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School leadership and teacher professional development in Lesotho : a case study of two secondary schools in Leribe District.

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Chapter 1

1.1 Introduction

Since Lesotho gained independence from British colonial rule in 1966, secondary education has expanded dramatically in scale, but changed little in character (Ansell, 2002: 91). This expansion can be attributed amongst other factors, to the fact that the Government of Lesotho implemented Free Primary Education (FPE) policy with the aim of expanding access to education and increasing enrolment of children of school going age.

Lesotho is a small country with a population of about 2 million and annual growth rate of 0.7% (UNESCO, 2007). It is completely landlocked by South Africa and depends mainly on the South Africa economy for its trade and remittances that are sent home by majority of migrant labourers and domestic workers who have flooded South Africa for survival. "Inherent problems in the system include poor facilities, the lack of institutional early childcare development programmes, an inadequate and poorly organised in-service teacher programme, and high pupil-to-teacher ratios, coupled with overcrowded classrooms." (OSISA).

In 2007, there were about 1,427 registered primary schools in the country; with the total enrolment of 400.934 learners. Secondary school level, on the other hand, accounted for a total of 291 schools and enrolment of 97,936 learners (Bureau of Statistics Lesotho). The growing numbers of learners and therefore apparent need for more teachers make it imperative for teacher

professional development to also expand despite the disoriented teacher development programmes that characterize Lesotho schools as implicated by OSISA.

According to the Lesotho Education Strategic Plan (2005) "the introduction of Free Primary Education (FPE) in 2000, starting with grade 1, resulted in a dramatic rise in intake and overall enrolment which increased from 364,951 in 1999 to 410,745 in 2000, a rise of 12.5 percent." These rising numbers within the FPE system undoubtedly have massive implications for transition into secondary schooling. As critical as this is, the need to further enable these learners to complete their schooling is imperative. One way of ensuring this is to provide quality teachers necessary for excellent academic performance and to enable learners to successfully move into secondary schools. However, the Lesotho Strategic Plan (2005) has indicated that a shortage of qualified teachers is one of the biggest challenges in attaining quality and efficiency in their education system.

With the current influx of enrolment into the Free Primary Education (FPE) system and transition into secondary schooling, quality trained teachers, both at primary and secondary level, would need to be increased five-fold if good quality education is to be realised (Lewin & Stuart, 2003: ix). Besides the need for additional teachers to meet these demands, the growing enrolment also means that existing teachers require continuous teacher professional development (TPD) which would support them in dealing with the large influx of students into secondary schooling. One of the key reasons for continuous TPD is that it is generally perceived as a catalyst for teachers' motivation and curbs the chances of teacher 'burn out'. Good quality teacher education

and the ongoing professional development of teachers are absolutely vital to the well-being of any education system.

According to Day (1999:57), "the achievement and further development of broadly defined competences which are part of the challenge of good teaching and being a good teacher are not only the responsibility of each individual but also that of the employing organisation." So at the heart of developing professional development for teachers stands the person responsible for these teachers' employment. In broad terms this would be the Ministry of Education and Training (MoET). However, the principal as a leader of the school is given the legal responsibility to oversee teachers' wellbeing on behalf of the MoET hence the responsibility of ensuring further development for teachers becomes his/her primary role. Principals also have a normative obligation to develop teachers. The principal's task is to ensure that teaching and learning takes place in the school. As the authority in the school, the principal is expected to identify deficiencies in the teachers' daily work and from there provide remediation. One way of doing this is by strengthening teachers' competencies through professional development.

The study examined teacher professional knowledge and development in two secondary schools in the Leribe district and the contribution that school leadership makes in advancing teacher professional development.

Administratively, Lesotho is divided into ten districts, each headed by a district administrator. These districts are- Berea, Butha-Buthe, Leribe, Mafeteng, Maseru, Mohale's Hoek, Mokhotlong, Qacha's Nek, Quthing and Thaba-Tseka, each with its capital known as a camp town. Maseru is

the capital of Lesotho and is perceived to reflect a *pseudo- rural urban status* thus reflecting the mixed socio-economic strata of the country. Leribe district is the second largest district after Maseru with its town known as Hlotse. The study primarily examined how school principals of the selected schools tackle their responsibility for teacher professional development programmes in their school.

1.2 Aims and Objectives of the Study

The purpose of the research is to examine the leadership focus within the context of the case study of the two schools. The following are the key aims of this research; to explore how principals and teachers in the two secondary schools understand professional development in the context of improving teaching-learning processes; to examine the perceptions of principals and teachers regarding the link between professional development and learner outcomes. Professional development is believed to improve the quality of teaching and subsequently quality performance of learners. Knapp (2003:109) believes that every initiative that is geared towards improving teaching and learning in schools should consolidate its efforts chiefly towards high quality teacher professional development and this is perceived as one of the roles attached to principalship. This provides a basis upon which teachers can improve their instructional competence and pedagogic skills. Another objective for this study is to examine the choices that principals make to foster teacher professional development.

1.3 Problem Statement

The role of the principal in supporting professional development activities of teachers appears to be crucial to the success of the professional growth of teachers (Berube, W., Gaston, J., & Stepans, J., 2004 citing Stepans, 2001). While teachers are meant to benefit from effective teacher professional development, school leadership is at the core of mobilising activities that pertain to TPD. Hence, without adequate support from the principals, teachers may not gain much in terms of teacher professional development.

Traditionally, teacher professional development has been defined as "the provision of activities designed to enhance the knowledge, skills and understandings of teachers in ways that lead to changes in their thinking and classroom behaviour" (TeleLearning Inc. 1999 citing Fenstermacher, and Berliner, 1983). Professional development is a notion inclusive of the concept of a reflective practice, a now well-recognised element in teaching. (TeleLearning Inc, 1999). Berube et al (2004) state that, “In addition to performing these organisational and managerial tasks, contemporary principals are expected to be leaders, setting directions for the teaching and learning of students. They also are expected to “coach, teach, and develop teachers in their schools,” and perform their tasks as instructional leaders.

Despite the notion that what teachers take away from professional development efforts is based on their existing knowledge and beliefs (TeleLearning Inc., 1999), it is left to the individual school principal to provide the leadership that will effectively manage the professional development of the school teachers. Since professional development may take many forms and

shapes, the *content*, *process* and *context* (TeleLearning Inc., 1999:5) of what constitute these need to be examined.

Currently the most popular forms of teacher professional development in Lesotho are workshops and seminars held both within the schools and in places such as education resource centres and hotels. This study is of relevance in the context of Lesotho because it deepens out the understanding of the potential role of principals in teacher development. Currently there is insufficient support for teacher professional development which could affect the quality of education that students receive and ultimately impact on their likelihood to pass their final high school external examination and transition into higher education in Lesotho.

1.4 Research Questions

The proposed study seeks to answer the following key question:

- How does school leadership contribute to teacher professional development?

In order to explore this question effectively; the following sub-questions will be used to frame the research design:

- What is the understanding of school principals and teachers of professional development issues in their schools?
- How have the principals of the two secondary schools executed their responsibility for teachers' professional development in their schools?
- Where evidenced, what is the impact of teacher professional development in the two schools?

- To what extent do teachers share knowledge and skills acquired from professional development activities?
- How does the management of teacher professional development by school leadership help in enhancing teaching and learning?

1.5 Rationale

This study aims to investigate whether teacher professional development is perceived as central to student achievement by school leadership (principals). It also aims specifically to examine the role that principals play to encourage teacher professional development in their schools. According to Harris & Muijs (2005: 13), the leadership ability and skill of a principal in any school plays a significant role in promoting school improvement, change and development. It is on the basis of this that principals are put at the centre of this study as they are perceived to be the ones enabling professional development of teachers.

What justifies the study is an empirical attempt to validate or refute the perception that, teachers and principals in Lesotho still perceive professional development in a conventional sense. This conventional sense is more concerned with providing workshops from outside schools which, in most cases, are too general. The workshops hardly accommodate contextual differences in each school – an important component which if not considered – could have a negative impact on the classroom interaction of teachers and learners that forms the whole core business of schools.

Bolam (1993) has identified other forms of professional development and indicates that they occur in three categories. These include professional training, professional education and

professional support. Activities within the professional training category include; short conferences, courses, workshops both in the schools and outside the schools, for which emphasis is put on enhancing the knowledge and skills of participants and formal certification is not provided. As Bolam further points out, professional education in contrast leads to formal qualifications and relevant certificates. Professional support according to Earley & Bubb (2004) involves "on-the-job" support that is primarily intended to improve teachers' experience and performance. Activities in this category may include coaching, mentoring, and induction.

While there is considerable attention given to teacher professional development, there is little known on the perceptions of teachers regarding the various forms of teacher professional development as well as how these variants can be used to manage teaching and learning. The Ministry of Education is concerned that the issue of professional development is not being given adequate attention in the schools in Lesotho. This study is significant in that it intends to add to the existing body of knowledge around school leadership and its role in teacher professional development. This is based on the growing need for principals to shift from their conventional perception of teacher professional development and embrace their 'new' roles.

1.6 Limitations of the Study

The scope of the study is limited mainly by time, cost and accessibility. Data collected in this research would have been enriched by observing the actual professional development programmes. However, because this research is undertaken during a one year full time contact study, it makes it difficult both in terms of accessibility and the costs incurred for the researcher to be in Lesotho as regularly as necessary to be able to conduct such observations. The

contribution these [observations] would have made to the research is nevertheless noted. The observations would be highly informative with regard to the nature of professional development programmes that teachers in Lesotho secondary schools receive. This would therefore add to the validation of the research findings through triangulation.

The research is further constrained in terms of the scope. The study is limited to two secondary schools in the Leribe district in Lesotho. As such, the findings may not necessarily represent the rest of the secondary schools across the country. The findings however provide some insights into how principals contribute to teacher professional development and how this contribution can manifest itself into student outcomes. Another constraint would be on the kind of literature that had to be reviewed. There is abundant literature on teacher professional development but this is in most cases not linked to leadership as a contributory factor.

Another limitation has to do with the participants in the research. Initially, the research was meant to get feedback on questionnaires and follow-up interviews from the principals of the two schools, their deputy principals and five teachers from each of the two schools. This was done for purposes of triangulation; to solicit responses from people at different levels in the school so that possible irregularities in the responses could be easily traceable.

However, this was not fully achieved because the principal of one school refused to be part of the study and argued that there won't be much difference in the responses he and the deputy principal provide. One teacher from the same school only responded to the questionnaire but refused to be interviewed. The deputy principal who had been helping with coordinating the

interviews later confessed that the teacher would not do the interview they were informed late about their participation in the study. This was despite the fact that the researcher had informed the school in good time and made the necessary appointments. Some of the teachers were only told about the research the previous day following the researcher's visit to the school to confirm the following day's appointment.

This was a limitation because in the case of the principal, the intended outcome to draw on perspectives from different people failed as the study was now short of the principal's perspectives. In the case of the teacher, the limitation was that questionnaires were not constructed to get all the data required. They were used more as a baseline instrument through which the follow-up interviews would elicit more data through the in depth questions and probing. Failure to do this with the teacher resulted in incomplete data.

1.7 Conceptual Framework

This study is based on the conceptual conviction that student achievement is largely predetermined by the quality of teachers who facilitate teaching and learning in the classrooms. This can be achieved by acknowledging that there is a very close relationship between teachers' performance in the classrooms and enhancing their professional growth, (Haiti, 2002; Hargreaves, 1994 cited in NCSL Report, 2006:4). In view of this, it is imperative that in order to improve student achievement, the concept of developing excellent teachers cannot be ignored. This raises a need for principals to reconceptualise teacher professional development and not perceive it only as limited to workshops.

The conceptual framework is developed in line with Leithwood's (1992:86) view that principals can contribute in the development of teachers in three basic areas and these are development of professional expertise, psychological development and career-cycle development. "Professional recognition, professional involvement and professional influence become rewards that keep teachers career-oriented and help them establish a high sense of efficacy." Grimmet and Crehan in Leithwood (1992:71). For principals, this would mean having a broader understanding of what is meant by professional development and subsequent commitment to implement the different approaches that are associated with it.

"The central purpose of professional development", according to Day (1999:4) is to enable teachers to respond to the [external change demands and maintain commitment] amidst the "changing contexts in which teachers work and learning takes place." This is underpinned in Day (1994b:7) where he argues that since the role of teachers is concerned with improving students' performance so should the role of principalship concentrate on improving the performance of teachers through professional development.

