INVESTIGATING TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF

SELF-INITIATED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

by

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Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree

Master in Educational Management and Leadership

in the

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

at the

UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA

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September 2021

DECLARATION

I declare this information regarding the dissertation titled: *Investigating teachers' perceptions of the self-initiated professional development,* submitted for the degree of Masters in Education Management.

1. I am the creator of part or all content and layout and where I have used other people's work, they are acknowledged fully.

2. The work is not in any way a violation of anybody's rights or anything.

3. This dissertation is my own work and has not been submitted to any institution before.

4. I have complied with all research ethics requirements.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my beloved son,

Fuandem Success Atem Junior

Who passed on to eternal glory on 27 May 2016

To have you as our son was the greatest gift. Thank you for making the world to call me a mother. I wish you were here to celebrate this achievement with mommy.

Missing you comes in waves and right now, I am drowning.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Firstly, I express my gratitude to my supervisor, Dr. Rakgadi Phatlane, Faculty of Education, University of Pretoria for her continuous guidance, input, and encouragement, financial and moral support throughout the years of completing my master's. Without her unfailing support, thorough and insightful comments during the process of writing, I would not have had the motivation to strive for my goal. I would like to emulate her footsteps, with her profound intelligence and commitment. I have gained inspiration from her to never to stop learning. She has inspired me to continue growing as an individual and to participate in whatever way to improve educational values. I am privileged to be your student.

I would like to thank my co-supervisor, Professor Chika Sehoole, Dean of the Faculty of Education, who supported me immeasurably by adding invaluable expertise, guidance and constructive comments throughout. I acknowledge the Department of Education Management staff for their support during the initial stage of proposal writing.

My sincere gratitude to the school principals for allowing me to conduct interviews with their teachers. I am thankful to the HODs and English language teachers who accepted to take part in this study and provided honest answers to all the questions; and without whom this study would not have been possible. I thank you for offering your precious time to take part in this study despite the current pandemic.

I need to acknowledge the support from Fombelleh Joseph, my mom, Ndemaze Grace Amunkeng, my siblings, Zelefac Killian, Anyifuet Chantal, Tongwa Columbus, Atemkeng Falone and Precious Nkafu.

I am also thankful to my best friends, Moyosoreoluwa Soyombo, Asonganyi Boris and my darling Billa Emillien. Thank you all for trusting in me and lifting me up whenever gloom crept in.

Last but not least, I thank my husband, Njuafac Nicodemus Wamba, my pillar of strength, best friend, my anchor and support throughout this study. I appreciate all that you have done for me. You are my rock.

Above all, I thank God Almighty for giving me the wisdom and strength to conduct this study. It could not have been possible without you, Lord.

ABSTRACT

Teacher professional development has increasingly gained priority in educational policies and practice. However, existing models have often been condemned for being top-down and ineffective. Recently, self-initiated professional development has been acknowledged and is more relevant with teachers taking responsibility in identifying their own developmental needs. This teacher-centred learning, originating from adult learning theory of andragogy, confirms teachers' independence in initiating self-initiated professional development. The purpose of this study was to find out teachers' perceptions and experiences in self-initiating their professional development, how teachers perceive the effectiveness of the self-initiated approach and how it is incorporated into their practice.

A qualitative case study research, nested in an interpretivist paradigm, was conducted with twelve purposively selected in-service high school English language teachers in government schools in the Tshwane South District of Gauteng to determine teachers' perceptions of self-initiated professional development initiatives. Data collected through document analysis and interviews were thematically analysed.

It emerged that although HODs and teachers were positive about engaging in self-initiated professional development, some teachers regard it as a foreign concept while others engage in it inadvertently. At this stage, self-initiated professional development is not well integrated with the current professional development models. It is suggested that in order for professional development to positively influence the quality of education in South Africa, the Department of Basic Education needs to firstly consult with the teachers to determine their developmental needs and secondly, to monitor that the process. In addition, accountability needs to be enforced so that the implementations of the various types of professional development activities influence the provision of quality teaching and learning.

KEY WORDS: Self-initiated professional development, teacher professional development, professional development.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

CPTD	Continuous Professional Teacher Development
DA	Development Appraisal
DBE	Department of Basic Education
EEA	Employment of Educators Act
ELRC	Educational Labour Relations Council
GDE	Gauteng Department of Education
HOD	Head of Department
ISPFTED	Integrated Strategic Planning Framework for Teachers Education and Development
IQMS	Integrated Quality Management System
NIET	National Institute for Excellence in Teaching
NPFTED	National Policy Framework for Teacher Education and Development
NSE	Norms and Standards for Educators
PAM	Personal Administrative Measures
PCK	Pedagogic Content Knowledge
PGP	Personal Growth Plan
PLC	Professional Learning Community
PM	Performance Management
PD	Professional Development
RSA	Republic of South Africa
SACE	South African Council for Educators
SIP	School Improvement Plan
SMT	School Management Team

TD	Teacher Development
TPD	Teacher Professional Development
UK	United Kingdom
USA	United States of America
WSE	Whole School Evaluation

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1   INTRODUCTION

Studies have shown that in order to make education more relevant to the society, it depends on how well teachers are professionally developed (Ono & Ferreira, 2010; Steyn, 2011). Professional development (PD) for teachers is a priority for stakeholders to ensure the provision of quality education (Avalos, 2011). The recognition of this reality has led many developed and underdeveloped countries like South Africa to invest finances and resources in the education sector and most especially in the professional development of teachers (Avalos, 2011; Meyer & Abel, 2015). Teachers' participation in professional development activities develops their pedagogic content knowledge (PCK) and acquire new skills to address the identified professional gaps or deficiencies which often occur with curriculum changes. All teachers, at some time or another, have professional development needs.

Teacher's professional development (TPD) denotes all activities that teachers carry out to enhance their professional deficiencies (Adu & Okeke, 2014) and the fundamental reason of professional development is to ensure a teacher's lifelong learning, professional growth and also to improve learner achievement (Ajani, 2018). Self-initiated and external professional developments are two types of professional development that could assist in developing teachers' pedagogic content knowledge and competencies. Self-initiated professional development originates from teachers' own idea/initiative. Self-initiated professional development is a process whereby teachers take the main responsibility in developing themselves professionally. In this regard, an education agent plays a facilitating role. The direction of teachers' development has therefore, shifts from an outsider to an insider approach, which stems from criticism of traditional forms of teachers' professional development (Curwood, 2011). Critics of the traditional models of professional development, which include conferences, workshops, courses and seminars and so forth offered by external experts (Duncan-Howell, 2010), point to their lack of lasting effect on teaching and learning.

In contrast, external professional development activities are guided by regulatory bodies, which stipulate the standards of professional development (Evans & Esch, 2013). In this approach, teachers rely more on experts' knowledge and practices. Regardless of the remarkable body of evidence on teacher's professional development, there seems to be little research on teachers' perceptions of self-initiated professional development. Thus, the researcher argues that self-

initiated professional development is crucial in offering teachers relevant support, skills and resource materials needed to optimally perform their role in the classroom.

To explore how English language teachers of the Tshwane South District, South Africa perceive the self-initiated professional development approach, the study followed a qualitative research methodology. In doing so, I believe that this study may add to the South African literature on professional development of teachers, and in addition, the findings may inform policy makers who plan professional development activities. I believe that this study may create more awareness of self-initiated professional development activities.

1.2   BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Teachers being at the forefront of education in South Africa have made education one of the government's priorities. Thus, professional development of teachers, particularly continuous professional development is vital to ensure quality of education (Meyer & Abel, 2015; RSA, 2007). Every teacher undergoes initial teacher development which is the basis of the teaching profession by acquiring appropriate qualifications before he/she is employed as a teacher in South Africa (RSA, 2007). However, though teachers may have acquired relevant teacher qualifications, they still need to take part in their developmental activities. The purpose of continuous professional development is to support them to advance their pedagogic content knowledge particularly with curriculum changes and ensure professional growth.

Important policies that guide teachers' professional development in South Africa include "the Employment of Educators Act", 1998, "Norms and Standards for Educators" (NSE), 2000, "the Integrated Quality Management System" (IQMS) and the "National Policy Framework for Teachers Education and Development" (NPFTED. Despite the above professional development policies, the NPFTED (RSA, 2007), acknowledged that many teachers had not yet been fully prepared to embrace teaching in the 21st century. As such, this has led to another form of teachers' professional development called Self-Initiated Professional Development or Teacher-Initiated Activities (Type 1) (SACE, 2012). Self-initiated professional development, which originates from teachers' own idea/initiative, is a process where a teacher takes the main role for his/her developmental activities and (Birhanu, 2014).

