

Empowering Teachers: An Alternative Model for Professional Development in South Africa

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ABSTRACT The paper aims at examining one example of a large and fairly successful professional development intervention programme, the Mpumalanga Secondary Science Initiative (MSSI), carried out within the South African context. The continuing professional development programme (CPD) for science and mathematics teachers was a six-year intervention programme that was carried out in one of the nine provinces of South Africa, Mpumalanga. The programme was fairly successful in enlisting large numbers of science and mathematics teachers, ensuring consistent participation of the teachers throughout the duration of the project, and in changing in some ways the teachers' knowledge and approaches to the teaching of science and mathematics in many of the schools. In this paper, the researcher uses qualitative research approaches to develop an alternative model for professional development, from interviews with a group of South African teachers who participated in the MSSI project, the researcher explore their experiences with the CPD intervention. The researcher deposit that teachers should not only be involved in the planning of the CPD programmes, but that the programmes should be aligned with their own personal circumstances and motivations