

**The impact of Class Visits on Professional Teacher Development in  
White Hazy Circuit in Mpumalanga Province**

by

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Mini-Dissertation

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

**MASTER OF DEVELOPMENT**

In

**Development Studies**

In the

**Faculty of Management and Law**

At the

**UNIVERSITY OF LIMPOPO**

(Turfloop Graduate School of Leadership)

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**2016**

## DECLARATION OF CANDIDATE

I, hereby declare that the mini-dissertation submitted hereby me, to the University of Limpopo, for Master of Development (Degree & field of research) has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at this or any other university: that it is my work in design and in execution, and that all material contained herein has been duly acknowledged.

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**MNISI DM (Mr)**

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**DATE:**

## **DEDICATION**

On the 12<sup>th</sup> of February 2012, together with my ex-wife, we took a long journey at three O'clock in the morning to Polokwane. We visited the administration building in Edupark for registration though we got lost along the way but thanks to her for encouragement not to give- up, to my friend Tony Malibe (Chief) who inspired me with his learning habit, to my fiancé Nomsa and to my late mother mama N'WA Sibiya Nanana Nester, my late boy Vuyo Shobiyana and my sister Sibusiso Nomsa Mnisi, and the wonderful support I got from Sister and her wonderful husband, I dedicate this work to all of the above.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

This research was made possible by a number of people who dedicated their precious time and energy to contribute towards its completion. These included the following individuals and institutions:

- First, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my supervisor, Dr. Mankolo Lethoko for her sterling support she gave me from the initial stage of this mini-dissertation to the very end. She has given me the intellectual assistance to complete this work. Without her passionate support, dedications and guidance, I could not have possibly been in a position to complete this mini-dissertation.
- Thanks very also to the university of Limpopo academic and administrative staff, the Department of Education for allowing me to conduct this research.
- To the principals, deputy principals, head of departments and teachers involved thank you very much.
- Siyafundza staff and my family regarding the completion of this mini-dissertation cannot be overlooked.
- To my late mother Nester Mnisi, my family and my child Nicholus thank you for your tireless support you gave me throughout my studies.
- Thanks for the Mnisi family especially for my late mother for her support and encouragement in pursuing my studies and for bringing me into this world.
- Thanks go to Dr. Lutz Ackermann and Dr. Phalanndwa for their assistance in editing this mini-dissertation.
- Lastly, I want to thank God the Almighty for guiding me and giving me courage, commitment and sterling wisdom to complete this mini-dissertation. Glory be to God the Almighty!

**Mnisi Donald Moffat**

## **ABSTRACT**

*This study aims to give insights into the nature and extent of professional teacher development by the department of education through class visits, and subsequently its impact on professional teacher development in the white hazy circuit in Mpumalanga province.*

*This study further examines measures and recommendations to be put in place which can help to improve the programme (class visits), also the effectiveness of this programme in professional teacher development. The study further highlights key issues regarding class visits with regard to professional teacher development. The study further highlights strategies that can be put in place to enhancing class visits as a programme for professional teacher development. The study further highlights key recommendations to be put in place to enhance class visits as professional teacher development programme.*

## **KEY WORDS**

Professional Teacher Development; Development Appraisal System; Integrated Quality Management Systems; development support group; Continuing Professional Teacher Development.

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## **ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS**

<b>AFT</b>	<b>American Federation of Teachers</b>
<b>CPTD</b>	<b>Continuing Professional Teacher Development</b>
<b>DSG</b>	<b>Development Support Group</b>
<b>DoE-</b>	<b>Department of Education</b>
<b>DAS</b>	<b>Development Appraisal System</b>
<b>ELREC</b>	<b>Education Labour Relation Council</b>
<b>HLTAs</b>	<b>Higher Level teaching assistants</b>
<b>HOD</b>	<b>Head of Department</b>
<b>IQMS</b>	<b>Integrated Quality Management Systems</b>
<b>PL</b>	<b>Post Level</b>
<b>SACE</b>	<b>South African Council of Educators</b>
<b>SADTU</b>	<b>South African Democratic Teachers Union</b>
<b>TFA</b>	<b>Teach For America</b>
<b>UK</b>	<b>United Kingdom</b>
<b>USA</b>	<b>United States of America</b>
<b>QA</b>	<b>Quality Assurance</b>

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

#### 1. Introduction

This chapter introduces the background, focus and rationale for embarking on this research on the impact of class visits on professional teacher development in the white hazy circuit in Mpumalanga province. The first part of the chapter reviews literature and debates that dominate teacher professional development. The literature argues that South Africa has changed its education system without taking into account the professional development of its teachers. According to Guskey, this is the reason why teachers are struggling to implement policies (specifically the curriculum) in education.

The question of professional teacher development according to (Hoadley, 2004) has recently become a priority for the government, for teacher unions and for other educational organisations in a quest to improve their education system. The South African education has undergone dramatic changes in the past decade, thereby impacting heavily on the roles and work of teachers in the class room (Hoadley, 2004). According to Guskey (2008), educational reforms and teacher professional development share a symbiotic relationship and must go hand in hand for either of them to work well. Thus according to him, reforms without teacher development or vice-versa are a recipe for disaster, and South Africa has learnt this in a hard way says Guskey (2008).

Major educational reforms, which began with curriculum change, were introduced without adequate teacher professional development or a plan for it. As a result, most teachers misunderstood and misinterpreted what they were supposed to do in this new educational dispensation (Hardely & Wedekind, 2004). The Curriculum 2000 Review Committee also indicates that there has been little effective training to induct teachers into the thinking of the new education system and identified insufficient

teacher's induction and training as one of the reasons for poor implementation of the curriculum (Chisolm, 2000). Besides, academics and researchers (Jansen, 2001; Maile & Makole, 2004; Bloch, 2010) alike have commented on the levels of complexity undertaken in South Africa, and that they are above and beyond the average level of the teacher competencies. The reaction to the new style and structure was mixed, while some schools welcomed the flexibility and the nature of the curriculum. Teachers across the country complained onerous administration requirements duplication of work. This has been partially addressed by the recommendations support roles in the districts and subjects advisors services. However the planning requirements of teachers has become unnecessarily complicated and appear to make little contribution to improving teaching and learning attainments; on the contrary, the administrative burden around assessment and planning appear to impact negatively on teaching and contact time (Chisolm, 2000).

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The teacher hearing and submissions were unanimous in suggesting that the current teacher development policies to support the curriculum were often too generic and superficial and did not provide the needed support to teachers. Teachers complained that most tertiary institutions did not cover the National Curriculum Statement thoroughly enough and that many newly trained teachers were not competent to teach the curriculum therefore Class visits came as a recommendation to professional teacher development, Borko (2000).

South Africa has undergone a complete overhaul of its education system, appearing to render useless most of what teachers knew and demanding new types of skills, values, knowledge levels and beliefs. It has been a major departure from what used to be and it meant teachers had to re-learn almost everything. It is no wonder that teachers professional development is today one of South Africa's educational goals for the success of its educational reforms Borko (2000). He alludes that the changes in classroom practice demanded by the reform vision ultimately rely on teachers.

The South African Department of Education realized the centrality of teacher learning in achieving the desired change in education when it envisioned a teacher as a lifelong learner, to play his or her multiple roles (Jansen, 2001). It is therefore undisputable that teachers have to do a great deal of learning to change their beliefs and values about teaching and learning. They need to acquire new knowledge in pedagogy, content and skills as well as changing their views about learners to achieve intents of the new education reforms. Guskey (2000) contends that schools can be no better than the teacher learning and professional development in both the attainment of reform goals and the improvement of teaching and learning.

South Africa presents a challenging case with its widely unequal school systems. For the majority of poor schools, teachers are at the best resources learners have towards a better education (McNeil, 2004). Thus, teacher professional development holds an important key for such learners. The little professional development that teachers receive consists of class visits, which are conducted in a way that makes it, at best, a small gain for teachers, but at worst, greater confusion for teachers as they come out of this activity with more questions than answers. However, these, programme (class visits) rarely help teachers in terms of what and how they are supposed to do it, leaving them at the very same level of knowledge and competencies as they had before undergoing this professional development programme. According to MacNeil, (2004) class visits are often used to get out of the way, leaving teachers to look for anything that can assist them to cope in their classrooms. The focus of the study is on the impact of class visits on professional teacher development; this study seeks to investigate how class visits impact on professional teacher development in the White Hazy Circuit in the Mpumalanga Province.

According to MacNeil, (2004) “class visits” is a program brought about by the new Department of Education after the Apartheid government initially introduced it in the quest to professionally develop teacher. This paper endeavours to examine aspects of leadership and change in the context of South African public schools and assess the impact of class visits on professional teacher development. In addition, to the

recent publications by the Quality Assurance Agencies (QA, 2006), professional teacher development is said to be an opportunity given to the institutions or schools to discuss teaching and quality learning. They allude to the fact that the program itself (typically a self-evaluation to be scrutinised by peer reviewers) is an opportunity given to teachers to discuss teaching and quality learning.

School leadership in South Africa is currently faced with two major challenges, namely to ensure equitable access to education and to improve the quality of education in general, which places huge demands on the educational leadership corps Quality Assurance (QA, 2006), in agreement to the above statement the Department of Education, has this to say “the pace of change and the need to be adaptable and responsive to local circumstances requires that managers develop new leadership styles and management skills” (Department of Education, 2005). The role of the principals as instructional leaders and as head of departments and of the school development team at the school level would be very important in this regard. Subsequently, the study will assess the impact of class visits on professional teacher development and again assess as to how teachers can be developed through class visits and conduct a research on training needs for teacher professional development in response to curriculum changes that will improve performance of teachers in schools.

## **1.2. THE PROBLEM STATEMENT**

Class visits were used by the former Department of Education as a tool to develop teachers; the researcher has noted that the culture of teacher development through “class visits” has been severely affected by the legacy of apartheid education this is further supported by recent studies in the Department of Education. During this period, the former Department of Education and Training was using class visits as a tool to develop teachers through lesson observations however this could not go well due to the fact that no feedback was given to teachers after visitation (Department of education, 2005). According to literature review, class visits were only used by inspectors and school principals only, and it encountered resistance from teacher

unions, because of the prevailing political environment as they were viewed by teachers as being politically biased collaborators with the Apartheid regime and, the entire programme was perceived as fault finding mission rather than developmental (Mboyane, 2004).

Hagreaves, (2005) shares nearly the same views with Mboyane when he says “the secrecy which surrounded the whole system created enormous malcontent amongst teachers and teacher Unions and the possibility of developmental appraisal was severely negated”. He continues to substantiate his views by indicating that when the new government came into power, the Department of Education re-introduced “class visits” through the Integrated Quality Management System known as (IQMS) as a policy for professional teacher development. This system integrates the three management areas in one which are: Developmental Appraisal, Measurement and Whole School Evaluation. Therefore the proposed study is seeking to assess the impact of “class visits” for professional teacher development.

According to the (Department of Education, 2006) teaching has evolved from being a mere calling to being a profession orientated field, it is necessary to capacitate the teaching personnel to move with the times (Department of Education, 2006). The study has chosen “Class visits” as a subject to be researched which could be the most appropriate program to develop the teachers. The assumption is that teachers need professional development in order to fully execute their major function which is teaching effectively and efficiently.

### **1.3 MOTIVATION/ RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY**

According to (Rhodes, Strokes & Hampton, 2005), a practical guide to mentoring, coaching and peer networking: teacher professionalism development in schools and colleges. London: Routledge Falmer, teachers see no connection between their professional development and everyday classroom needs. They complain that the training is not related to school improvement efforts or to real classrooms and students (Black, 2004). A survey conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics (2005) found that only 18 per cent of teachers felt the training they received

was connected to a great extent to other school improvement activities at their school. According to Darling Hammond (2007) teachers complained that they have no input into the planning process, with training topics selected in a “top down” manner by district or school level administrators. Teachers’ lack of involvement often results in delivery of training that is not related to their interests or professional needs. This is an indication that professional teacher development has become a runaway problem in our public schools, which is supported by the (National Commission on Teaching and Learning in South Africa, 2002).

#### **1.4 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

The proposed study is very important because it seeks to find new ways of adding value to teachers by assessing the skills and the method they use in teaching learners as to whether they are in line with the new curriculum policy, from OBE (Outcome Base Education) to the NCS (National Curriculum Statement). Secondly it seeks to find strategies to harmonise the new ways of teaching as required by the new Curriculum policy statement, and teachers will be developed in the area where they need development because according to (Black, 2004), Class visits are advocated by the Department of Education because it is believed to be at the centre of teacher development (Black, 2004). The study is also significant because it will address the issue of resolving the power aspect regarding Class visits between school managers and teachers. The Principals, Deputy Principals and teachers will benefit from the study.

#### **1.5 AIM OF THE STUDY**

- The principal aim of this study is to assess the impact of class visits on professional teacher development.
- The study aims to put measures or recommendations in place that can help to enhance development of teachers through “Class visits”.

## **1.6 OBJECTIVE OF STUDY**

- To assess the impact of class visits for development of teachers.
- To make recommendations on strategies for conducting class visits in order to enhance professional teacher development.

## **1.7 RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

- What is the impact of class visits on professional teacher development?
- How do class visits help enhance professional teacher development?
- What strategies can be employed to strengthen class visits as a program of professional teacher development?

## **1.8 LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Literature review with regard to class visits**

According to (Fullan 2005) principals are in the best position to help teachers improve in areas of weakness and can accomplish this through observation and dialogue that shows respect for teachers as professionals. According to (Joyce and Showers, 2002) they emphasize that principals must develop leadership skills that help them build the intellectual capital that is necessary to make good curriculum choices, establish expectation for student work and provide teachers with the opportunities to learn the specifics of teaching well within their academic areas. An early study by (Darling, 2005), found that for a school to produce satisfactory results teachers need effective professional teacher development program and teachers should be motivated to take such programs seriously. Darling further argues that it is very important that school managers or leaders employ strategies that will produce good results. He then concludes that class visits is very key to the development of teachers and according to (Darling, 2005) teachers are reluctant to be visited in class by their immediate seniors.