The literature that is reviewed for this purpose is not extensive but has been narrowed to address the following central issues in detail; principals and their roles as leaders, teacher professional development, students' outcomes and how they can be influenced by teacher professional development. As Faulkner (2007) has suggested, one of the key characteristics of 'good' schools is quality principals who are able to establish structures that enable growth as part of his/her leadership styles.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

2.1 A Historic Overview of Teacher Professional Development

Substantial literature on teacher professional development has been available globally for several decades now. Teacher professional development in Indonesia for example as in the education system of most developing countries can be traced as far back as the 1960's. It is strongly believed that any initiative aimed at improving the quality of education in schools is closely linked to enhancing the professional development of teachers. This has been highlighted by Fuller (1987) in Thair and Treagust (2002) who have stated that in the 1980's two thirds of the World Bank's budget was directed to teacher professional development in developing countries. While these initiatives were the responsibility of the Departments of Education in such countries, the active role of principals in ensuring that these initiatives are followed through in the schools cannot go unnoticed.

As the above statement suggests, there has been literature reviewed on teacher professional development in general, this according to Villegas-Reimers (2003: 11), has been limited to a generic form of professional development which consisted of facilitating workshops for teachers and short in-service courses. Villegas-Reimers (2003:11) states that "this was often the only type of training teachers would receive and was usually unrelated to teachers work." Wideen & Andrews (1987: 1) concur that in the 1960's and 1970's, the only existent forms of teacher

professional development that teachers relied on were "short periods of in-service during which the focus was upon explaining curriculum materials to teachers." Wideen & Andrews (1987) further state that these programmes are reported to have focused merely on explaining curriculum materials to teachers while ignoring the problems that teachers may encounter in the implementation of the curriculum or the professional development that may be deemed necessary to carry through the requirements of the curriculum.

While most countries have shifted from this traditional form of professional development to that which "includes regular opportunities and experiences planned systematically to promote growth and development in the profession." (Villegas-Reimers, 2003). The shift has seen professional development opportunities being related to actual classroom experiences such that what teachers do in professional development programmes is more about the daily activities they engage with between themselves; teachers and learners. It may appear that the manner in which professional development programmes are provided in Lesotho is reminiscent of the 1960's and 1970's that Wideen and Andrews (1987) have referred to. It is among countries that are still lagging behind in this shift of professional development which makes this study significant.

2.2 Teacher Professional Development

2.2.1 Definitions

Attempts to define professional development include those of Steyn & van Niekerk, (2002) who describe it as an ongoing developmental programme which aims at developing the knowledge, skills and attitudes that are needed in improving teaching and learning. It is therefore a

programme that is aimed at developing teachers and educational leaders in order for them to become better equipped both personally and professionally (Steyn & van Niekerk, 2002).

While it has been argued that attempts to define professional development are short of conceptual clarity (Evans, 2002:124) some of the definitions provided in Evans (2002) include; "professional development can be seen as a process of professional growth" (Keiny 1994:158). This definition however does not explain clearly how 'professional growth" should be conceptualized in this context. Grossman (1994:59) refers to professional development as the acquisition of "new knowledge and perspectives from interactions in planning and teaching the class … [and] teachers' new understandings of their role, and 'teachers' expanded vision of their professional roles and their awareness of broader issues in education." Bell and Gilbert (1994:493) however, state that "the process of professional development can be seen as one in which personal, professional and social development is occurring, and one in which development in one aspect cannot proceed unless the other aspects develop also. Fullan (1990) in Kydd et al (1997:131) postulates that,

"Staff development must view holistically the personal and professional lives of teachers as individuals [which] become the sum total of formal and informal learning experiences accumulated across individual careers. The agenda then is to work continuously on the spirit and practice of life –long learning for all teachers."

These definitions identified by different writers in Evans (2002) may not encapsulate the full meaning of teacher professional development when viewed in isolation but put together, they create a clear picture of what professional development entails. It is about professional growth,

which may not be realised without the personal and social growth. The definitions also have implications for improved attitude towards teaching which result in learners' achievement.

2.2.2 Purpose of Professional Development

All professions require a continuous update of knowledge and skills (Sparks & Richardson, 1997:2; Somers & Sikorova, 2002:103) in Steyn & van Niekerk (2005:129). This is no exception in the teaching profession. This can be provided through continuous professional development. Teacher professional development is defined by Glatthorn (1995) in Villegas-Reimers (2003) as,

"The professional growth that the teacher achieves as a result of gaining increased experience and examining his or her teaching systematically."

It can be deduced from this that one of the key purposes of teacher professional development (TPD) is about empowering teachers to enhance their efficiency in their teaching while developing them in their professional career cycle as a whole. TPD "is essential to efforts to improve our schools" (Borko 2004: 3). In looking at TPD therefore, we cannot ignore the stakeholders that are involved in the processes of teaching and learning. These are primarily, principals, teachers and students and how each of them becomes a recipient of teacher professional development.

TPD seeks to explain the link between teacher development, principals and students' achievement. The three elements seem to be very closely linked and should one not be administered properly, this affects the balance of the core business of schools – teaching and learning. Students' achievement is at the heart of good school management and this lies critically

at the hands of the principals to ensure that students within their schools get the best from their teachers. Barth (1990) makes the point that:

"Probably nothing within a school has more impact on students in terms of skills development, self-confidence, or classroom behaviour than the personal and professional development of their teachers" (1990, p.49).

Principals can foster this through providing the much needed professional development for their teachers. Faulkner (2007) has indicated that through research and debates internationally, it is clear that "school leadership and learner achievement are inextricably linked."

The key purpose of TPD has been identified by Tjepkema & Wognum (1999:251) in Steyn & van Niekerk (2002:251) as encompassing the following; personal development, career development and organizational development. In Tjepkema & Wognum's (1999) view, professional development aims at enhancing personal development in that the knowledge and skills that the teachers gain from professional development will benefit him/her both personally and professionally. The teacher who has received professional development gains a personal fulfillment that cannot be experienced by those who do not receive this. Teacher professional development also has a positive impact on the career development of an individual in that it helps in,

"Supporting the professional advancement of educators to jobs at a higher level in the school by providing them with the necessary qualifications and developing the skills of important selected staff members so that anticipated vacancies can be filled." Steyn & van Niekerk (2002:251).

In essence teacher professional development enhances job advancement and opens up opportunities for promotion.

Furthermore, TPD has an influence on the holistic development of the school as an organisation. Having teachers who have undertaken professional development programmes facilitates the achievement of improved quality teaching and learning; which is the core business of schools. Steyn and van Niekerk (2002:251) concede that

"The purpose of professional development is therefore to promote learning processes that will in turn enhance the performance of individuals and the organisation as a whole."

2.2.3 Forms of Teacher Professional Development

Sparks (2002) has identified the following as the basic forms of professional development: workshops, guided peer observations with feedback, teacher research groups and demonstration lessons by master teachers. Other forms have been identified by Garet et al (2001:920) to include courses, conferences and institutes. These are all similar to workshops and have been criticised by most professional development reformers as being ineffective and not linked directly to the daily classroom activities that teachers embark on. They often occur after school, over weekends and during school vacations. Sparks (2002) believes that when all teachers engage effectively in the reformed forms of professional development which occur during school hours and usually in the classroom, students' achievement is deemed to improve.

In-service seminars fall under the many forms of teacher professional development in schools. Borko (2004) points to this form as one that was made exceptionally popular in the United States

when "each year, schools, districts, and the federal government spend millions, if not billions, of dollars on in-service seminars." However, he also emphasises that these attempts towards enabling professional development have unfortunately not been fully successful as they have repeatedly failed to address what should characterise professional development to make it meaningful and relevant to the daily practices of teachers. His view on this is that so much money is spent in forms of professional development that "are fragmented, intellectually superficial, and do not take into account what we know about how teachers learn."

2.3 Changing Practice within Leadership

This section provides an insight into the changing practice of leadership and how this may impact on the responsibility of principals to execute teacher professional development. Yukl (2002:3) in Bush (2003:5) defines leadership as a;

"social process whereby intentional influence is exerted by one person [or group] over other people [or groups] to structure the activities and relationships in a group or organisation."

Within the context of professional development, leadership therefore would involve the principal's influence on the staff members and simultaneously staff members would have an influence on the activities of professional development among other activities in the school. The influence that Yukl alludes to here is that which advocates for both leadership by an individual (principal) as well as leadership by groups. Essentially, he believes that leadership may be exercised by the principal single – handedly as much as it can be exercised by teams within the organisation.

Hargreaves & Fullan (1992:14) also add that "leadership is [a] particularly important contextual factor which affects the success of teacher development efforts." They provide an important analysis that the presence of positive leadership in teacher professional development has a positive impact on the improvement of the school.

Leadership becomes a component of change when it is characterised chiefly by values and vision of a leader. According to Bush (2003:5) outstanding leaders are those who are able to instill strong personal and professional values as well as institutionalising the vision for their organisation. Such values and vision influence the effectiveness of the organisation best when they are communicated well with subordinates. A leader does not only hold certain values and vision but ensures that they are shared by subordinates if they are to have an improved effect on the leadership of the organisation. This is when influence of one person over other people or vice versa becomes significant. Values have to be shared. The vision of the school is valuable if it is mutually agreed upon by all members of the organisation and this subsequently necessitates the organisation to move forward. This is deemed necessary in the professional development of teachers. Unless all members of the school organisation hold the same vision that professional development will move the school forward, it would be impracticable to implement professional development activities in such an organisation.

Horner in Bennett et al (2003:27) asserts that leadership is characterized by "traits, qualities, and behaviours of a leader." However, Bennett et al (2003: 174) is also quick to caution that there is no 'all purpose recipe' to school leadership. There are underlying factors that determine the kind of leadership that a particular school adopts. These factors are generally framed by notions that

include contexts, skills and attributes of individuals, national obligations and demands and obligations of different stakeholders in the schools. In a study conducted with forty principals from England, Scotland, Denmark and Australia, what came out clearly for Bennett et al (2003) was that;

"successful leaders do not learn how to do leadership and then stick to patterns and ways of doing things along a prescribed set of known rules. They are willing to change in response to new sets of circumstances - and to differing needs of children, young people and teachers – and they are often rule breakers."

So while there are common ingredients in the way that successful principals lead their schools, they are also fairly dynamic, and accommodate change if that change has prospects of improving the school. What Bennett et al (2003) argue here therefore will concur with Bush's (2003) argument that there are basic leadership traits that characterise outstanding leaders. However, Bennett et al add that these traits become more effective if leaders use them only as a basis for their leadership and are open to change if there is a need for that.

2.4 Participative Leadership

Bush (2003:78) defines participative leadership as a leadership model that "assumes that the decision-making processes of the group ought to be the central focus of the group." It is grounded on the view that participation from all stakeholders in the organisation improves school effectiveness. Research has indicated that leadership involves many stakeholders and this is no exception in the education system. Leadership is not necessarily the sole responsibility of the person appointed as a leader but can actually be enhanced by the involvement of other members

of the school organisation to accomplish the goals of the organisation. Sergiovanni (1984:13) in Bush (2003: 78) believes that participative approach bonds members of the organisation together; it enables everyone to feel like part of the team, but most importantly it reduces the burdens of leadership on the principal as other members of the organisation are more involved.

The principal plays a critical role in articulating the goals and values of the school s/he leads, and as such is expected to show his/her ability to induce effective participation in the staff that s/he works with. Bass (1990:10) in Spillane (2006:10) argues that leaders are at the forefront of a well functioning organisation but these leaders can only achieve the goals of the organisation if the other members of the organisation all have an input. He puts it thus, "leaders are agents of change - persons whose acts affect other people more than other people's acts affect them. Leadership occurs when one group member modifies the motivation or competencies of others in the group." It is on the basis of the definition above that leadership in an organisation should not be treated as the sole responsibility of a principal but is a joint process that involves different members of an organisation.

Bush (2003:187) states that participative leadership;

"is a normatively preferred approach in the early twenty first century [as it may be] likely to be effective in increasing the commitment of participants and in the development of team work."

Bush suggests that the feeling of involvement that the principal induces through participative leadership is crucial as it encourages the other stakeholders (teachers) to commit to their work and inevitably produce higher levels of student outcomes. Fullan (2002:17) brings in a similar

notion that effective leadership is executed by the leader/principal when s/he involves his/her teachers in acquiring some basic leadership skills. He states;

"To ensure deeper learning – to encourage problem solving and thinking skills and to develop and nurture highly motivated and engaged learners, for example – requires mobilizing the energy and capacities of teachers" (Fullan, 2002:17)

Since student achievement should be at the heart of effective leadership, it is important that principals focus on teacher development as this will ultimately influence process of teaching and therefore the attitude of learners toward education in general and improve their performance.