Teacher-centred professional development, emanating from theories of adult learning, confirms teachers' independence in carrying out their developmental activities (Louws, Meirink, Veen & Driel, 2017). The South African Council for Educators (SACE, 2012)

mandates educators to obtain a total of 150 professional development points within a period of three years. This should be done by engaging in teacher-initiated activity (Type 1), school-initiated activity (Type 2), and externally-initiated activity (Type 3). However, very little is known about teachers' perceptions of self-initiated professional development. Previous studies have focused more on professional development opportunities, its potential for teachers, challenges and teachers' perceptions of PD in general (Jita & Mokhele, 2014; Ono &Ferreira, 2010; Steyn, 2009). These studies excluded a focus on teachers' perceptions regarding self-initiated professional development.

This research was prompted by teachers' desire to participate in planning their developmental activities (Ravhuhali, 2014). Teachers have long complained about professional development activities which do not help them as activities tend to be irrelevant, inefficient, and most of all, not really linked to their main work which is to improve learners' achievement (Ravhuhali, 2014). Consequently, this study intended to fill this gap in the literature by investigating teachers' perceptions of self-initiated professional development.

1.3   PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The general aim of this research was to explore high school English language teachers' perceptions of self-initiated professional development activity. That is, their understanding about self-initiated professional development and whether it delivers its intended purpose of allowing teachers to initiate their own professional development. Although there has been previous research conducted on both the positive and negative influence of professional development (Ali, 2017; Steyn, 2011) how teachers perceive the self-initiated activities in catering   for their developmental needs is still not known. Therefore, this study sought to fill the gap in the literature for more meaningful professional development and specifically to understand the perceptions of teachers in self-initiated professional development.

1.4   STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

SACE (2012), emphasises that all educators must accrue 150 professional development points over a period of three (3) years. These professional development points can be collected over three different types of activities, which include teacher-initiated activity (Type 1), school-initiated activity (Type 2), and externally initiated activity (Type 3). It is particularly in teacher-initiated activity (type 1 activity) that teachers have the main responsibility. Type 1 activities

(teacher initiated) include continuous professional teacher development (CPTD) activities, which are initiated by a teacher based on his\her individual and professional development requirements. However, whether the self-initiated professional development is implemented effectively or not seems yet not to be well known in the country. According to Ravhuhali (2014), much of the professional development activities do not help teachers as they (teachers) often complain that such activities are irrelevant, inefficient, and most of all, not really linked to their main work which is to improve learners' achievement. Bantwini (2012) in his findings reveal that a successful teachers' professional development lies on the understanding of teachers' perceptions since they can be a hindrance to the new information and the background knowledge. Consequently, does the fact that teachers simply identify their development needs mean self-initiated development activity? Does attending educational meeting, workshops and conferences mean self-initiated professional development? Does completing an online course and reading educational materials mean self-initiated activities? These continuous feeling sparked the curiosity for me to investigate other teachers' understanding of self-initiated professional development as well as their experiences.

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Considering the gap in the literature, the following main research question and the subsidiary questions directed the research process: *How do teachers perceive self-initiated professional development?*

In order to explore this topic fully, the following sub-questions were also explored:

1. What are teachers' perceptions/understanding of self-initiated professional development?

2. How do teachers perceive their experiences/engagement of self-initiated professional development?

3. How do teachers perceive the effectiveness of self-initiated activities?

1.6 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The primary aim of this study was to understand clearly how teachers perceive self-initiated professional development. The following objectives guided the study:

- To determine teachers' perceptions/understanding of a self-initiated professional development approach with reference to quality teaching.

- To explore how teachers, perceive their experiences/engagement in self-initiating professional development activities.

- To discover teachers' perceptions towards the effectiveness of self-initiated professional development.

1.7   RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

My primary reason for conducting this study was to understand the South African education system in general and specifically professional development via the perceptions and experiences of teachers in the process of self-initiating their professional development. It is clear from the literature that more responsibilities are given to the educators themselves to take charge of their developmental activities through the Type 1 activity or self-initiated development activities. These teacher-initiated activities consist of Continuous Professional Teacher Development (CPTD) activities that teachers initiate themselves depending on their developmental needs. Some examples of these teacher-initiated activities are reading educational materials, attending conferences, educational meetings, conferences, and workshop sessions and mentoring.

Secondly, my interest in teachers' professional development comes from my prior professional and personal experiences of looking at examples of self-initiated activities, which include, reading educational materials and attending seminars. I have often pondered on what self-initiated professional development really is and what kind of activities should be considered as self-initiated professional development activities. In addition, questions such as how and when should self-initiated teacher development be carried out, have arisen. This sparked the desire to explore other teachers' perceptions of self-initiated professional development as well as their experiences. Acquiring these insights was only possible by investigating how teachers perceive self-initiated activities in their personal and professional lives.

Thus, the need for more comprehensive knowledge of teachers' self-initiated developmental practices to enable a good understanding of how teachers prefer to learn. This is similar to DuFour (2015), who emphasised that an understanding of teachers' perceptions in planning

their professional development has the potential of improving the contemporary professional development guidelines and practices.

1.8 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Although studies have been carried out on teacher professional development activities in South Africa (Jita & Mokhele, 2014; Ono & Ferreira, 2010; Smith, 2017), there is still lack of information regarding teachers' understanding of self-initiated professional development approach in the South African literature. Therefore, in conducting this study, I explored teachers' opinions, views or perceptions regarding their experiences of the self-initiated PD activities in South Africa with regard to quality teaching, to determine educators' opinion about the effectiveness of the content applicability in classroom practices in self-initiated activities. In addition, I wanted to uncover the effectiveness of self-initiated activities in addressing learner-related problems in the classroom and investigate the effectiveness of the self-initiated professional development in introducing innovative teaching strategies.

The findings may be useful in narrowing the gaps between the perceptions of educators' professional development and real practice. The findings of this study may lead to redesigning of self-initiated professional development activities of educators. Lastly, the findings can be useful in the development of appropriate strategies to involve teachers in self-initiating their PD.

To conclude, the findings of this study may offer a perspective on areas of teachers' professional development in South Africa through the understanding of English language teachers' perspectives of self-initiated PD. It may assist designers of professional development and institutions that train teachers in understanding teachers' needs and offer professional development opportunities for better teacher quality and improved classroom practices. It may equally lead to more awareness in the important roles that teachers play in self-initiating their developmental activities.

1.9 DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Creswell (2013) explain that delimitations set borders to a study and establish a precise scope. The focus of this study was on teachers' perceptions of self-initiated professional activities. The study only involved a few, selected public schools in the Tshwane-South District of the

Gauteng province, and participants were restricted to HoDs of English language and English language secondary school teachers.

1.10   CONCEPT CLARIFICATION

To contextualise this study, it is important to give meaning and understanding to certain terms that were used within the study. The terms include:

An **activity** involves all actions by teachers in their core job responsibility area, which is improving learner achievement.

Development denotes the growth that teachers achieve of teaching and of themselves (Richards & Farrell, 2011) aiming to inculcate lifelong learning in them.

According to this study, **a teacher** is a person who teaches, educates or trains other persons.

Teacher perception is teachers' awareness or understanding of a situation.

Teacher professional development refers to activities, which improve an educator's skill, knowledge and expertise.

Professional development relates to the variety of internal and external activities that educators engage in to enable school improvement.

Self-efficacy is a trait in character providing explanations on how people's presumptions about their capabilities to do something can have an effect on their true performance in many ways (Bandura, 2009) and the capability to self-reflect. In this study, self-efficacy means the ability of a teacher to be able to use self-reflection in making sense out of their experiences and shape their actions.

Self-initiated professional development is the educators' own development of experiences, attitudes and intelligence, which is initiated by the educators themselves.

1.11   OVERVIEW OF THE FOLLOWING CHAPTERS

Chapter 1 presented an introduction and background of the study, explanation of the problem as well as the research questions, aim and objective. The chapter also presented the rationale, significance of the study and clarified concepts used in the study.

Chapter 2 reviews the literature of local and international researchers' work. This is primarily done to ascertain the practices, literature gaps and the different models to professional development were identified in general and specifically the self-initiated professional development.

Chapter 3 illustrates the research methodologies used in the study. It highlights the research tools used for data collection, which includes interviews and document analysis as well as discussing data analysis, trustworthiness and ethical considerations.

Chapter 4 is a presentation of findings emerging from qualitative data analysis and an interpretation.

Chapter 5 is the concluding chapter, which comprises a synthesis of the findings, recommendations, suggestions for future research and the overall conclusion of the study.

1.12   CONCLUSION

Chapter 1 set the stage with a background to the study resulting in three secondary research questions, which guided the research by looking into teachers' responses of how they perceive and experience their experience in participating in self-initiating their professional development activities. This chapter provided an overview of the study. Thus, diverse components of the study were presented summarily and short outlines of the different chapters were provided.

