

Lived experiences of Educators in relation to CPTD within the Johannesburg West District High Schools

King Costa (Ph.D)* and Nisi Thusi (Ph.D)**

King Costa*, MD; Global Centre for Academic Research, South Africa costak@researchglobal.net

Nisi Thusi **, Faculty Member, University of Johannesburg, South Africa, dthusi@uj.ac.za

Abstract

Continuing Professional Teacher Development (CPTD) is empowerment and enhancement of professionalism and competence of Educators within the education system, whether public or private sector. The Department of Basic Education implemented a standardized CPTD program throughout the schooling system, which is monitored and managed by a statutory body known as SACE (South African Council of Educators). This study sought to describe lived experiences of educators in relation to implementation of CPTD in Johannesburg West District. The study was designed within the interpretivist paradigm, employing phenomenology as a strategy of inquiry. 10 educators were selected purposively for interviews, which were recorded with permission of participants. The recording was critical for demonstration of member checking and audit trail required for rigor determination in qualitative research.

Through thematic data analysis, the study generated three themes in pursuit of answering the research question, which were (1) Mentorship Vacuum, (2) Dis-interest and inertia and (3) Leadership Support. Whereas the first two themes report the negative experiences educators have had with CPTD, the last them reflected that participants had some form of leadership support.

Key Words : CPTD, Educators, Leadership Support, Mentorship

1. INTRODUCTION

Continuing Professional Teacher Development (CPTD) is empowerment and enhancement of professionalism and competence of Educators within the education whether public or private sector. The Department of Basic Education implemented a standardized CPTD program throughout the schooling system, which is monitored and managed by a statutory body known as SACE (South African Council of Educators). SACE, as a legal body for proficient instructors has by and large obligation regarding, the execution, quality confirmation and monitoring of the CPTD framework. SACE is a professional council that is established in terms of the SACE Act no.31 of 2000.

On 26 April 2007, the Minister of Education promulgated the National Policy Framework for Teacher Education and Development in South Africa (NPFTED) [Government Gazette No. 29832]. Section 53 of the policy framework states that,

“...the South African Council for Educators (SACE), as a statutory body for professional educators will have overall responsibility for the implementation, management and quality assurance of the CPTD system. SACE will be provided with the necessary resources and support to undertake that role”.

Many studies have been conducted on the subject of CPTD and its effectiveness in developing and empowering educators (Bernadine, 2019; du Plessis, 2013; Mashologu, 2012). It is interesting to note that this current study, although different in design as it sought to describe educator's experiences, is a progressive account of a debate that has been ongoing for almost two decades. Commonalities in these studies, including primary data obtained in this current investigation, seem to point to same issues that those in authorities have not dealt with them. These issues seem to be lack of leadership support, statement of purpose regarding CPTD and proper monitoring and oversight.

Educators were aware and informed on CPTD framework, however, usage at school level is a test on the grounds that the majority of the educators are technophobic and Continuing Professional Teacher Development delivery is based on electronic

framework (South African Council for Educators, 2011). Among the prescripts of SACE is that each educator develops a Personal Development Plan (PDP) file as part of the CPTD system. The PDP is a resource document to assist each educator with professional growth. The Continuing Professional Teacher Development (CPTD) is commonly acknowledged as a fundamental instrument for the expert improvement of educator's capabilities and competence (Engelbrecht, 2016).

The purpose of this study was to determine and describe the lived experiences of Educators in relation to CPTD within the Johannesburg West District High Schools. Studies have revealed that implementation of CPTD is very poor while at the same time the demonstration of its rational seems to be difficult or poorly communicated to intended beneficiaries (Merliza & Retnawati, 2018).

2. METHODOLOGY

This study used IMRAD (Introduction, Method, Results and Discussion) which is scientific framework for structure and presentation postulated by (Oriokot, et al., 2011). The study trajectory was hinged on interpretivist epistemology grounded within a subjective ontology of participants as well as that of a researcher. The research question was answered by this study through inductive argumentation process as posited by Saunders et al 2018 (Saunders, et al., 2016). A qualitative research method bounded within phenomenology research as a strategic direction for enquiry utilizing semi-structured questionnaire guide for interviews, was used to describe the lived experiences of educators in relation to CPTD implementation.