Payne & Wolfson (2000:13) allude to the notion that;

"the principals play a critical role in ensuring that teachers are prepared through appropriate professional development to bring about school reform and improved learning for all students."

This emphasises the need for principals to embrace their responsibility for empowering their teachers through professional development and most importantly to realise that professional development is not just a once-off event but continues through a teacher's career.

Teacher professional development is an integral component of teachers as leaders in the teaching-learning process in schools. As Faulkner (2007) argues;

"leadership behaviours and practices, specifically in meeting the challenges of providing excellence and equity in urban and inner city public schools, must take account of the need for school leaders who effectively guide instructional improvement: the management of teaching and learning."

To elaborate on this line of thought therefore, a leader (the school principal in this case) who is skilled with professional development him/herself is more likely to drive his/her school towards positive transformation.

Wideen & Andrews (1987: 5) have identified;

"Collaboration, collegiality, and mutual adaptation as necessary ingredients in any school improvement plan. It places value on the differences among teachers and schools and the uniqueness that results."

This suggests that for teachers to be able to work towards sustained school improvement, the task of the principal is to ensure that these components, which Wideen & Andrews (1987) have identified as critical, exist within the school that is aiming for improvement. In Wideen & Andrews (1987) view, teachers are partners and prime movers in the process of change.

York-Barr & Duke (2004:266) have conceded that principals are the key drivers of teacher professional development in schools. They allude to the notion that part of teacher professional development involves among other things, "mentoring of teachers" by the school principals. Since the concept of teacher professional development has become increasingly embedded in the realisation of students' achievement and school improvement, principals need to emphasise the significance of facilitating ongoing professional development for their teachers.

According to Payne et al (2000:15) the principal among other things "serves as a role model for continual learning and motivates and inspires others to pursue learning opportunities and further their own knowledge." This implies that the principal who is able to promote professional

development is one that is motivated and driven by a need to widen his/her knowledge parameters. These kinds of attributes can be observed in a principal who engages in continuous professional development and subsequently influences his/her teaching staff develop similar desire for professional growth.

Huber (2004: 670) emphasises that the principal's key role is to be a facilitator in,

> *"Sharing leadership responsibilities, involvement in and about what goes on in the classroom. That means it is important to have decisive and goal-oriented participation of others, in leadership tasks, that there is a real empowerment in terms of true delegation of leadership power (distributed power) and that there is dedicated interest for and knowledge about what happens during lessons."*

In essence, the principals are responsible for enhancing teacher involvement in leadership roles especially in those aspects of leadership that focus heavily on management of teaching and learning. As such a need exists for principals to both distribute their leadership roles through delegation while at the same time empowering teachers so that they engage in continued professional development. In supporting this view, Harris & Muijs (2005:15) have highlighted the "importance of cultivating a context in which change is valued and the need to distribute leadership widely within the organization is reinforced."

Beare et al, (1993) state that principals should be able to work within two dimensions of leadership and these are to balance the execution of organisational tasks and maintain relationships among people in the organisation. The implication for this is that principals are not

only expected to execute and delegate their powers to ensure that the school is functioning well but should also ensure that this is aligned with the support s/he provides for his staff to maintain healthy relationships in the school.

2.5 Providing a Supportive Environment for Continuous Professional Development.

Sparks (2002:14) contends that for teachers to be effective in classrooms and improve student outcomes, it is imperative that principals are supportive of the efforts that teachers make to become better instructional leaders. Darling- Hammond (1997:8) in Sparks (2002) supports this in saying; "teachers who know a lot about teaching and learning and who work in environments that allow them to know students well are the critical elements of successful learning." It can be deduced from the above that the environment within which teachers work is crucial if successful learning is to be accomplished.

A favourable environment is that within which professional development occurs continuously to ensure support for teachers. Senge (1990) defines this in terms of the systems theory; the relationship that exists between people in the system. For him, everything in the system is related to everything else and should one component of the system be changed all the other components thereof should be considered. They are all interdependent, and the principal plays a critical role in creating a 'community of learners' among his staff. What comes out clearly from Senge, (1990) is that principals are not only expected to monitor and enhance relationships among their staff but are also expected to continually create a conducive environment that allows for their staff to develop as professional as a condition for enhancing the teaching and learning experiences of learners.

While Sparks (2002) acknowledges that professional development has been inadequately provisioned to sustain teachers in their challenging profession, she highlights that, for quality teaching to occur in schools, teachers need the best forms of professional development available to support them to overcome the growing demands of today's classrooms. Although she identifies the value of professional development on teachers' work, she states that the majority of teachers in Britain have not received the much needed support to help them cope with the demands they are faced with in schools. In providing an array of professional development opportunities, principals expedite support for their teachers and enhance the working culture of their school in general.

Bennett et al (2003:175) extend a similar line of argument in their view that;

> *"in recent years, school leaders have acquired greater responsibilities for developing the professional development of staff, at the same time holding onto to their primary task of allowing freedom for the individual classroom teacher to develop his or her relationship with pupils."*

What is significant here is the correlation between the support that teachers need from principals to overcome their teaching challenges and the space that teachers need to exercise independence in their own teaching. This balance is very critical as it allows for a conducive environment for teachers to carry out their teaching effectively.

Equally important in this balance is the fact that principals are still able to fulfill their professional obligations to support teachers professionally without crossing the line. The role of principals in providing a conducive environment for teacher professional development is fore-grounded by ensuring that principals draw a demarcation line between what is their responsibility and what should be left to the discretion of the teacher. Williams et al (2001:164) concur that this happens if leaders are able to "map individual and organizational goals alongside ways of preserving some individual and team autonomy so that the two aspects of practice are not regarded as incompatible."

Steyn and van Niekerk (2002) also point to the fact that knowledge and skills acquired through professional development may not be adequate as they are, if there is no supporting infrastructure in the school. In their view, the availability of equipment such as computers and laboratories is imperative to support teachers in applying their newly acquired skills; otherwise these skills would not necessarily lead to improved performance.

Fullan & Miles (1992) concur with Spillane (1999) in Borko (2004:3) that "the changes in classroom practices demanded by the reform visions ultimately rely on teachers." In their view, because teachers are at the heart of any reform that revolves around students' achievement, the success of such reforms is dependent on them being accorded meaningful opportunities and a supportive environment that will help in developing their knowledge and skills. Such reforms are entailed in the fostering of continued teacher professional development which has been deemed essential to facilitate the ongoing learning of teachers and subsequently the success of the students. Changes of this nature "will be difficult to make without support and guidance." (Ball

& Cohen, 1999; Putman & Borko, 1997; Wilson & Berne, 1999 in Borko 2004). The role of principals as leaders in school organisation is therefore imperative in ensuring that the necessary support and guidance are provided for teachers who are engaged in professional development.

Teacher professional development tends to happen under the guise of school reform. It has been noted that where schools actively engage in and empower their teachers through the change process of their own schools, there is a correlation between this and teachers' teaching behaviour and improvement in students' outcomes. (Craig et al 1998, Villegas-Reimers; 2003). On the other hand, where teachers are not considered part of the change process in schools and the change process ignores the core aspect of schools – classroom interaction - there is a tendency for this particular kind of change to fail (Craig et al, 1998). This is because teacher professional development is a process in itself that involves gradual change.

Hargreaves (1994:430) tends to agree with the notion that teacher professional development is most effective when it is a continuous change process and this is also noted by several other authors. (Hargreaves, 1994, Villegas-Reimers; 2003, Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1995). They all concur that professional development occurs on the basis that reformers acknowledge that teachers have life-long professional needs. These needs will be met only if teachers are given the same attention that is given to learners; that requires continuity and progression.

2.6 Developing Professional Learning in Schools

According to Loucks-Horsley (2003), "for … professional development to be effective, experience for teachers must occur over time, provide ample time for in depth investigations and reflection, and incorporate opportunities for continuous learning." Teacher professional development can happen in many forms and contexts but in all the varying forms it is fundamental that professional development is not seen as a once off phenomenon where teachers can gain knowledge and go but should be provided continuously throughout the career of every individual teacher. Sparks & Richardson (1997:3) in Steyn and Van Niekerk (2005) have indicated that teachers are only capable of changes if they are aware that they are not performing to their highest capabilities and therefore need to change.

Several attempts have been made towards increasing opportunities for teacher professional development in schools. These opportunities come with the growing awareness that the availability of high quality professional development of teachers is instrumental in enhancing students' learning and ensuring that the students reach their full potential in classroom performance. Some of the initiatives that were in place in the US to raise the awareness of the need to provide high quality professional development of teachers in the US include the *No Child Left Behind* Act of 2001 which advocated the provision of teacher professional development in schools as a means to improve students' performance. Similarly, "Teaching at Risk: A Call to Action" released by the Teaching Commission in 2004 advocated for "a multifaceted approach to helping teachers succeed; one that includes, high standards for teacher classroom performance and student achievement, and "ongoing and targeted professional development" to help teachers meet the demanding new standards." (Borko, 2004).

In the United Kingdom, a similar initiative was undertaken called, *Every Child Matters.* The initiative is aimed at improving support for learners so that they achieve high standards of education and through the programme teachers are provided with support that will ensure that the standards set for learners are accomplished. According to the Education and Skills Committee (2004) "*Every Child Matters* is a comprehensive programme of reform for children's services that aims to integrate more closely educational, health, social and specialist services so that there could be earlier intervention through closer working between professionals." The *Every Child Matters* Programme proposes that because of the need for teachers to gain more knowledge that will enhance the learners' outcomes, "School staff will want good relationships with other practitioners such as social workers, nurses, GPs and educational psychologists. This may mean building knowledge and trust through joint training or working, or encouraging others to support what the school is doing in areas."

The nature of the 'joint training' that is referred to here underpins the broadening of opportunities for professional development of teachers in the United Kingdom. This initiative further shows that professional development can be approached in different ways. This is not limited to taking teachers for workshops, which is the popular form of professional development in Lesotho. This variant of professional development that *Every Child Matters* has embarked on, gives teachers an opportunity to train or work with other people who may be involved in some way in the education and well being of the child. This way, it allows different perceptions from different people that may be brought together in ensuring that learners receive the best possible education.

Research has revealed that there is a growing need for teachers to be empowered through professional development if schools are to improve. Harris (2001:261) maintains that for schools to be improved there is an undisputed need to build the capacity of those working in the schools. Harris (2001) aptly adds, "capacity building is concerned with creating the conditions, opportunities, and experiences for collaboration and mutual learning …building school capacity implies that schools promote collaboration, empowerment, and inclusion." It is apparent that the ideal school is one which is able to engage its staff in capacity building thereby giving the staff the opportunity to enhance their professional learning. Kydd et al (1997: 130) emphasise this in saying; "any personally expressed professional development need of an individual teacher will, in future, be judged alongside the needs of the schools as a whole." While most developed countries have successfully managed to epitomize this ideology, most of the developing countries are still embarking of the processes of incorporating effective collaborative learning in their schools.

2.7 Professional Development and Improved Students Outcomes

Sparks (2002:16) notes that there is a very close link between teacher professional development and student outcomes. In fact she attributes continuous professional development in most high achieving schools as the reason for the achievement in such schools. She argues that at the core of effective professional development are teachers and principals who work collectively towards improving academic achievement of all students;

"Such staff development moves beyond the transmission of knowledge and skills to include analytic and reflective cognitive processes, focuses on problems experienced by educators,

reflects their input, and allows participants to share power and authority with those who teach them." Education Commission of the States (2000) in Sparks (2002: 17).

In this way, professional development becomes a tool to enhance opportunities for teachers to learn collaboratively and reflect on their experiences.

Borko (2004) has indicated that while research on teacher professional development is still in its infancy, there is considerable evidence that "professional development can lead to improvements in instructional practices and student learning." It is for this reason that teacher professional development becomes an essential mechanism in improving students' learning and ultimately their outcomes.

2.8 Teacher Professional Development and School Culture

School leadership is considered as an essential aspect of the school that is able to keep intact the organisation as a whole. Huber (2004) concurs with this in saying, leadership "is required to create the internal conditions necessary for the continuous development and increasing professionalisation of teachers. Leadership holds the responsibility for developing a cooperative school culture." It is in this regard that the cultural dynamics of the organisation become an integral component of teacher professional development.