CHAPTER 2: PERUSING THE LITERATURE IN SEARCH OF THEORY

2.1   INTRODUCTION

A review of the literature means examining previous studies that relate to the research problem and topic that properly establish the theoretical strength of the study (Suter, 2012). Therefore, the aim of this chapter is to review appropriate literature to set a good basis for the investigation into the main question, specifically: *How do teachers perceive self-initiated professional development?* As such, both local and international literatures assisted to shape the argument in this study. This section is structured into three related sections. The opening section provides differing definitions of teachers' professional development and purpose. The second and third sections of the review discuss more broadly self-initiated professional development and externally initiated professional development. The fourth section dwells on the theoretical framework based on local and international literature about professional development of teachers.

2.2   CONCEPTUALISATION OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

This section presents an understanding of professional development and then engages in a discussion on teacher development, training and education.

2.2.1   Understanding Professional Development

Researchers have defined teachers' professional development in various ways. Tan, Chang & Teng (2015) acknowledge that teacher professional development is multidimensional in nature. DuFour (2015) explains teachers' professional development as the participation of teachers in valued-based training to plan, execute, and appraise different methods to increase learners' attainment. This is similar to the views of Ono and Ferreira (2010) & Mkhwanazi (2014) who state that professional development for teachers is a process, which consists of formal or informal learning that enhances knowledge, skills and personal attributes that are needed to function professionally. This suggests that teachers may have deficiencies in their practice, which need improvement.

The teaching profession requires educators to take part in continuous development as professional knowledge and skills develop and improve over time. This makes it compelling teachers to be committed to professional development activities for their personal and professional growth. However, Badri *et al.* (2016) argue that personal development for teachers is not at all clear, not up to standard and are not very objective. I concur with to Bradi *et al.* (2016) in the sense that, though there is positive evidence regarding teachers' professional development; most activities are still traditional in form, of short duration and more content-focused with limited opportunities for active learning to occur.

While considering the different understanding of professional development, for this investigation refers to professional development as formal or informal activities designed for teachers and or by teachers within and out of the school. The activities are planned and provide follow-up by means of constructive feedback on potential changes which could be implemented by the teachers and which in return would help the school to accomplish its goals.

2.2.1 Teacher Development, Training and Education

Teacher development, education and training are different notions. Teacher development refers to teachers' overall development and understanding of teaching and themselves (Padwad & Dixil, 2011). The aim of teacher development is to inculcate lifelong learning in teachers' spectrum of learning (Padwad & Dixil, 2011). Padwad and Dixit (2011) explain that teacher professional development is a bottom-up approach, which, monitors varied channels of teachers' practices as the basis for thoughtful review. These authors more critically emphasise how teacher development turns to planned, continuing and lifelong practice where they grow both personally and professionally, thereby improving the quality of teaching and learning (Chaves & Guapacha, 2016). Contrary to teacher development, teacher training are programs that relate directly to teachers' current tasks whereby teachers' immediate objectives can be achieved (Claudia, 2017). This means that the aims of teacher training include providing teachers with more specific guiding principles and skills, to prepare these teachers for their initial teaching or new teaching techniques. On the other hand, teacher education differs from teacher development and teacher training. Teacher education generally occurs before the start of a teacher's career in the form of undergraduate programs at tertiary levels. According to Perraton (2010), essential facets that cover teacher education programmes are improving the educational background of the beginner teacher, increase their knowledge of the subject they will teach and develop practical competences.

2.3   THE PURPOSE OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Living in the 21st century with rapid change particularly in technological advances makes teaching very demanding. Staying abreast with the continuous changes and developments demands a need for quality education, which requires continuous improvement in teaching and learning practices. Hence, continuing professional development for teachers cannot be undervalued. As practitioners, teachers must be at pace with currents developments and familiarise themselves with new skills and technology. Ravhuhali (2014) and Jita & Mokhele (2014) explain that the purpose of teachers' professional development revolves around providing teachers with the opportunities to improve their content and pedagogic knowledge. Teachers thus, need to continuously equip themselves with new knowledge and skills by undertaking professional development activities that would enable them to become better teachers. Teachers who participate in professional development activities can easily transfer such learning into their classroom practices.

Ajani (2018) emphasises that the purpose of professional development activities is to ensure teachers' lifelong learning, improve on their professional growth and learners' achievement. Improving knowledge and skills by prioritising and participating in professional development can boost teacher competence and confidence. Conversely, resistance to professional development activities may lead to teacher incompetence. This means that teachers should not disregard professional development because as role models, teachers' main responsibility is instilling a disposition of life-long learning in their learners

It is worthy at this point to note that the profession demands that teachers continually engage in professional development activities because teachers cannot rely solely on the knowledge, which they acquired during pre-service training throughout their teaching career. A common connection is that professional development is intended to improve learner achievement with the main purpose being individual, professional and institutional growth. Teachers need to upgrade their professional proficiency to stay abreast with new technological methods of teaching. This means that in order to be effective, facilitators for professional development need to be equipped with appropriate skills regarding the content of these developmental activities (Mafora & Phorabatho, 2012).

2.4 INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL CONTEXT OF TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

In this section, literature on professional development in both the international and local context is reviewed

2.4.1 International Context

Many countries share diverse policies concerning teachers' continuous professional development. The manner in which contextual aspects interrelate with teachers' learning needs differs depending on the culture and policies of a given country (Avalos, 2011). In addition, global trends concerning teachers' professional development internationally need to be considered. The first trend is that teachers' professional development programmes are linked to salary benefits and career advancement (Geldenhuys & Oosthuizen, 2015) and can be optional or compulsory. In the United Kingdom (UK) for instance, teachers are expected to participate in professional development programmes, meanwhile in France, the participation of teachers in professional development is taken as a professional duty and does not have salary benefits (De Vries, Jansen &Van de Grift, 2013). In the United States of America (USA), state laws decree that educators participate in professional development to earn professional development points and to renew their licences (De Vries *et al.,* 2013)

Another global trend of teacher professional development is the non-involvement of teachers in the planning of their professional development activities. As teachers are the beneficiaries of these development programmes, their opinion is vital in the planning process because such involvement offers them a sense of belongingness and recognition as well as making them more committed to the successful implementation of the programmes. In Nigeria, a developing country like South Africa (Oyedeji, 2015), development programmes should be planned with the teachers to meet their developmental needs. In Kenya, experienced educators mentor new educators as a way of conducting professional development with mentors assuming the position of experts (Dawo, 2015), thereby treating the novice teacher as a *tabula rasa*. They end up getting mentoring on aspects they do not need. In contrast, in the Netherlands, educators have the autonomy to plan their own professional development (Ajani, 2018). The above international trends as regards to TPD can be related to the present conditions in South Africa.

2.4.2   The South African Context

Education in South Africa is one of the government's key priorities and specifically, the professional development for teachers. Teachers are at the front position of education and as such, their continuous professional development is vital (RSA, 2007; Meyer & Abel, 2015). The South African Council for Educators (SACE) has the responsibility for the running teachers' professional development programmes. As previously, stated, qualified teachers in South Africa are required to undertake continuous professional development activities. This means that teachers registered by SACE need to earn professional development points by engaging in accepted professional development activities according to their development needs (Steyn, 2011). The aim of this continuous professional development is to support them to advance their pedagogic content knowledge and skills to ensure that they are prepared to implement curriculum changes to ensure delivery of quality education and ensure learner outcomes. In support of this view, SACE (2012) states that teachers are mandated to obtain a minimum of 150 professional development points within three-years by participating in three types of professional development activities namely: teacher-initiated activity (Type 1), school-initiated activity (Type 2), and externally-initiated activity (Type 3). It is with developmental activities initiated by teachers themselves (Type 1) that they play a key role. Yet, little is known about teachers' perceptions of these self-initiated professional development activities. Previous research has focused largely on a series of available professional development activities, their potential for teachers and challenges faced, as well as teachers' perceptions of professional development in general (Jita & Mokhele, 2014; Ono & Ferreira, 2010; Steyn, 2009) but not investigating teachers' perceptions regarding self-initiated professional development specifically.

To guide teachers' professional development in South Africa, some policies have been developed which include: The Employment of Educators Act, 1998, Norms and Standards for Educators (NSE), 2000, the Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS) and the National Policy Framework for Teachers Education and Development (NPFTED), all of which are discussed in more detail in Section 2.10. However, the NPFTED (RSA, 2007) has acknowledged that many teachers do not possess adequate knowledge, skill and experience to cope effectively within the 21st century classroom environment. As a result, self-initiated professional development (Teacher Initiated activities (Type 1), (SACE, 2012) has emerged as another form of teachers' professional development considered a process whereby the teacher,

as a learner, assumes primary responsibility for planning, implementing, and evaluating the learning process which is facilitated by an education agent (Birhanu, 2014). This teacher-centred professional development, originating from theories on adult learning, confirms the need for teachers' autonomy in their own development (Louws *et al.,* 2017).

