South African teachers' experiences of continuous professional teacher development: Connections and disconnections

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In this article we present the findings of an investigation on how primary school teachers at 3 independent primary schools in Johannesburg experienced continuous professional teacher development (CPTD). There is a wealth of literature available on planning, organising and implementing effective CPTD. Such literature also highlights the importance of applying adult learning principles in CPTD contexts in order to promote teachers' learning and development and in turn contributing to a positive effect on learning in the classroom. Exploring the value and usefulness of adult learning principles in CPTD can enhance primary school teachers' learning opportunities to update their knowledge and skills. Effective CPTD is important in South Africa as there is an urgent need to improve literacy and numeracy levels across primary education levels. Using qualitative data, we explore teachers' perspectives on how they learn and develop effectively, and what hinders their own learning and CPTD. Data collection methods included interviews, open-ended questionnaires, observations and document analysis. Fifteen primary school teachers, 3 primary school principals and 4 adult/teacher trainers participated in this investigation. A major finding of this research suggests that adult learning principles such as community of practice (CoP) are often omitted from CPTD practices. Thus, a disparity exists between literature on effective CPTD practice as compared to the everyday CPTD experiences of teachers. With this article we aim to contribute to current literature about teachers' experiences of CPTD and propose suggestions for planning, organising and implementing CPTD that also incorporates adult learning principles and would be valuable and useful to teachers.

Keywords: adult learning; community of practice; continuous professional teacher development; independent schools

Introduction

Continuous professional teacher development (CPTD) can be viewed as a process, method and tool which teachers and schools can use in order to be informed of new content and methodologies in the field of education. South Africa has continuously experienced changes and modifications to its educational policies, schooling and education systems (Van der Merwe, 2003). CPTD assists teachers with understanding and implementing these changes and modifications. Kedzior and Fifield (2004) mention that effective CPTD consists of regular training events being on-going, integrated into work experiences, and motivated by teachers. Adult learning principles take cognisance specifically of the adult learner in learning and development environments. Although there is a wide range of literature on methods to improve CPTD, in this article we highlight how adult learning principles may contribute to develop useful CPTD strategies.

Effective CPTD comprises of teaching practice, setting student learning goals, and understanding how students learn specific subject content or matter (Lee, 2004). CPTD can focus on teachers' learning area content competency and pedagogical knowledge of schooling and teaching (Thornburg & Mungai, 2011). CPTD, which includes teachers as essential decision-makers, is often a more effective method of establishing CPTD aims than making those decisions for teachers (Lee, 2004). Joyce and Calhoun (2010) echo this by referring to the teacher as the crucial focal point in CPTD.

Teachers will develop and learn more effectively when they are in an environment where their personal and professional development is valued (Joyce & Calhoun, 2010). Teachers' professional development should focus on areas that contribute to learners learning more effectively in schools (Southworth, 1996). Our investigation provides insight into the perspectives and challenges that teachers face in terms of being adult learners and their CPTD experiences. Furthermore, we aim to capture the teachers' experiences of participating in CPTD. We asked what teachers' experiences of participating in CPTD were? We also asked which aspects they perceived as contributing positively to their CPTD experiences and which aspects hindered their development?

The Role of Continuous Professional Teacher Development

Teachers constantly face changes, reforms and modifications to the curriculum. It is often the role of CPTD to bridge the gap between current practice and the new or modified way of doing things. In South Africa recent modifications to the National Curriculum Statement (NCS) Grade R–12 (2011–2012) required of teachers to undergo training and development on the Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS). Teachers have voiced concern about the implementation of the new Revised NCS Grades R–9 (Department of Basic Education, Republic of South Africa, 2015). Teachers were uncertain on how to implement the Revised NCS Grades R–9 in the subject-specific requirements that they taught. CPTD, in a form of teacher training, played a crucial role in upskilling the nation's teachers in terms of knowledge and skills to enable them to implement the modifications. Through CPTD teachers develop on a continual basis and create improved learning environments for learners (Southworth, 1996). Although some of the skills that teachers needed for the CAPS were generic, teachers also needed differentiated

knowledge and skills. These differentiated needs are dependent on the subject, grade and phase that the individual teacher teaches.

