' career development in South Africa. Teachers were asked to rate their views using a five-point Likert-type response scale. The results of the data gathered were consolidated and results presented in Table 3.

The results displayed in Table 3 reveal that majority (63.2%) of the respondents agree that teacher's workload is allocated equally according to Curriculum Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS). Additionally, more than half (53.1%) of the respondents also agreed that the classroom environment is conducive for learning. On the other hand, 45.2 percent of the respondents dis-

agree, while only a third (33.4%) agree that the teacher-learner ratio per class is allocated equally to teachers. These results are in line with a study conduct by the Department of Basic Education (DoE 2017) whose findings showed that workload remains the most important factor influencing teachers' decisions to leave the profession and most suggested solutions to addressing retention were linked to workload in some way.

In terms of teaching hours, more than three quarters (77.0%) of the respondents agree that the teaching hours per subject allocated according to Curriculum Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS). On the contrary, majority (71.4%) of the respondents disagree that overcrowding of learners enable teachers to have a flexible teaching and learning environment. Finally, almost an equal majority of the respondents agreed that learner discipline in classes will contribute towards effective teaching and learning (90.5%), and safety of teachers in classes would contribute towards effective teaching and learning (90.3%). These findings confirm the argument held by Tehseen and Hadi (2015: 235) that majority of public-school teachers in third world countries, especially Africa are not well motivated by a combination of deterioration of morals, satisfaction in the working environment, non-existence of control and insufficient incentives.

# Career Growth Factors Among Public School Teachers

The paper also determines what organisational factors influence the career growth of public-

Table 3: Task factors that contribute towards career development of teacher

Variables	Agreement	Neutral	Disagreement
Q9. Career training and development (N=126)	61.1%	8.7%	30.2%
Q21. Is the teacher workload allocated equally according to CAPS? (N=126)	63.2%	19.2%	17.6%
Q22. Is the classroom environment conducive for learning? (N=125) Missing (N=1)	53.1%	23.1%	23.8%
Q23. Is the teacher-learner ratio per class allocated equally to teachers? (N=126)	33.4%	21.4%	45.2%
Q24. Are the teaching hours per subject allocated according to CAPS? (N=126)	77.0%	16.7%	6.3%
Q25. Is overcrowding of learners enabling a teacher to have a flexible teaching and learning environment? (N=126)	17.4%	11.1%	71.4%
Q26. Learner discipline in classes will contribute towards effective teaching and learning.	90.5%	5.6%	4.0%
Q27. Safety of teachers in classes will contribute towards effective teaching and learning.	90.3%	8.7%	1.6%

Source: Researchers' own data

school teachers in South Africa. The results were consolidated and presented in Table 4.

From Table 4, it was deduced that majority of the respondents agreed that training public school teachers would contribute towards their career growth (88.1%), and knowing the organisational goals may contribute towards their career growth (85.7%). Furthermore, 81.8 percent of the respondents believed that providing career education to public school teachers would contribute towards their career growth, while 88.9 percent concurred that empowerment within the organisational context may contribute towards their career growth. Teachers' individual attitudes (71.4%), individual career mapping (71.5%), selfappraisals (83.4%), personal development (87.3%) and cultural factors (73.0%) were all found to significantly contribute towards teachers' career growth.

To support the above findings, a study conducted by Gore et al. (2017) reveals that school location (urban/rural) and years of teaching experience have a significant influence on teachers' career development and teaching quality. However, existing literature have shown dissimilar results, in that career development is mostly influenced by the individual's personal efforts rather than the organisations in which they belong, and most individuals are more independent in their career management (Akosah-Twumasi 2018: 1). Findings from the respondent's demographic information reveals that most (57.1%) of the teachers in the JB Mark district are females

who are Setswana speaking (50.4%). This finding could also reflect the influence of culture on organisational factors influencing the management of career development amongst public school teachers in the JB Marks district. Furthermore, the findings reveal that most (42.1%) of these teachers hold a bachelor's degree as their highest level of qualification and they are qualified teachers with more than 16-years of working experience. Finally, an equal proportion of the teachers were teaching in schools located in both urban and rural area with majority of them teaching in secondary schools, and a majority (44.8%) of them citing their principals as the main contributor towards their career development.

Findings from the literature review confirm that organisational factors such as career training opportunities, continuous studies, feedback regarding career development and career counselling are key factors that influence employees' career development. Findings from the current studies reveal that the most significant organisational factors influencing the management of teachers' career development, especially in public schools are career training courses and seminars, opportunities to continue studying, feedback regarding career development access to career mentoring/coaching/counselling, teamwork, and promotion opportunities.

Findings with regards task factors influencing the career development of public-school teachers' reveals that teacher's workload and teaching hours per subject are allocated equally

Table 4: Other factors influencing the management of career development

Variables	Agreement	Neutral	Disagreement
Q28. Training public school teachers will contribute towards my career growth (N=126)	88.1%	7.1%	4.8%
Q29. Knowing the organisational goals will contribute towards my career growth (N=126)	85.7%	11.1%	3.2%
Q30. Providing career education to public school teachers will contribute towards my career growth.	81.8%	10.7%	8.10%
Q31. Providing feedback on performance assessment will contribute towards my career growth.	88.9%	7.9%	3.2%
Q32. Empowerment within the organisational context will contribute towards my career growth	88.5%	10.7%	3.2%
Q33. Individual attitudes will contribute towards my career growth.	71.4%	22.2%	6.4%
Q34. Individual career mapping will contribute towards my career growth	1. 71.5%	23.8%	4.8%
Q35. Self-appraisals will contribute towards my career growth.	83.4%	9.8%	8.1%
Q36. Personal development will contribute towards my career growth.	87.3%	7.1%	5.7%
Q37. Cultural factors will contribute towards my career growth.	73.0%	14.3%	17.9%

Source: Researchers' own data

according to Curriculum Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS) and the class-room environment is conducive for learning. On the contrary, the findings further show that the biggest challenges or barriers to management of public school's teachers' career development are that the teacher-learner ratios per class are high and overcrowded classrooms. These challenges are perceived as barriers to teachers' career development in terms of flexible teaching and learning environment. Furthermore, a statistical significance difference was identified between the females and males' teachers with respect to these challenges. These findings contradict the results from a study conducted by Shakir et al. (2019) where findings indicate that female career development was related to their individual perceptions of their ability, as well as their self-efficacy.

#### CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to determine the organisational factors, task factors, and career growth factors influencing management of career development amongst public school teachers in the North West province of South Africa. The study concludes that the principals, heavy workload, inadequate support to teachers, professional career training and development, rewards and benefits are among the organisational factors affecting the management of teachers' career development. Furthermore, limited studies do exists with a focus to investigate organisational factors affecting management of career development amongst public school teachers in the South African context and this study lays a foundation for future studies in this focus area.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

The results from the study have vital practical implications for management of teachers' career development, hence the following recommendations were made for both educational stakeholders and for future research. To educational stakeholders: school management should develop career development plans that clearly outline the skills and knowledge that public school teachers require to improve their career. Furthermore, the Department of Basic Education (DoE) should take cognisance of critical career development

factors such as career training, career access, career advancement, working environment, learners' discipline and devise corrective measures so as to retain quality teachers.

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