2.5   TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Each teacher has his/her own attitude about professional development activities. While a development activity may assist some teachers, the same activity may not work for others. In this regard, Torff & Session (2009) found that there is a link between teachers' perceptions and professional development. Pitsoe & Maila (2012) support this view by stating that many teachers do not have interest to actively participating in professional development. Knowles (1984) in his theory of andragogy, acknowledges that a person' perception towards a subject has an effect on that person. Similarly, Dufour, Eaker, & Many (2010) add that teacher' perceptions on factors influencing professional development discontent may play an important role in reshaping how they teach, thus affecting learners' achievement and their efficiency. DuFour (2015) argues that an understanding of teachers' perceptions in planning their professional development may be used to improve current professional development guidelines and practices. I concur with DuFour (2015) as teachers are the ones in the field and more than anyone else is, they know and understand their problem areas and where they wish to improve. Therefore, understanding teachers' perception in planning their professional development is imperative to fully understand the professional development of teachers.

Teachers' perceptions towards professional development have a direct bearing on their self-motivation. This assertion is similar to Knowles (1984) drawing on the theory of andragogy, that a person's perception towards a subject has an effect on that person. Teachers' perceptions of professional development are required to ensure the development of effective professional development activities. Integrating teachers' perspectives fosters collaboration and develops a professional learning culture. Dufour *et al.* (2010) add that teacher perceptions of factors influencing professional development discontent may play an important role in reshaping how teachers teach, thus affecting learners' achievement and teachers' efficiency as well. The perceptions of teachers have the potential of shaping the world in which they live and in addition, they are equally shaped by social forces. Such social forces can result in teachers having biased perceptions of some of the people they deal with on a daily basis as well as

teaching. Professional development should provide an important strategy for improving teacher quality and learner achievement (Opfer, Pedder & Lavicza, 2011; Witte & Jansen, 2016).

Mastin (2010) suggests that a major barrier regarding professional development activities for teachers is that too often, teachers expressed their discontent that these activities are inadequate in serving their professional needs, and that there is subsequently little effect on learner improvement. Shagrir (2010) adds that professional development activities often leave teachers with negative and unsupportive feelings due to their fragmented nature. The findings of Shagrir (2010) are still relevant as teachers still find professional development activities not particularly useful and relevant and are often a waste of time (Pinho & Andrade, 2015). When teachers' perceptions are taken into considerations, teachers become motivated to engage in their developmental activities without resistance and reluctance. In addition, when teachers feel that their voices and views are recognised, they take ownership of their behaviour and thus their professional development.

2.6   SELF-INITIATED AND EXTERNALPROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The two main types of professional development initiatives that could enhance teachers' professional growth are self-initiated professional development and external professional development. Self-initiated professional development comes from teachers' own development of PD activities initiated by them. The external professional development is further divided into school-initiated activities (Type 2) and externally initiated activities (Type 3). These are activities that are driven by regulatory bodies (Evans & Esch, 2013).

2.6.1   Teacher-Initiated Activities

Teacher-initiated or self-initiated activities are activities initiated by each teacher individually based on their personal and professional development requirements (SACE, 2012). This is to say that the process is internally motivated and developed. In this approach, novices as well as experienced teachers see themselves as the source of professional development. This means that teachers' development has moved to from being a passive to an active approach or from an outsider to an insider approach. Teacher-initiated activities consist of Continuous Professional Teacher Development (CPTD) activities attended, completed or initiated by each teacher individually based on their personal and professional development needs. This means that teachers' cognition possibly underlies some aspects of teachers' work. For example, when teachers purposefully examine their personal cognition needs as well as their connection with

classroom practice, it can lead to a platform for teacher-centred learning. This means that teachers' cognitive needs should be considered as an important element in the designing and delivery of professional development activities (Avalos, 2011). This, probably stems from the idea that professional development commences with self-awareness and self-motivation, which then progresses to self-direction as teachers make choices and claim ownership for the decisions they make in their professional development (Thiyagarajah, 2009). On the contrary, however, teachers need to firstly examine their teaching and classroom practices as this may enable them to take note of the strengths and weaknesses in their teaching and classroom practice. This study argues that self-reflection is the best form of evaluation as teachers can assess themselves and their needs and thus be informed to make their own decisions, which is in contrast other's assessment about teacher needs which could be unreliable.

Birhanu (2014) emphasises that self-initiated professional development is a process whereby a teacher takes on the main task of planning, implementing and evaluating the learning process with an education agent playing a facilitating role in the process. The self-initiated approach promotes teachers to identify their own development needs and build up their individual knowledge and concepts by observing learners' behaviours and practices in their classrooms (Admiraal *et al.,* 2016). This teacher-led professional development, derived from theories on adult learning, aligns with teachers' autonomy in their developmental activities (Louws *et al.,* 2017). Consequently, it is possible to sustain individual professional development if the potential is there to be utilised by the teachers themselves. In the light of the above statement, self-initiated professional development can only be accomplished by each teacher for themselves. This is in line with Soleimani & Khaliliyan (2012) that teacher development can be made only by and for oneself. Both experienced and novice teachers should see themselves as sources of professional development because the sustainability of the self-initiated professional development greatly depends on teachers' individual ability. Self-initiated professional development begins with self-motivation, self-reflection and develops with self-directedness as the teachers take ownership of the decisions which are related to their own professional development. Teachers' self-initiated professional development means that teachers themselves take the lead to set goals for their development being informed by their needs and thus are then motivated to sustain their professional development (Borg, 2014). This study argues that the basis for professional development is the teachers themselves if they take responsibility of engaging in their own developmental activities. Teachers are the ones who

need reflect on and assess their teaching needs and source relevant activities to ensure their continuous development that will support them throughout their careers.

Despite the fact that the self-initiated professional development prioritises individual aspirations to advance and self-initiate, it is argued that teachers cannot develop entirely by themselves. Morgan (2010) argues that the experiences which teachers gain from self-initiated developmental activities are not always enough to create significant changes in their teaching and learning practices. Bozat, Bozat & Hursen (2013) explain that institutional involvement in teachers' professional development cannot be ignored considering their inputs in creating more focused programmes. Gurney, Liyanage & Haung (2018) add that institutional interference can be beneficial to teachers' by intensifying the importance of externally-initiated professional development activities as well as updating teachers on new opportunities. In this regard, it should be noted that teachers need support throughout their teaching careers. Teacher-initiated development does not necessarily require teachers to develop in isolation. Hence, it is an excellent idea for teachers to seek colleagues to work as a team or in collaboration to improve and develop their practice. In this way, teachers can acquire an inside perception of working with colleagues for their own personal and professional development. Although the aims of the self-initiated professional development align with the needs of teachers in the 21st century, how teachers perceive self-initiated activities in catering for their actual needs is a question yet to be answered.

In contrast, in an externally initiated approach, teachers rely on expert knowledge, meanwhile an insider approach (self-initiated) encourages teachers to identify and take responsibility to initiate their own professional development activities (SACE, 2012; Admiraal *et al.,* 2016). Tan *et al.* (2015) explain that externally initiated professional development activities can lead to compliance with protocols or providers of professional development. Gurney & Liyanage (2015) argue that the anxiety for compliance can negatively affect teachers' participation in professional development activities likewise their professional identity. What should be noted here is that, if teachers are not provided with externally initiated professional development opportunities needed for their individual and professional development, they are likely to take on self-initiated development triggered by their personal desires.

2.6.2   School-Initiated and Externally-Initiated Activities

School initiated activities are professional development activities, which are initiated by schools that resolve the shared needs of the school and encourage teamwork among teachers and collegiality in the school environment (SACE, 2012). On behalf of the teachers, the schools report their participation in Type 2 activities. However, each teacher is required to keep a record, which will later be used to verify the school professional development reports.

Externally-initiated activities in South Africa are initiated by external providers or facilitators with expert knowledge and must be accredited by SACE (2012), and are directed by regulatory bodies that identify standards and determine the design and aims of professional development activities (Evans & Esch, 2013). Teachers are required to accumulate 150 professional development points over a three (3) year period in order to comply with professional development guidelines. However, the fact that the same type of activities is used for Type 1, Type 2 and Type 3 activities respectively make their effectiveness questionable. This gives the impression that the focus of these activities seems to be more on securing professional development points rather than improving the quality of teaching and learning.

Although the relationship between self-initiated and externally initiated professional development tends to overlap, teachers' personal goals and readiness for their professional growth are important in determining the extent to which they engage in their developmental activities (Gurney & Liyanage, 2016). The roles that teachers need to fulfil in their personal and professional lives differ greatly so that at times, it is challenging to keep pace with what is needed. In this regard, school and externally initiated activities are necessary in fostering teachers' growth. It is evident that school-based and externally initiated activities can ensure a significant effect on teacher practice and thinking and eventually on learner achievement (Gurney *et al.,* 2018).