CPTD can address differentiated developmental needs of teachers. When teacher development is informed by individualised professional development models, it addresses teachers' specific and individual needs (Joyce & Calhoun, 2010). Individualised professional development models take both a person's abilities and needs into account (Marczely, 1996). In addition to the active involvement of teachers in establishing goals for CPTD, it is important to consider the development needs of groups of teachers in schools. Groups or teams may include subject, grade and phase teachers. Teachers' developmental needs should be established as part of a process where all role-players contribute to need identification, taking a holistic professional development approach into consideration (Moore, 1991). These role-players who plan and design CPTD may include individual teachers, groups or teams and school managers in the school community. CPTD should integrate role-players' views to make CPTD useful and relevant. School managers can create useful CPTD opportunities for teachers who experience time constrains during the school day. Teachers are busy teaching during the day and may only have a few moments in their schedule to observe colleagues in their classrooms (Moore & Barab, 2002). It is imperative for school managers to create access to opportunities for teachers to develop individually and to share ideas, solutions and experiences with peers. Quality learning environments, for both learners and teachers, should be developed by school managers (Southworth, 1996). School managers can create CPTD opportunities which include reflective practice. Teachers should be given the opportunities to learn, collaborate and reflect together to improve their practice (Svendsen, 2016:321). School managers will gain return on investment if they modify learning environments by facilitating adult learning concepts such as CoP in developmental practices (Knowles, Holton & Swanson, 1998).

When CPTD is planned correctly, it can help teachers feel valued and heard. Designing and planning CPTD is a process in which varied elements contribute to the actual course of action and even the end-product of CPTD. These elements can include individual developmental needs, modes of learning and abilities as well as the needs of subject and phase groups across schools. Therefore, CPTD should be a well-planned and designed effort that aligns teachers as individual adult learners and valued contributors to CPTD. As Braga, Jones, Bulger and Elliott (2017:301) state "in its ideal form, professional development should empower teachers to assume increased responsibility for making improvements that positively impact student

learning." Teachers, as adult learners, should have opportunities to learn new classroom technologies, methodologies and classroom management techniques, but teachers must be exposed to high quality training to do this successfully (Benton & Benton, 2008). Whether CPTD consists of individual or group development activities with shared experiences, appropriate CPTD planning and implementation has the potential to create effective teacher development and learning.

CPTD can create authentic opportunities for peer and group learning. Appropriate CPTD planning for adult learners involves a CoP framework where teachers learn with and from their peers, sharing ideas and solutions. Jones, West and Stevens (2006:82) refer to a "less formal context involving interactions with other teachers…." Yıldırım (2008:234) mentions that "CoP's hold promise for meaningful and effective professional development as they support opportunities for professional disclosure, reflection and growth in collaboration with colleagues." We are in agreement with the literature that states that teachers can learn and develop in formal and informal ways including a collective sharing of experience.

CoPs are valuable and useable approaches in CPTD, however, there is also a purpose to individual learning and development in CPTD. For teachers to benefit from CPTD, the focus should be on individual differences and learning needs (Knowles et al., 1998). In the next section we discuss the teacher as individual adult learner.

Teachers as Adult Learners

School managers like boards, school principals, heads of departments and teachers can all have input in defining CPTD aims for individual teachers and collective groups. Understanding learning, and more specifically, how adults learn, can assist in decision making concerning effective and useful CPTD planning and implementation.

By applying this knowledge, school managers can, for example, ensure that adult learners' *need to know* is addressed in CPTD. Knowledge of the methods and strategies of adult learning can help those who make decisions about training and working with learning adults (Knowles et al., 1998).

Knowles et al. (1998) mention that the adult learner's readiness to learn is linked to their life-related activities, stages and developmental activities. Therefore, adults learn in a variety of ways. Adults use their personal histories and experiences and apply this to new learning situations in which they find themselves (Caffarella, 2002).