Hargreaves, D (1999:48) concedes that a school that embarks on a process of improving its effectiveness is bound to examine its culture. This involves three major tasks which he terms as diagnostic, directional, and managerial. Through these different tasks, the existing school culture is *diagnosed* to establish the prevailing nature of the existing culture. This is followed by the

directional task which determines the ways in which the school culture is to change and finally the *managerial* task involves the implementation of the direction which has been identified in the directional task. Hargreaves puts emphasis on the importance of involving as many people as possible in the diagnosis of the school culture. In his view this helps in outlining the different perceptions of different stakeholders involved in the school as an organisation. When all the possible cultures prevailing in the school have been identified, it becomes easier to find the appropriate direction that will accommodate all people involved in the school with their differing personalities. It can therefore be construed from the above claim that school culture lies at the heart of any development of the school and should be considered accordingly in the professional development of teachers. Bruce (1990:16) aptly adds that;

"the future culture of school will be fashioned largely by how staff development systems evolve ... [it will] depend to a large extent on the strength of the growing staff development programmes, and especially whether they become true human resource development systems."

The link between the culture of the school and teacher professional development, according to Hargreaves (1994:11) is deemed important because "the involvement of teachers in educational change is vital to its success, especially if the change is complex and is to affect many settings over long periods of time." The culture of the school therefore is at the forefront of establishing teacher professional development, since if it is given adequate attention; it is possible to achieve the cooperation that forms a basis for and enhances teacher professional development. This is necessary because teacher professional development is a change process and is realised over an extended period of time. Fullan (1993) in Guskey & Huberman (1995: 260) believes that "professional development is primarily about 'reculturing' the school, not about 'restructuring'

its formal elements." This provides a strong basis to argue that the culture of the school is paramount for professional development to take place in any school and subsequently for change to be effected in the school. If these variables necessary for change are taken into consideration, then accomplishing the core business of the school – teaching and learning - is feasible.

Hammonds (2002) concedes that; "leaders need to advocate, nurture and sustain a school culture, and an instructional programme, conducive to student learning and staff growth. Such leaders promote the success of all students by promoting a safe and effective learning environment." However, he also points out that most principals have been trained in a system that does not allow for this and therefore need to have their priorities redirected in their schools so that they themselves get sufficient professional development that will allow them to advocate for a culture in their schools that will enhance both the learners' learning as well as staff growth.

Hammonds (2002), further indicates that, "teaching needs to be seen as a collective rather than an individual enterprise." By this, he alludes to the need for teachers to develop a culture that is conducive for collegiality. This is a definite success ingredient for the improvement of learners' outcomes. Teachers who have a rich culture of collegiality tend to trust each other and therefore are more at ease to share valuable expertise amongst each other. This development of rich culture according to Fullan (2001) in Hammonds (2002) is what makes some schools easier to work in than others.

2.9 Conclusion

The literature reviewed above covers mainly issues relating to teacher professional development and the contribution principals play in schools to ensure that teacher professional development activities are attained. While this responsibility is chiefly put upon the principals to ensure that teacher professional development occurs, literature has highlighted that successful facilitation of teacher professional development but should be a joint responsibility of the principals, head of departments and teachers as well as other stakeholders such as the department of education and non governmental organisations that may at the time be directly involved with the professional development being administered to teachers. Each of these stakeholders, as literature suggests, has a role to play in ensuring that teacher professional development activities are achieved in schools. Hence notions of participative leadership and culture of the school that have been discussed in the literature are of prime importance. It is also apparent from the literature reviewed that there is a need to promote the culture of continual professional learning in schools which will make the work of the principal easier if there is a mutual understanding of the importance of partaking in continued professional development to improve their professional competence.

What also emerged as significant in the literature is the rising need to encourage ongoing teacher professional development in schools. Literature has revealed that for professional development to have a meaningful impact in schools, it need not be a once off programme but should continue throughout the teaching profession. This has been noted as playing a critical role in improving the core of business of schools which is teaching and learning and consequently enhancing learner outcomes.

Chapter 3

Research Methodology

The research is a qualitative case study. Strauss and Corbin (1998:10) define qualitative research as "any type of research that produces findings not arrived at by statistical procedures or other means of quantification. It can refer to research about persons' lives, lived experiences, behaviours, emotions, and feelings…." In view of the above description, the study attempted to look into the 'lived experiences' of teachers in the two schools selected. In particular, the study aimed at finding out by way of interpretative analysis how teachers view teacher professional development in their schools and what the role of the principal is in teacher professional development. The purpose was to "obtain the intricate details about phenomena such as feelings, thought processes, and emotions that are difficult to extract or learn about through more conventional research methods" (Strauss & Corbin, 1998:11). So while it would be difficult to understand the perceptions of teachers on professional development using other methods such as quantitative methodology, qualitative research allows for a platform to understand and interpret meanings of thoughts and behaviours of teachers and principals around teacher professional development.

According to Yin (1997), “case studies emphasise detailed contextual analysis of a limited number of events or conditions and their relationships.” Case studies help in examining real-life situations and why certain phenomena occur in the way that they do using a small population scale. This method is particularly significant for this research because it intends to look at two schools to examine the nature of school leadership and its relationship to teacher professional development and attempt to understand how, from a very small population of teachers, this relationship manifests itself in the management of teaching and learning.

3.1 Research Instruments

Questionnaires were administered to investigate and compare the views of school principals and teachers in two Lesotho secondary schools in Leribe district. Citing Strauss and Corbin (1990), Hoepfl (1997:2) broadly defined qualitative research as "any kind of research that produces findings not arrived at by means of statistical procedures or other means of quantification". Expounding further on qualitative research, Hoepfl (1997) explains that qualitative researchers seek instead “illumination, understanding, and extrapolation to similar situations, and results in a different type of knowledge than does quantitative inquiry.” It is therefore important to indicate that this research is not interested in finding generalisations formed from the population used as in quantitative research but will focus on understanding why certain things happen the way they do from the results attained by using a carefully selected target population. “The issue is to cover the subjects of the study comprehensively” (Ruyter & Scholl, 1998:8).

As a follow up exercise to ensure reliability and validity of data collected, semi-structured, open-ended interview questions were asked. This was done in order to elicit information on how

principals carry out their role of enhancing teacher professional development as well as finding out what teachers and principals perceive of teacher professional development and its impact on improving learning outcomes.

3.2 Reliability and Validity

The use of questionnaires and follow-up interviews as research tools helped to enhance the reliability and validity of the research by way of triangulation because it is believed that one single use of data collection method is not enough by itself. Bannister et al (1994 in Holtzhausen 2001) indicate that "methodological triangulation entails combining different data collection methods." This is based on the rationale that a single data collection method is insufficient to provide adequate and accurate research results hence the use of both questionnaires and semi-structured follow up interview questions in this study.

3.3 Sampling

The sample of the study was drawn from two secondary schools in Leribe district, Lesotho by way of purposeful sampling. According to Berg (2004), in purposeful sampling, "the researcher uses special knowledge or expertise about specific group to select subjects who represent this population." Since teachers are the main recipients of professional development and would know better how it helps improve their competence and subsequently the students' performance, their participation in this regard would be very informative. Similarly, principals are expected to advocate for teacher professional development in their schools which is why their participation in this study is paramount.

3.3.1 Size

As Patton (2002:242) in Macmillan & Schumacher (2006:318) has put it, "purposeful sampling … is selecting information-rich cases for study in-depth." Macmillan & Schumacher (2006:318) add here that the "samples are chosen because they are likely to be knowledgeable and informative about the phenomena the researcher is investigating." It is for this reason that the research has selected teachers who have been in service for at least five years. The basis of this selection is that, in five years, these teachers would have observed the trend of teacher professional development in their schools and how it has contributed to managing teaching and learning. This selection also made it possible to trace where relevant if the process of teacher professional development has been seen as a continual process through the different levels of their careers. The sample size therefore was initially meant to consist of two principals from the two schools, two deputy principals from each of the two schools and five teachers from each school making a total of ten teachers and a total sample size of 14 respondents. However, for reasons explain earlier, only one principal could take part in the study.

3.4 Site Selection

The two schools selected are government schools within the Leribe district. Government schools in Lesotho are more than the other schools – church owned, community and private schools – expected to serve the interests of the government and as such should observe that the requirements that the government through the Ministry of Education and Training (MoET) set forth for the rest of the schools. The MoET continuously encourages government schools to act as role models for the other schools both by observing the policies of education and ensuring that they are tirelessly practiced. It is on these premises that it is hoped that the government schools

have information regarding the provision of teacher professional development to manage teaching and learning.

One school is located in the Hlotse in the capital of Leribe. The Ministry of Education and Training district resource centre is situated about five kilometers from the school which also makes it practical for the school to become one of the schools involved in the pilot initiatives undertaken by the Ministry to test any initiatives that may later be introduced to the rest of the schools in the district. The second school is along the main highway from the capital Maseru to the northern districts, known as the Main North One about 48 km south of the MOET district resource centre. The school is accessible for the district resource centre and it is therefore possible to use it as a base for their pilot tests. This school is also further revisited by the resource centre for monitoring the pilot tests. The two schools are therefore likely to be encouraged to undergo programmes introduced by the MoET which may include teacher professional development programmes because of their attachment to the government.

3.5 Data Analysis Strategies

Analysis of data seeks to answer the research main question; examine how school leadership contributes to teacher professional development. The data collected was coded and categorised into relevant themes which were informed by the following sub questions:

- What is the understanding of school principals and teachers of professional development issues in their schools?
- How have the principals of the two secondary schools executed their responsibility for teachers' professional development in their schools?

- Where evidenced, what is the impact of teacher professional development in the two schools?
- To what extent do teachers share knowledge and skills acquired from professional development activities?
- How does the management of teacher professional development by school leadership help in enhancing teaching and learning?

According to Macmillan & Schumacher (2006:366), the process of coding means giving a descriptive term for a subject matter such that any topic that comes up under that code is grouped together. Categories on the other hand, are formed from codes and involve organising similar meanings of a topic together; a code may fall under different categories because they may be interpreted in different ways (Macmillan & Schumacher; p 370). Once different categories are formed, patterns will be identified through the categories. Patterns seek to find a relationship among categories and are intended to organise data into related themes. For the purpose of this study, patterns were identified and themes organised in relation to the sub questions above.

3.6 Ethical Considerations

The research first gained permission from the MOET district resource centre to have access to the schools. With the letters written by the District official to grant access to the schools, it was a matter of negotiating with individual schools and arranges appointments. Following the appointments, before beginning with the actual data collection, the researcher first established dialogue with every participant by introducing the study and the purpose for which the data is being collected. The time that each participant would be required to partake in the research was

also indicated and all participants were assured that the questions asked were not meant to be in any way judgmental and there were no wrong or correct responses, they were only expected to give their honest opinions to the questions. All participants were reassured that data collected was for the purpose of the partial fulfillment of the Master's Degree and all participants were also assured that the name of their schools, the information they provide during the data collection would be kept anonymous and confidential by not revealing the actual names of their schools and the participants.

Chapter 4

Data Presentation, Interpretation and Analysis

4.1 Introduction

The research was conducted in two high schools; School A and School B in the Leribe district in Lesotho. These are the only government schools in the district that were founded over 10 years ago. School A was established in 1996 and School B in 1978. The other government schools in the district were established since 2007 following an influx of learners into secondary school after Free Primary Education (FPE) was rolled out in primary schools and an increased number of learners transited into secondary schools. Such schools have therefore only been established as recently as 2006 to accommodate learners who had just completed FPE.

School A is situated in the semi rural area of the Leribe district. The school is situated immediately after the border of two districts - Berea and Leribe and falls in the Leribe side of the border. Phuthiatsana draws a demarcation border between the two districts. It is about 5 kilometres from Teyateyaneng, a small town in Berea district. Because of the proximity of the school to Berea district, most of the learners come from Teyateyaneng and its surrounding villages. Some teachers also come from Berea. The rest of the learners come from the different villages in Leribe district. The school does not have boarding facilities for learners, nor housing for teachers, so they all commute to and from school every day. There are a total of 23 teachers

in the school out of which five (5) participated in the research, plus the principal and the deputy principal.

School B is situated right in the hub of Hlotse, a town in Leribe. The majority of learners from this school come from around the Leribe district. The school offers housing for teachers most of whom come from the outskirts of Leribe and even from other districts. There is a total number of 37 teachers in the school, and five teachers participated in the study as well the principal and the deputy principal. All the teachers selected have been teaching in the school for at least five years.