### **Literature review of professional teachers' development**

According to The American Federation of Teachers, (2004), teachers' professional development is an essential component of comprehensive school reform. Teachers are at the center of educational reform because they must make every effort to

ensure that their students meet the high standards that the districts and states have adopted “Without professional teacher development, school reform and improved achievement for all students will not happen” (Darling, 2005).

Evidence continues to accumulate showing that student performance is influenced by teachers ‘high quality of professional development and that the effects of increased teacher knowledge are observed across subject matter field according to (The American Federation of Teachers, 2004). They further found that high quality professional teacher development is essential to the nation’s goal of high standards of learning for every child and that the most important investment school districts can make is to ensure that teachers continue to learn.

The Federation for Teachers (2004) found that investments in teacher knowledge and skills result in greater increased of educators’ knowledge in teaching and learning. New professional development programs were introduced with no attempt to connect them to past training (Hargreaves, 2005). According to (Joyce and Showers, 2002), Professional teacher development programs should support curricular and instructional change that enhances student learning.

## **1.9 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **1.9.1 RESEARCH APPROACH**

The research approach for this study would be –quantitative approach. Henning and Smith (2004) define quantitative research as an interactive inquiry in which researchers collect data using in survey (field research). Quantitative research describes and analyses people’s individual and collective social actions, beliefs, thoughts, and perceptions, Henning et, al, (2004). Thus in qualitative research, the research is concerned with understanding the social phenomena from the participants’ perspectives and therefore interprets phenomena in terms of the meaning people bring to him or her. The study will focusing on gaining greater insight and understanding of the way rural schools are managed in the Mpumalanga province of South Africa.

### 1.9.2 POPULATION AND SAMPLING

Henning et, al. (2004) describe a population as a group of elements or cases, whether individuals, or objects or events that conform to specific criteria and to which we intend to generalize the results of the population. The target population is teachers, five hundred (500) teachers in the white hazy circuit in the District of Enhlanzeni region in Mpumalanga Province and samples will be sourced from post level 1 teachers (PL1) to post level 2 teachers (PL2) teachers in all grades from primary schools to secondary schools to widen the scope for extensive search for knowledge. The research site will be White hazy circuit in Mpumalanga province.

### SAMPLING

#### 1.9.3 SAMPLING METHOD AND SAMPLING SIZE

A stratified random sampling method will be used; according to Leedy and Ormrod, (2004) this type of sampling is suitable for heterogeneous population because the inclusions of small subgroups percentage-wise can be ensured.

The reason the researcher has chosen to use stratified random sampling is because with a stratified random sampling, is mainly used to ensure that the different groups or segments of a population acquire sufficient representation in the sample Leedy and Ormrod (2004).

<b><i>Category</i></b>	<b><i>total</i></b>	<b><i>No. of participants</i></b>
No. of secondary schools	<b>12</b>	<b>6</b>
No. of primary schools	<b>16</b>	<b>8</b>
Primary School Teachers	<b>224</b>	<b>22</b>
Secondary School Teachers	<b>210</b>	<b>22</b>
Primary School HODs	<b>30</b>	<b>3</b>
Secondary School HODs	<b>36</b>	<b>4</b>
<b><u>TOTALL NUMBER OF TEACHERS</u></b>	<b>434</b>	<b>44</b>
<b><u>TOTAL NUMBER OF HODs</u></b>	<b>66</b>	<b>7</b>
<b><u>GRAND TOTAL</u></b>	<b>500</b>	<b>51</b>

#### **1.9.4 DATA COLLECTION METHOD**

Two methods of data collection will be used, that is questionnaires and interviews. Smith (2008), in their Dictionary of Research Methodology defines this type of data collection as follows: **Quantitative** data is data which can be expressed numerically and is classified numerically.

In the **quantitative** data collection method the researcher will use fifty (50) this would be teachers, Head of Departments, Deputy Principals and Principals questionnaires where the respondents will fill in their responses. Semi structured interview will be used for ten (10) people in the management (Head of Departments, Deputy principals and Principals), and it is defined as techniques for collecting data through guided questioning and are acknowledged as being some of the most effective ways of collecting data in the social sciences (Smith et al. 2004) And the researcher has decided to use this type of interview because the researcher wanted to get an in-depth understanding, knowledge, insight and the opinions of the participants on the topic.

#### **1.9.5 DATA ANALYSIS**

Data analysis means that the researcher has to make meaning of the information he/she has collected (Smith et, al, 2008) Some of the data will be analyzed using the quantitative techniques while some of the data will be analyzed using qualitative tools for example, (interviews) techniques and in quantitative the technique will be observations. In this section, data will be analyzed in accordance with Mouton, McMillan and Schumacher (2001). This will be followed by descriptive and inferential statistical analyses; this type of analysis allows the researcher to draw conclusions about the populations from the sample data. The data gathered will be analyzed statistically (STATKON) using the PASW Statistical 18.0 program (SPSS inc.2009). Statistics collected from questionnaires and interviews will be analyzed to determine whether Class visits have impact on professional teacher development, whether the impact have is positive or negative.

### **1.9.6 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Smith, (2009) defines ethics as the appropriateness of the researcher's behavior in relation to the rights of those who become participants in the research. McMillan (2001) defines ethics as a set of moral principles, suggested by individual or group which offers rules and behavioral expectations about the most correct conduct towards experimental subjects and respondents. In the study, the researcher requested permission from relevant structures such as the provincial Mpumalanga Department of Education, circuit office and the target group.

- Consent forms which will be accompanied by a detailed outline of the purpose of the study,
- An application to conduct the study at this institution and requesting identified participants to take part in the project will be designed.
- Contained in this documentation will be confidentiality undertaking and the declaration of intent, as well the liberty to decline to give any information which might be deemed personal.

### **1.9.7 RELIABILITY**

Reliability of an instrument means that if the same instrument is used at different times or administered to different subject from the same population, therefor the findings should be the same. In order words, reliability is the extent to which a measuring instrument is repeatable and consistence (Smith, 2009). To ensure reliability of the study, the researcher has used a combination of questionnaires and semi structured interviews

### **1.9.8 VALIDITY**

Validity in research means that you are observing, identifying or measuring what you say you are going to measure (McMillan and Schumacher (2001). He further argues that the validity in qualitative design is the degree to which the interpretations and concepts have mutual meanings between the participant and the researcher. In

trying to ensure validity in the study the following strategies were used as suggested by McMillan (2001):

- Prolonged and persistent field work;
- Verbatim accounts;
- Multiple researcher and
- Member checking

The researcher used some of the above –mentioned strategies to ensure that validity prevail in the study.

### **1.9.9 RESEARCH LIMITATIONS**

The possible limitations to this research could be the lack of funds or budgetary constraints. And other possible limitations could be lack of resources and support. The schools are very scattered and are very much apart from one another then transport could be a possible limitation because I will need a transport to move from school A to school B. Other possible limitation could be the lack of co-operation from school authorities this includes school managers and circuit managers.

### **1.9.10 DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS**

**Class visits,** Class visit is defined as a peer visitation program for both junior and senior teacher put into place to help develop and improve the quality of teaching and learning. It is also regarded as an effort by the principals as Instructional leaders to bring about change in terms of teaching, developing teachers, again evaluating what they taught to learners is beneficial and authentic (Kamper, 2008).

**Professional teacher development,** Professional teacher development refers to ongoing learning opportunities that are available to teachers through their school or school district (Odden et al., 2004). He further defines professional teacher development as the sum of the activities, both formal and informal, carried out by the individual or system to promote staff growth and renewal.

**Impact,** according to the (Collins dictionary, no date, revised edition) impact is defined as the impression made by an idea, cultural movement or social group: (the impact of Renaissance on Medieval Europe, to have an impact on something, in this

case an idea can either have a **positive** impact or **negative impact** on something of which in the study “Impact” of class visits on professional teacher development).

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1. INTRODUCTION

There is growing consensus in international and local literature that class visits are comparatively easy and simple to organize and that they have got immediate tangible benefits. So it is no wonder they are adopted by different levels of teachers in different levels of schools, especially beginning teachers, who generally prefer to be helped and to be told what to do. In addition, class visits especially by peer observation help teachers transfer the skills and knowledge that they received from the training into actual practice in the classrooms effectively says (Bush, 2009).

According to a literature review on class visits no clear consensus has been reached yet on the form and teaching focus of Professional Teacher Development. A strong reason for that is that classroom-based research cannot yet establish what form of teaching and learning has most impact on learner achievements. A recent review of classroom-based research in South Africa suggests that on the basis of their consistent appearance across the reviewed studies, a few factors seem to be associated with learning gains: a focus on reading and writing text, teacher proficiency in the language of instruction and feedback to learners all assume that sufficient teacher knowledge exists (Hoadley, 2012).

In the United Kingdom during the 1940's, control of the curriculum was in the hands of teachers. They decided on their own the curriculum they use in schools and were free to make their own selection of the content materials. But by the 1960's, this teacher autonomy was taken away (Mboyane 2002). The question of accountability and funding of schools by the government were used as an excuse to remove this power of the control of the curriculum from the teacher (Lawton, 1998). It is reported that class visits are increasingly used in higher education in the United Kingdom (UK) to enhance learning and teaching practice and a positive response to external

review. Even reluctant participants have reported benefits according to the National Commission on Teaching & America's Future (American Teacher, 2000).

Class Visits, as Richards (2005) explains, may include observation of other teachers (especially the experienced ones), peer observation and three-way observation which uses students' perceptions of the lesson as a third source of information. According to Shui-fong Lam (Lam, 2004), the current patterns of class visits may be classified as the following:

- A principal visits and observes teachers in class
- A panel/section heads observe/s teachers in class during class visit
- Teachers observe a panel/section heads in class
- Experienced teachers visit and observe new teachers class
- New teachers observe experienced teachers.

## **2.2. Policy stipulation**

This new approach to the education and development of teachers has necessitated a transformation of processes and policy frameworks that supports the development of teachers, their education, their work and their growth in the profession. The IQMS (Integrated Quality Management System) is a relevant basis on which subsequent arguments could be firmly entrenched. The Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS, 2005), has been designed as a policy in which the program of professional teacher development is embedded in. Mestry, Hendricks and Bisschoff (2009) argue that Continuing Professional Teacher Development (CPTD) is essential to create effective schools. These views are further supported by Chisholm (2004) when saying that poor results achieved in the senior certificate examination as well as the drop-out rate of children, especially in black schools, in South Africa reveal that teachers are not performing at an optimum level. However Fullan, (2005) holds different views, he argues that professional teacher development is an important strategy to improve educators' skills and knowledge in the interest of quality teaching and learning. For professional development to be effective motivation should be intrinsic rather than extrinsic says Fullan, (2005).

The implementation of the IQMS implies that class visits should be the prioritised for Professional Development and should be placed high on a school's agenda (Mestry et al 2009). The professional development of teachers could be seriously jeopardised because IQMS has not yet been successfully implemented in some provinces, while in others, implementation is very slow. Some of the reasons cited by Mboyane (2004) are that the National Department of Education's advocacy programme on IQMS is not intensively driven: the approach is top-down, the training is often once-off and in some provinces training is outsourced to institutions of higher learning and private consultants who themselves have inadequate knowledge and practical experience to undertake such training, such that facilitators lack insight into IQMS. Mboyane (2004) highlights that additional problems such as the poor leadership provided by principals and school management teams as well as insufficient resources in previously disadvantaged schools are a serious challenge. The Department of Education is "forcing" the implementation of IQMS on teachers and not taking into considerations the low morale of teachers due to their poor working conditions and remuneration pack are some of the challenges as noted by (Scott, 2003).

Class visits are mandated by South Africa's Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS) of 2006, performance standard number 1-7. The South African Teachers Union (SADTU) noted that subject advisers are not part of IQMS and they continue to deliver below par performance and the frequent changes in education take everybody unprepared and require continuous development by all. The unions, therefore, have sponsored a motion which stipulates that IQMS is an instrument meant to develop and empower all educators and education practitioners (Mboyane 2000).

The unions have resolved that IQMS and class visit should be fused and be streamlined into one (Collective Agreement No 1 of 2006). But in some schools still IQMS occurs as a monitoring device. It has been a systematic process but it is too early to assess whether it is achieving its purpose of teacher development and that of improving learner outcomes. However some literature reviews argue that class

visits appear to be a sporadic and unsystematic activity, restricted by lack of time available to Heads of Department (HoDs) and the lingering belief that they are discouraged by the teacher unions (Fleischer, 2008).

The South African Council for Educators (SACE) is another body which also supports the use of class visits and professional teacher development. Section 7 of *SACE: The educator and the profession* (subsection 7.3) says that the educator keeps abreast of educational trends and development and that (7.4) the educator promotes the on-going development of teaching as a profession. Professional development of teachers in South Africa is the domain and responsibility of the South African Council of Educators (SACE). It plays a role in terms of developing a professional code of conduct for teachers, Education Labour Relation Council (ELREC), policy Hand book for teachers, 1998)

### **2.3. CLASS VISITS**

According to the literature, the concept of class visits started in the United Kingdom and has commonly been used in both the UK and China (Kamper, 2008). These two countries have used class visits, usually carried out in purpose of staff appraisal in China and in the UK (United Kingdom). Class visits have been used to professionally develop teachers, Kamper (2008) claims; this notion is further supported by Lawton (1996). Both of them define them as a peer visitation program for both junior and senior teachers put into place to help develop and improve the quality of teaching and learning.

It is also regarded as an effort by the principals as instructional leaders to bring about change in terms of teaching, developing teachers, and evaluating if what they teach to learners is beneficial and authentic (Kamper, 2008). According to the Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS, 2006) class visits are a peer visitation or a visitation by your supervisor or the Head of Department (HOD) with the aim of fostering discussions of teaching and sharing of ideas and to provide constructive criticism about the teaching effectiveness of each member, a view is also supported by Fullan (2005). The ultimate goal of this process is to assist teachers to self-evaluate, reflect, set goals, make plans, assess improvements and

evaluate results as an integral part of each teacher's day, according to the Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS). Recently class visits were rejected by teachers unions, specifically the South African Teachers Union (SADTU) as they have been widely used as a tool to fault-finding in the teaching quality among teachers (Department of Education, 2006).