Caffarella claims that adults prefer being active learners in learning situations and that this is an important tenet of adult learning. We agree that contexts for teachers as adult learners should include opportunities to be active participants in CPTD and differentiate learning contexts. Therefore, in an

effort to more clearly define effective CPTD for teachers as adult learners, we examined adult learning theory and principles in this study. Numerous aspects of CPTD must be taken into account when planning adult learning.

Adults' physical and mental health, their experiences and attitudes may all have a direct influence on their capacity and disposition to learn (Dean, 1994). As evident from the literature, it is important to consider individual adult learners in concurrence with the learning communities they form part of.

Adult Learning Theory and Principles that Contribute to Effective CPTD Practice

Adult learning, also referred to as andragogy, in a combination with CPTD, may contribute to effective development strategies for teachers. Merriam and Bierema (2014:59) state that "andragogy continues to be a major theory/model/approach to understanding and planning instruction for adult learners." Adult learning concepts contribute to creating opportunities and conditions for learning (Gregson & Sturko, 2007). There are a number of adult learning principles that can be applied directly to CPTD in order to create more useful and effective CPTD, and also alter ineffective CPTD practices. CPTD that aims to be a quick fix to problems is considered ineffective practice (Hunzicker, 2011). Terehoff (2002) notes a pedagogy approach as another problem that may hinder CPTD. "[P]principals assume that professional development learning methods should mirror methods teachers employ with their students" (Terehoff, 2002:66). Adults and children do not necessarily use similar learning strategies (Merriam & Bierema, 2014). Andragogy is a set of beliefs and learning methods based on the adult learner and the unique learning strategies of adult learning (Terehoff, 2002). Andragogy or adult learning principles can be incorporated into CPTD planning to counter ineffective CPTD practices.

Active and interactive CPTD based on the social element of adult learning in peer groups may create more effective conditions for learning (Zepeda, 2008). Thus, when CPTD planning takes place, this social aspect of adult learning should be considered. Hargreaves and Fullan (2012) mention that for teaching and learning to be effective, development should be a continuous process for the individual teacher and communities of teachers participating in peer learning strategies. Teachers are professionals who should be learning with other teachers as professionals in learning communities (Gregson & Sturko, 2007). A CoP is a dynamic cycle where community members are able to learn from their colleagues and then go their separate ways when the purpose of the CoP has been reached (Wenger, 1998).

Members that form part of a learning community, for example teachers in peer learning groups, who feel encouraged to learn from each other's experiences and ideas may feel encouraged to voice their own learning and developmental needs (Zepeda, 2008). Hunzicker (2011:177) refers to the adult learners' choice in CPTD as a "voice of direction and pace of learning." The adult learning principles that are discussed in this section may contribute to improved professional development opportunities for teachers. Implementing learning theory in training and professional development strategies may lead to improved learning and development procedures (Zepeda, 2008).

CPTD stakeholders and partners are able to implement adult learning principles in professional developmental activities. "[B]ecause of its validity in identifying adult learning characteristics, andragogy is popular with educators and trainers of adults in all types of instructional settings" (Merriam & Bierema, 2014:60). In this study we investigated the role of andragogy in current South African CPTD contexts.

Method

In order to capture teachers' perspectives on CPTD, we followed a qualitative research approach. A qualitative design framework focusses on the description of research participants' accounts and using different ways of collecting data until the underlying and true meaning is known by the researcher (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010).

This investigation was conducted at three independent primary schools in Johannesburg. The primary schools were located on different campuses and served parents and learners from local communities. The schools are referred to as *sister schools and community schools* by the teachers and the community. The schools in the investigation emphasise religious beliefs, values, ethos and cultural aspects of a specific religion, as well as traditions associated with that religion. The primary schools share a Board, but each school has its own school principal and deputy principal who are responsible for the day-to-day management of the school. The three schools belong to a network of schools with a shared ethos and value system, thus they were purposefully selected based on this shared mission. These schools adhere to the NCS Grades R-12 and the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement.

To contextualise the study, we discuss some of the CPTD activities and sessions that the teachers attended or participated in. Many of these CPTD activities were also observed. CPTD took on the form of meetings between Heads of Departments and teachers on a weekly or bi-weekly basis.