Externally initiated activities are considered important in promoting teachers' development. Evans and Esch (2013) explain that this is possible only if it practised with care because these activities have a number of limitations that should to be identified. Externally and school-initiated activities are extensive, however, questions can still be asked about their effectiveness. As a result, for effective professional development to occur, follow-up and support are both required for any professional development programme, otherwise they run the danger of highlighting skill development rather than professional development.

Another shortfall of school and externally initiated professional development activities for teachers is that they are questionable in terms of satisfying teachers' needs. Badri *et al.* (2016) suggests that the activities seldom address teachers' personal needs and concerns. Conversely, teachers' individual needs for professional development cannot be neglected because it plays an important role in ensuring effective teaching and learning and ultimately has an influence on learner achievement.

Amongst these different approaches to teachers' professional development, it is clear that self-initiated development is one of the trends of teacher professional development. The reason for this is that professional development is something that occurs not only within the classroom but within oneself too. Self-initiated professional development is one of the important qualities of professional development because it requires teacher commitment and motivation. These aspects can be measured as key terms for any successful developmental activities for teachers.

2.6.3   School-Based Activities

Various researchers have used different concepts to categorise approaches to teachers' professional development (TPD) at the level of the school. Desimone (2009) describes them as informal professional development practices while Guskey & Yoon (2009) define them as site-based professional learning. In this study, these approaches refer to formal or informal professional development activities that occur during normal school time within or outside the school environment. They are guided by regulatory bodies. Some of these approaches include, but are not limited to, cluster meetings, mentoring and the cascade models.

2.6.3.1   Cluster meetings

Cluster meetings refer to the method of bringing teachers together to work together in order to address the challenges, which they face at their different work places (Gulston, 2010). This means that teachers are given the opportunity to come together in clusters to discuss and foster development in their specific subject groups. Cluster meetings give teachers the opportunity to work as a group, share ideas, skills and discuss challenges that they face in their different classrooms and during professional development activities. The group can participate in a familiar activity such as the unpacking and discussion of a given subject's content. When teachers have the opportunity to share teaching skills and reflect collectively, they are most likely to improve their classroom practice, which then has a spin-off effect on learner achievement. Teachers who work at the same school would benefit from sharing resources that

have a connection to the curriculum. It is useful to add that teachers who teach the same learners would be able to discuss learners' needs. Thus, this type of professional development may lead to the improvement of teaching and learning practices. However, commitment lies in the human aspect as teachers as individuals need to display commitment and enthusiasm in participation in order to improve their teaching practice.

2.6.3.2   The cascade model

The cascade model of professional development involves the training of a group of teachers on acceptable content/topics and when these teachers become competent, they then train the upcoming teachers (Ono & Ferreira, 2010). Ono & Ferreira (2010) affirm that the cascade approach works well on the ground if a trainer is well skilled and experienced to train the others and thereby reducing cost. This correlates with Mokhele (2011) who suggested that such an approach permits teacher development to occur at different levels for better monitoring of teacher progress, thus, offering quick feedback to the right persons. On the other hand, Phorabatho (2013) argues that the cascade model has failed the 21st century South African education system as the main method to provide TPD. Nevertheless, there may be other contributing factors regarding the ill-perceived methods of TPD as a way to advance teaching and learning practices.

2.6.3.3   Job-embedded professional development

Job-embedded professional development generally takes place in teachers' institutions and the classroom environment (Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 2011). Thus, teachers' practices that include formal and informal learning are regarded as job-embedded professional development. Kraft, Blaze & Hogan (2018) explain that detailed and continual job-embedded professional development that targets teaching can enhance teacher quality and learner achievement. More particularly, this practice can foster teachers' vision for reforms, deepen their content knowledge and promote understanding of students thinking (Althauser, 2015). The research conducted by Topkaya & Celik (2016) argues that teachers need collegial support and meaningful opportunities to reinforce the knowledge and skills that they gain from various professional development initiatives. Hirsh (2009) adds that job-embedded professional development creates a common platform for teachers to collectively and supportively plan, analyse and reflect on their learning from professional development activities. Similarly, the National Institute for Excellence in Teaching (NIET, 2012) asserts that teachers can gain more beneficial outcomes via on-the-job professional development rather than attending fragmented

workshops and conferences. Even though job-embedded professional development has the potential to optimise teachers' engagement, resolve their practice-based needs and sustain their on-going improvements and development or growth, the desired outcomes are ultimately largely dependent on the professional culture of the institutions.

For several years, rather than being job-embedded, teacher professional development was usually characterised as a short, stand-alone activity focusing on diverse topics chosen by schools and the Department of Basic Education. This has resulted in teachers feeling that many of the professional development activities do not help them as such activities are irrelevant, ineffective and most of all, not really linked to their main work which is to improve learner achievement (Ravhuhali, 2014). Curwood (2011) noticed the inadequacy of traditional forms of professional development in terms of strength, focus and required consistency to enhance classroom practice. Thus, researchers and scholars have re-designed teacher professional development initiatives to accommodate 21st century teacher and learners' needs.

2.6.3.4 Mentoring

Mentoring refers to the process where the mentor and the mentee engage in cycles of active learning. Rikard and Banville (2010) state that the aim of mentoring is to provide individual and professional guidance from experienced professional to a novice. Mentoring offers new teachers the opportunity to learn the scope of teaching within the environment. Mentoring creates a process of mutual development, which leads to classroom improvement, enhancement of reflective practices and professional growth of both mentor and mentee (Nolan & Molla, 2017). In this regard, competent and skilled teachers build professional and personal partnerships through which novice teachers are supported and address individual stress, improve resilience and take an initial role in their professional practice. This symbiotic relationship is equally beneficial to the mentor and the mentee.

2.6.3.5 Peer teaching

Peer teaching is a process where a group of teachers collaborate systematically to achieve the design and delivery of a course. Peer teaching empowers teachers to move away from solitary practice and allow other practitioners to look at his/her teaching from another perspective (Plank, 2013). Collaborative teaching enriches teachers' efficacy (Jenkins &Crawford, 2016) enabling them to expose learners to several perspectives (Plank, 2013) and develop their critical thinking abilities. Even though team teaching is beneficial for cross-disciplinary collaboration, interdisciplinary studies and pedagogical innovations (Rope-Ruark, Monthley & Moner, 2019),

integrating teachers' personal perspectives into one delivery plan could be challenging in order to achieve the desirable outcomes (Cruz & Geist, 2019).

2.7   TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Every teacher has a particular perception about and attitude towards professional development activities. In many cases, professional development activities may assist some teachers, but then the same activity may not work for others. Pitsoe and Maila (2012) support this view by stating that many teachers do not have interest to actively participate in professional development. The theory of andragogy states that a person' perception towards a subject has an effect on that person (Knowles, 1984) and these perceptions may influence discontent and thus play an important role in reshaping how teachers teach (Dufour *et al.,*2010). However, research suggests that an understanding of teachers' perceptions in planning their professional development may be used to improve current professional development guidelines and practices (DuFour, 2015).

Teachers' perceptions towards professional development have a direct bearing on their self-motivation. This means that perceptions of teachers have the prospective to form the world they live in and social forces equally shape them (teachers) greatly. Such social forces can result in teachers having biased perceptions of some of the people they deal with on a daily basis as well as teaching. Professional development should provide an important tactic for improving schools, increasing teacher quality, and improving student learning (Girvan, Conneely, Tangney, 2016; Opfer, Pedder & Lavicza, 2011; Witte & Jansen, 2016).

Similarly, according to Mastin (2010) one major barrier regarding professional development activities for teachers is that too often, teachers express their discontent that these activities are insufficient in serving their professional needs, and that there is little effect on learners' improvement afterward. Shagrir (2010) adds that the current professional development activities often leave teachers with negative and unsupportive feelings due to the fragmented nature of the development activities. According to James & McCormick (2009), teacher autonomy is important if teachers are to learn. Teacher autonomy can be supported if teachers are allowed to identify their own learning objectives and can talk about and reflect on learning t processes.