According to Bush (2004), Class Visits enable faculty members to learn from each other through mutual observation; according to Bush the goal of a class visit is to gain new ideas, strategies, and techniques for classroom teaching and to share goals and common concerns, which will assist in professional teacher development. Class visits must be strengthened for professional teacher development and the results of class visits should be communicated to teachers in a better way (Bush and Heystek, 2006).

The two authors emphasize the fact that, feedback after class visits could be one of the major ways to communicate such findings to the teachers. They indicate that the link between class visits and professional teacher development is extremely important saying that link must be operating in two directions: information going to the teachers about the latest findings in educational, pedagogical and psychological research and information going to the principal about the problems in teaching experienced by classroom teachers, (Bush and Heystek, 2006). They continue to advice that finding different forums for the exchange of such views and experiences must be a challenge for all educational systems. While they acknowledge that strengthened teacher development through class visits and pedagogical research based on these premises could be an important step in improving educational quality". The two (Bush and Heystek, 2006) further agreed that there should be a variety of different kinds of strategies offered to the teachers as developmental programmes.

Similar views are echoed by Mestry, Hendricks and Bisschoff (2009), that there must also be possibilities for teachers to develop their teaching skills by broadening their skills and knowledge in order to be qualified for teaching positions in other subjects or at other levels in the education system instead of using one system which is only classroom oriented. "The teacher should be given a large amount of freedom to

choose the kind of training that he/she thinks is most appropriate for his/ her professional development,” (Mestry, et al, 2009) Continuous literature study by Mestry, Hendricks and Bisschoff (2009), indicates that professional teacher development through class visits must be considered a fundamental right for teachers development. They postulate that professional teacher development should be organised inside the classroom during school working hours, with the possibility for the teacher to have more time of contact hours with learners while following a course.

According to Richards (2005) benefit of class visits to school includes the following:

### **2.3.1. THE BENEFITS OF CLASS VISITS:**

- In fact through classroom visits, the visiting teachers can gain an incredible amount of knowledge not only about how other teachers view teaching.
- The observed teachers enrich the teaching performance and the observers gain insight into the strengths and effectiveness of their teaching.
- “The most positive benefit of class visits to-teachers,” said Hirsh (2004) is that it makes teaching a public rather than a private act.
- It gives teachers the opportunity to engage in reflective dialogue about their work.
- They benefit on classroom support.
- Classroom practices are improved.
- It reduces job stress, especially for the new teachers.
- And increased focus on student achievement (Day and Harris, 2005)

### **2.3.2. BENEFITS OF CLASS VISITS TO THE SCHOOL:**

According to Richards (2005), the benefits of class visit to schools are:

- Increased collaboration among teachers.
- The establishment of a professional learning community.
- An increased focus on student achievement.
- Enthusiasm for the profession.

### **2.3.3. BENEFITS OF CLASS VISITS TO PRINCIPALS:**

According to Shui-Fong Lam (Lam, 2004), principals would benefit in the manner in which they:

- Allow time for teachers to observe other teachers.
- Organize scheduled meetings, coaching sessions, and follow-up conversations.
- Create teams that shares students.
- Select specific strategies and skills on which to focus during an observation session.
- Institute ways to measure the impact of observation.

### **2.3.4. BENEFITS OF CLASS VISITS TO STUDENTS:**

- Students would benefit from highly skilled and knowledgeable teachers in delivering the subject matter.
- Students would benefit from the increased collaborations to among teachers.
- The students would also benefit from the teachers increased focus on academic achievement (Lam, 2004).

### **2.3.5. THE NEGATIVE EFFECT OF CLASS VISITS**

Although classroom observation plays an important role in the above purpose, it is not well received in general. The reasons are variable. As Hammonds (2004) has noted, classrooms are very isolated places and there is subtle resistance from teachers against having another adult in their classroom being visited by another adult in the classroom may be perceived as intrusion instead of support (Hammonds, 2004). According to (Hammonds, 2004) the following are the negative effects of class visits:

- It creates untrustworthy between the person visiting the teacher and the teacher being visited( Hammonds, 2004 eludes that the visited teacher might feel uncomfortable to continue giving lesson in the presence of his senior)

- It can cause the learners in class to lose concentration or completely lose focus by the presence of the senior in the class.
- While class visits take place inside the class in the presence of learners, the teacher being visited might feel uneasy during the discussions
- During the feedback discussions, it might be difficult for the observed teacher to accept the findings, he/ she might feel that the findings are only meant to despise him/her (Hammonds, 2004)
- Those who conduct class visits are sometimes becoming more arrogant and unwilling to listen to the observed teacher.
- Those who are tasked with professional development of teachers through class visits are sometimes less qualified than those who are observed and this causes contradictions.
- The negative effect of class visits as observed by (Hammond, 2004) is that the whole programme is viewed as fault finding mission by teachers rather than developmental.

#### **2.4. USE OF CLASS VISITS IN THE UNITED KINGDOM (UK)**

The notion of teaching as a reflective activity through (class visits) emerged strongly in the UK, partly in response to the growing influence of the effective teacher model, which was seen by some as restricting teacher professionalism, rather than enhancing it (Stronach et al, 2002; Hartley, 2002). The philosophical roots of the reflective teaching model lie in the work of the American educator John Dewey. Early in the twentieth century he developed an approach to teaching based on teachers becoming active decision-makers. Similar ideas were later developed by Donald Schön who wrote about *The Reflective Practitioner* (1983), stressing the significance of values and of theory informing decision-making.

In the UK, such ideas were picked up and developed in a very practical way by Andrew Pollard and his collaborators who from the late 1980s onwards, produced a series of books, including handbooks, on 'reflective teaching' (from Pollard and Tann, 1987 to Pollard, 2008). At the centre of this model was a cyclical approach to planning, making provision, acting, collecting data, analysing the data, evaluating and reflecting and then planning the next step. Built into such a model is a

commitment to personal professional development through practice. It was a model that took a firm hold in teacher education institutions across the UK during the latter parts of the twentieth century. The largest scale studies of initial teacher education undertaken in England by Furlong et al (2000) found that about 70 per cent of teacher education programmes led from universities and colleges were informed by some version of 'reflective teaching' (see also Griffiths, 2000).

The reflective teaching approach also has significance beyond theory for experienced teachers. In their Teaching and Learning Research Programme study 'Learning to Learn' Pedder et al (2005) found that there were opportunities for considerable teacher learning to take place in the classroom context, through for example applying research, collaborating with colleagues, or consulting with pupils. They viewed such learning as being of high potential value. However it is also viewed as relatively high risk, and some teachers appear to be less comfortable with such approaches.

In one of the few studies that considers the future of teacher education in the UK (especially England), Edwards et al (2002) argue on the basis of an analysis of the consequences of recent reform for teacher education, that teachers should be seen as 'users and producers of knowledge about teaching, in communities of practice which are constantly refreshed through processes of professional enquiry, in partnerships between practitioners and researchers'. That is, teachers should be given increased control over the professional knowledge base of teaching.

### **Policy and practice background**

This systematic review of teacher development was carried out in the context of the implementation of the National Agreement on workforce reform in England (Department for Education and Skills, 2003b), which set out plans to remodel the school workforce by freeing teachers to focus on teaching and learning, and developing the roles of support staff in schools; as well as the need to prepare new teachers for working as part of a team in support of pupils' learning (Department for Education and Skills and Training and Development Agency, 2002). It was hoped that the results of this review would contribute to greater understanding of the nature

and quality of training available to teacher development and perhaps higher level teaching assistants (HLTAs).

The United Kingdom also introduced the Education Act which resulted in free and compulsory primary education within a decade. The Department of Education and Science is responsible for determining policy and exercising control over teacher development and training (Joyce and Showers, 2002). With the ultimate aim of achieving a wholly professional teacher development to cope with new development in education, the department of education offer three year integrated courses leading to a BEd degree, with the opportunity of a fourth year of study leading to an honours degree. In-service training like class visits were also adopted which enables teachers to prepare for new responsibilities or to keep abreast of new developments in their subject and in teaching techniques.

Class visits are also prevalent in English language teaching. Through class visiting, visiting teachers and visited teachers have learnt from each other's strong points to offset their own weaknesses (Lashway, 1999; Killion, 1998; Sparks and Loucks-Horsley, 1989). However, they again point out to the disadvantage of class visits which they say due to the lack of theoretical support and practical research, many misunderstandings about the method emerged and existed for a long time, which impeded teachers' professional development to a certain extent. Research has found that the effectiveness of professional teacher development programs is enhanced when the programs receive strong support from principals (Education Week, 2005; Joyce and Showers, 2002; French, 1997; Licklider, 1997). In schools where professional teacher development is most successful, studies show that principals encourage their teachers to learn and work toward continuous professional growth by (Lashway, 1999; Killion, 1998; Sparks and Loucks-Horsley, 1989).

## **2.5 Professional teacher development and class visits in the USA**

In the USA, Gerber et al. (2001) warn that TAs have very limited preparation for their roles. In 2003, French advised that 'Para educators continue to be hired for the job with no preparation' (2003). Many teaching assistants are still likely to depend on the training given to them on the job by their classroom teachers. Giangreco et al. (2002, p 60) reported that, while there was some attendance at workshops and other forms of training, their study (215 staff in four schools) revealed that being mentored by a teacher (i.e. on the job training) was the principal source of training received. French (2001) reviewed on the job training experiences of 321 teachers responsible for paraprofessionals. Teachers often addressed teaching techniques and behaviour management with their support staff, the most frequently used approach being 'telling' or providing feedback' (French, 2001). Learning from the teacher has been reported in a range of UK studies (for example, Hughes and Westgate, 1997). There is some justification to the view that actual training programmes seem to occur as some kind of afterthought (Pickett, 1996, cited in Hadadian and Yssel, 1998).

Nevertheless, in the USA, informative reviews about training of support staff have been undertaken, notably by Morgan et al. (1995) and more recently by French (2003). A glance at the titles in French's review suggests that TAs and teachers have been consulted about the effects of TA training: for example, Long et al. (1994), Passaro et al. (1991) and Riggs and Mueller (2001).

Giangreco (2002) and his colleagues have been involved in identifying appropriate programmes and developing materials to use in the training of paraprofessionals, who support pupils with disabilities in US general education classrooms. In conclusion, there is a range of experience and research in the USA to which we could look for comparison as we mapped studies and narrowed the focus of the review. This review drew on the research of French (2003) to inform its review would focus in particular on the impact that class visits has on professional teacher development and those they work with(learners in this case), but also touch on other important issues, such as the availability of training, its take-up and costs in time and investment.

Issues around teacher supply and quality in the US have resulted in a proliferation of alternative routes into teaching internationally (i.e. not traditional university programmes). These are most developed in the deregulated system of US teacher education, where most States operate an alternative programme.

Teach for America (TFA) provides an alternative route for entrants to the profession who may not have considered teaching as a career. TFA was established in 1989 to encourage graduates with strong academic credentials to teach for a minimum of two years in high needs schools. Candidates participate in an intensive five-week summer institute as preparation for school experience (Decker et al, 2004; Raymond et al, 2001).

Two evaluations comparing TFA corps members with control teachers, report that Teach for America graduates achieve pupil outcomes above those achieved by comparable teachers who qualified through other entry routes (Decker et al, 2004; Raymond et al, 2001). These findings are however challenged by Darling Hammond et al (2005) who note that these studies did not control for certification status or students' prior achievement. Based on analysis of a longitudinal dataset (1996-2002) linking the achievement records of 35,000 students with school and teacher data, Darling Hammond et al (2005: 20) conclude, *"teachers' abilities to support student achievement appear to depend, both for TFA teachers and others, substantially on the level of preparation these teachers have had, as reflected in their certification status"*.

Generally, great emphasis is placed on proper professional teacher development in the USA. All states require a bachelor's degree for teaching elementary grades, and 47 states require a bachelor's as a minimum preparation for teaching in secondary schools. Three states require five years training or a Master's degree. The majority of teachers train at a teachers' college offering a four –year course (state college) or a college of education. Many local education systems set standards that are higher than the minimum state requirements. They often require that teachers earn

additional academic credits every few years or participate in in-service courses (King, 2005)

However the US experienced a dire shortage of teachers (a problem experienced by many other countries at the time) class visits was adopted by many states in their education system to help develop their teachers in the new curricular. According to (King, 2005) stricter selections programs and higher training demands resulted in the reduction of enrolment of prospective teachers. So in trying to mitigate the prevailing problem of lack of skill and knowledge in the new curricular class visits was therefore adopted as a program that will assists in professional teacher development within the school avoiding the time lost as a result of attending after hours workshops.

In addition to looking at South African models, the Department of Education also studied existing programmes and models professional teacher development from the USA as indicated above (Henning, Wilhem, and Van Rensburg and Smith, 2004).

These class visits is one other model that has been practised in the US schools, and the following are programmes in the US which are used as professional teacher development: Loucks-Horsley, Hewson, Love and Stiles are from the USA Cognitively Guided Instruction are based in the USA. The above mentioned programmes were selected because they have been sustainable over a long period.

## **2.6. CLASS VISITS IN CHINA**

According to Lam, (2004), class visits were widely used in Chinese schools as a program and a tool to develop and appraise the teachers. According to Lam (2004), class visits in China have been successful and the performance of students increased in that student reached high performance as a result of the program. In spite of the difficulties in data collection and other aspects, classroom visits as a research tool play an important role in Chinese schools, while in China they have had a program and a model called Bell and Gilbert. The purpose was to provide evidence of the quality of teaching and learning across the curriculum, including the identification of good practice and weakness that need to be addressed and the necessary support (Shui-Lam, 2004). Through class visits, a visiting teacher can

“gain an incredible amount of knowledge not only about how other teachers view teaching , but also about how I see my own teaching differently as well as consider what changes I can make in my teaching” (Gebhard, 2004). The purpose of class visits were to develop the teachers both in the class and outside the class environment (Integrated Quality Management System, Mpumalanga Department of Education, 2006)

The disadvantage of this program is that it focuses mostly on appraisal which is linked to development as it is the case in China. Also, teachers were worried about the incentives they would get through this program and the program totally lost its focus (Guskey, 1990).