However, only the deputy principal and five of the teachers were available to take part in the research. The principal indicated that he would delegate to the deputy as the deputy was his right hand man who will know what to say on his behalf. All attempts to persuade the principal to participate as well failed. The principal's reluctance to participate in the study limited the anticipated response. Despite the principal's belief that the deputy principal would know what to say on his behalf, his participation would have been very important as it could reveal different views of the principal and the deputy principal. More so because, the study is based on an individual's opinion and not what his/her work expectations are, in which case opinions are likely to differ even if people subscribe to the same work ethics.

All the data was collected through questionnaires and semi structured follow-up interview questions. These were used to solicit information around the role of principals in administering teacher professional development programmes and the possible impact of teacher professional development on learner outcomes. Similar questions were asked of the principals and deputy

principals. These were focused around their understanding of teacher professional development and how well in their perception this is administered.

Most data in school A was collected within a day and split between morning and afternoon sessions. Questionnaires were administered in the morning and the deputy principal provided the library for this purpose. As part of ensuring that questions were answered without any misinterpretations, unfamiliar terms were clarified to respondents. The researcher was available for further clarifications that may be requested by respondents. Following questionnaires; teachers were later interviewed depending on their availability as they also had to continue attending classes and were interviewed during their free time. Two of the teachers were not available for the follow-up interviews because of their tight schedule for the day. These teachers were interviewed two weeks after they completed the questionnaires. In total, five teachers, the principal and the deputy principal filled in the questionnaire and all took part in the follow-up interview exercise.

In School B, questionnaires were administered with the help of the deputy principal. They were given to the deputy principal on the day which the researcher went to make the appointment in the school and the interview questions followed two weeks later. Five teachers and only the deputy principal participated in the research as the principal did not see the significance of him and the deputy principal both participating in the study. The basic data covered the profile of the teachers, understanding of teacher professional development and its significance in relation to leadership.

4.1 School A

4.1.1 Profile of Participants

Table 4.1a

Participant	Age	Gender
Respondent A1	30	male
Respondent A2	33	female
Respondent A3	36	female
Respondent A4	28	female
Respondent A5	39	female
Deputy Principal	47	female
Principal	58	female

Table 4.1b

Participant	Qualifications	Teaching Subjects
Respondent A1	B Ed Hons	Geography and Computer Literacy
Respondent A2	B Ed	English Language and Sesotho
Respondent A3	Diploma in Management	Accounting and Commerce
Respondent A4	BSC Ed	Mathematics and Science
Respondent A5	BSC Agric	Agriculture and Science
Deputy Principal	B Ed	English Language, Sesotho & Geography
Principal	B Ed	Sesotho & Geography

Table 4.1c

Participant	Teaching Experience	Experience in Current School
Respondent A 1	1 – 5 years	5 years
Respondent A2	6 – 10 years	9 years
Respondent A3	6 – 10 years	7 years
Respondent A4	1 – 5 years	5 years
Respondent A 5	11 -15 years	12 years
Deputy Principal	More than 15 years	10 years
Principal	More than 15 years	12 years

Tables 4.1a illustrate the biographical information of teachers in school A. Table 4.1b shows teachers' qualifications and their subject areas while Table 4.1c illustrates teachers' length of experience in the teaching profession and in the schools in which they are currently working. Three respondents have a Bachelor's Degree in Education, one teacher hold a Bachelor's Degree in Agriculture and no qualification in education. Another teacher has a Diploma in Management. Both the principal and the deputy principal hold a Bachelor's Degree in Education. All respondents have taught for at least five years with the principal having the longest teaching experience at 31 years with the latter twelve years spent in School A. all teachers have been denoted respondent A1 to A5 respectively to make presentation and analysis easy and accurate.

Although all respondents have a professional qualification, figure 4.1B shows they have not all been trained as teachers. It is not clear how this affects their teaching competence. Although these teachers have content knowledge, their pedagogical knowledge is not certified. These teachers admitted that they felt they were pedagogically disadvantaged compared to their colleagues who were qualified teachers. A big question would arise here; whether teaching profession is being taken for granted in Lesotho if there are people who are teaching without proper qualifications. It is doubtful whether other professions would consider people without the relevant qualifications and expect them to be competent. Perhaps the MoET needs to look into this and see how it may be affecting the quality of teachers in the country.

4.1.2 Professional Development Activities

Respondents in the study reported workshops as one of the most commonly offered forms of professional development. All respondents interviewed have indicated that they have attended at least one workshop in their teaching profession**.** These were identified as critical as they have enhanced their professional development. Another form of professional development that some respondents in the study have undergone in the past year was in-service training. It is clear that within the school there is at least one form of professional development going on although at this point there is no clarity on how this is related to leadership or has an impact on learner outcomes.

Two of the respondents in this school have indicated that in the beginning of the year they were part of the group of teachers who were selected to undergo in-service ICT training in Qacha's Nek; one of the districts in the country. This training was meant to equip teachers with skills to incorporate computer-based teaching methods in their teaching. The principal was responsible

for the selection of teachers. However these teachers were primarily those who had undertaken a similar training a few years ago as this was a continuing process. Some of the respondents who were part of the initial training had moved from the school either because of better job prospects or because they went to study further. The principal therefore had to select additional teachers to be part of the training because there was a cut off number per school required by the organisers for the training. Respondent A2 stated that ICT training was last facilitated in the school in 2006 and prior to the most current one in 2008. Besides this being one of the key development programmes being facilitated in the school, the purpose for which it was facilitated did not seem to have been accomplished as these teachers admitted to not having incorporated computer based teaching to their lessons due to lack of time to do so.

A majority of respondents concurred that professional development activities are too infrequent in the school. They emphasised the importance of having these activities more regularly as these would enhance their teaching. Respondent A3 suggested that these activities should be provided *"monthly to keep being updated with new knowledge."* Another respondent agreed as she also believes that holding workshops monthly would be ideal as she said, *"gaining additional skill from the workshops helps me pass the knowledge to learners."* Despite recognition of its importance, the professional development currently available to teachers seems inadequate, (Borko 2004:3). The suggestion above certainly indicates that insufficient time for professional development poses a serious impediment to the development of teachers.

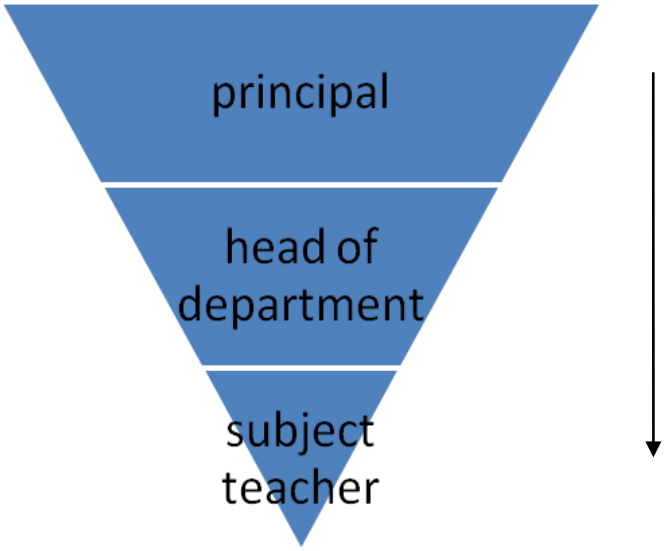
4.1.3 Role of the Principal in Teacher Professional Development

All respondents believed that the principal's key responsibility was to provide financial support to enable teachers to attend workshops conducted outside the school. All respondents were in general agreement that teacher professional development is a leadership responsibility. One said it would not be easy for them to go for the workshops because the principal receives workshop invitation letters, and would then inform the head of department about the invitation and teachers within that department are informed by the head of department. Following such an announcement, the teachers and their head of department decide who will attend the workshop. The respondent stated that the criterion for the choice of the teacher depends on what the agenda of that particular workshop is. She pointed out that if it is a follow up on a previous workshop, the teacher who had attended the previous workshop would be chosen to make a proper follow-up. However, if the workshop is on a new agenda, the department tries to ensure that all the teachers in the department get a chance to attend the workshop so it becomes a cyclic process; the selection circulates around the different teachers in the department.

While many respondents were convinced that the principal had developed a 'good' practice, this hierarchical approach seems to be in contrast Elmore's (1979) backward mapping which suggests that implementation works effectively if it comes from the bottom to the top because it is the people at the grassroots level that play a determinant role of what ought to be done by policymakers. Hence they would know how best to implement. Similarly if teachers are the ones who attend curriculum based workshops and not the principals there is no reason why they should not be involved with the planning and perhaps facilitation of this workshops so that they can identify what suits them best. In a transformational world, the school would do better with a

more flexible approach, like the backward mapping which would accommodate teachers in the planning and content of their own workshops.

Fig. 1 Mediation of teacher professional development activities in the school



The above figure illustrates the structures/liaisons that exist in the school to ensure that teachers are aware of the workshops. The principal, as in all her managerial duties, is the 'middle man' between the officers external to the school and members of staff. The invitation to attend workshops or any other forms of teacher professional development comes through her. Then she passes the information to the head of department who will then decide which teacher will attend the workshop in question. This top down approach adopted in the school leaves one to question the suitability of this approach within a developmental organisation. The top down approach has been criticized by Elmore (1983) as being too hierarchical and too rigid to accommodate change. It may be difficult therefore for the school adopting this approach to develop in a meaningful and quick way.

Some respondents noted that it is the principal's responsibility to motivate them to attend more workshops. Since workshops are the only popular forms of teacher professional development in the school, Sometimes, because of the tight schedule of the curriculum in the school, the teachers are *'discouraged to attend the workshops, then the same teacher keeps going for workshops all the time',* one teacher lamented. Teachers were unanimous that lack of collaborative commitment to attend workshops diminishes their *'competence and confidence'* they all need to convey in their classrooms. It would appear that from the above response that schools lack more varied forms of professional development that would spontaneous and encourage an increased interest in such activities.

Respondent A1 also indicated that it is the principal's responsibility to encourage teachers to share information they gain from the workshops with other teachers on a regular basis. This according to the respondent will *"raise the motivation that teachers need to enhance their teaching and learning."* However, all respondents reported that the principal supports them fully with funds to attend workshops but does not encourage them to share information with colleagues when they have attended workshops. Kydd (1997: 131) points out that "nothing is more frustrating for staff than to go through a complex needs – identification process only to hear nothing further of its outcomes." There is clearly is a lack of needs identification processes for professional development. The workshops provided are not based on the needs of teachers regarding professional development. They are entirely ad hoc; and only occur when the MoET invites the schools to do so. It could be argued from the findings above that the link between encouraging professional development for teachers and ensuring that the information gained from such activities benefits all the relevant teachers is critical. Failure to this may result in

teachers devaluing teacher professional development initiatives as there is no clear-cut link between these initiatives and achieving their ultimate goal of improving learner outcomes.

4.1.4 Meaningful Provision of Teacher Professional Development

Many respondents felt that for teacher professional development programmes to contribute strongly to their teaching, and ultimately to learner achievement, it has to be provided regularly. The principal shared similar sentiments and argued for professional development activities to be provided at least every two months, according to her, *"this would help teachers to be kept engaged with the new aspects we learn from there."* The principal believes that such activities create a platform to discuss a lot of pedagogic content and update different aspects when necessary. This space in her view affords teachers an opportunity to discuss new developments and possible challenges related to their teaching. Research also provides evidence that strong professional learning communities can foster teacher learning and instructional improvement (Borko, 2004:6). Clearly, teachers in School A are not satisfied with the frequency of professional development. Perhaps putting aside more time for professional development activities would be integral to the development of teachers. In addition these activities cannot be deemed to be effective because they are not planned according to the needs of teachers or the school as a whole. Teachers therefore are not aware of what the workshops would be about or when the next one would be.

One of the key respondents supported the view of the principal above and added that, teacher professional development programmes currently in place are not enough to enhance teachers' professionalism. In her view, there should be workshops within the region every month to

support teachers with their teaching. The deputy principal suggests that teachers should establish cluster meetings within their clusters where they can meet weekly to discuss their challenges in teaching and how these can be overcome. Regular cluster meetings in the deputy principal's view would;

"help teachers to keep track of what the other teachers in other schools are doing and help them to work in the same pace as the other schools."