Teachers were expected to attend mandatory CPTD sessions (workshops, lectures,

demonstrations) – usually on a Monday after the school day at each respective primary school. Many of these workshops, lectures and demonstrations consisted of a speaker who presented a topic to the audience. The audience, however, was often passive and there were only a few opportunities for active learning. These sessions usually continued for an hour after school, but we observed that some sessions took up to 3 hours. CPTD was provided through in-house initiatives and usually organised by school principals or social workers. Throughout the year (three to five times per year), the CPTD sessions involved a "expert" speaker in education where teachers from the three primary schools gathered to listen to the "expert" in a lecture-type format.

The sample included 15 primary school teachers, three primary school principals and four adult/teacher trainers (male and female) (*n* = 22), from a selection of independent primary schools in Johannesburg. The participants varied in age, but had been in the teaching, education and training professions for at least 1 year prior to the investigation. As teachers' CPTD needs may differ for the phases taught (Grades 4, 5, 6 or 7), it was important to know what the teachers' experiences were in this regard.

Trainers were purposefully selected as they had to work with the teachers and provide training for at least 1 year prior to the investigation and while the investigation was taking place. The school principals were purposefully selected because they were in that specific positions when the investigation occurred. The teachers volunteered to participate after the purpose and aim of the investigation had been explained. At the site where one of us were employed, the principal was asked to purposefully select teachers based on their experience of CPTD and their ability to provide rich, unbiased descriptions of their experience of CPTD. All the participants were assured of anonymity and were free to withdraw from the research at any stage.

Fifteen teachers completed questionnaires on their own experiences of CPTD and learning within the school system where they taught. Participants were able to complete the questionnaire anonymously and in their own time.

Following from the questionnaire, 22 semi-structures interviews were employed to further expand on the issues raised and clarify concepts commented on in the questionnaire. Due to its flexible nature and the possibility for it to be altered or adapted, interviews were used as technique (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006). The interviews were opportunities for teachers, school principals and trainers to reflect on their experiences of CPTD. The interview questions included the following:

1) Explain the process of CPTD at your school.
2) Please give an example of how CPTD is evaluated at your school (if any).
3) What is your personal involvement in CPTD?

4) What is your opinion on voluntary and/or mandatory CPTD for teachers?

Using the Participant Observation Grid designed by McMillan and Schumacher (2010) to observe a variety of behaviours (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010), the data gathered consisted of observations notes collected during this time. The Participant Observation Grid focuses one's attention on detail, for example who is sitting/standing where, who is talking and saying what, who is not speaking, level of participation, body language, facial expressions, et cetera.

A variety of CPTD sessions were observed, e.g. computer training, smartboard training, subject, grade and phase meetings, motivational speakers and outside educational experts. Observations of CPTD were done at the three primary schools and three to five CPTD sessions were observed at each school. In addition, document analysis was also employed as an appropriate method for supplementing data collection about CPTD (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010).

Teacher evaluation and appraisal booklets as well as school CPTD documents formed part of the data collected. Document analysis is a useful method for data collection because it creates some perception of historical and recorded content about CPTD in the school and indicates whether planned changes have taken place (Bowen, 2009). The data were relevant in that teachers' lived experiences of the CPTD that they had participated are explicated. Ethical principles were observed throughout the investigation. All participants voluntarily took part in the investigation and participants could withdraw from the research at any time without any consequences (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). Informed consent was used to ensure that the participants fully understood what the investigation entailed. To ensure privacy and anonymity, actual names were not mentioned in the investigation, and participants were referred to as either "teacher, school principal or trainer."

Data Analysis

Data were analysed using qualitative data analysis. The specific steps used were collecting, organising, transcribing, coding, describing, and categorising (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). Interviews were transcribed and then checked against the digital recordings for any omissions and/or mistakes.