## **2.7 CLASS VISITS IN NEW ZEALAND**

In the 1980s and early 1990s there was a skills-based emphasis on teacher development where it was thought that conveying a particular approach to learning, along with sufficient coaching and support to the teacher, would ensure quality practice. Transfer to practice was found to be problematic, however, and the skills-based approach was criticised by a number of writers for conveying undue certainty and predictability in education, a field subject to continual change. Indeed, arguments were mounted about de-skilling the work of teachers (Apple, 2004), neglecting the personal development of teachers (Leithwood, Jantzi & Steinbach, 2004), and divorcing on-going learning from the context of change (Apple, 2004).

Joyce and Showers (1995) argued that there were four elements impacting on teacher development: the influence of government policy, regional directions, school-wide influences and the disposition of the individual teacher for on-going growth. Class visits as a program for professional teacher development and as a tool to develop and appraise the teachers were adopted. According to Hargreaves and Goodson (2004), class visits in New Zealand have been successful. According to the majority of teachers, who mentioned how professional teacher development increased their repertoire of practical ideas and strategies (Kearney & Poskitt, 2001).

### **2.5.1. BENEFITS OF CLASS VISITS IN NEW ZEALAND**

Evaluation of *Special Education 2000 Professional Teacher Development* indicated that the majority of teachers' perceived benefits of class visits as being:

- Increased knowledge and information, greater awareness of available help and support, and increased confidence
- Help in the identification and assessment of learners with special needs (Kearney & Poskitt, 2001).

### **2.6. USE OF CLASS VISITS IN SOUTH AFRICA (SA) DURING APARTHEID**

The culture of professional development has been severely affected by the legacy of Apartheid education. The former Department of Education and Training encountered political resistance to evaluation and appraisal because many inspectors and principals were viewed as being politically biased collaborators with the Apartheid regime (Mestry, 1999). According to Phillips (1996:14), the secrecy which surrounded the whole system created enormous malcontent and the possibility of evaluation and appraisal acting as an incentive was severely negated. The poor results in the Senior Certificate Examinations as well as the drop-out rate of children, especially in black schools, revealed that to some extent teachers were not performing at an optimum level (Chisholm, 2004).

During the Apartheid period, class visits were used by the former Department of Education as an attempt to develop teachers; the researcher has noted that the culture of teacher development through "class visits" has been severely affected by the legacy of the Apartheid education, according to the Mpumalanga Department of Education (Resolution1 of 2003). During this period, the former Department of Education and Training was using class visits as a tool to develop teachers through lesson observations, but the weakness of this was that no feedback was given to teachers after visits. Class visits were only used by inspectors and school principals as indicated above and it encountered resistance from teacher unions, because of the prevailing political environment, they were viewed by teachers as being politically biased collaborators with the Apartheid regime and, the entire programme was

perceived as fault finding mission rather than something developmental (Mpumalanga Department of Education, 2004). According to Hargreaves (2005) the secrecy which surrounded the whole system created enormous malcontent amongst teachers and teacher Unions. The possibility of developmental appraisal was severely negated.

After studying these programme (Professional Teacher Development) and model, the following common features were identified: reflection on teachers' own practice, development of teachers' content knowledge, provision of infrastructure to support teachers, collaboration with fellow teachers and researchers, provision of opportunities to try out and discuss new teaching strategies, development of teachers as lifelong learners and recognition and development of teachers' beliefs. Further seven principles for effective professional teacher development have been identified by the Professional Development Project of the National Institute for Science Education in the USA (Loucks-Horsley, Stiles & Hewson, 2004). These recommendations are:

- Have a clear image of effective classroom visits and teaching.
- Develop teachers' knowledge and skills to broaden teaching approaches.
- Use instructional methods that mirror the methods to be used with students.
- Build or strengthen the learning community of science and mathematics teachers; prepare and support teachers to serve in leadership roles.
- Provide links with other parts of the educational system; provide continuous assessment.

All of these recommendations informed the professional teacher development mode as explained by (Du Toit & Sguazzin, 2000).

### **2.6.1. BENEFITS OF CLASS VISITS DURING APARTHEID**

During the Apartheid period class visits were used with the aim of developing the teaching person, but this program did not yield any benefits. It was viewed by teachers as a tool which was meant to spy on them and to find mistakes from the

individual teacher and it was slammed by the teachers unions and ultimately the program was negated (Mboyane, 2004).

The disadvantage of this program, as cited by Mestry, Hendricks and Bisschoff (2009), is that inspectors were used by the then Department of Education to administer the program with little emphasis on teacher development but rather as a fault finding mission and it led to teachers disliking the program and viewing it as another instrument to try and discourage a black person on the system of education.

## **2.7. USE OF CLASS VISITS IN SOUTH AFRICA IN A DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY**

After 1994, the Department of Education (DoE) focused on major policy changes in the education system and also in the teacher education system. The greatest challenges were at the in-service level because of the wide inequalities inherited during the past but also because of the need to support practicing teachers with the implementation of demanding new curricula. The Curriculum 2005 (C2005), with its under-specified subject matter knowledge and complex concepts of knowledge integration across the curriculum and the lessons to fit the prescribed learning confused most teachers. Then the ministerial Committee on Teacher Education was set up and it suggested the development of a national framework which would provide coherence, direction and focus to a new teacher education system (DoE, 2005). It formalized the concept of lifelong professional development with the Continuing Professional Teacher Development (CPTD) System which expects teachers to continuously update and strengthen their professional knowledge (DoE, 2007).

Hargreaves (2005) asserts that, when the new government came into power, the Department of Education re-introduced “class visits” through the Integrated Quality Management System (known as IQMS) as a policy meant to support and develop teachers. This system integrates the three management areas in one which are: the Developmental Appraisal System, Whole School Evaluation and the Performance

Management System. Therefore the proposed study is seeking to assess the impact of “class visits” as an instrument for teacher development programs as embedded in the policy the (IQMS). The main purpose of class visits (Department of Education, 2005) is to collect evidence for professional teacher development. To have an effective teaching, pre-service teachers cannot rely solely on pre-service training programs or recruitment mechanisms, and in-service teachers cannot rely on the workshops and seminars. In other words, teachers are most likely to change their behaviours and continue to use new ideas through class visits (Fullan, 2004).

## **2.8. PROFESSIONAL TEACHER DEVELOPMENT AND CLASS VISITS**

Any departure point in the discussion of the Professional Teacher Development must move from the premise that teachers occupy a unique and indispensable position in society. They are a barometer of social change and determine through their work the quality and skill capacity of people that the education system will ultimately produce. No education system in the world, no matter how good it is designed and resourced, can succeed in achieving its national strategic objectives and vision if the teacher who is in the cold phase of implementation, is not properly motivated, skilled and developed in the art of pedagogy and pedagogical content knowledge and imbued with the spirit of patriotism, apparently Koala sees “Nationalism” as a positive value for education (Koala, 2004).

According to (Koala, 2004), it is important to recognise teachers as a multiple resource in society; they have developed themselves into politicians, artisan, lawyers, as workers, as revolutionaries etc. They have a multifaceted character. To ignore such a mighty force in society, with great influence and the capacity to mould and shape the young generation with their persuasive knowledge and thinking, would put the whole country in danger, they are a barometer of social change Koala, (2004).

This expression is further supported by (Govender, 2008) when he says, “in developing a teacher one is basically developing the nation and it is a rich investment for now and into the future when the country needs to be pulled out of the economic austerity and education stagnation”. Teachers should continuously take an introspection of their role, engage with it and interrogate it in an on-going self-evaluation and development. They must reflect on their professional development to know their strength and weakness (Govender, 2008).

According to Glatthorn (2004), “professional teacher development in a broad sense refers to the development of a person in his or her professional role”, more specifically teacher development is the professional growth which a teacher achieves as a result of gaining increased experience and examining his/her teaching systematically (Glatthorn 2004). He further asserts that professional teacher development includes formal experiences such as attending workshops and professional meetings, mentoring etc. and informal one. There is consensus in the literature regarding the importance of effective development programmes for teachers (Loxley, Johnston, Murchan, Fitzgerald and Quinn, 2007; Sandberg, Ansett & Wahlgren, 2007). Even at school level, the leadership of principals on class visits for professional teacher development activities is given particular attention to create a school climate wherein schools’ curriculum and administrative issues receive collaborative attention by all the teachers (Mestry, *et al.*, 2009). It is principals who formulate the action plans that seem most effective in achieving their aims and objectives and it is important that these principals systematically reflect upon the outcomes.

Teachers’ professional development is an essential component of comprehensive school reform; says Mestry et al. (2009). Teachers are at the centre of educational reform because they must make every effort to ensure that their students meet the high standards that districts and states have adopted (Garet, Porter, Desimone, Birman, and Yoon, 2001). They have the most direct contact with students and considerable control over what is taught and the learning climate (King and Newmann, 2005). The American Federation of Teachers (2002) has stated that “the

nation can adopt rigorous standards, set forth a visionary scenario, compile the best research about how students learn, change textbooks and assessment, promote teaching strategies that have been successful with a wide range of students, and change all the other elements involved in systemic reform - but without professional development, school reform and improved achievement for all students will not happen.”

Evidence continues to accumulate showing that student performance is influenced by teachers’ high quality professional development and that the effects of increased teacher knowledge are observed across subject-matter fields (Darling-Hammond, 2004). The American Federation of Teachers (2004) has concluded that high quality professional development is essential to the nation’s goal of high standards of learning for every child and that the most important investment school districts can make is to ensure that teachers continue to learn.

The National Commission on Teaching and America’s Future (2004) reported that investments in teacher knowledge and skills result in greater increases in student achievement than other uses of the education dollar. The time teachers spend with other knowledgeable educators, engaging in teaching and learning is just as important to students’ learning as the time teachers spend teaching students. In the past, professional teacher development consisted of teachers attending one or two workshops on the latest instructional practices. Participants listened passively to outside experts and were then encouraged to apply the strategies in their own classrooms. New professional development programs were introduced with no attempt to connect them to past training (Scott, 2004). Teachers were provided with few, if any, opportunities for follow-up activities and rarely applied their new knowledge or skills when they returned to their classrooms (Hargreaves, 2005).

Today, challenging student performance standards, paired with rigorous accountability policies call for significant changes in professional development practices. These changes cannot be accomplished by sending teachers to the short-term professional development efforts of the past. Professional development must be more than training in new knowledge or instructional procedures, says Hargreaves

(2005). It must enable teachers to move to the next level of expertise and enhance their ability to make changes that will result in increased student performance, according to the international literature on the role of principals (National Assembly for Wales, 2005). This professional growth will only occur if teachers are provided with expanded learning opportunities, ample peer support, and extended time to practice, reflect, critique, and then practice again (Chisholm, Hoadley and Kivulu 2005).

Professional teacher development programs should support curricular and instructional change that enhances student learning in the personal, social, and academic domains. Professional teacher development must have a significant impact on what is taught, how it is taught and the social climate of the school so that students' gains in knowledge and skill and their ability to learn increase (Chisholm et al.). Effective professional development produces changes in teachers' instructional practice, which can be linked to improvements in student achievement (Odden, Archibald, Fermanich and Gallagher, 2004), while class visits take the form of ensuring that high quality teaching materials are readily available and scheduling teacher formal visits and modelling lessons are taking place. According to Odden et al. (2004) there is a link between the two concepts because they both complement each other "one can only do with the aid of the other".

Odden et al. (2004) argue that, where there is a close link between the two concepts it is only when the principal strategy to gather classroom information and use that information gathered from the class to develop teachers which would be followed by conversation between the principal and the teacher about what was observed in class, "they will together draft a development program which will be used to develop the teacher" (Odden et al., 2004).

The teacher development approach of class visits is the most powerful one available to impact teacher behaviour. Although it can be an effective strategy to increase principal leadership, it can also be employed as a tool to promote professional teacher development and build professional learning communities, says Downey

(2004). Professional learning communities are teams of teachers who have shared goals for student learning, shared experiences, a common core of knowledge, and a common vocabulary. Learning communities enable teachers to exchange ideas about how to best implement practices and shape these practices to fit the specific needs of the students in their school (Redding and Kamm, 2004).

King and Newmann (2005) concluded that schools are most effective when they function as professional learning communities, characterized by a shared vision and shared values, collective inquiry, collaborative teams, willingness to experiment, and commitment to improvement. They say that once teachers are trained in the basic principles of class visits, this can be used in a variety of ways. In one school, all third grade teachers might agree to visit each other's classrooms, focusing on consistency and coherence. After school all teachers examine how class room setup and structures support student learning and talk about their own craft and about developing lessons that will improve student achievement. Downey (2004) concludes that this will link class visits to professional teacher development.

## **2.9. ASPECTS OF CLASS VISITS**

### **2.9.1. Observing and collecting data**

Scott (2004) argues that the focus is not only on teacher development, but also on the teacher's environment. All activities are recorded according to what was agreed upon in the planning phase. According to Scott (2004), this will help enhance the development of teachers because the teacher will become aware of his or her immediate environment instead of only focusing on the instructional part only; looking also at the family background of the learners and their socio- economic status will assist in the development of the teacher professionally.

### **2.9.2. Analysing data**

All information relating to teaching style, and student learning patterns that emerged, the interaction between teacher and students, strength and weaknesses, also certain

specific aspects agreed upon will be used during feedback time (Scott, 2004). The data gathered will form a key aspect to inform the teacher about the progress made. It must be as transparent as possible. This will lead to professional teacher development because the teacher will use the data at hands to analyse her or his performance in terms of instructions in class and where the learners have got the most difficulties and incorporate that to his/her area of development together with his/her Development Support Group (DSG).