According to (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011), phenomenology study is a research process that seeks to describe the general lived experiences and participants with inter-subjectivity as foundational tenet considering experiences of participants and the research team in relation to the phenomenon being investigated. Those experience, in terms of Van Manen's (1990) opinion, must be in a sub-conscious situation because

human beings are essentially interconnected to their ontology through their conscious subjectivity. In view of the fact that the main goal of phenomenology is to reduce the individual experience of a phenomenon into a descriptive scientific data regarding varied perspective of the universal phenomenon and associated interpretations, the following steps were carried out by researcher's:

- Establishment of the Scope of Phenomenon
- Epoche
- Compilation of Question Lists

The researcher's used semi structured questions to obtain thick , rich descriptions from participants. In qualitative reserch semi- structured questionnaires are used to guide interviews in a loosly structured manner that allows participants to contribute vastly information related to a particular question (Owen, 2014). Semi- structured questionnaires are intended to comprehend educator's encounters and what they were experiencing with CPTD implemetation. The motivation behind semi- structured questionnaires in subjective examination to direct improvement of indepth portrayals of member's perspectives in regards to social wonders, their encounters and revealing of their understandings of their reality (Kvale, 1996). This technique encourages subjectivity between interview particies (researchers and participants) whereby the collaboration between the questioner and the interviewee prompts revealing and unfurling of new data (De Jonckheere & Vaughn, 2017). All meetings were recorded, with permission from the participants.

The main question was, "What are the lived experiences of the educators within JWD?". The target population was composed of educators who had undergone CPTD programs within the JWD. A sample of 10 educators was drawn from this population using purpose sampling. Justification for selection of ten participants is subject to recommendations by Morse 1994 where by as sample size of 6 participants was dimmed sufficient while Creswell 1998 (Creswell, 1998) recommended a minimum of five with the maximum of ten in a phenomenological study (Morse, 1994). This group of educators is the ones who engaged themselves willingly in CPD activities.

As indicated earlier the strategy utilized in the study was purposive sampling. Purposive sampling is alluded to as judgmental, emotional, or particular sampling strategy. This strategy of sampling depends colossally on the judgment of the researcher to choose the members from the exploration populace (Owen, 2014) . This method involves selective sampling and allows the researcher to intentionally chose units of analysis (Sharma, 2017).

The purposive sampling methods incorporate a variety of sampling strategies that can be applied either exclusively or related to other purposive testing procedures all through the investigation. While in specific cases the example choice may not be a reasonable portrayal of the exploration populace it isn't viewed as a shortcoming but instead it relies upon the decision of the analyst (Tongco, 2007).

In terms of data analysis thematic analysis was chosen as a suitable strategy for analyzing data for the study as espoused by Costa (2019). It is common in the academia that thematic analysis is generally poorly understood by scholars and yet it is widely used as a data analysis technique (Costa, 2019). Students, academics, and senior researchers use thematic analysis widely in their research projects to generate themes in qualitative research (Braun & Clarke, 2006). It is interesting to note that students and academics engaged in qualitative research opt for thematic analysis in generating themes to draw their conclusions. The researcher postulates that the Costa (2019) method of analysis, which broadly advocates Content Analysis as the most, preferred method to analyze responses in qualitative research and will be applied in this study. Through the COSTA QDA approach (2019), data was extracted from transcribed document through a reduction method (Dey, 1993) that resulted in a total of 393 codes. The process of data analysis followed 6 stages as depicted in Figure 1 below:

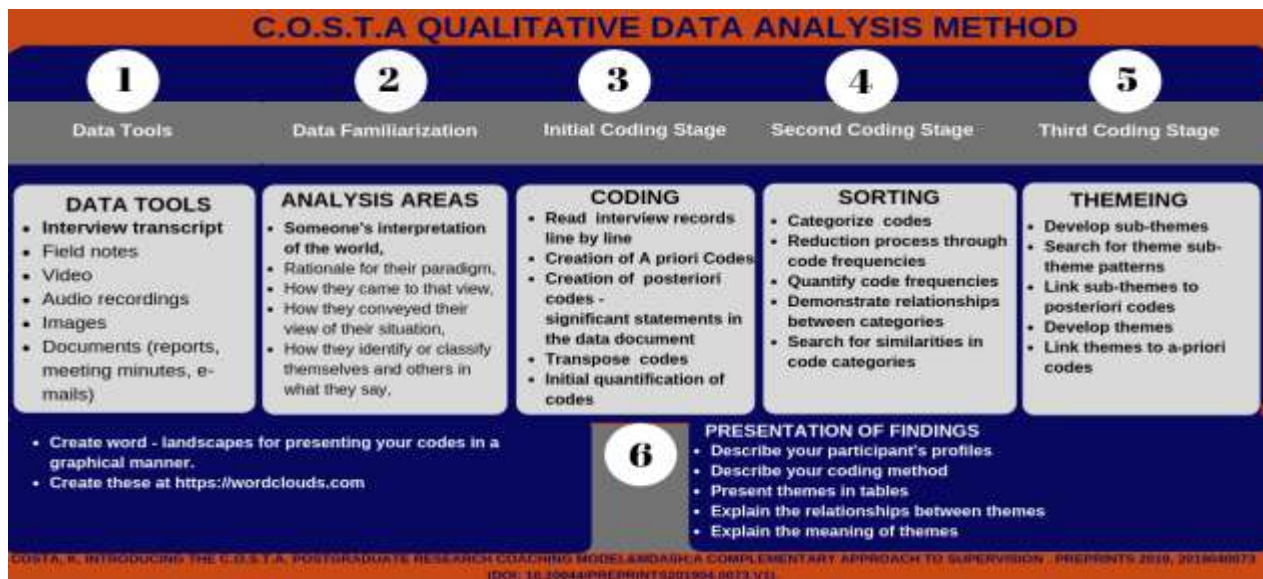


Figure 1: Process of data analysis

The COSTA QDA is a method that is benchmarked on framework analysis technic (Srivastave & Thomson, 2009), deriving strength from the thematic analysis of Braun and Clarke (2019), albeit minor differences in that the former demonstrates the issues through code frequencies (Srivastave & Thomson, 2009).

3. RESULTS/FINDINGS

This segment presents the study findings. Figure 2 below demonstrates how codes were treated to generate sub-themes and categories. In terms of qualitative processes, after transcriptions, data documents were coded inductively, resulting in creation of codes and frequencies as reflected in *Tables 2* below. The connections between these codes and their frequencies were firmly arranged in accordance with anchor codes previously created deductively, emanating from the research topics. These codes were then gathered together to observe their 'behaviors', relationships, similarities, patterns and frequencies for determining their trajectories (Saldana, 2015).

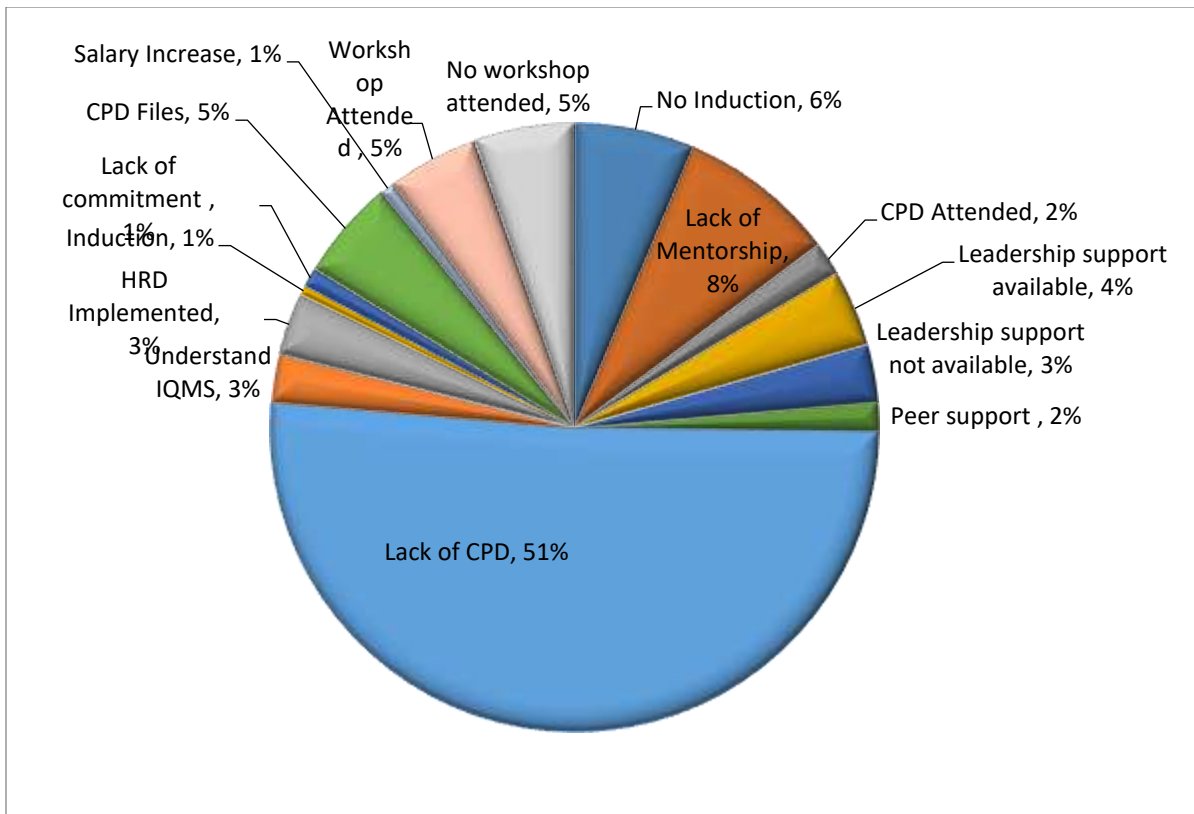


Figure 2 Sub-Themes

Figure 2 above is the depiction of how codes travel the assessment journey into final sub-themes. The display indicated that CPTD was not properly implemented in the region at 51% with the rest (49% allocated to other themes that were in the main , auxiliary.