Omissions and mistakes were corrected on the transcriptions. The data from the questionnaires, interview transcriptions, observations field notes and the documents related to CPTD were coded by identifying phrases, ideas, emotions and concepts in the language. The analysis of this content was informed by patterns about key information regarding CPTD, teacher learning and adult learning. Coding was done by identifying certain phrases used by participants, for example: "*Mondays are compulsory CPTD days for all staff.*"

This provided us with information on when CPTD occurred at the schools under study. Emergent codes were extracted from the data using concepts, ideas, actions, and meanings from the data. Then codes and concepts were pooled together to develop categories. As an example, the codes "Setting, context and feedback process" as well as "Identification of when and where CPTD occurs within the on-site and off-site context" were extracted from the data. Both these codes were then pooled under the category "Process and procedure of planning and implementing CPTD." Discourse markers were indicative of specific segments of data. For example, "Discourse of Choice: Mandatory and Voluntary CPTD" were indicative of language used by participants such as "being kept here" and "forced to attend training."

Discourse analysis of teachers' interaction patterns emerging from observations and interviews was used for data analysis. The transcriptions of audio recordings from the interviews were used to find the properties of texts like vocabulary, grammar, implicatures and metaphors (Fairclough, 1995). Interview transcripts, participant observations, document analysis and questionnaires were used to find the conventions of speech and written texts. Multiple observations were also analysed to identify the roles and tasks of participants in CPTD activities. The observations were organised within the identified categories (Schlager & Fusco, 2003).

Trustworthiness of the Research

Trustworthiness was ensured by checking with participants that their intended ideas were understood and recorded correctly. This was done during the interviews as participants were asked to explain in more detail and give further descriptions in instances where the responses were unclear or when the interviewee was unsure of what was being conveyed. Detailed records of interview transcriptions were also developed and used for analysis.

Trustworthiness was further ensured by developing the findings based on the results from the questionnaires, interviews, documents analysis and observations. Credibility from the observations was ensured by doing observations over a long period of time and doing multiple observations at the research sites. The results were also triangulated using various data collection methods.

Findings and Discussion

In this section we present a discussion of the major themes that emerged from the questionnaires, interviews, observations, and document analysis. The findings are discussed and include participants' responses. The themes include a disjuncture between adult learning principles and CPTD; participants' suggestions for CPTD and lastly, positive and negative impressions of CPTD.

Disjuncture between Adult Learning Principles and CPTD

Teachers indicated that there was a difference between current CPTD practice and the preferences and methods that teachers implemented to learn effectively (Van der Merwe-Muller, 2018).

According to the data, teachers identified that they preferred to learn by discussion groups linked to a specific grade, subject or phase and peer-to-peer discussions (Van der Merwe-Muller, 2018). They preferred learning in communities of practice by sharing ideas and solutions, using and working with relevant examples, internet or online searches, writing and reading, note taking, listening to relevant topics and attending workshops. Through the observations, questionnaires, and interviews it became clear that most current CPTD emphasises lecture-type CPTD – where a speaker or trainer speaks about a specific topic. The audience, teachers, take on a passive role of listener. A teacher mentioned in the questionnaire: "*There have been occasions when the trainers and speakers are lacking basic communications skills and presentations have been long, boring and time wasting*" (Questionnaire).

A participant commented during an interview on the role of teachers in the school concerning CPTD: "*If I am not interested in a topic nothing really* […] [not doing anything]*, just sitting and listening*" (Interview).

This theme indicated that much of the CPTD practice differed from how teachers preferred to learn and learn effectively. Instead of active learning, teachers were mostly exposed to sit-and-listen forms of training. Andragogy is applicable to various learning contexts specifically for adult learners (Knowles et al., 1998:2). Professional development should be influenced and be informed by aspects of adult learning like context and methods in which adults learn; it should also form the basis from which development is planned (Lawler, 2003).

Participants' Suggestions for CPTD Improvement

Teachers reflected that they could contribute relevant experiences, skills and knowledge that they have accumulated individually and collectively to make CPTD more effective. Teachers suggested strategies to improve their learning and development. Trainers and other adult teachers should assist adult learners to direct their learning (Knowles et al., 1998). Some of the strategies suggested by teachers were dividing long sessions in frequent, shorter, in-depth sessions which would allow for improved concentration and focus. Teachers also suggested that they should be allowed

to supply relevant topics for training, and that they should create development needs. Furthermore, teachers also suggested that for CPTD to improve, sessions should be less frequent, but more effective CPTD instead of more frequent mediocre CPTD sessions; teachers preferred having fewer, but quality-driven CPTD sessions. Teachers proposed that speakers or adult trainers, topics and methods of CPTD should be evaluated and screened before and after implementing in-school CPTD.