### **2.9.3. Feedback**

Scott (2004) points out that feedback is a key to the process of conducting class visits. He notes that it indicates what follow up is due to each individual teacher, and again it provides the basis for professional teacher development. He alludes that without feedback the whole process would be in vain. The principal should show why he/she evaluates them, also point out the significance of gathering data, so that data collected can be used as help of developing and empowering educators. On the other hand, Kapan (2005) asserts that a principal can spend two hours a day in class room observing her teachers and use that opportunity to give feedback to them as means of developing them. South Worth (2004) says that monitoring involves visiting classrooms, observing teachers at work and providing them with feedback.

Contrary to what Scott claims, not giving feedback to educators minimizes the significance of evaluating teachers. Therefore it is essential that principals should give feedback for corrections to be made, he alludes. Similarly feedback motivates educators to do better; moreover, it is a strategy that seeks to involve staff in the process of teacher development (Mestry et al.). While Scott says “the principal should check periodical on the progress being made by the teacher, after the class visit and it must not end on the day of the class visit”. This notion is further supported by Cockerham (personal communication, January 12, 2007) who says that feedback is necessary to ensure that there is indeed a common understanding, teachers should be involved in developing the “look fors” and “listen fors” that principals used during the observation as well as the reflective questions that structure the feedback session. “This participation would go a long way towards professional teacher

development and it is the most powerful staff development approach available to impact teacher development” he says.

#### **2.9.4. Environment**

The environment where the appraisal takes place is a key, because one might need to consider the different schools and communities in terms of socio-economic status, socio and psychological settings. It also involves the political situation for the way power is exercised influences the outcomes of the process of appraisal (Scott, 2004).

As much as the teacher may be regarded well in teaching, the status of the communities also plays an important role. This, according to Scott, must also come to the attention of the teacher to be appraised, that aspects that may hinder progress are also taken into considerations. All of the above help to enhance the professional teacher development.

#### **2.9.5. Praise while helping**

Kappan (2005) recommends that the planning phase opens with some praise from the principal on the successful aspect of the lesson observed. Then the principal and the teacher together go over together the areas identified for development. The principal’s comments and suggestions must be specific and of such nature that the teacher is capable of carrying them out. Kappan (2005) further asserts that the strategy of praising motivates teachers to want to do more and again to ask for a follow up observation. “Again the principal must not keep the teacher guessing as to what is needed of him or her” says South Worth (2004).

#### **2.9.6. Questioning**

In his study Kappan (2005) discovered that a principal spent four weekends in April and May completing teacher evaluations just before the deadline, put the evaluation into the teachers mail box with a cover note attached that read, “please let me know if you have any concerns, otherwise sign and return by tomorrow” and there are no further discussions.

According Kamper (2008) the teacher should be given a chance to ask questions to the principal face to face and the author believes that this would enable the teachers

to get answers where they stumbled and that it would assist the teacher in his or her area of development. This would enable the principals to make constructive suggestions that could lead to the improvement of not only the situation in the classroom, but also the teacher development says Kamper (2008). Out of this phase, a training programme should be developed. During the observation the principal should, as objectively as possible, accumulate information about what happens in the class.

### **2.10. The impact of class visits on professional teacher development**

Many professional development programs are implemented without an agreed-upon set of expectations of what full implementation and success will look like. In the past, few professional development leaders knew how to measure the impact of professional development on student learning. As a result, educators know training was conducted, but do not know if teachers' classroom practices changed or if students learned more as a result of their teachers' training (Education Week, 2005; Joyce and Showers, 2002; French, 1997; Licklider, 1997). This type of documentation does not convince policymakers or the public that more time and resources for professional teacher development and better quality learning experiences are necessary for improving student achievement asset (Killion, 2004; Speck and Knipe, 2004; Kennedy, 2005; DuFour, 2004).

Results-driven professional development, on the other hand, measures its success in terms of increases in teacher knowledge and skills, changes in classroom practice, and improvements in student learning (Kilion, 2004, Sparks, 2005, Department of Education, 2004). To evaluate the impact of a professional teacher development program on student achievement, the measure of achievement must be aligned with all of the following: the curriculum content, the pedagogy (instructional practice), the instructional resources students use in their classrooms, and the content of the professional development program. When the measure of achievement is closely aligned with these variables, a relationship can be established that correlates specific educator learning and related practices with student results says Killion, (2004).

Internationally class visits have got a positive impact on professional teacher development. Results-driven professional development, on the other hand, measures its success in terms of increases in teacher knowledge and skills, changes in classroom practice, and improvements in student learning asset (Kilion, 2004; Sparks, 2007, U.S. Department of Education, 2004). However class visits as a programme for professional teacher development - especially in South Africa before 1994 - did not improve the teaching force, we observe that this was due to the fault finding fact mission which led teachers to retract from the program says (Kilion 2004).

Professional Teacher Development as a program was there but it seems the current scenario could not yield the intended results says the author (Kilion, 2004) However after 1994, when the democratically elected government took over, things changed, the new Minister of Education re-introduced the program through the Development Appraisal System (DAS) and later he incorporated class visits into the Integrated Quality Management Systems (IQMS). However Mestry, (2009) holds a different view when he says “this program is still to be properly implemented”, he continues to say that it still unclear as to whether the program (class visits) is succeeding or not. The author thinks the program is impacting negatively on professional teacher development because teachers are using the program only for appraisal rather than developmental reasons and they are caught up cheating just to get the pay progression score instead of being honest to identify their area of development.

## **2.11. CONCLUSION**

Evidence continues to accumulate showing that professional teacher development is influenced by high quality class visits and that the effects of increased teacher knowledge are observed across subject matter fields (Darling-Hammond, 2004). The American Federation of Teachers (2002) has concluded that high quality class visits are essential to a nation’s goal of professional teacher development and high standards of learning for every child and that the most important investment school districts can make is to ensure that teachers continue to learn. However Mboyané (2002), negate the above views when he says that, class visits in South Africa have not improved the teaching force; he says this is due to the fault finding fact mission which has led teachers to retract from the program. “Professional Teacher

Development as a program was there, but it could not yield the intended results it therefore had a negative impact on teachers” says Mboyane, (2002).

Continued literature studies indicate that when the new government took over, the new minister of education re-introduced the program through Development Appraisal System (DAS) and later incorporated this program (Class visits) into the Integrated Quality Management Systems (IQMS). This program is still to be properly implemented Mestry et, al. (2009). The author thinks the program is impacting negatively on professional teacher development because teachers are using the program only for appraisal rather than developmental reasons and they are caught up cheating just to get the pay progression score instead of being honest to identify their areas of development.

This study is investigating the impact of class visits on professional teacher development. The components of this aspect clearly indicate that class visits should be harnessed and be facilitated in order to produce good results which are the development of teachers. In the next chapter research design and methodology will be discussed.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1. INTRODUCTION**

This chapter seeks to clearly outline the research methodology which was utilized in conducting the study on the impact of class visits on professional teacher development in White Hazy circuit in Mpumalanga province. Based on an extensive review of existing literature on research designs, the relevant and appropriate research design has been identified and justified for utilisation in this study. The researcher has also clearly identified and fairly described the study area as well as the population of the study. The selected sampling methods and size as well as the justification behind the selected sampling methods are clarified. Furthermore, the variety of data collection methods are clearly identified and well justified.

The research methodology utilised is important because it assists in clearly defining the research process that will be followed, as well as the tools and procedures to be employed in the study. The research study will follow a mixed methods approach by implementing both qualitative and quantitative research method. According to Creswell (2003), “a mixed methods design is useful to capture the best of both quantitative and qualitative approaches”.

Quantitative data will be collected by means of a survey design, from a sample implementing a standard research instrument in the form of a self-administered questionnaire in order to generate responses. Creswell (2003), clearly points out that “this type of survey is by far the cheapest, and it can be conducted by a single researcher”. He further emphasized that “self-administered questionnaires are very effective, and responses rates may be high for a target population that is well educated, Creswell (2003)”. This enables the researcher to present the quantitative data using the computer spread sheet soft wear. The researcher provided questionnaires directly to the respondents who intern read the instructions and

questions then recorded their answers. Thereafter, qualitative data will be collected by means of structured interviews. (De Vos et al 2007) define structured interviews as “those organized around areas of particular interest, while still allowing considerable flexibility in scope and in depth”. The researcher developed a set of conceived open-ended questions on an interview schedule, but the interview was guided by the schedule rather than being dictated by it. The mixed methods approach is usually applied when the researcher tends to base knowledge on practical foundations, in order to best understand research problems, the mixed methods approach utilises strategies of inquiry where data collection can either occur at the same time or in a sequence (Creswell, 2003). In both situations teachers, Head of departments, Deputy Principals and Principals were sampled especially the later were selected because there are responsible for administering Class Visits.

When researchers combine qualitative and quantitative methods in order to observe something from several angles or to acquire multiple measures of the same phenomenon by applying different research measures, the process is referred to as triangulation (De Vos, 2002; Neuman, 2000). The purpose of this model is for the researcher to use the results of the qualitative component to explain and interpret the results of the quantitative component of the research (Creswell, 2003).

De Vos (2002) is of the opinion that the researcher gains the advantage of both methods by mixing qualitative and quantitative approaches. Creswell (2003) points out that this model is well known to the majority of researchers and that it might lead to confirmed and validated findings, which is regarded as another advantage of the mixed methods approach.

### **3.2. RESEARCH DESIGN**

Bless and Higson–Smith (1995) provides the following definition of a research design: “The plan of how to proceed in determining the nature of the relationship between variable is called research designs”. This study will follow a mixed methodological approach by conducting a quantitative, descriptive survey design in the form of questionnaire and a qualitative, instrument case study design by means of semi-structured interviews. Creswell (2003) refers to Babbie and explains the purpose of the survey design as follows: “This purpose is to generalize from a

sample to a population so that inferences can be made about some characteristic, attitude, or behaviour of this population". The descriptive survey design has been selected for this study, as it should assist the researcher in obtaining information from various cases in the sample population and allow the researcher to focus on the exact characteristics under consideration (Bless & Higson-Smith, 1995).

According to Mouton (2001) states that if a suitable sampling design has been applied to the survey (quantitative component), one of the strengths should be that it will have the potential to be generalised to large populations. An additional strength is that if the questionnaires are properly constructed, a high measurement of reliability and validity will be evident. A limitation of the survey design (qualitative component) is that a lack of depth and insider observation might lead to the criticism of "surface level" analyses (Mouton, 2001).

For the qualitative component of the study the instrumental case study design (qualitative component) has been selected, as it should assist the researcher in gaining a clearer understanding and acquiring knowledge regarding social issues under investigation. Furthermore, it should provide the researcher with multiple sources of information and facilitate the process of exploring and describing the phenomenon clearly (Mark, in Fouche, 2004). According to Bless and Higson-Smith (2004) a case study design involves comprehensive and systematic investigation of a few cases. The strength of the qualitative component is that it is very useful for learning about situations, which might be poorly understood or about which not much is known, (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001). According to Wimmer and Dominick (2000), the case study design is advantageous to research as it provides a large amount of information and detail about the research topic and allows the researcher to deal with a wide variety of raw data. It includes methods to collect both descriptive and exploratory data within a study. Lindegger (2004) adds yet another advantage, stating that this design gives way for original ideas to surface from vigilant and detailed observation.

There are, however, also limitations to the qualitative component being that it might lack scientific rigour and it may not be generalizable. This is however, often characteristics of interpretivist studies and should not necessarily be regarded as a

limitation. It may also be time-consuming and the researcher may find it hard to analyse (Wimmer & Dominick, 2004). Furthermore, Lindergerger (2004) states that problems might emerge with regard to the validity of the information and those causal relations are often hard to test. The researcher has selected both the case study and survey design to provide rich data and to be able to compare and incorporate findings.

### **3.3 STUDY AREA**

The study area is Mbombela local Municipality; it is one of the districts which fall under the District of Ehlanzeni. The Ehlanzeni district is the district that occupies the Southern part of Mpumalanga province, The District is located about 80 kilometres from the city of Nelspruit in Mpumalanga province. The area is semi-rural and is located inside the small Towns which are Hazyview, Bushbuckridge, Sabie, Lydenburg and White river.

### **3.4. POPULATION**

Henning, Van Rensburg and Smith (2009) describe a population as a group of elements or cases, whether individuals, or objects or events that conform to specific criteria and to which we intend to generalize the results of the population.

Cooper and Schindler, as cited by Lushaba (2006), describe populations as the total collection of elements about which that the study wishes to make some inferences. In this case study research the population refers to the five hundred (500) teachers in the White Hazy Circuit in the District of Ehlanzeni Region in the Mpumalanga Province and samples will be sourced from post level 1 teachers (PL1) to post level 2 teachers (PL2) teachers in all grades from primary schools to secondary schools to widen the scope for extensive search for knowledge. The sample population consists of both male teachers and female teachers for both secondary schools and primary schools.

### **3.5. SAMPLING**

Cooper and Schindler (as cited by Lushaba, 2006) assert that the basic idea of sampling is that by selecting some of the elements in a population, one can draw conclusions about the entire population. It is in this context that the researcher endeavours to draw conclusions based on the selected participants. The study will

consist of a sample size of 50 participants, ages ranging from 20 years and above. Cooper and Schindler (as cited by Lushaba, 2006) further mention that people tend to be chosen deliberately because they have some special contribution to make, or because they have some unique insight or due to the position they hold. For this study, the population selected is one that provides a relevant representation of the population. The proposed study aims to use stratified sampling method.