2.8   TEACHER SELF-EFFICACY

The primary concern of policy-makers and researchers is to ensure that teachers' newly acquired knowledge and skills are correctly transmitted to their learners. According to Eun & Heining-Boynton (2007), each classroom is different, and the challenge for the teacher is to implement any teaching strategy and resource in such a way that will align with the educational needs, readiness and learners' particularities in their respective classrooms. Teacher efficacy refers to a teacher's self-reliance and ability to make sure that learners attain their outcomes (Bandura, 1997). Teachers, who believe in their own efficacy, passionately acquire new ideas and explore novel strategies to meet their learners' needs (Alt, 2018). This empowerment can lead to teachers' self-satisfaction as well as creating a supportive learning environment. Kleinsasser (2014) adds that self-efficacious teachers are unlikely to experience burnout and depersonalisation, which means that teachers who have a good sense of belief can greatly impact learners' performance via the learning that they get from professional development programmes or activities. Tan *et al.* (2015) state that even teachers who have a low sense of self-efficacy can possibly have a change of perception and attitude if they think that what they study during the professional development programme or activities can lead to learner improvement. However, Von Suchodoletz, Jamil, Larsen & Hamre (2018) suggest that the lack of institutional support and resources can have a negative impact on teachers' self-efficacy and as such, deter the transfer of professional development learning to classroom practice. Hence, a helpful environment is imperative to optimise the implementation of teachers' knowledge from professional development programmes or activities. In this regard, teachers who possess self-efficacy beliefs are in a better position to benefit from professional development activities.

2.9 LIFELONG LEARNING

Lifelong learning refers to learning which is divergent, flexible and accessible at any time and place (Duta & Rafalia, 2014). It includes self-directed learning skills, the ability to work as an agent of change and the readiness to work together and share different approaches of innovation with others (Collins, 2009).

Nowadays, institutions and policymakers regard lifelong learning as necessary in addressing educational challenges in the 21st century (Duta & Rafalia, 2014). Thus, lifelong learning has gained great acceptance among institutions of learning in recent years, specifically, university institutions as centres of knowledge acquisition (Kehm, 2015) that prepare students and offer more meaningful opportunities for teachers to participate in lifelong learning. Duta and Rafalia (2014) add that teachers' professional development at higher education level is key to providing

opportunities for lifelong learning for the improvement of teacher quality. Continuous learning enables teachers to evaluate their proficiencies (Woonsun, 2014) and improve their resilience for new challenges facing the 21st century teacher (Laal & Salamati, 2012). Teachers thus need to understand the ramifications of lifelong learning and develop awareness of for their professional proficiency needs, develop a genuine interest for on-going learning so as to gain the knowledge and skills vital to enhance their teaching practice and possibly use these skills in their personal lives.

2.10   POLICIES GUIDING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF TEACHERS

Various policies have been developed to support and guide teachers' professional development in South Africa. These include the National Policy Framework for Teacher Education and Development, the Employment of Educators Act (EEA) of 1998, the Norms and Standards for Educators 2000, The Integrated Quality Management (IQMS), the South African Council for Educators' Act No 31 of 2000 (SACE) and the Integrated Strategic Planning Framework for Teacher Education and Development (ISPFTED) 2011-2025, all of which are discussed in the subsequent sections.

2.10.1 The National Policy Framework for Teacher Education and Development (NPFTED)

The purpose of this policy is to provide teachers with pertinent skills which will allow them to be on same level with their professional peers (DoE, 2007). The NPFTED focuses on the role that teacher education has in the entire transformation of the education system (DoE 2005). NPFTED ensures that teachers are well equipped to deal with challenges which they encounter, to improve their professional competences in order to meet the demands of the 21st century teacher. It can be postulated that the NPFTED seeks to shape teachers to be pivotal in endeavouring to improve their skills and knowledge.

The South African Council for Teachers (SACE) states that teachers should take the responsibility of initiating their own professional development. According to SACE (2012), teachers are required to identify areas of developmental needs that would be integrated in their professional growth plans at school. They would constitute part of the school improvement plan. Even though SACE (2012), expects teachers to take responsibility for their professional development by identifying the areas in which they need to grow professionally (RSA, 2007), it seems as if it does not clearly spell out the role of teachers play as individuals in planning

and directing these development programmes. As advocated by Knowles's theory of andragogy (1984), and in identifying such needs, there is no clear guidelines of what teachers should do. The emphasis of the framework is in particular on individuals' development, which conforms to the theory of andragogy. The theory of Andragogy promotes adult learning as being self-directed, based on their previous experiences (Knowles, 1984).

2.10.2 The Employment of Educators Act (EEA) of 1998

The Employment of Educators Act (EEA) via the application of Personal Administrative Measures (PAM) (RSA, 1999), is one of the best documents used in guiding the execution of professional development activities for the improvement of teaching and learning. These expectations include allocating 80 hours for teachers to engage in professional development activities (RSA, 1998). The Employment of Educators Act (RSA, 1998) also allocates a few days leave to attend professional development activities. This study argues that the School Management Teams (SMTs) could make use of such days to manage time in a way that it enables teachers to engage in professional development activities at least once every term.

2.10.3 The Norms and Standards for Educators 2000

The policy pertaining to Norms and Standards for Educators became known in South Africa in 2000 after the first democratic elections in 1994. This policy was developed to shape teacher development, which was regarded as an on-going learning of teachers, which involves pre-service training and in-service training and education (RSA, 2000). To this effect, a competent teacher is envisaged as a mediator for learning, an interpreter and designer of learning materials, a leader and administrator, a researcher, a lifelong learner, as well as a specialist in a subject and discipline (RSA, 2000).

2.10.4 The Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS)

Schedule 1 of the Employment of Educator's Act (no. 76 of 1998) informed the Integrated Quality Management System (RSA, 1998). It comprises three programmes whose aims are to enhance and monitor the performance of the educational system. These programmes include:

- Developmental Appraisal (DA),
- Performance Management (PM) and
- Whole School Evaluation (WSE).

The aim of the Developmental Appraisal (DA) is to transparently appraise individual teachers with the view to ascertain areas of strength and weakness, and to draw up programmes for individual development. Performance Management (PM) aims to assess individual teachers for salary progression, appointment and rewards. Each one of these management policies has a different purpose with the idea of enhancing and monitoring the performance of the education system. The intended purpose of these policies is to complement each other without repetition and unneeded workload, as indicated by the Education Labour Relations Council (ELRC).

Mahlaela (2012) stresses that IQMS implementation in South African public schools promotes two objectives, which are professional development and management. Nevertheless, according to a study conducted by Queen-Mary & Mtapuri (2014), teachers are concerned about the IQMS because instead of focusing on development, teachers merely score themselves highly in order to receive the 1% increase in remuneration. Queen-Mary & Mtapuri (2014) add that the advocacy programme of the National Department of Education on IQMS is demotivating and the method is top-down. In the same line, SACE (2014) points out that schools face major challenges in the implementation of IQMS, which include inadequate support and information provided to teachers about compiling their personal growth plan (PGP). A further concern is the irregular monitoring of teachers' personal growth plans, coupled with a general lack of support from School Management Teams (SMT). The above-mentioned challenges are a cause for concern, as the IQMS is aimed at encouraging quality teaching and learning. However, the findings above could mean that the IQMS may not be delivering its intended goal.

2.10.5   South African Council for Educators' Act No 31 of 2000 (SACE)

The South African Council for Educators obtains its professional development authorisation from the SACE Act no.31 of 200 and the National Policy Framework on Teacher Education and Development (NPFTED) (RSA, 2007). Section 5(b) of the SACE Act prescribes the professional development functions in promoting the development of teachers and advising the minister about teacher education and development issues. In addition, section 53 of the NPFTED gives SACE the responsibility of managing and implementing the CPTD system. However, there seems to be conflict on the role that SACE should play in professional development, with the conflict being with SACE promoting professional development and providing it. SACE cannot be a player and a referee at the same time.

The Act stipulates that all teachers must obtain professional development points over three types of activities (SACE, 2012)

- Teacher-initiated (Type 1),

- School-initiated (Type 2) and

- Externally initiated (Type 3).

Teachers have the responsibility to initiate or take part in professional development activities that address their specific needs. However, there is no clear difference between what kind of professional development activity should constitute Type1, Type 2 or Type 3 activities. Apart from the fact that the teachers themselves initiate Type 1 activities; Type 2 by the school and Type 3 by external providers; it is worthy to note that the weakness of SACE has been the neglect in clearly stating the differences amongst the three types of activities. In particular because the same professional development activities are used by all types. Another weakness discovered during the analysis of SACE document is that, it does not really promote dialogue amongst teachers on how to advance their professional identities and professionalism.

2.10.6 Integrated Strategic Planning Framework for Teacher Education and Development (ISPFTED) 2011-2025

The launch of the Integrated Strategic Planning Framework for Teacher Education and Development was officiated by the Ministers of Basic Education and the minister of Higher Education and Training in 2011. The report recognised that teacher professional development in South Africa is poorly coordinated, badly supervised, confounding and tedious (RSA, 2011). In the view of the Teacher Development Summit Development Declaration (2009), the new plan for teacher development (TD) should define clear roles and responsibilities of main stakeholders to ensure improvement of teacher development. It should define proper instructional methods for the delivery of main mechanisms of teacher development such as teacher education and professional development as well as setting clear priorities and realisable timeframes for implementation (RSA, 2011).