These auxiliary sub-themes included views related to Mentorship, Leadership support, Induction and rational for CPTD workshops. The calibration of transposed codes is presented with wordclouds (www.wordclouds.com) which though closer examination reveal a suggestion that CPTD is lacking.

Table 1: Second Stage Coding (Axial Coding Stage)

GE CODING			SECOND STAGE CODING (AXIAL CODING)		FINAL THEMES		
Sub-Themes	Code	Frequency	Sub-Themes	Frequency	Sub-Themes	Final Themes	Proportion
No Induction	NI	25	No Induction	25	No Induction	Mentorship Vacuum	6%
Lack of Mentorship	LM	33	Lack of Mentorship	33	Lack of Mentorship		8%
CPD Attended	C	7	CPD Attended	7	CPD Attended	Leadership support	2%
Leadership support available	LS	16	Leadership support available	16	Leadership support available		4%
Leadership support not available	LN	12	Leadership support not available	12	Leadership support not available	Mentorship Vacuum	3%
Peer support	PS	6	Peer support	6	Peer support		2%
Lack of CPD	LC	201	Lack of CPD	201	Lack of CPD	Mentorship Vacuum	51%
Understand IQMS	UI	10	Understand IQMS	10	Understand IQMS		Leadership support
HRD Implemented	HI	13	HRD Implemented	13	HRD Implemented	3%	
Induction	I	2	Induction	2	Induction	Dis-interest and unwillingness	1%
Lack of commitment	LOC	4	Lack of commitment	4	Lack of commitment		1%
CPD Files	CF	21	CPD Files	21	CPD Files	Dis-interest and unwillingness	5%
Salary Increase	SI	3	Salary Increase	3	Salary Increase		1%
Workshop Attended	WA	19	Workshop Attended	19	Workshop Attended	Leadership support	5%
No workshop attended	NWA	21	No workshop attended	21	No workshop attended		5%
		393		393			

Table 2 : Final Themes

Final themes		Proportion
Theme 1	Mentorship Vacuum	68%
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No Induction, • Lack of Mentorship, • Leadership support not available, • Lack of CPD, 	6% 8% 3% 51%
Theme 2	Dis-interest and unwillingness	12%
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No workshop attended, • Attending workshops only to and enhance salary increase • Lack of commitment, 	5% 6% 1%
Theme 3	Leadership support	20%
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CPD Attended • Leadership support available • Peer support • Understand IQMS • HRD Implemented • Induction • Workshop Attended 	2% 4% 2% 3% 3% 1% 5%

4. DISCUSSION

This section discusses the results and study findings as presented above. The key question for this investigation was “What are the lived experiences of the educators within JWD?”. As the titles clearly indicates, the study method was a phenomenological design within the qualitative tradition. After a thorough textual analysis, three main themes, providing a summative experiences of educators within the study locale were generated as follows:

1. Mentorship vacuum
2. Disinterest and unwillingness
3. Leadership support

Mentorship Vacuum

This study found out that there was significant lack of interest for CPTD attendance and standard checking of Educators' enumerating progress. Mentorship vacuum indicates that there was no proper leadership and on-boarding of new educators, while at the same time ignoring some of the processes for educator development as entrenched in

the Integrated Quality Management Systems (du Plessis, 2013). Mentorship vacuum indicates the following variables:

- *Lack of mentors*: this means that educators are left on their own, without a designated individual to help the educator through their teaching developmental journey. In terms of du Plessis (2013), mentors display personal attributes that create a supportive environment where educators could be comfortable to talk about their practice, while at the same time receiving transfer of knowledge.
- *Systematic Pedagogies*: This entails integration of policies, curricula, aims and objectives customary with the educational system at national and provincial level. These are then included in the mentor-educator relationship as part of CPD. However, in the JWD this was found not to be in practice as most educators interviewed indicated no knowledge of such. This is not surprising because without any mentorship in place, even this aspect which is its sub-division would clearly be lacking.
- *Grounded Knowledge*: Lack of mentors at the regional level suggests that preparation and discussions on teacher needs is not a common practice. A study by Bernadine (2019) enumerated a plethora of educator needs that were not given proper attention in the Gauteng Province. These included among other lack of proper mentorship, leaving educators to form their own support groups and assist one another in dealing with a plethora of challenges related to their work. In Mashologu (2012), grounded knowledge provided through mentorship seemed to benefit and empower educators, created CPTD value in their own perspective.
- *Lack of systematic engagement*: Lack of this aspect as a result of mentorship vacuum meant that regular monitoring of educator progress as not properly done. This once more appeared in another study (Bernadine, 2019), whereby the sentiments of the participants of this study are hereby triangulated from this source. Due to lack of engagement by any designated individual for this role, coupled by educators' awareness of certain punitive CPTD measures introduced by SACE, their reluctance to participate is more heightened.