### **3.6. STRATIFIED SAMPLING METHOD**

The rationale for sampling is the availability of the population elements and to lower costs. By using a sample population for this research the researcher aims to gather information with greater efficiency. The proposed study is using a stratified random sampling method. According to Fowler (in Creswell, 2003) this type of sampling is suitable for heterogeneous population because the inclusions of small subgroups percentage-wise can be ensured. Berg (2004) partially agrees with Patton, in emphasising that stratified random sampling is utilised whenever researchers need to ensure a certain portion of the identified population under examination is represented within the sample. He argues that the population is divided into various sub-groups or strata and independent samples of each stratum must be selected. Within each stratum, a particular sampling fraction is applied, in order to ensure correct reproduction of proportion representation of the full population. For this study the researcher sampled a total of 50 participants and questionnaires were given to 40 participants and ten participants were involved in a semi-structured interview.

### **3.7. DATA COLLECTION STRATEGIES**

#### **3.7.1. QUESTIONNAIRE**

MacMillan and Schumacher (2001) define questionnaires as a set of questions on a form, submitted to a number of people in order to collect statistical information. The authors above also point that when using questionnaires the researcher must always be aware of the advantages and disadvantages of questionnaires, here are some of the advantages of using questionnaires:

- Many respondents can complete the questionnaire in a short space of time

- Test administrators can check questionnaires for accuracy
- It is cheap and easy to do
- Respondents can be reached across long distances
- The response rate optimal (MacMillan and Schumacher (2001)).

The disadvantages of using questionnaires are:

- The researcher has limited control over what happens in the field
- Cost could be rather high when using questionnaires
- The conditions in which the questionnaire is administered cannot be controlled by the primary researcher.

In this study the researcher used questionnaires in order to generate responses, which enabled the researcher to present the quantitative data. The researcher provided questionnaires directly to respondents who in turn read the instructions and questions, then recorded their answers. Neuman (2000) clearly points out that “this type of survey is by far the cheapest, and it can be conducted by a single researcher”. He further emphasizes that “self –administered questionnaires are very effective, and responses rates may be high for a target population that is well educated or has a strong interest in the topic or the survey organisation” (Neuman, 2000). The researcher was present when the respondents were completing the questionnaires with a view to clarify questions or probing for more information when the respondent gives incomplete answers.

### **3.7.2. INTERVIEWS**

De Vos (2005) defines interviewing as the predominant mode of data or information collection in qualitative research. Seidman (as cited by De Vos, 2005) emphasises that the researcher should undertake the interviews because of interest in other people’s stories. Greef (2004) alternatively asserts that interviews are an attractive proposition for the project researcher. Initially they do not appear to involve much technical paraphernalia being required in order to collect the information. Greef (2004) asserts that interviews are generally conducted with lower numbers of members, as opposed to questionnaire surveys, this denoting that the selection of interview subjects is more likely to be based on non-probability sampling.

Challenges that face the researcher when using qualitative research (interviews) include establishing rapport to gain information from the participants, coping with the unanticipated problems, payments to interviewees in the field and recording and managing the large volume of data generated by even relatively brief interviews (De Vos, 2005).

An essential requirement of the employment of unstructured or open-ended questionnaires in interviewing needs to be an interest in understanding the experience of other people and the meaning they make of that experience. Open-ended questionnaires are less focused and discursive, allowing the researcher and participant to explore an issue. These are used to determine individual perceptions, opinions, facts and forecasts, and reactions to initial findings and potential solutions (De Vos, 2005).

### **3.7.3. STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF INTERVIEWS**

De Vos (2005) postulates that interviewing is one of the weakest methodologies because the participant is likely to encourage the researcher with the 'official account' which may not be valid. Since the interviews involve personal interaction and co-operation, respondents might be scared to give more information.

De Vos (2005) argues that, despite these weaknesses, interviews have certain strengths, because they are a useful way of swiftly gathering large amounts of data and are an especially effective way of extracting in-depth data.

### **3.7.4. FACE-TO-FACE INTERVIEWS**

The purpose of employing face-to-face interviews for the data collection process was to compensate for the limitations of the focus group approach. The in-depth interviews, with the various racial, gender and age-groups can significantly assist in gathering more information on the issues under examination (Greef, 2004).

The face-to-face interviews provided the opportunity for the respondents to express their views in their own words and in their environment, structuring their answers as they see fit. The researcher will assist participants by translating some questions into

their vernacular. The questions phrasing reflected the use of the ordinary conversation of the respondents in order to contextualise the discussions (Cresswell, 2003).

The benefit of conducting face-to-face interviews is that it enables the researcher to gain participants cooperation by establishing a relationship with them, which therefore facilitates the production of high response rates (Leedy & Ormrod, 2004). Within this study, establishing such relationships should enable the researcher to gain more information and generate more data than the data collected during the first phase of the study (quantitative component).

### **3.8. DATA ANALYSIS**

#### **3.8.1. DATA ANALYSIS: (Questionnaires)**

Data analysis means that the researcher has to make meaning of the information he/she has collected (Smith et, al, 2008). An in-depth data analysis will be made through data filtering to eliminate irrelevant data. According to Smith (2008) “data analysis contributes towards the process of filtering out irrelevant data until only relevant data remains”. In analyzing the quantitative data the research will use a computer program designed for data analysis. The raw data collected from participants will be entered into an electronic format using a computer spread sheet. This will consists of all completed questionnaires and a computer format will be used by a statistical software package to analyze the data.

#### **3.8.2. DATA ANALYSIS (Interviews)**

Interviews De Vos (2005) defines interviewing as the predominant mode of data or information collection in qualitative research. This method will be used by the researcher to collect data from the participants and analysed it. According to De Vos (2005), data analysis involves reducing and organising the data, synthesizing, searching for significant patterns and discovering what is important. In this study, the analysis of data was performed manually and according to the predetermined research categories. As typically happens in qualitative research, Smith (2008) a preliminary data analysis was started while the interviews were still underway. The

data in this study were then organised, coded and interpreted and this were performed according to all the qualitative steps like: data collections, organising the data and coding. There after the researcher used a tape recorder to listen to the recorded interviews and transcribed the data. The data was organised into categories De Vos (2005), and inferences were made about larger and more general phenomenon. The researcher categorises data into themes and they and analysed to trace patterns that were interpreted and grouped according to different categories.

### **3.9. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

The study was conducted in accordance with basic ethical principles and standard practice of research. As required the researcher ensured that potential informants were, as far as possible, enabled to freely give their informed consent to participate in the research and were advised that they could terminate their involvement for any reason, at any time. The participants were informed about “what the research is about, who is undertaking it, and why it is being undertaken”. The researcher concurred with Henning, Van Rensburg and Smith, (2004) in that the respondents “need to know that their privacy and sensitivity will be protected and what is going to happen with their information after recording”. Anonymity was guaranteed by asking the respondent not to write their names on the questionnaires under this study. The participants were protected in that their identities were not revealed in the report and that no harm was done to them.

### **3.10 Validity and Reliability**

The criteria for good measuring instruments are validity and reliability. Validity is the degree to which a test measures what it supposed measure and consequently permits appropriate interpretation of scores. Smith (2009) asserts that in qualitative research, the researcher serves as a research instrument or tool in the collection and analysis of data. A central issue in qualitative research is Validity (also known as credibility and / or dependability). There are many different ways of establishing validity, including member check, interviewer corroboration, conformability and balance among others. In order to ensure reliability and validity of this research the researcher has conducted one on one interview with principals in the identified

schools to solicit their views so as to maintain objectivity of the research. The researcher has modified the research questions so that they can be relevant to school principals and those of the teachers.

Yvonna (1994) caution about the importance of maintaining reliability and validity within the qualitative research by stating that it has been an exception rather than the rule, that a qualitative research report includes a discussion of reliability and validity. However this of course is not true. The question of validity and reliability within research are just as important within the qualitative as within the quantitative methods, as a result of this challenge, the researcher has ensured validity and reliability by interviewing both school teachers and principals to get divergent views, opinions and experience so as to have a balanced judgment in the analysis and interpretations.

### **3.11 Research limitations**

The limitations of this study are that only a few schools participated (28 schools) out of 44 schools in the circuit. The reason is that this is only a small scale study and therefore intended to investigate a particular challenge of professional teacher development. Based on the severity of the research problem, a large scale research study to cover all the provinces can be recommended.

### **3.12. CONCLUSION**

The research methodology stated above supplied a fundamental framework which the study on the impact of class visits on professional teacher development was conducted. The methodology provided detailed information about the chosen research design which was considered fit for the kind of the study which was embarked upon. The methodology also provided detailed information with regard to the sample selection, method and size, chosen data analysis methods for the study and fundamental ethical issues which were considered by the researcher during the study.

## CHAPTER 4

### DATA ANALYSIS

#### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter will present the analysis and the interpretation of data as collected from the participants. The presentation will mainly be descriptive and also be supported by percentages (%). Tables and figures will be used to illustrate the results. In this study data was collected through questionnaires which completed by teachers from post level1 to HoDs (head of departments) post level 2 and Senior Managers principals and deputy principals. Questionnaires were distributed to 50 sampled teachers.

**Table 4.1: Completed Questionnaires**

<b>Completed Questionnaires</b>		
<b>Questionnaires issued</b>	<b>Questionnaires Returned</b>	<b>Response in percentages</b>
<b>63</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>79,37%</b>

As shown in table 4.1, 79.37% response was received. It further indicate that 50 of 63 questionnaires were completed and returned to the researcher by due date. The results of the study are presented in tabular and graphic format hereafter.

#### 4.2 Demographic information

Demographic information required of participants included gender, age group, post level and highest qualification. The results of the investigation into the demographic information of the 50 participants in the study are presented in tabular and graphic format hereafter.

#### 4.2.1 Gender

**Table 4.2: Respondents gender**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Number of respondents</b>	<b>percentages</b>
<b>Males</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>56%</b>
<b>Females</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>44%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100%</b>

The gender breakdown of respondents is twenty two females (44%) and a total of twenty eight males (56%) are depicted by Table 4.2. The gender distribution of teachers in the table above shows that male teachers dominate the profession, constituting 56% while female teachers constitute 44%.

#### 4.2.2. Age

**Table 4.3: Respondents age**

<b>Age</b>	<b>Respondents</b>	<b>Percentages</b>
<b>18-29</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>30-39</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>40-49</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>60</b>
<b>50-59</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>60-69</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 4.3: depicts that there were no respondents from category 18-29, while 4(8%) respondents are in the age category 30-39. And respectively age group 40-49 are 30 (60%), and 16 (32%) of the respondents are in the age group 50-59, while there was no respondents from category 60-69.

### 4.2.3 Post levels

**Table 4.4: Respondents' post levels**

Post level	Frequency	Percentage
Principals	3	6
Deputy Principals	6	12
HoDs	15	30
PL1Teachers	26	52
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>

As depicted by table 4.4 in terms of post levels of respondents, 3 (6%) were principals, 6 (12%) were Deputy Principals, 15 (30%) of the respondents were HoDs and the majority of respondents at 26 (52%) were PL1 Teachers.

**Table 4.5 Gender representations in terms of post levels**

Post level	Males	Females
<b>PRINCIPALS</b>	<b>2 (4%)</b>	<b>1(2%)</b>
<b>DEPUTY PRINCIPALS</b>	<b>4 (8%)</b>	<b>2 (4%)</b>
<b>HOD's</b>	<b>9 (18%)</b>	<b>6 (12%)</b>
<b>PL1 TEACHERS</b>	<b>13 (26%)</b>	<b>13 (26%)</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>28 (100)</b>	<b>22</b>

As shown by table 4.5 in terms of gender representations of post levels 2 (4%) of principals were males and females principals were only 1(2%), while 4 (8%) were male deputy principals and only 2 (4%) were female deputy principals. And 9 (18%) of the respondents were male Head of Departments and only 6 (12%) of the respondents were female Head of Departments. Very interestingly of the respondents in the category of the PL1teachers, the gender representations were balanced with 13 (26%) of males and 13 (26%) of females. These figures in the table demonstrate a lack of career pathing for women as opposed to men within the teaching profession. These indicators might have serious implications for

professional teacher development of female teachers who constitutes the majority within the sector.

#### 4.2.4 Highest qualifications

**Figure 4.1: Respondents highest qualification**

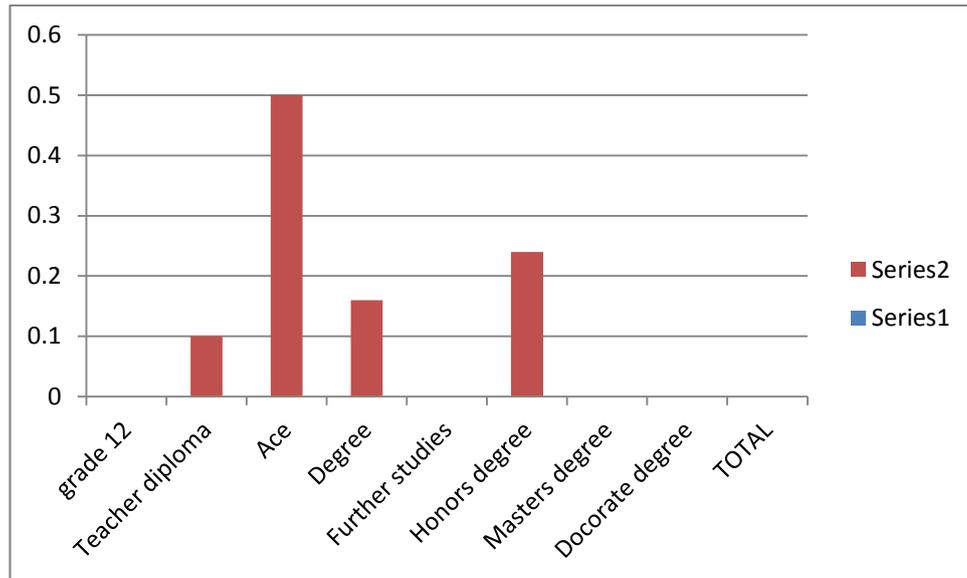


Figure: 4.1 depict the highest qualifications of respondents, 5(10%) had a 3year teacher diploma. 25 (50%) had Advance Certificate in Education (Ace) and in management and 8 (16%) had a Degree in education. There were no respondents in the category of further studies 0%. And there were 12 (24%) had an honors degree in education with 0% in master degree and Doctorate degree respectively.