2.11 CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL TEACHER DEVELOPMENT (CPTD)

Continuous Professional Teacher Development (CPTD) is authorised by the National Policy Framework for Teacher Education and Development (RSA, 2007). The main aim of CPTD is to encourage teachers to develop professionally. The South African Council for Educators is responsible for managing CPTD, offering teachers a list of SACE's accepted providers and SACE authorised professional development activities to address the needs identified in the

IQMS process. This suggests that the IQMS and SACE have similar features regarding teachers' professional development.

IQMS appraises individual teachers with the aim of determining areas of strength and weakness. Based on the findings, it then draws up professional development activities for those individual teachers. These activities are activities initiated by the educators themselves (Type 1), activities initiated by the school (Type 2) and activities initiated externally (Type 3). Teachers generally choose Type 1 professional development activities to resolve the needs in their Personal Growth Plan (PGP). School Management Teams (STMs) focus on Type 2 professional development activities to resolve the needs in the School Improvement Plan. Provinces and the Districts engage in Type 3 professional development activities to address the needs in the Province or District Plan.

Teachers are required to accumulate at least 150 professional development points over a three-year period by engaging in three types of professional development activities (SACE 2012). SACE equally manages teachers' engagement in CTPD and their professional development uptake via the Professional Development Portfolios. It is worthy to note here that the NPFTED policy mandates teachers to engage in CPTD activities. However, according to Steyn (2011), some teachers were anticipating to leave the teaching professional if they were forced to participate in the system.

2.12 CHALLENGES FACING TEACHERS REGARDING THE EXECUTION OFTHE SELF-INITIATED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Reviews of the strategies employed to facilitate the execution of the self-initiated professional development of teachers disclose the existence of some barriers. Researchers such as Davids (2009), Wei, Darling-Hammond & Adamson (2010) have revealed hindrances emanating during teacher's professional development. Some examples of such hindrances include limited time, limited resources and a fragmented system, which are discussed below.

2.12.1 Limited Time for Professional Development Activities

A number of studies have emphasised that time is one of the most influential factors impacting teacher participation in professional development activities and have shown that the lack of time affects teachers' participation in professional development programmes (Demirtas, 2010; Postholm, 2011; Visser, Coenders, Terlouw & Peiters, 2010). Advocates of professional

development have long indicated that the insufficient time for teachers to network in quality professional development learning activities is of concern (Guskey & Yoon, 2009). Teachers are aware that it is mandatory for them to dedicate 80 hours per year for continuous professional teacher development (CPTD) as stipulated in the Employment ACT of 1998 (Bantwini, 2009) and to self-initiate their own professional development activities as indicated in SACE (2012). However, time shortage is one of the most serious problems linked to low participation of teachers in professional development activities even though time has been allocated for CTPD by the EEA (RSA, 1998).

2.12.2 Limited Resources

One of the barriers of TPD is limited resources. In some schools where teachers have identified areas for development, lack of materials and human resources prohibit engagement in professional development. In addition, inadequate resources negatively affect the effective implementation of professional development activities. Research conducted by Hismanoglu & Hismanoglu (2010) emphasise the importance of adequate funding for professional development of teachers.

2.12.3 Fragmented System of Professional Development

According to studies done by Badri *et al.* (2016), professional developments for teachers are not clear, not up to standard and are not objective. This could mean that professional development programmes lack insights. Webster-Write (2009), acknowledge this view by stating that existing programmes have not successfully addressed teachers' professional development needs. Shagrir (2010) argues that the professional development activities often leave teachers with negative and unsupportive feelings due to the fragmented nature of the development activities

2.13 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

A theoretical framework draws from an established theory that tested over time and approved by the community of scholars (Sefotho, 2018). The theoretical framework for this study moves from the premise that theoretical knowledge is an important guide for an investigation into teachers' views on the effectiveness of the self-initiated professional development approach.

The theory supporting this study is andragogy, which is the art and science of assisting adults to learn in contrast to pedagogy, which is the science of how children learn (Knowles, 1984). The theory states that adults should be taught differently because the learning processes are not the same. Andragogy contends that as a person matures, his\her self-concept moves from reliance to self-directedness and independence. Teachers' professional development includes adult learning and to guarantee effective professional development, understanding and combining themes of adult learning is important. Appraising teachers' self-concept, readiness to learn, motivation, previous experiences, orientation to learning and needing to know why and how adults learn is important in designing professional development that is engaging and meaningful. In addition, adults bring with them a range of experiences, which form the richest resource for their learning. It equally argues that readiness to learn is increasingly oriented toward tasks associated with social roles. This theory also asserts that an adult's time perspective changes from postponed application of knowledge to immediacy of application and accordingly, orientation to learning shifts from subject-centred to problem-centred.

Andragogy raises six important principles that need to be considered in planning teachers' professional development. Adult learners

- are self-directed and autonomous,

- have accumulated life experiences,

- are goal oriented,

- are relevancy-oriented;

- are problem centred in their learning, and

- are motivated to learn.

Although the theory is not a new one, it is still applicable to today's modern practice of teaching and learning.

The rationale behind this theory is the need for the integration of teachers' self-concept and previous experience into the planning of professional development programmes. Adult learners are goal oriented (Knowles, 1984) which means that adults commit to learning when the goals are realistic and important. In other words, adult learners want to see the connection between what they are learning and what they accomplish in their day-to-day activities. Teachers being adults will commit to continuous professional development programmes that confer with what

they do in the classroom. For instance, teachers encounter challenges such as students' indiscipline, school violence and so on. Consequently, professional development activities that do not seem to assist educators to resolve these challenges would result in them not being interested in the activities; hence, the reason for examining teachers' needs in the planning of their professional development programmes. Moreover, experience is a foundational assumption for the adult learner. The various experiences permit the adult learner to set parameters of learning in order for learning to be capitalised (Nohl, 2015). These parameters include the experiences of the adult learner and what the adult learner believes is necessary to learn, which thus determines the value of their learning.

2.14   CONCLUSION

The above chapter presented the literature review that relates to the investigation of teachers' perceptions of self-initiated professional development for the improvement of teaching and learning practices. It was structured into three connected parts. The initial part provided clarification for a better understanding of the concepts that relates to teachers' professional development and purpose of professional development. The second and third sections of the review discussed more broadly self-initiated professional development and externally initiated professional development. The fourth section dwelt on the theoretical perspectives based on local and international literature regarding professional development of teachers.

It is important to provide teachers with developmental activities in order to enhance their teaching quality and classroom practices. Nevertheless, in some situations, the implementation of such activities is questionable. As such, little clarity exists between the activities that constitute self-initiated and school-based; or even externally initiated professional development of teachers. This study investigated the perception of teachers regarding self-initiated professional development activities for improving teachers' quality and learners' achievement.

The following chapter gives an in-depth description and justification for the research methodology used in the study.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Research methodology explains the approach, the paradigms, the designs, data collection methods, sampling procedures utilised and data analysis processes followed during the research process. In this section the strategies used to conduct research in order to answer the research question and achieve the research outcomes are explained and discussed in details (Yunos & Ahmad, 2014). The approach could be qualitative, quantitative or even mixed methods.

Married to the aim of the study which was to investigate how English language, high school teachers in public schools in the Tshwane South District understood self-initiated professional development initiatives, how they viewed their understanding and experiences of self-initiated professional development and how they perceived the effectiveness of the self-initiated professional development, I found a qualitative research approach appropriate. In order to accomplish this, the study then used a case study research design. The rationale behind this was to make sure that participants (Heads of Department for English and English language teachers in high schools) were not deprived of their views and chance to share their experiences on the subject under study.

The unit of analysis in this case study research design were the English Teachers themselves as the 'case'. The HoDs are promoted teachers of English, therefore their inclusion was to only add on to be able to answer the sub questions including 'experiences' which might not have been able to be answered by the novice teachers in the sample. This chapter also includes aspects of the sampling techniques, which are relevant to the qualitative research approach and the case study research design, data collection and analysis methods. The chapter further explains the methodological norms, together with the ethical considerations during the data collection processes. The limitations of the study are also discussed in this chapter.

The following table, Table 3.1, demonstrates the research methodology used in this study.