During an interview one of the teachers suggested that teachers should train and develop with other teachers: "*I would definitely say that the Management Team should actually open up the weeks to all staff ... Because I do feel that every teacher has something special that they know and they could share ...*" (Interview).

Another teacher suggested consultation as vital for the development of effective professional development: "*Practical professional development needs guidelines and consultation. The big issue comes in with implementation* [of what is learnt in professional development]" (Questionnaire).

A school principal commented that teachers should be proactive and not depend solely on school principals to give input regarding CPTD:

> *I think by teachers being proactive* [concerning training]*. By teachers coming to me or to management to say, this is my field of interest within the educational field, I feel this could help in my teaching, help in my personal growth. So it is about developing the children, but developing oneself as well. And I think if we can be guided by the teacher's needs that would really be the first prize.* (Interview)

This theme indicates that teachers had ideas and strategies to improve CPTD. It also indicates that the other participants, like school principals, encouraged teachers to provide input regarding CPTD. Furthermore, this theme reveals that teacher can also be teacher-trainers and that teachers have classroom and educational experience, tools for effective teaching, and teaching to share with other teachers and school managers. The adult learner is the best resource for learning because they have life experience, they are able to share this experience and have ideas on what works and what can be improved on in their respective fields (Knowles et al., 1998).

Reflections on CPTD

Teachers reflected that CPTD was positive when teachers could share ideas among themselves. CPTD within a CoP that is focused on the grade, subject or a phase, and is also specific and specialised, is valuable and useful to teachers. Teachers mentioned that they wanted to learn with their peers. A teacher commented as follows:

> *We've had some really good trainers coming in. We had some* [training] *on the CAPS documents by teachers who are actually involved in actually teaching those subjects, they had a hands-on experience. They could share their war stories from trenches as we can say.* (Interview)

This teacher indicated that they had training on the CAPS, but that the trainers were actual teachers who taught the subject and content. The teacher felt that they could relate to the trainers because the trainers had real-life or hands-on experiences to share with the teachers, which made the training a positive developmental experience.

Teachers indicated that they preferred learning in a CoP. Wenger-Trayner and Wenger-Trayner (2015) mention that when peers continually work and learn together, this may lead to the improvement of individual practice. Professional development can occur within a CoP when learning is associated with practical application within the CoP (Schlager & Fusco, 2003). When teachers engage in communities of practice there is a greater chance of creating professional development that is "effective" and "sustainable" (Schlager & Fusco, 2003:204–205).

A teacher trainer who regularly works with teachers in professional development mentioned that teachers had to be explicitly shown the value of CPTD activities. The trainer mentioned that when teachers could see the benefits or value of CPTD, it may be perceived as a positive part of a teaching career:

> *I think it* [CPTD] *mustn't be a chore, it mustn't be seen as an extra activity, I* [teacher] *have to stay behind. That is what I said before ... the value from that* [Professional Development] *PD needs to be shown from the outset. If you come to this PD, by the time you finish it, you will be able to do X, Y and Z. And they should be able to do X, Y, Z by the end of that. If you don't do that they won't come back and there will be no value.* (Interview)

Negative impressions of CPTD were also reflected on during interviews. Teachers expressed that they weren't part of the planning process of CPTD; they often felt that they were not consulted in CPTD planning and implementation. The teachers commented that school principals, social workers and boards were involved in the process of planning CPTD.

> *If I am not interested in a* [development] *topic nothing really ...* [not doing anything]*, just sitting and listening. In the planning, as I say, if we want to we can put a topic forward, but it is easier for somebody else to do it.* (Interview)

Teachers indicated disempowerment of decision-making concerning CPTD. Knowles et al. (1998:67) argue that this can be negative for adults' identity: "The implication of this fact for adult education is that in any situation in which the participants' experiences are ignored or devalued, adults will perceive this as rejecting, not only their experience, but rejecting themselves as persons."