#### 4.2.5 Teaching experience

Table 4.6:

	1-5	5-10	10-15	15-20	20-30	30-40
Respondent	3	9	9	15	13	1
Percentage	6%	18%	18%	30%	26%	2%

Table 4.6 above indicate that 3 (6%) of the respondents have 1-5 years of experience in teaching and 9 (18%) have 5-10 years of experience while the other 9 (18%) have 10-15 years of experience. And 15 (30%) have 15-20 years of experience, 13 (26%) has 20-30 years of experience however only 1 (2%) of the respondents have 30-40 years of experience in the teaching profession.

**4.2.5 Objective1:** To assess the impact of class visits for professional teacher development

**Question1:**

**4.2.5.1 Do you believe that class visits supports professional teacher development?**

Table 4.7 Total number of responses and percentage in terms of the question asked above

Responses	Respondents	Percentage
To no extent	12	24%
To a small extent	2	4%
To a moderate extent	10	20%
To a large extent	17	34%
To a very large extent	9	18%
Total	50	100%

Table 4.7 above shows 12 (24%) respondents agreed to no extent that class visits support professional teacher development, 2 (4%) agreed to a small extent that class visits support professional teacher development while 10 (20%) agreed to a moderate extent with class visits. 17 (34%) agreed to a large extent that class visits

support professional teacher development, and 9 (18%) agreed to a very large extent that class visits support professional teacher development.

**Table: 4.8 Overall views of class visits by objective1: question number 1**

Responses	Respondents	Percentages
Yes	26	52%
No	14	28%
Moderate	10	20%
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 4.8 above depicts the overall views of the respondents on objective 1 question number 1. 26 (52%) of the respondents said yes to the question, 14 (28%) said no they do not believe that class visits support professional teacher development while 10 (20%) of the respondents agreed to a moderate extend with the question number 1.

#### **4.2.5.2 Do you believe that class visits has professionally developed you as a professional teacher**

**Table 4.9 Number of responses and percentage in terms of the question asked above**

Responses	Respondents	Percentage
To no extent	16	32%
To a small extent	1	2 %
To a moderate extent	10	20%
To a large extent	15	30%
To a very large extent	8	16 %
Total	50	100%

Table 4.9 above shows 16 (32%) respondents agreed to no extent that class visits support professional teacher development, 1 (2%) agreed to a small extent that class visits support professional teacher development while 10 (20%) agreed to a

moderate extent with class visits. 15 (30%) agreed to a large extent that class visits support professional teacher development, and 8 (16%) agreed to a very large extent that class visits support professional teacher development.

**Table: 4.10 Overall views of class visits by objective1: question number 2**

Responses	Respondents	Percentages
Yes	23	26 %
No	17	34%
Moderate	10	20%
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 4.10 above depicts the overall views of the respondents on objective 1 question number 2. 23 (26%) of the respondents said yes to the question, 17 (34%) said no they do not believe that class visits has professionally developed them while 10 (20%) of the respondents agreed to a moderate extend that class visits has professionally developed them.

#### **4.2.5.3 Do you believe that class visits assist you to grow as a professional teacher?**

**Table: 4.11 Number of responses in terms of the question asked above**

Responses	Respondents	Percentage
To no extent	8	16%
To a small extent	3	6%
To a moderate extent	9	18%
To a large extent	19	38%
To a very large extent	11	22%
Total	50	100%

Table 4.11 on page 56 shows 8 (16%) respondents agreed to no extent that class visits assists them to grow as professional teachers, 3 (6%) agreed to a small extent that class visits assists them to grow professional teachers, while 19 (38%) agreed to a moderate extent with the question 3. 11 (22%) agreed to a large extent that class visits assists them to grow as professional teachers.

**Table 4.12: Overall views of class visits by objective1: question number 3**

Responses	Respondents	Percentages
Yes	30	60%
No	11	22%
Moderate	9	18%
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 4.12 above depicts the overall views of the respondents on objective 1 question number 3. 30 (60%) of the respondents said yes, that class visits assists them to grow as professional teachers, 11 (22%) said no they do not believe that class visits assists them to grow professionally while 9 (18%) of the respondents agreed to a moderate extend that class visits assists them to grow professionally

#### **4.2.5.4 Do you believe that class visits has made you a professional teacher**

**Table: 4.13 Total numbers and percentage in terms of the question asked above**

<b>Responses</b>	<b>Respondents</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
To no extent	8	16 %
To a small extent	2	4%
To a moderate extent	9	18%
To a large extent	24	48 %
To a very large extent	7	14%
Total	50	100%

Table 4.13 on page 57 shows 8 (16%) respondents agreed to no extent that class visits has made professional teachers, 2 (4%) agreed to a small extent that class visits has made them professional teachers, while 9 (18%) agreed to a moderate extent with question 3. 24 (48%) agreed to a large extent that class visits has made them professional teachers and 7 (14%) of the respondents has agreed to a very large extend that class visits has made them professional teachers.

**Table 4.14: Overall views of class visits by objective1: question number 3**

Responses	Respondents	Percentages
Yes	31	62%
No	10	20%
Moderate	9	18%
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 4.14 above depicts the overall views of the respondents on objective 1 question number 4. 31 (62%) of the respondents answered yes, they believe that class visits has made them professional teachers, 10 (20%) said no they do not believe that class visits made them professionally while 9 (18%) of the respondents agreed to a moderate extend that class visits has made them professional teachers.

#### **4.2.5.5 Do you believe that class visits help you to improve the quality of teaching?**

**Table: 4.15 Total numbers of responses and percentage in terms of the question asked above**

Responses	Respondents	Percentage
To no extent	17	34%
To a small extent	0	0%
To a moderate extent	8	16%
To a large extent	18	36%
To a very large extent	7	14%
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 4.15 on page 58 shows 17 (34%) respondents agreed to no extent that class visits help them to improve the quality of teaching, 0(0%) agreed to a small extent that class visits help them to improve the quality of teaching, while 8 (16%) agreed to a moderate extent with question 5. And 18 (36%) agreed to a large extent that class visits help them to improve the quality of teaching and 7 (14%) of the respondents has agreed to a very large extend that class visits help them to improve the quality teaching

**Table 4.16: Overall views of class visits by objective1: question number 5**

Responses	Respondents	Percentages
Yes	25	50%
No	17	34%
Moderate	8	16%
<b>Total</b>	50	100%

Table 4.16 above depicts the overall views of the respondents on objective 1 question number 5. 25 (50%) of the respondents answered yes, they believe that class visits help them to improve the quality of teaching, 17 (34%) said no they do not believe that class visits help them to improve the quality of teaching while 8 (16%) of the respondents agreed to a moderate extend that class visits help them to improve the quality of teaching.

**OBJECTIVE 2: To strengthen the strategies of conducting class visits as programme for professional teacher development.**

**Table 4.17: Total number of respondents in terms of strengthening strategies for conducting class visits**

<b>Question:</b>	<b>To no extent</b>	<b>To slight extent</b>	<b>Average</b>	<b>To large extent</b>	<b>To every large extend</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>%</b>
Do class visits help you to evaluates results as integral part of your profession:	<b>13</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100%</b>
Do you believe that class visits help you to gain new ideas, strategies, and techniques for classroom teaching as teacher development	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100%</b>
Do you believe that the feedback you receive after class visits is credible for your professional teacher development	<b>11</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100%</b>

Do you believe that there is a link between class visits and professional teacher development?	3	6	12	16	13	50	100%
Do you believe that class visits give you the opportunity to engage reflective dialogue about your work?	2	8	4	24	12	50	100%

**4.2.5.5 Do class visits help you to evaluate results as integral part of your profession?**

Table 4.17 above depicts that 13 respondents agreed to no extent with the statement, 2 of the respondents agreed to a slight extent and 9 of the respondents agreed to an average extent while 15 of the respondents agreed to a large extent, however 11 of the respondent agreed to a very large extent to that class visits help them to evaluate results as an integral part of their profession.

**4.2.5.6 Do you believe that class visits help you to gain new ideas, strategies, and techniques for classroom teaching as teacher development?**

Table 4.17 above depicts that 6 of the respondents agreed to no extent with the statement, 3 of the respondents agreed to a slight extent and 5 of the respondents agreed to an average extent while 14 of the respondents agreed to a large extent, however 22 of the respondent agreed to a very large extent to that class visits help them to gain new ideas, strategies and techniques for classroom teaching as professional teacher development.

**4.2.5.7 Do you believe that the feedback you receive after class visits is credible for your professional teacher development?**

Table 4.17 on page 62 depicts that 11 of the respondents agreed to no extent with the question, 2 of the respondents agreed to a slight extend and 4 of the respondents agreed to an average extent while 19 of the respondents agreed to a large extent, however 14 of the respondent agreed to a very large extent to that they believe that the feedback they receive after class visits is credible for their professional teacher development

**4.2.5.8 Do you believe that there is a link between class visits and professional teacher development?**

Table 4.17 on page 62 depicts that 3 of the respondents agreed to no extent with the question, 6 of the respondents agreed to a slight extend and 12 of the respondents agreed to an average extent while 16 of the respondents agreed to a large extent, however 13 of the respondent agreed to a very large extent to that there is a link between class visits and professional teacher development.

**4.2.5.8 Do you believe that class visits give you the opportunity to engage reflective dialogue about your work?**

Table 4.17 on page 62 depicts that 2 of the respondents agreed to no extent with the question, 8 of the respondents agreed to a slight extent and 4 of the respondents agreed to an average extent while 24 of the respondents agreed to a large extent, however 12 of the respondent agreed to a very large extent to that class visits give them an opportunity to engage in a reflective dialogue about their work.

**Table 4.18 OVERALL VIEWS OF CLASS VISITS AS DEPICTED BY TABLE 18**

<b>Respondents</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Moderate</b>	<b>Total</b>
	<b>34</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>50</b>

Table 4.18 on page 62 depicts that 34 of the respondents said **yes** in favour of questions while only 6 said **no** to all the questions while 10 agreed to a moderate extend to the questions asked.

### 4.3 What other strategies can you suggest which can strengthen class visits as a programme for professional teacher development?

**Table 4.19: Total number and percentage of respondents in terms of questions asked on the table below**

<b>Responses</b>	<b>Respondents</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Not responded</b>
Pre evaluation discussions, post evaluation discussion, write quality report/ give feedback.	<b>3</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>36</b>
Team teaching	<b>3</b>	<b>6%</b>	
Workshops	<b>8</b>	<b>16%</b>	
<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>36</b>

The table above 4.19 indicates that 3 (6%) of the respondents suggested that Pre evaluation discussions, post evaluation discussion, write quality report/ give feedback as other strategies to strengthen class visits, and again 3 (6%) suggested that team teaching can serve as a strategy to strengthen class visits while 8 (16%) of respondents suggested workshops as strategy to strengthen class visits. However 36 of the respondents did not suggest anything else they were silent on the issue .

**Table: 4.20 Percentage of respondents in terms of questions asked on the table below**

	To no extent	2	3	4	To a very large extent
Do you believe that class visits support professional teacher development?	<b>26%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>16%</b>
Do you believe that class visits has professionally developed you as a	<b>32%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>16%</b>

professional teacher?					
Do you believe that class visits assist you to grow as a professional teacher?	10%	2%	18%	38%	22%
Do you believe that class visits has developed you as a professional teacher?	16%	4%	18%	48%	14%
Do you believe that class visits helped you to improve the quality of teaching?	34%	0%	16%	36%	14%
Do class visits help you to evaluate results as an integral part of your profession?	4%	24%	20%	30%	22%
Do you believe that class visits helped you to gain new ideas, strategies, and techniques for classroom teaching as professional teacher development?	10%	6%	12%	28%	44%
Do you believe that the feedback you receive after class visits is credible for your professional teacher development?	22%	4%	14%	32%	28%
Do you believe that there is a link between class visits and professional teacher development?	6%	14%	24%	34%	22%
Do you believe that class visits gives you the opportunity to engage in reflective dialogue about your work?	4%	16%	8%	48%	24%

It can now be seen on the table above table 4.20 that a high percentage (**48%**) of respondents were more likely, indicated by a 4 on rating scale, to think of class visits as a programme that has professionally developed them and also giving them opportunity to engage in reflective dialogue about their work.

## CONCLUSION

In this study it was evident that educators tend towards agreeing to a large extent to class visits (Rank 4) on the scale of 1 to 4. At the same time the majority of teachers find themselves in between, not sure whether or not to agree with class visits as programme for their own professional development. That suggests that there is a need for senior management to change the manner in which they conduct class visits. Although one would expect managers to agree to a large extent, in this regards management tend to agree to a lesser extent than teachers. The reason

could be that they are met with hostile reception from educators and have become to dislike class visits. Chiefly educators regard class visits as of value given the highest percentage **(48%)** on question asked.

Overall the responses to the questions would seem to point to the contradictory notions of professional teacher development held by some teachers. Although generally most teachers felt that professional teacher development was more likely to meet school needs than their individual needs they also felt that they were given a real opportunity to improve their skills. This is likely to be because teachers' individual interpretations of the meaning of professional teacher development may be quite narrow.

Clearly professional teacher development is taking place according to the responses of most teachers in the study, but this also possibly points to ways in which a variety of forms of professional opportunity are not conceptualised as professional development. The results from this section show that overall teachers hold a traditional view of professional teacher development. Overwhelmingly, teachers interviewed on the focus group, thought of courses, conferences and workshops as Professional teacher development and were unlikely to consider class visits as part of their professional teacher development. In the next chapter the summary, findings recommendations will be discussed.

### **OBJECTIVE 3: TO MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS ON STRATEGIES FOR CONDUCTING CLASS VISITS IN ORDER TO ENHANCE PROFESSIONAL TEACHER DEVELOPMENT**

This section present analysis of the data collected through focus group (seven people) taking part on the focus group discussions and four focus groups were organised in the circuit of white hazy and interviews on strategies and recommendations to enhance class visits.