Research supports the perceptions of the principal and shows that teachers must have rich and flexible knowledge of the subjects they teach. They must understand the central facts and concepts of the discipline, how these ideas are connected, and the processes used to establish new knowledge and determine the validity of claims (Anderson, 1989; Ball, 1990; Borko & Putnam, 1996; McDiarmid, Ball, & Anderson, 1989). Professional development programmes that include an explicit focus on subject matter can help teachers develop these powerful understandings. Experiences that engage teachers as learners in activities such as solving mathematical problems and conducting scientific experiments are particularly effective (Borko 2004: 5). It would also re-motivate teachers into understanding the core business of schools. The above view correlates with the deputy principal's viewpoint which emphasises that

"the Ministry of Education and Training (MoET) should train more facilitators to do such workshops and provide other resources required such as computers and stationery."

She believes that the reason that workshops are not frequently administered for teachers is because there are not enough facilitators to hold such workshops and it is the responsibility of the MoET to ensure that facilitators are trained in larger numbers.

Only respondent A3 stated that the provision of teacher professional development in the school is sufficient. Three other teachers believed that teacher professional development is not being adequately provided in the school and in order for it to make meaningful impact on teaching and learning; it should be provided every month for all subjects. One teacher emphasised that having workshops monthly is important to *"keep being updated with new knowledge."* The teachers interviewed also highlighted a number of things which they expect teacher professional development programmes to incorporate. These included improving their competence, computer-based teaching, boosting confidence, getting new ideas and methodologies in teaching. The teachers concur that these factors are key to improving their professionalism and make them better teachers.

4.1.5 Teacher Professional Development on Learner Outcomes

The responses given by participants also highlighted the importance of teacher professional development on learner outcomes. Most of the participants believed that teacher professional development has a very positive impact on the improvement of learner outcomes. All of the five teachers agreed that continuous teacher professional development can lead to improved students outcomes. One teacher even indicated that

> *"For students' outcomes to be reached teacher professional development [programmes] should be improved. Because of the knowledge I acquire [through these programmes] students learn better."*

These teachers strongly supported the view that if teacher professional development were to be provided as a continuous exercise for schools, learner outcomes would greatly be improved.

Respondent A4 stated that she believed that discussing problems that teachers encounter from different classroom settings will help them to learn from each other. In addition, it will help them to learn how to solve their existing teaching related problems and even those problems that may arise later which they have not yet encountered in their own situation. The collaboration that is implied here, in the view of the teacher, would be achieved through offering more frequent workshops. It will further enhance teachers' ability to spend less time in trying to solve problems experienced in classrooms as they would have discussed the solutions with other teachers. Research provides evidence that high-quality professional development programmes can help teachers deepen their knowledge and transform their teaching (Borko, 2004: 5).

The deputy principal also suggested that there should be cluster meetings which provide support and mentorship for teachers to improve their competence. She stressed that it is important for teachers to meet with other fellow teachers to share ideas on improving their schools in general. In her view, this would help schools in the same cluster to work towards a common goal of getting better results for their learners. If this happens in each cluster, it will eventually spread through the whole country and operationalise what she calls 'cluster–mentorship programmes' and this will increase achievement in learner outcomes for the whole country.

The deputy principal cited an example of a group of schools that are performing very well on national examinations. According to her, these schools convene cluster meetings where they share ideas on how to tackle certain topics. They also give similar test papers to determine which school in their cluster is not performing well and provide more support for that particular school. She believes the main reason that learners from these schools are performing well is because of

the commitment of their teachers to prioritise the learners outcomes and do everything they can to support each other. Besides supporting individual learning, peer coaching can also foster collegiality in schools. In several studies (Sharan and Hertz-Lazarowitz, 1982; Sparks and Bruder, 1987) peer coaching appeared to enhance mutual sharing and assistance among teachers. The importance of teacher collaboration with regard to sustainable school improvement has often been stressed (Fullan, 1991; Hargreaves, 1992) Thijs & van de Berg (2002:58).

What also emerged from the interviews was that confidence in imparting knowledge to learners is integral. The respondents claim that they teach better when they have attended workshops. They believed that these workshops equip them with the necessary skills that will enhance their teaching in classrooms. For them, this makes teaching less difficult as they are more informed with pedagogic skills as well as classroom management strategies. One teacher indicated that confidence in teaching is critical because a confident teacher is likely to produce better results with his/her learners. The teachers interviewed all agreed that attending workshops on a regular basis helps boost their confidence with the learners and with other teachers, and ultimately improves learner outcomes.

Respondent A3 who has a Diploma in Business Management but no teaching qualification stated that the workshops she attends helps her become a better teacher as she was not sure of the best way to teach learners and always doubted her teaching styles as she was not trained for this profession. But through the workshops, she claims that she is a better teacher who has become more confident. She thinks teacher professional development programmes are very important particularly for her as she says

"teacher professional development can help add to the knowledge gained through my qualification. I wasn't trained as a teacher so I need more training to be a better teacher."

This training, in her view, can be achieved through the provision of more regular teacher professional development programmes.

Neil & Morgan (2003) concur with the view expressed by respondent A1 when they point out that teacher professional development should correlate with the teacher's professional and personal needs. For this particular teacher, the workshops provided were in sync with what she needed at that time in her professional life. At first she felt she was an inadequate teacher as she did not have a teaching certificate but a diploma in Business Management, when she attended the workshops, this gap she felt was filled as she relates how she felt she had become a better teacher through attending the workshops. On the same note, Neil & Morgan (2003:40) point to the significance of having both the professional and personal needs of the teacher in consideration when planning professional development activities, as these,

"will enhance the quality of teaching and learning taking place in their classrooms [teachers] and they will benefit the schools in which they are working."

While the workshops that this particular teacher attended may not have been planned for her specific needs, their outcome for the teacher, demonstrate the usefulness of relating professional development activities to the needs of teachers.

4.1.6 Support for Teacher Professional Development

Both the principal and the deputy principal identified financial support as primary to supporting teachers to enable them to participate in teacher professional activities. The principal indicated that since they are administrative staff, teachers rely on them for funding so that they could attend activities on professional development. Three of the respondents also stated that the principal's key role in teacher professional development is to provide for financial support. The respondents indicated that financial support is important because most of the workshops are conducted in the Ministry of Education district offices, which is far from the school so they need to be funded in order to attend the workshops.

Respondent A2 thinks it is more important for the principal *"to encourage all teachers to participate and ... be involved in the activities".* However, this respondent also emphasised that the principal in the school does not show interest in teacher professional development activities. She cited an example of disseminating information about workshops to the teachers. She said letters of invitation to workshops are always addressed to the principal who has to pass on the invitation to the concerned teachers. This is meant to help teachers at departmental level select a teacher who will attend and prepare on time for the workshops. But sometimes the principal would not tell them about the workshops or mention it on the day of the workshops. When she doesn't tell them about the workshops, they would hear of it from their colleagues in other schools who would be asking them why they did not attend that particular workshop. She thinks this 'ignorance' tends to happen more for some departments than others.

Respondent A2 is in the science department but she could not point to the reason for the principal's 'forgetfulness' in this regard. The teacher said that they are informed late about the workshops; they are not very keen to attend because it means it has to get in the way of their day's schedule. She said she personally needs to be informed on time if she has to attend workshops so that she can make arrangements about her classes to give learners work to do while she is away.

Blasé et al (1995:11) has a similar view that *"teachers lose respect for principals who fail to support them and in some cases view these principals as cowardly."* This then suggests that when principals continuously show indifference to areas where teachers need their support; in the long run, teachers lose confidence in their principals. This attitude may potentially discourage teachers to continue with professional development activities. Since these activities are linked to instructional leadership, the teachers' attitude to achieving the core business of schools is bound to ultimately change and impact badly on the teaching and learning of learners.

Respondent A4 who teaches Commerce and Accounting also emphasised on the importance of management encouraging them to attend workshops and give feedback to fellow teachers within the department. Her experience was more positive than that of the science teacher. She said most of the time, they are told of the workshops well ahead of time usually a week or sometimes two weeks before the day of the workshops. She also added that when they come back from the workshops, the teacher who had attended the workshop is expected to give feedback to the other teachers in the department. The feedback meeting was always facilitated by the head of department. In her view, providing this kind of feedback helps other teachers who did not attend

the workshop to be abreast of issues being discussed in workshops. She mentioned that it also helps whoever attends the next workshop to be able to pick up from the previous one easily even if it was not necessarily the teacher who had attended before. Blandford (2000:5) supports this view by saying,

"effective communication is essential if all staff are to benefit from developmental opportunities."

This holds true particularly for teachers who would not have attended the developmental activities such as workshop as effective communication would ensure that they are put abreast of new developments in their teaching by their fellow colleagues.

The deputy principal noted that the involvement of the Ministry of Education is critical to make teachers feel that they are adequately supported. The deputy principal lamented that,

"Sometimes the ministry introduces certain topics to us in workshops that are new to us, for instance, how to approach composition and they promise to hold another follow-up workshop in March, but the whole year will pass, they never come back to us."

She added that the ministry should train more facilitators because at the time they appear like they are overloaded with work and there is only a few of them. She thinks if there are more facilitators more workshops could be conducted and follow-up on issues that require follow-up. As the deputy principal aptly puts it, the ministry should,

"*Provide for such workshops, train more facilitators to do such workshops and provide for other resources required such as computers, stationery for workshops to be help in schools."*

The deputy principal also noted that it would be easier if the ministry used schools as centres where workshops could be held on regular basis and for convenience. She stated that "when there are no funds, it becomes a problem; closer centres would make this easier." The deputy principal mentioned that in the beginning of each year there is a budget drawn for different departments for workshops over and above the budget for other activities that are expected to take place in each department. Sometimes, some departments put a lower budget that they actually use for workshops and the school has to provide more money for such instances. She however indicated that sometimes even the school doesn't have any money to give to the departments and they fail to attend workshops just because of insufficient funds so in her opinion if there were other centres close by where workshops could be attended which would not cost them money this would not be a problem

4.2 School B

4.2.1 Profile of Participants

Table 4.2a

Participant	**Age**	**Gender**
Respondent B1	29	male
Respondent B2	39	female
Respondent B3	44	female
Respondent B4	30	male
Respondent B5	27	female
Deputy Principal	29	male

Table 4.2b

Participant	**Qualifications**	**Teaching Subjects**
Respondent B1	Diploma in Education	Mathematics
Respondent B2	BSc Ed	Biology and Geography
Respondent B3	B Ed	Accounting
Respondent B4	B Ed	English
Respondent B5	B Ed	English language and Literature in English
Deputy Principal	B Ed	English Language
Principal	-	-

Table 4.2c

Participant	**Teaching Experience**	**Experience in Current School**
Respondent B1	6 -10years	6 years
Respondent B2	11- 15 years	7 years
Respondent B3	More than 15 years	20 years
Respondent B4	1 – 5 years	5 years
Respondent B5	1 -5 years	5 years
Deputy Principal	6 – 10 years	7 years
Principal	-	-

The three tables above represent similar typologies that are laid out in Table 4.1 in school A. Table 4.2a illustrates the biographical information of teachers in school B. Table 4.2b shows teachers' qualifications and their subject areas while Table 4.2c illustrates teachers' length of experience in the teaching profession and in the schools in which they are currently working. There were a total number of 6 participants; five teachers and the deputy principal. Out of the five teachers, four hold a Bachelor of Education while one has a Diploma in Education. All the teachers have worked in the school for at least five years except for one who has the longest teaching experience in the school of 20 years. The deputy principal also holds a Bachelor of Education. He has taught for seven years but has only been in the school for five years. He has

been appointed as acting deputy principal until the end of this year while the actual deputy principal has gone to further his studies in one of the South African universities.

4.2.2 Teacher Professional Development Activities

Four of the teachers in School B all said they have attended workshops in the past year. Respondent B2 who was an exception said she has never attended a workshop in the seven years that she has worked in this school. The only development programme she attended was an induction programme which was operational since September 2007 until early 2008. This programme took place after she had upgraded her qualifications from a Diploma in Education to Bachelor of Education. While improving one's qualification is another form of professional development, she acknowledged that she does not see it that way, it was just a way of upgrading her qualifications and getting better remuneration, she only seemed to agree after different forms of teacher professional development were explained to her. A consensus was reached thereafter that she had attended two forms of professional development, induction programme and going back to school to gain better qualifications. The interview with respondent B2 illustrated the lack of understanding for professional development. Teachers are not aware of what counts as professional development and what doesn't. Training needs to therefore start at this level so that teachers can make an informed distinction between what is professional development and what is not.