Dis-interest and inertia

Educators who were in or close to retirement age were hesitant to partake in CPTD, as they felt there was no more need for them to enhance any career. This came out emphatically from those Educators who were left with 3–8 years of administration within the Department of Basic Education. This further indicated some form of concurrence with the discoveries from study by Bernadine (2019). Richter et al. (2011) in accentuated this when they noticed that educators in their last phase of service would in general lessen their responsibility and vocational aspiration in the practice.

ICT access and functionality seemed to be another problem that contributes to lack of interest on the subject. It is critical for educators to be empowered on ICT functional enablement as most CPTD requires these skills. Empowerment would include training on the use of ICT equipment, particularly where it is required for their CPTD reporting, and further providing them with resources such as wifi and connectivity (Bernadine, 2019 ; Mashologu, 2012). One of the causes of lack of interest among teachers is the fact that most CPTD programmes are more focused on reforms as opposed to personal development and empowerment of educators for effectiveness (Mashologu, 2012).

In Gauteng Province, studies indicate that CPTD is vastly considered more as a “policing” and compliance requirement as opposed to a measure of professional development (Bernadine, 2019). In this study, participants recorded that CPTD attendance was also used as a means for enhancement of salary increments. They reported, it seemed, records of attending CPTD workshops were treated as indicators of professional development – regardless of any demonstration of skills or knowledge attained from such attendance.

The other contributory factor to inertia was lack of equivocal connectedness between CPTD initiatives and other existing formative developmental programmes. Educators considered CPTD as a consistence device rather than an expert improvement action on their development. In spite of the fact that CPTD is a piece of the implicit rules for

educators, participants indicated some form of knowledge about CPTD and realized that it was significant for their development, if properly implemented (du Plessis, 2013).

Leadership Support

Some participants did indicate that they do have leadership support in their schools and enjoy much required mentorship in their schools. While this information is encouraging, at it does indicate that all is not entirely bad within the district; other themes which appear in the negative suggest that all schools need to have a better co-ordinate district effort so as to keep a balance.

Conclusion

Key principles of CPTD implementation are fundamentally benchmarked on improvement of knowledge and skills of professionals through induction, training and leadership support, as once postulated by Coetzer (2001). In this study, a number of issues were discussed in relation to experiences of educators about CPTD. Three key thematic expressions were derived from data analysis, which were (1) Mentorship Vacuum, (2) Dis-interest and inertia and (3) Leadership Support. This was the rationale for the study's main objective which sort to describe lived experiences of educators in relation to CPTD. The degree of negative experiences which were postulated by participants indicate that much need to be done for CPTD in the district. The code frequency illustration reflect 80% ineffectiveness of CPTD, which is largely attributed to mentorship vacuum.

It is recommended that those tasked with implementation should focus on the following:

- Educators' needs and their developmental learning
- Enhancement of educator's commitment to CPTD
- Development of quality and responsive school-based leadership
- Removal of developmental obstructions at school setting
- Continuous feedback of educator's professional development
- CPTD is restricted by issues of time. A connection ought to be built up with instructor habitats for educators to get to innovative teaching. The requirement for Management to help CPTD execution is highly emphasized.

- ITC officials must be selected at the educator advancement centers to help with IT aptitudes. ICT proficiency program to be made accessible for educators. Supporting the compelling utilization of ITC abilities may fill in as an establishment for fruitful CPTD execution in South Africa.
- CPTD ought to be a part of the educational plan, underlying educator preparing programs.

LIMITATIONS

First it is hereby acknowledged that study findings cannot be generalized, although it could be established through triangulation that, although the setting of the study was in Johannesburg West District, the same state of affairs concluded in this study seemed to correspond with findings of similar studies. Further, this article is limited by the fact that the research is still ongoing, expected to be concluded by December 2020. In this view, the data presented are preliminary in nature – more depth will be discussed with the outcome of the final study.

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