#### **4.3.1 Strategies and recommendation to enhance class visits.**

Participants were asked two questions similar to those asked already in the questionnaires, these questions were as follows: What other strategies can you suggest which can strengthen class visits as a programme for professional teacher

development? What recommendations which will enhance class visits in your school. Data analysis collected through focus group discussions. 3 teachers, 2 Heads of Department and one deputy principals and the principal totalling 7 both from primary schools and secondary schools in the White Hazy Circuit were subjected to focus group interview. Here is the breakdown of their responses;

**Interviewer:** Sir since you has indicated that class visits enhance professional teacher development, can you please tell us what other strategies you can suggest that will enhance class visits?

**Response by Principals:** Since this programme helps to develop teachers professionally, I will suggest that there should be pre-evaluation discussions before and after that I would suggest that post evaluation discussions after class visits. If the teachers can get feedback after class visits really class visits will have a positive impact on professional teacher development.

**Interviewer:** Sir I know that you might have answered this question on the questionnaire but please if you can what recommendation can you make to class visits?

**Principal:** Yes as a principal I would recommend that there should be team work amongst teachers, good relationship and communication should this be in place class visits would have positive impact on professional teacher development thanks.

**Deputy Principal was the second person to respond**

Sir since you indicating that class visits enhance professional teacher development, can you please tell us what other strategies you can suggest that will enhance class visits?

**Deputy Principal:** I think if there can be more workshops, and we need continuous support from the SMT and prompt feedback is given to the teacher and there should be subject meetings. This could be good strategies that I can suggest.

What recommendation can you suggest to class visits?

**Deputy Principal:** I would suggest that planning by developing a programme, and also team teaching can be of assistance to teachers.

## **Responses by the Head of Department:**

### **Interviewer**

It has been indicated that class visits enhance professional teacher development; can you please tell us what other strategies you can suggest that will enhance class visits?

### **HoD response no 1:**

I think if there can be more workshops, and we need in-service training from the SMT and prompt feedback is given to the teacher and there should be subject meetings. This could be good strategies that I can suggest to enhance professional teacher development.

### **HoD no 2:**

**Interviewer:** Sir since your indicating that class visits enhance professional teacher development, can you please tell us what other strategies you can suggest that will enhance class visits?

**HoD no 2:** We can be happy if the department can roll lot of workshops, and more support from our CIs.

**Interviewer:** Can you suggest any recommendation to class visits sir?

**HoD no 2:** Oh yes I think teachers should feel free to discuss their teaching strategies in the corridors of the school and I think that would assist a lot.

## **Responses by the teachers**

### **Interviewer:**

Can you please tell us what other strategies you can suggest that will enhance class visits?

### **Teacher no 1:**

We can suggest mini- workshops to be implemented and also make use of teaching aids and improve communication amongst teachers and Head of department.

**Interviewer:** Can you suggest any recommendation to class visits sir?

**Teacher:** I can only suggest few things like communication and team teaching, also in-service training and mini- workshops.

**Interviewer:**

Can you please tell us what other strategies you can suggest that will enhance class visits?

**Teacher no 2:**

Being augmented by workshops it can be a good strategy that can help enhance class visits because more knowledge will be gained through.

**Interviewer:** Can you suggest any recommendation to class visits sir?

**Teacher no 2:** I can only suggest things like communication and team teaching, also in-service training and mini- workshops, also exchanging programmes that are new to teachers.

**Interviewer:**

Sir since your indicating that class visits enhance professional teacher development, can you please tell us what other strategies you can suggest that will enhance class visits?

**Teacher no 3:**

I will not deviate much from what my colleagues has just said, workshops and in-service training including book viewing can be best strategies to use for class visits.

**Interviewer:** Can you suggest any recommendation to class visits sir?

**Teacher no 3:**

Oh yes book viewing and what my fellow colleagues have just said would be good recommendation to class visits.

**Thank you very much for your participation and your time, End of the interview**

**Analysis and Interpretation of the focus group discussion and interviews responses:**

Judging by the response above from the participants, we depicts that the response did not differ as to the strategies and recommendation from what other participants said; it shows that they were all positive about class visits, and it can be seen from the response of the principal that there is positive response to class visits and they both sounded the same when it came to strategies and recommendations by both the principal, head of department and teachers. The responses from all the participants are that they suggest workshops and in-service training. This became the same as what they recommended; they recommended workshops, in-service training and communications amongst the teachers.

**Discussions from the interviews:**

Considering all the responses by the participants we can conclude from the findings that, class visits is being viewed by most teachers as a correct programme for professional teacher development. One could infer that only some few things need to be fixed on the programme, things like getting in more workshops, in-service training and more communications from those who seem to be the custodians of the programme and those who are the recipient of the programme. This is seen by the responses from the participants which were almost the same when responding to the questions put to them on the focus group interview. Their responses did not differ much from those asked before.

**Conclusions**

This chapter presented the results of the research for the study which included interviews with principals, deputy principals Head of departments and teachers respectively and also questionnaires which were handed out to various post levels and all of the above will form the basis for discussions, findings, and recommendations for chapter 5.

## **CAPTER 5**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

In this chapter, summary of results, conclusions and recommendations as they were presented in chapter four are going to be discussed. The aim of this study was to investigate the impact of class visits on professional teacher development in the white hazy circuit in Mpumalanga province. What came out of this research was a variety of factors which came as a result of the impact of class visits. Chapter 1 of this research, problem statement, motivation of the study, significance of the study, aim of the study, objectives of the study, research questions, literature review, rationale for the study, and research methodology were both discussed. Research methodology in chapter three, which comprise of research design, population, sampling, data analysis and ethical considerations were discussed. Data analysis and interpretation were done in chapter four.

#### **5.2 Demographic information**

##### **5.3 Gender**

The findings in the study shows that male teachers 14 (28%) dominate the profession, constituting 28% while female teachers constitute only 12 (22%). This means that males are more than female teachers in the study. It further suggest that more female teachers are attracted to other professions where they are more opportunities for career growth than in teaching where there is less career growth hence the reason males dominate the profession than females.

##### **5.4 Age group**

The findings on the gender groups were that there were older people in the study than young people, this suggest that the profession was predominantly dominated by old people ranging from 30-39 and 40-49 years. This situation depicts that young people were not attracted to the profession because it was perceived by young people to be the list paid and lacked career pathing.

### **5.5 Gender representation**

It has been found that males are dominating the study and they are occupying the top positions than their female counter parts. Few females are occupying top positions as compared to their males counter parts and it has been found on the study that when coming to junior positions there is parity between males and females. This shows patriarchy still exist and we have still not been able to deal away with it even in the work place. The fact that males dominate the top positions shows that females are still battling to make their presence felt in the work place and that we have not yet emancipated women enough to take on their males counterpart in the work place.

### **5.6 Highest qualifications**

On the highest qualifications it has been found that 10% of the respondents has a 3 years teacher diploma which is the entry level in the teaching profession and more than 10% of the teaching force has advanced certificate plus 3 year diploma which take them to Relevant Education Qualification Value (REQV14). And more teachers in the profession have now acquired BeD honours in the teaching profession and this implies that teachers are continuing to develop themselves in the profession. However the study shows that in the field of masters' level and Doctorial level there is zero and this might be a concern for the department of education.

### **5.7 Post levels**

It has been found that more males are on post level 2, 3 and 4 than female teachers. Female teacher are occupying top post levels but in a small number as compared to males and this as it stands suggest that female teachers are not benefiting from the system of education on post promotions only males benefit in the process and the situation undermines female professional development.

### **5.8 Education Level**

On education level it has been found that more teachers have improved their qualifications levels, and this shows that they take the issue of professional development very serious in the profession. They have move to comply with the departmental call for Relevant Education Qualification Value (REQV14) as a new entry point for teaching profession by 2014.

## **5.9 Types of school**

It has been found that more teachers sampled in the study were from primary schools at 42 (48%) and the secondary school participated in a smaller number 8 (16%) and this means that primary schools participated more than the secondary schools. In the primary school teachers are easier to work with than in the secondary school, in the secondary school compliance to policy is not as strict as in the primary school. Class visits are always if not done at all in the secondary school. Most teachers in secondary schools are more arrogant than those in the primary school where teachers still comply to departmental policies hence is the reason why more primary teachers participated in the study than the secondary teachers.

## **5.10 Teaching experience**

It has been discovered that more teachers have 15-20 teaching experience followed by those who have 20-30 years of experience in teaching. And only 9 people have 1-5 years of experience followed by other 9 respondents with only 5-10 years of experience in the teaching fraternity. The study shows that more teachers are above 15 years of experience in the teaching profession. This shows that more teachers are towards retirement age and it should be worrying factor on the side of the department of Education because those teachers with lot of experience will be gone and the system will be left with those teachers who are young and inexperienced.

### **5.10 Objective 1**

#### **5.10.1 Do you believe that class visits supports professional teacher development?**

In this study 26 respondents indicated that they believe that class visits support professional teacher development. The reason might be that most teachers are able to plan their lesson plans in accordance with the departmental procedure than before, and most teachers are being able to develop their own learning programs now.

### **5.10.2 Do you believe that class visits has professionally developed you as a professional teacher**

23 respondents indicated that they believe that class visits has professionally developed them as professional teachers. This might be due to the fact that teachers are now able to plan their work properly and they are able to do self-administrative work such as filing their lesson presentations.

### **5.10.3 Do you believe that class visits assist you to grow as a professional teacher?**

In this study 30 respondents indicated that they believe that class visits assist them to grow as professional teachers. Most teachers they have grown as professionals, they are able to use the resources around them sparingly, and they are no longer waiting for the principal to remind of their co-duty. When is their time to go to class they know what to do in class and what are the teaching media they will need to deliver the lesson.

### **5.10.4 Do you believe that class visits has made you a professional teacher?**

31 respondents indicated that they believe that class visits has made them profession teachers. Most teachers agreed with the statement because they are now involved in the planning process of their work including being given the opportunity to do timetabling and they are given the space to develop strategic planning.

### **5.10.5 Do you believe that class visits help you to improve the quality of teaching?**

In this study 25 respondents indicated that they believe that class visits helped them to improve the quality of teaching. Most teachers responded positively because they are being involved to run their own workshops in the absence of the subject advisors. Through cluster meeting they meet and plan on how to improve the quality of teaching and through in-service training.

## **5.11 OBJECTIVE 2**

### **5.11.1 Do class visits help you to evaluate results as integral part of your profession?**

In this study 26 respondents indicated that yes class visits help them to evaluate results as integral part of their profession. Most teachers responded positive in this situation because there are allowed a chance to sit as teams and evaluate results after a formal assessment and they are also given a chance to a so called item analysis to gauge the strength and the weaknesses of the question paper and improve it.

### **5.11.2 Do you believe that class visits helped you to gain new idea, strategies and techniques for class room teaching?**

In this study 36 respondents indicated that yes class visits help them to gain new ideas, strategies and techniques for class room teaching. Teachers responded positive because through cluster meeting, Departmental workshops and staff meeting they meet and brainstorm new ideas and come out with new strategies and techniques for class room teaching.

### **5.11.3 Do you believe that the feedback you receive after class visits is credible for your professional teacher development?**

33 respondents indicated that yes they believe that the feedback they receive after class visits is credible for their teacher professional development. Most teachers found the feedback to be very important and credible because they believe that it assist them to identify the areas of development, and it also assist them to realise their strength and weaknesses for developmental purposes.

### **5.11.4 Do you believe that there is a link between class visits and professional teacher development?**

In this study 29 respondents indicated that yes they believe that there is a link between class visits and professional teacher development. Most teachers believe that when they are being visited they the advice and the feedback they receive after class visits, assist them and if properly communicated they improve their standard. Then they believe that there is a link between class visits and professional teacher development.

### **5.11.5 Do you believe that class visits give you the opportunity to engage reflective dialogue about your work?**

In this study 36 respondents indicated that they believe that class visits give them the opportunity to engage reflective dialogue about their work. Most teachers believe that opportunity is given to them to engage in a reflective dialogue about their work with their seniors. They reflect on issues like lack of resources like textbooks shortages and overcrowding which hampers individual attention during class lessons.

## **5.12 Objective 3(Interviews)**

### **5.12.1 Strategies and recommendation to enhance class visits.**

In this study three different categories were interviewed based on the strategies that they think can be used to enhance class visits, participants were principal, deputy principal, Head of departments and teachers. And the findings were that they all suggested pre-evaluation discussions before and after class visits, they also suggest that post evaluation discussions after class visits. And lastly they suggested feedback after class visits.

### **5.12.2 Recommendations to enhance class visits**

The findings on the recommendations were almost the same, from the principal, deputy principal, HoDs and teachers. They suggested communication and team teaching, also in-service training and mini- workshops which they put forward as recommendations.

## **5.13 Recommendations**

### **5.13.1 Recommendation to the Department of Education**

- There should be regular workshops for teachers and give more resources to schools in order to conduct class visits.

### **5.13.2 Recommendation to principals and HODs**

- There should be time table for class visits before the academic year begins.

- All teachers concerned should partake in the development of the rooster for class visits.
- Pre-evaluation discussion before execution.
- There should be year programme for class visits as early as January
- Those who conduct class visits must have all the necessary skills to conduct class visits
- There should be regular feedback to teachers
- There should be clear goals and objectives of the class visits
- Class visits should be done in a democratic manner with teachers involved

### **5.13.3 Recommendation to teachers**

- There should be team teaching across the phases
- All teachers should honour class visits as prescribed by the department
- Class visits should be conducted on a weekly basis or quarterly.

### **5.14 Limitations of the study**

It should be noted that not all targeted participants were willing to take part in this study, some participants indicated that that the questionnaire was too long and time consuming hence they did not bother to take part no return the questionnaire. Time factor was also another limitation as not all participants could be reached.

### **5.15 Suggestions for further studies**

Further research is necessary to factors that can be implemented to assist the Department of Education enhancing the impact of class visits for professional teacher development in the entire province as this was centred around white hazy circuit.

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