However, from the interviews with the school principal and teachers it was clear that teachers were given opportunities to suggest CPTD topics and themes.

Teachers could also suggest names of speakers and trainers for CPTD sessions at the schools. These opportunities were often not used for various reasons: teachers not volunteering suggestions as it was easier to pass that responsibility to others; an attitude of apathy towards CPTD. Although opportunities were provided for teachers to contribute to CPTD planning, this lack of interest reinforced an attitude of apathy and self-disempowerment (Van der Merwe-Muller, 2018).

Discussion

In this article we elucidate teachers' experiences of CPTD in order to contribute to the literature on CPTD in independent primary schools in South Africa. A limitation of this investigation was that this was localised to teachers in independent primary schools in Johannesburg. However, this investigation could contribute to the understanding and illumination of the lived experiences of other teachers who participated in CPTD. The reflections of experiences concerning CPTD may be evident for many teachers teaching at independent or public schools alike. As indicated, teachers often participated in lecture or seminar type CPTD sessions organised by school principals or social workers. These were CPTD sessions where teachers listened to an educational expert while taking notes. The implication was that the teachers were not involved or were only minimally involved in planning the CPTD. The teachers questioned the effectiveness and level of implementation of these CPTD sessions. This links to the second finding and lends support to the claim that CPTD was haphazard, repetitive, passive, boring, are ineffective teacher learning and development.

In the article we report on some of the aspects and experiences that hinder effective CPTD and those aspects that contribute to useful and valuable CPTD. From the data gathered it can be concluded that the aspects which impede useful CPTD included a disjuncture between adult learning principles and CPTD and topics/themes that were irrelevant or repetitive. When the views of teachers about their experiences of CPTD were examined, it was clear that the teachers' experiences of CPTD differed from the principles of adult learning in developmental contexts. This finding is consistent with Terehoff (2002) who mentions that adult learning principles and methods are designed specifically for the adult who is learning. When literature makes credible suggestions for adult learning, but when these are not implemented for teachers in their CPTD, a disjuncture is created which results in challenges with regard to teacher development.

From the investigation we deduced that teachers were of the opinion that they had very little or no input into planning the CPTD. Teachers suggested that they preferred active participation in CPTD and less passive sitting-and-listening. In the interviews the participants indicated that learning with and in a CoP was a preferred method for development and learning. This was also evident from the observations of specific grade, subject and phase meetings. Literature on CPTD is readily available, but we suggest that CPTD should be developed and planned in conjunction with adult learning principles. Both these concepts, CPTD and adult learning, can improve learning and development for teachers.

We recommend that planning for CPTD should include role-players like school managers, teachers and trainers learning about andragogy and implementing adult learning principles in CPTD. A model, see Figure 1, has emerged from the research and is applicable to school managers, trainers, teachers and policy-developers who have an interest to ensure a more effective planning process for CPTD. The model indicates various elements to consider, for example, adult learning principles, and tensions and policy development within the CPTD planning process. The model (Figure 1) was designed as an output for effective CPTD and teacher leaning as a result of the research undertaken. This has relevance for all schools and role players that participate in various forms of CPTD – locally and internationally. The model was developed as a tool from the data, and as the voice of participants, to promote more effective CPTD. It serves as a recommendation to teachers, trainers, school principals and any person involved in CPTD planning. These recommendations can be applied to planning contexts for CPTD.
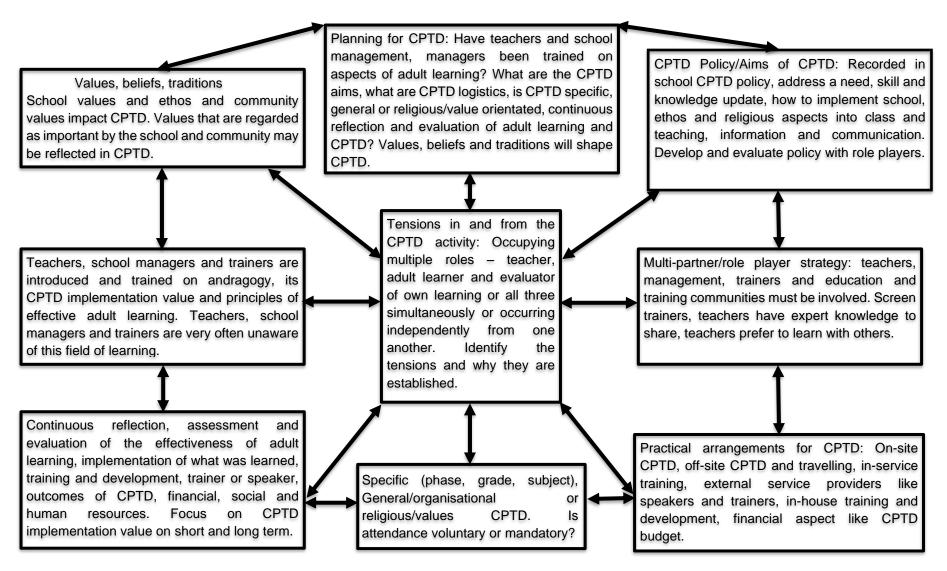
Figure 1 Model to enhance planning and implementation of CPTD and teacher learning to develop more effective CPTD (Van der Merwe-Muller, 2018:156)