While this teacher had indicated that she has never attended any form of teacher professional development, the other four teachers acknowledged their participation in these activities. However they also pointed out that they are not as frequent as they should be in order to realistically help them become better teachers. In their view, such activities should be conducted at least on a quarterly basis, once a year, twice every month, or every month as each of the participants recommended. Respondent B1 who said professional development programmes

should be held on a quarterly basis stated that this would help them *"make a quarterly plenary [session] with other teachers and check our progress against other teachers."*

4.2.3 The Role of the Principal in Teacher Professional Development

The teachers interviewed all concurred that the role of the principal is significant in facilitating teacher professional development. This is echoed by Bush (2003:105) that; "the head or principal is a key participant in the process of bargaining and negotiating." Although one teacher noted that most of the workshops they attend are convened by the ministry of education, it is the principal that makes it possible for them to attend such workshops. This denotes that while workshops may be initiated from outside the schools, the principal plays the role of a mediator to ensure that these workshops succeed. One respondent stated that,

"The workshops are organised by the education officers …not sure if that's their right title… or maybe English advisors. They have to get permission from the principal for teachers to attend workshops. The principal plays a role of a mediator between the teachers and the Ministry of Education because the ministry communicates with him about the workshops and then the principal tells us about the workshops and provides money for those workshops".

The role of the principal in this regard is to inform teachers of the workshops and ensure that they attend workshops both by providing them with financial assistance and encouraging them to attend the workshops. The principal therefore plays a significant role in facilitating communication between the ministry and the teachers. Another teacher stated that they expect the principal to,

"Be supportive by informing us about the workshops and providing financial assistance and to enable people who attend to report on the workshop."

The principal's role therefore, is not only to support teachers to attend workshops but because the workshops are usually attended by one teacher representative from each school, the principal is also expected to ensure that the dissemination of feedback/information from the workshops is possible among the teachers who are teaching the subject for which the workshop was attended. Furthermore, the significance of effective communication that Blanford (2000) emphasizes is highlighted in the teacher's response. This communication is essential both among respondents and between teachers and the principal as the mediator. Respondent B1 agreed with the one above that the principal is expected to convey,

"Cooperation in that when I attend such teacher professional development programmes, it comes back to the school. Other teachers should know about it and be given feedback on it and financial assistance [is also required from the principal]."

The distributed leadership perspective also affords followers a prominent place in discussions of leadership practice. In this respect the distributed leadership perspective concurs with research that suggests that leaders depend on followers to lead. (Dahl (1961, Hollander 1978; Cuban 1988) in Spillane (2006:22). A distributed perspective on leadership extends this work by casting followers as essential constituting elements in defining leadership activity. Some of the teachers lamented that feedback is never given by the teachers who have attended workshops. This suggests that there is no communication between the principal and the teachers about this as it has continued over the years. Admittedly principals cannot do this by themselves; they need their followers to identify their weak and strong points in this regard (communication). This would have been an ideal platform for the principal and teachers to have a discussion on how the

principal should take up his role in ensuring that teachers attend workshops and feedback is given after workshops have been attended.

4.2.4 Meaningful Provisioning of Teacher Professional Development

Meaningful provisioning of teacher professional development entails continuity such that the programmes on TPD are ongoing and is such that teacher's competency is enhanced both from the pedagogic and personal level. Different teachers had different ideas of what meaningful professional development should be characterized with. Some of these ideas include;

"They only focus on pedagogy but not how to address issues that we face with students like when they misbehave."

"Workshops should be provided regularly to revive us as teachers"

"We should be updated with the content of my curriculum and how I should approach."

"Inviting better performing schools to tell us how they make their schools succeed."

"Provide our own workshops in the schools because of the contextual problems that can be addressed in the school. Sometimes going to the joint workshops becomes redundant when we've already passed a certain problem."

From the responses above, it is apparent that all the teachers interviewed agree that professional development programmes should be linked with issues relating to teaching and learning and

problems that may be encountered during the processes of teaching and learning. Some teachers agree that meaningful provisioning of professional development should be able to develop them to become better teachers, as they have indicated that they would want to attend regular workshops so that they can be re-motivated in their work. Respondent B3 pointed out that they would want to share success stories from schools that perform well on the national examinations for forms C and E (grade 10 and grade 12). This would help the other schools obtain the best practices from good performing schools and use them to improve their own school as well. Improvement of the school is mirrored through the performance of the learners, if they perform well; then the school is perceived as performing well as well. So, this implies that teachers also would like to see professional development that is related to learners' outcomes.

Another teacher has advocated for TPD programmes within schools because in his view these would be able to address unique problems that are only experienced in their school which may not necessarily have been experienced in the other schools that they meet with for workshops. He believes that such workshops would help individual schools to deal with their own problems and accommodate those issues that are not addressed in the workshops they currently have because they are not of particular interest at the time of the workshop. This teacher indicated that in workshops, sometimes their problems are not addressed and it happens that the issue that is being discussed in a particular workshop is one that their school has already faced so the workshops are not meaningful to them that way.

The responses above concur with Hargreaves & Fullan's (1992:3) arguement that lack of development activities is based on disregard for teachers' own practical knowledge in the

development of classroom skills. There is a clear indication here that the workshops being conducted in the MoET resource centre do not contribute much to the teachers' improvement of classroom knowledge. As some of the teachers in this study have indicated the workshops are either repetitive or slow paced in nature hence do not help the teachers. Perhaps therefore, there is a need for MoET to take a different approach which is suggested by Hargreaves & Fullan (1992) in their view that "training teachers to train other teachers or asking teachers to support or coach their colleagues in the implementation of new skills, can mitigate or even override many of these effects of top-down, 'outside-in' reform."

The above view is extended by Lawrence (1974) in Fullan & Hargreaves argues that " School-based programmes in which teachers participate as helpers to each other and planners of in-service activities tend to have greater success in accomplishing their objectives than do programmes which are conducted by colleges or other outside personnel without the assistance of teachers." The programmes that teachers give reference to in this study are held mainly by the MoET but are still abstract in the context of individual schools. Similar to the view of the teacher interviewed here, school based professional development activities are essential in helping teachers deal with their own unique problems for their schools.

4.2.5 Teacher Professional Development on Learner Outcomes

According to Hopkins et al (1994:3), school improvement is about "raising student achievement through focusing on the teaching-learning process and the conditions which support it." Sparks (2005:94) adds that these conditions are underpinned in the assumption that "professional development is most effective when to a large extent its goals and methods match the goals and

methods teachers are expected to use with their students." In relation to the above views, some of the teachers in school B pointed out to the need for professional development activities to match the needs of teachers that will enhance their performance in the classroom. In their view the main goal for teacher professional development is to improve the quality of what occurs in schools. This improvement can be easily reflected in the outcomes of learners in schools.

This also suggests that while the professional needs of the teacher are met through professional development activities there is also a benefit to learners in that the teacher who goes through professional development would improve his/her classroom practices. This is testified by some of the teachers in the research who noted that there was a considerable difference in the way that they teach before they attend teacher professional development activities and afterwards. Respondent B3 gave an account that teacher professional development activities are useful in that,

"if workshops are focused on the content, they will help me teach towards achieving good outcomes for the students. The skills I acquire through these all help me know how to reach out to the students. … After the workshops I practice what I gained on the students."

4.2.6 Support for Teacher Professional Development

According to Harris & Muijs (2005:58),

"if the use of new practices is to be sustained and changes are to endure in schools, then teachers need to be able to engage in professional development that is collaborative and meaningful. Working collaboratively not only reduces the sense of isolation many teachers feel, but also enhances the quality of the work produced."

Within the study, there was evidence that teachers believed that workshops *"help [me] interact better with [my] colleagues on a professional as well as social level."*

Respondents in the study felt that some of the professional development activities are not well supported. An emphasis was placed on the need for feedback when teachers attended workshops to enhance collaborative learning. One respondent for instance, postulated that workshops helped her to become a better teacher both for her own good and for the good of the school. She proposed that while the principal has been supportive in terms of providing funds for them to attend workshops, he should extend this and also encourage all teachers to attend and more importantly to communicate the contents of the workshop with the rest of the teachers when they return from workshops.

Sergiovanni (1991:240) argues that "lack of social interaction deprives teachers of opportunities to help and seek help from others – both essential ingredients in most motivation to work models." Respondents in this study have provided evidence that typically, they work alone and this makes them feel isolated in their work as everyone comes off as though they don't care about what they are doing or how they are doing it. For this reason, many of them advocated for in-school professional development and cluster teaching where teachers can support one another in their professional growth and improve learner outcomes as this would encourage competition in the schools. The findings in school B, as in school A, also revealed that professional development is not linked to any of the teachers' needs. It is an impromptu exercise that is provided by the MoET, the principal has no voice in such development programmes. While the study also showed that more varied development programmes should be provided to strengthen

teachers' competencies, it is important to note that schools need principals who take on professional development in order for them to encourage effective professional development for their schools. Perhaps in addition to this, what is also required in both these schools is to embed professional development in everyday activities.

The findings raised three major issues. These are as follows; first, there is no connection between professional development and leadership. All professional development activities that have been identified in the study were managed by the Ministry of Education and Training. The principal's role as a leader is merely legalistic and is only carried through to 'obey' MoET instructions. Secondly, in both schools, there is no effort to vary professional development activities, workshops seemed to be popular form of development. These workshops also are prescribed from MoET and do not make any attempt to match with the needs of teachers. Thirdly, both teachers and principals are not happy with the kind of professional development they are being offered. Both think more should be happening to make them effective.

Chapter 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter will provide conclusions and recommendations to the research. The exploration of school leadership in this research suggests that there is weak leadership in relation to teacher professional development. Leadership is centralized: Principals only do what is expected of them legally; what the MoET instructs them to do which is to literally to pass on letters of invitation to teachers and release the school funds so that they can attend workshops. Beyond that, principals do not see professional development as their responsibility, they are not even aware that what they are doing is not enough to help teachers develop. In fact they do not know what they are expected to be doing to support teachers professionally.

From the findings, it can be concluded that principals need professional development themselves. They need to be able to identify teachers who need professional development, teachers must attend workshops or any other forms of professional development based on their needs and not just because the principals or the head of department thinks any teacher may go. In addition, principals should be able to identify deficiencies in the way teachers teach; even if it means introducing classroom observation as a developmental measure. They would be better able to determine remediation for such deficiencies; they would need to have had professional development of their own.

The findings revealed that professional development needs to be contextually bound. The needs of one school in terms of professional development may not necessarily be the same as another school if the contexts of such schools are different. In addition, while leadership would not allow for 'borrowing' styles, there are common basic ingredients that manifest themselves in almost every school. Looking into the common ingredients may be very useful for schools to learn from the experiences of successful schools. On the same note, it may be imperative for both schools and particularly the Ministry of Education and Training to acknowledge that based on the notion above, teacher professional development activities do not work as a one size fits all; they are bound to contexts and different experiences of the schools. Therefore, there should be different activities planned for different contexts within which the different schools exist.

The empirical knowledge base for teacher professional development is still very small in Lesotho. First, although this cannot be generalised, schools still understand teacher professional development within the limits of attending workshops. This can be attributed to the fact that the MoET has conceptualised TPD in this manner. There is no real professional development that happens. It only happens at ad hoc level when the MoET see it fit to provide workshops. Programmes such as short courses and taking up leave to further one's study are seen as an improvement on the individual's teacher's part and is hardly ever encouraged by principals or the schools in general.

The study has shown that teacher professional development programmes are multi faceted; attending workshops and occasional in-service training programmes are insufficient realistically to have an impact in teachers' careers and more importantly in the success of the core business of

schooling–teaching and learning. The principals together with the Ministry of Education and Training should adopt systems from neighbouring countries like South Africa which are making a head start towards improving teacher professional development activities for schools. For instance, the Department of Education in South Africa has a directorate that is responsible for continuous teacher professional development. This directorate ensures that initiatives on continuous teacher professional development are not side sidelined by other initiatives in the department that may be seen as more prominent. While this directorate has its own challenges, there is a conscious effort to support teacher professional development activities in the country. The Ministry of Education and Training in Lesotho may therefore benefit from developing their own teacher professional development unit and taking some of the lessons learnt from this particular directorate and contextualizing their efforts to the MoET Lesotho's needs.

This study has generated insights into how leadership is underpinned in teacher professional development programmes. To start with, while the principal is a leader, s/he heavily depends on his teachers as followers to accomplish his/her leadership tasks. The principal holds it upon him/herself therefore to encourage teachers to take teacher professional development activities and use the programmes to improve the school.