The individuals or teams who plan, implement, evaluate and modify teacher development should understand that teachers' learning is dependent on various aspects. In Figure 1 it is suggested that role-players who plan CPTD should be trained on adult learning principles. This links to finding 4 that a disjuncture between adult learning principles and CPTD practice leads to ineffective teacher learning and development. Teachers are adult learners with their own learning styles, learning modes and preferences and this should form part of a formalised and purposeful planning process. Supporting the individual educator is when the teacher is viewed as a unique individual and the ultimate client in professional development (Joyce & Calhoun, 2010). Individual and organisational development aims and/or outcomes, as indicated in Figure 1, should be created to foster professional growth.

CPTD aims and outcomes are those aspects that teachers and schools earmark for current and future development. Developmental aims can be established from various sources, e.g. teacher evaluations can be used to determine developmental areas or needs. This links to the third finding that various formal and informal methods can be used to establish teachers' developmental needs. The identified needs should be recorded in CPTD policy as illustrated in CPTD Policy and Aims in Figure 1. Bayar (2014:323) suggests that CPTD should "match [to] existing teacher needs." Classroom observations, learners' standardised and baseline assessments and result analysis can also be used as tools to further develop aims and outcomes of CPTD. The CPTD policy can record and state the aims to develop an individual teacher, a group or department, or the whole organisation. In order to create aims for CPTD, a multiple-partner strategy is suggested which includes teachers, trainers and school managers to contribute to the development of aims.

Furthermore, we suggest continuous reflection, assessment and evaluation of CPTD in itself, and its effects in order to create an accurate assessment and earnestly consider assessment results of CPTD (Svendsen, 2016).

Vaughan and McLaughlin (2011) advocate that school managers reflect on and reconsider all CPTD ideas in their schools. Participants in this investigation suggested that reflection on learning and development could create opportunities for evaluation and feedback about the speaker or trainer, content of CPTD, and the implementation value thereof.

Conclusion

CPTD is a vital aspect of school and teacher development – not only in South Africa, but worldwide. Although this investigation was employed in independent primary schools in Johannesburg, it also has relevance for teachers in public schools in South Africa.

Firstly, teachers, irrespective of public or independent schools, may benefit from this investigation because the principles of effective adult learning in conjunction with CPTD are relevant for all teachers as adult learners. It is suggested that CPTD aims must be developed by teachers as role-players. This links with literature on adult learning which indicates that CPTD and existing teacher needs should correlate (Bayar, 2014).

In conclusion, we illuminated the importance to improve decision-making, practice and policy development when planning and implementing CPTD for all adult learners in order for them to learn and develop optimally. Thorough and in-depth planning includes ways for creating opportunities for teachers to learn from their peers in an active learning-teaching dynamic that takes the individual adult learners' CPTD requirements and specific context into careful consideration.

Authors' Contributions

LVMM conducted the research for this article that draws from her Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) study, which was supervised by ND. Both authors refined and reviewed the final manuscript.

Notes

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