Based on this study, there is obviously a need for further research that would investigate the relationships that are forged between the principal and teachers to negotiate effective teacher professional development. At the forefront, lies the need to develop stronger school focused professional development. These will enable identification of the specific needs of the different schools and the uniqueness of the teachers in them. The importance of school focused

professional development has been acknowledged in a study conducted by Macneil (2004) in the Republic of Guinea in 1999 where he documents that,

> *School-based and cluster in-service programs are very popular with teachers who are accustomed to receiving little professional attention and to working in isolation. Teachers welcome information on how to understand and implement reforms for which they have no practical preparation and no available models. Teachers react positively to the opportunity to learn and to the regard for their professional worth that such programs signal.*

The study revealed that school-based and cluster programmes are imperative because they encourage teachers to work within their familiar settings – in their own schools, allows them to collaborate with their peers, practice in their classrooms, and build a local resource network with each other. As Neil & Morgan (2003:39) point out, there should be a conscious effort in continuous teacher development activities to not only ensure that there is a correlation between the professional and personal needs of the individual teacher as well as the needs of the school. This calls for a need for teachers and the principals in different schools to develop their own format of continuous teacher professional development activities. These would be tailor-made to suit the specific needs of the different schools.

Such activities would be devised for individual schools and for cluster schools as some of the participants suggested. Critical to these activities is the need to emphasise that they should not serve to undermine developmental activities managed from outside the school but instead should complement each other. Still attached to this, the findings further revealed that professional development forms the cornerstone of good teaching and learning practices and if well practised,

may have a positive impact to learner outcomes. This therefore emphasises the significance of teacher professional development as a prerequisite to the improvement of the school as an organisation.

There is also an urgent need in the leadership arena to develop policies that are linked to teacher professional development. In a study conducted by Fullan & Hargreaves (1992:170) on teacher professional development, a report to the study revealed the following approaches to teacher professional development which maybe a useful guide to how policy can be implemented in relation to teacher professional development. First, professional development activities reflect "teachers' progress in mastering the complexities of classroom practice." Second, they also reflect on "how teachers learn to teach, how they mature intellectually and professionally, and how they sustain engagement in their work overtime." Fullan & Hargreaves (1992:170).

Fullan & Hargreaves point of departure here is that what these two reflections fail to do is make connections between teachers' organizational commitments and policy. In their view, there have only been 'assumptions' on teachers' practices and obligations and these are subsequently used to inform the policy orientation within which professional development activities exist. With reference to this particular study there is a need for a larger spectrum within which policy relating to professional development operates. This should include devising an action plan around how teacher professional development programmes should be implemented, and how often it would be facilitated in order for it to have a clear and positive impact on teaching and learning. Blanford (2000:7) adds that "the effective school will have professional development policy which is generated by a team the views of staff at all levels." This therefore suggests that

policies at the Ministerial level are not sufficient for schools to develop appropriate developmental activities. Consequently, this raises a need for the Ministry to devise a well thought out policy that will be able to reflect the opinions of both the individual and the organisation. There should be policies that are not only on the paper in principle but that should be able to translate easily into practice. Such policies should also be supplemented by policies at school level that will be unique for each school.

In addition, the Ministry of Education and Training in Lesotho should put into place specific initiatives that are directed towards improving the situation of teacher professional development in the country. During the interviews, most participants revealed that financial support they receive is not sufficient to gain optimal professional development. The frequency at which workshops in particular are conducted for schools in Lesotho imply that there might be a shortage of funds; perhaps from the MoET as the main funding body. This shortage means that not much can be done to support teachers and principals in the way in which they may have anticipated. Some criticism has been expressed at the quality of workshops being currently provided. Some participants say they only 'brush up' on the curriculum. Others have lamented that there is never a follow up on the workshops that they attend. If more funds were brought in specifically for professional development, perhaps teachers would have better perceptions of teacher professional development in the country as these would possibly look into the concerns of teachers.

There is also a need for Lesotho to move towards more recent trends of teacher professional development, examples of these could be drawn from England, Scotland and Wales (Craft,

2000). These trends have their primary focus on ensuring that the needs of individual teachers are linked with the needs of school so that both benefit from the professional development activities in place. In the countries above, this has been done through interviewing teachers to establish what their professional needs are and including these needs in the school development planning. The school development planning is then used to inform the planning of teacher professional development. This exercise would also highlight the responsibility of principals as they would be responsible for ensuring that teacher professional interviews are conducted and these are translated into the school development plan. According to Craft (2000:13), "this has been a trend towards a broader view of what constitutes professional development, and towards a greater emphasis on what happens before in-service training event and afterwards."

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APPENDIX: 1

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND, JOHANNESBURG

WITS SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Division of Education Leadership and Policy Studies

Wits School of Education Parktown.

July 2008

The School Principal

…….

…….

Dear Sir/Madam,

INTRODUCTION LETTER TO SCHOOL PRINCIPALS AND REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH STUDY

My name is Ms. Setungoane Letsatsi (Student Number 0708656P), a Master's student in the Division of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies of the University of the Witwatersrand. I wish to request your permission to use your school to collect data on my proposed research. The topic is *"School Leadership and Teacher Professional Development in Lesotho: A Case Study of Two Secondary Schools in Leribe District".*

Questionnaires and follow-up interviews will be used as instruments to collect the necessary information from the teachers, the deputy principal and the principal. The key criteria for selection of the teachers will be the length of their involvement with the school in teaching and learning as well as their willingness to participate in the study. Each of the follow-up interviews will take approximately 20-30 minutes. This research is for the purpose of my Master's degree. Data collected from the respondents will be treated confidentially and anonymously; no names will be mentioned in the research findings.

Thank you

Yours faithfully

Ms. Setungoane Letsatsi (*0708656P)*

APPENDIX: 2

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND, JOHANNESBURG

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

PARTICIPANTS INFORMATION LEAFLET AND INFORMED CONSENT

July 2008
Dear Participant,

My name is Ms. Setungoane Letsatsi (*Student Number: 0708656p),* a Master's student in the Division of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies of the University of the Witwatersrand School of Education. I am requesting your permission to use your school to collect data on my proposed research. The topic is *"School Leadership and Teacher Professional Development in Lesotho: A Case Study of Two Secondary Schools in Leribe District"*

This is an invitation to seek your consent in collecting data for my study. The research will be conducted through the use of questionnaires and follow-up interviews. Your participation in this study is voluntary and you can decline to participate at any point. Responses could take a maximum of 60 minutes of your time (for completing the questionnaire and participating in the interview).

All information obtained during the course of this study will be treated strictly confidential. Data that may be reported in the research report or any journal will not include any information that identifies you as the participant.

Your participation in this study will contribute to existing literature on school leadership and teacher professional development in Lesotho. The research report will be made available for viewing at your request.

Thank you.

Ms. Setungoane Letsatsi

Student Number: 0708656P

APPENDIX: 3

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND, JOHANNESBURG

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Research Topic *School Leadership and Teacher Professional Development in Lesotho: A Case Study of Two Secondary Schools in Leribe District*

PARTICIPANTS' INFORMED CONSENT

INSTRUCTION: PLEASE TICK AS APPROPRIATE

☐ I hereby confirm that I have been informed by the researcher, Ms. Setungoane Letsatsi about the nature of the study.

☐ I have also received, read and understood the Information and Consent sheets regarding this research.

☐ I am aware that the information I give regarding my sex, age, teaching experience and qualifications will be anonymously processed in this study.

☐ In view of the requirements of the research, I agree that the data collected during thisstudy

can be processed in a computerised system by the researcher.

☐ I may at any stage, without prejudice, withdraw my consent and participation from the study.

☐ I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and (of my own free will) declare myself prepared to participate in the study and voluntarily agreed to participate in the study.

……

Printed Name Signature Date and time

APPENDIX: 4

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND, JOHANNESBURG

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Research Topic: *School Leadership and Teacher Professional Development in Lesotho: A Case Study of Two Secondary Schools in Leribe District*

GENERAL QUESTIONNAIRE (FOR TEACHERS, PRINCIPALS AND DEPUTY PRINCIPALS)

School Information

Name of School:

_____

INSTRUCTION: PLEASE TICK AS APPROPRIATE

BACKGROUND INFORMATION OF PARTICIPANTS

A. Age: …….

B. Gender: Male ☐ Female ☐

C. Level of Qualifications

Masters ☐

Honours ☐

First Degree ☐

Teacher Certificate ☐

D. Specify your Course of Teaching Subject …….

E. Indicate number of years teaching: ☐ less than 5 years

☐ 1 – 5 years

☐ 6 -10 years

☐ 11-15years

☐ More than 15 years

E. Number of years in this school …….

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

1. In your experience as a teacher, do you think teacher professional development is useful?

☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Neutral ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

2. Is teacher professional development a leadership responsibility?

☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Neutral ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

3. Does teacher professional development help in managing teaching and learning?

☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Neutral ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

4. How often do you receive teacher professional development in your school?

☐ Frequently ☐ Not so frequent (Average) ☐ Occasionally ☐ Never

5. Does teacher professional development help enhance your competence as a teacher?

☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Neutral ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

6. Teacher professional development is a continuous process that helps in achieving students' learning goals.

☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Neutral ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

7. Please indicate in terms of the most significant your perceptions of teacher professional development.

☐ Adds to knowledge and skills ☐ Enhances teaching and learning ☐ enhances competence ☐ Boosts confidence ☐ Personal development

☐ To build social relationships with other teachers

☐ Strengthens professional relationships among colleagues

☐ Other_____ (Please specify)?

8. How has teacher professional development helped you manage teaching and learning?

----

9. What aspects of teacher professional development do you like the most? ----------

----

----

10. What aspects of teacher professional development do you think are inadequate?

---

11. How does teacher professional development impact on your teaching? ----------

---

APPENDIX: 5

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND, JOHANNESBURG

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

PROVISIONAL TEACHERS' QUESTIONS GUIDE FOR THE FOLLOW -UP INTERVIEWS

Research Topic: *School Leadership and Teacher Professional Development in Lesotho: A Case Study of Two Secondary Schools in Leribe District*

1.What activities have you engaged with, in the past year, which demonstrate teacher professional development? ----------

----

----------.

2. How have these activities been helpful? ----------

----

3. Who organised these activities? ----------

--------.

4. Were these activities focused on improving teaching and learning? Yes ☐ No ☐

Elaborate ----------

----------.

5. Which aspect of your career would you like to see enhanced in teacher professional development? ----------

----

----------.

6. How often do you think teacher professional development should be provided in order for it to enhance your professionalism? ----------

----

----------.

7. In your opinion, how does teacher professional development relate to learner outcomes?

----

8. How do you ensure that the knowledge and skills you acquire from teacher professional development benefits:

a) Your students? ----------

b) Your colleagues? ----------

c) The school? ----------

9. **What is the role of the principal in teacher professional development? ----------**

   ----------.

10. **How is this role demonstrated? ----------**

11. **Who are other personnel in and outside the school responsible for teacher professional development? ----------**

    ----------.

12. **Do you think the qualification you have is enough to sustain you in the teaching profession? If no, how can teacher professional development help in the enhancement of your skills? ----------**

    ----------.

APPENDIX: 6

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND, JOHANNESBURG

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Research Topic: *School Leadership and Teacher Professional Development in Lesotho: A Case Study of Two Secondary Schools in Leribe District*

PRINCIPAL AND DEPUTY PRINCIPAL'S PROVISIONAL QUESTIONS GUIDE FOR FOLLOW-UP INTERVIEWS

---

1. **What role do principals play in teacher professional development? ----------**

   -------.
2. **What do you think should be incorporated in the role of leadership in teacher professional development? ----------**

   -------.
3. **How does teacher professional development impact on teaching and learning?**

4. **In your opinion, should principals be trained to be able to provide teacher professional development?----------**

   ----------.

5. **Should principals also be provided with teacher professional development?**
6. **Give reasons for your response. ----------**

   --------.

7. **What factors in the school may affect the administering of teacher professional development?----------**

   -------.

8. **what support is necessary to enable teacher professional development:**
   a) **Support in the school ----------.**
   b) **Support outside the school----------.**

9. **How do you think teacher professional development helps teachers become better? -**

   ----------.

10. **What sort of improvement would you like to see done to enhance teacher professional**

    development programmes in your school?----------

    ----------.

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