Table 3.1: Paradigm assumptions

PARADIGMATIC ASSUMPTIONS	
Research paradigm	Interpretive

PARADIGMATIC ASSUMPTIONS	
Methodological paradigm	Qualitative approach
Research design	Case study
Sampling	Convenience sampling (Schools) and then Purposeful sampling (English teachers and their HODs)
Population	12 participants
Sample	Four (4) HODs and eight (8) English secondary school teachers
Selection criteria	Selection of four public secondary schools in the Tshwane South district (Convenient as per the proximity to the researcher)
Data collection method	Literature review, document analysis(statutes) and Interviews
Data analysing strategy	Inductive Analysis. Manual qualitative data analysis (transcribing the data, reading for understanding, reading for analysis, creating codes by colouring similarity in responses, creating themes out of groups of codes and then using the themes to discuss raw data. Quotations are used in the discussion of the findings to show originality and trustworthiness of the findings, which emanate straight form the raw data. This is an inductive analysis
Methodological norms and ensuring trustworthiness	Trustworthiness, triangulation, member checking and thick description, using of original quotations to argue and to discuss the findings
Ethical considerations	Permission from the ethics committee of the university, permission from the Gauteng Department of Education, permission from school principals, informed consent, privacy, confidentiality and anonymity, protection from harm

3.2   THE RESEARCH PARADIGM

Every study is done and defined by a specific paradigm. A paradigm is a tool used to identify one's own worldview. Creswell (2010) defines a research paradigm as a metaphysical construct associated with specific philosophical assumptions that describe one's worldview. The paradigm that a researcher uses guides the process of enquiry and ensures that the correct research methods are implemented. McGregor & Murnane (2010) refer to a paradigm as the methodology, which relates to the rationale and philosophy, while the methods refer to the technical procedures applied to conduct the research. Given the nature of this study, an interpretive paradigm with a qualitative research approach was employed.

An interpretive paradigm enables researchers to follow orderly procedures, while maintaining that there are multiple realities. There is less emphasis on numbers and a large volume of focus on values and content (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). The main belief of the interpretive paradigm is that reality is socially constructed and allows researchers to view the world through the perceptions and experiences of the participants. In seeking the answers for research, the researcher who follows an interpretive paradigm uses those experiences to construct and interpret his/her understanding from gathered data. The researcher's perceptions are not imposed on the data, however, the interpretation in understood from the perspectives of the participants.

In this study, an interpretive approach was used to understand how English language secondary school teachers and HODs in four public schools of the Tshwane South District perceive and experience the self-initiated professional development approach. An interpretive paradigm was adopted for this study because the researcher was interested in finding out how public secondary school English teachers construct their own reality of the effectiveness of the self-initiated activities, which enabled the researcher to see reality through the eyes of the participants.

3.3   THE RESEARCH APPROACH

Yin (2014) explains that a research approach is the coherent chain that connects the empirical data to a study's initial research question, and ultimately to its conclusions. Yin (2014) further adds that a research approach is the outline for the research. It is there to develop an explicit plan of action, a design, and sets out how the activities of sampling, data collection and analysis are conducted. For Creswell (2013), qualitative research is a set of interpretative practices which involves multiple methods to choose from, but has no paradigm that is distinctively its own. The qualitative approach is conducted in a natural setting of the phenomena and the findings are not arrived by means of statistical procedures (Creswell, 2016), thus researchers create tools of inquiry in a manner in which quantitative researchers would not (Yates & Leggett, 2016). Creswell (2016) adds that qualitative research focuses on the participants' experiences, and it is thus considered subjective and sensitive to the contexts of participants. Although qualitative research is considered subjective, there is no researcher who can claim pure objectivity of any research as every research involves a human element in it.

Qualitative research is interested in understanding the meaning people construct about their own experience of their world, and mostly, a qualitative paradigm employs case studies in research design for maintaining quality, richness, meaning, and contribution (Creswell, 2016).

Merriam (2009) highlights four features, which explain why qualitative research approach is implemented. These characteristics provided a better understanding of why this approach was deemed suitable for this study. Primarily, the focus of a qualitative approach is on process, understanding and meaning. In this study, the process self-initiated professional development approach was explored. The teachers' perceptions of that self-initiated professional development, as well as the perceptions by the teachers themselves. The question whether it brings about improvement in teacher development was also explored. Secondly, in research that adopts a qualitative approach the researcher is the primary instrument of data collection and analysis. In this study, I personally conducted the interviews and immediately afterwards I familiarised myself with the data by reading and listening to it several times before data transcription and analyses were done. Thirdly, a qualitative approach also leads to an inductive process. What this means is the gathering of data to build concepts, rather than deductively testing hypotheses as in positivist research. In this study, data were collected through document analysis and semi-structured interviews and completion of interview schedule forms. Finally, a qualitative approach is richly descriptive; in this study, words were used to convey and describe what was learned about the phenomenon of self-initiated activity. The participants were allowed to use verbal terminology freely to explain their perceptions of the self-initiated activities. The above-mentioned information about the use of a qualitative approach provides justification for using a qualitative approach.

3.4   THE RESEARCH DESIGN

Research design is the framework of research methods and techniques selected by the researcher. The research design could be a case study, naturalistic observations, a survey, a case-control study or a field experiment. This study used a case study research design. McMillan and Schumacher (2010) define a case study as an in-depth analysis of a single entity. Maree (2016) adds that a case study research design is an empirical inquiry about a contemporary phenomenon with its unit of exploration including people, families, communities, groups or institutions. Yin (2012) noted that a case study is an in-depth analysis of a single entity, which in this study, is the group of teachers with a single identity as "English Teachers' although they were from four schools. Their common denomination is the teaching

of English. Their perceptions of self-initiated professional development were explored. Yin (2014) further describes how a distinctive need for case study research arises out of the desire to understand complex social phenomena. This study viewed the teachers' self-initiated activities implemented in public schools as the single entity to which McMillan & Schumacher (2010) refer.

Data for this case study were collected from four different schools and the findings were combined into one case study. The case here is not the schools, but the 'English teachers and HoDs in the four schools' self-initiated professional development. Yin (2014) states that data from multiple places is often considered more convincing, and the overall study therefore is regarded as being more compelling than if the teachers were to come from one school. The advantages of case study research include the possibility to collect a variety of data about a case, which might offer greater in-depth meaning to the case under investigation. Hence, collecting data from 12 English teachers coming from four different public secondary schools offered more significant findings compared to if data on self-initiated professional development approach was collected from one school only.

Maree (2016) believes that most case study researchers start with a general issue, and as background research evolves, the researchers try to generate a list of about fifteen to twenty questions focused on the issue at hand but other questions may arise. The research questions set the focus for the study but as the research continued, the evolving process meant that further probing was necessary. Considering this provided the foundation for adopting an interview schedule with basic possible questions and allowing probing where necessary. Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2011) describe a good case study researcher as one who is able to gather data that addresses fitness for purpose, as well as having the skills to probe beneath the surface of phenomena.

An effective case study researcher must be an excellent listener, questioner, and prober, must be able to make informed inferences, and must be adaptable to changing and emerging situations. Yin (2014) lists the desired attributes of a case study researcher as having the ability to have a firm grasp of the issues being studied, as well as being able to avoid bias. I bore all of these aspects in mind when conducting the fieldwork and can confidently declare that I was aware of my knowledge, my possible bias and was alert not to contaminate the data collected.

This research employed a multiple setting with similar characteristics so that they can be fit to fall under one 'case' study design. The aim was to gain an in-depth understanding of the

contemporary issue (teachers' perceptions of the self-initiated professional development) in its real-life setting (the 12 public schools). The four schools' English teachers were investigated through in-depth data collection methods namely, semi structured interviews and the completion of interview schedules (Yin, 2012).

3.5   POPULATION AND SAMPLING

The sources of information used by qualitative researchers include individuals, groups, documents, reports and sites (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). In this case, I used two types of sampling. The first sampling technique was a convenience sampling of the four schools. The four schools are all in the Tshwane South District and it is closer to the higher education institution where I conducted my study. Convenience sampling is a sampling technique where the participants are selected because of their convenient accessibility and proximity to the researcher (Maree, 2016). Convenience sampling was applied because the schools were accessible to me, close to my home and the university. As a result, the research proved to be cost-effective.

From the four high schools, I then used purposive sampling as (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010), assert that the use of purposeful sampling gives rise to the researcher being able to choose precise elements from the population that will be representative of the topic of interest. Although, Cohen *et al.* (2011) note that the participants who are purposefully sampled may not be representative; and their comments may not be generalizable; this does not discredit its potential to inform similar contexts. Its importance is to acquire in-depth information from those who are better placed to provide it, and the aim is never to generalise the findings, rather, to inform similar contexts.

Based on my knowledge of the population, I made a choice of the English teachers as an English teacher myself. The reason I purposely sampled English teachers was that I understood the details of the Curriculum Statements of the Teaching of English and would therefore be able to engage with the participants on issues of professional development from a better position than if I had to sample Mathematics teachers. The English teachers, as per the aims of this research would be better positioned to provide the best information to address the purpose of the research. The sample identified by the researcher needs to satisfy specific needs – which in this case is the self-initiated professional development.

Creswell and Plano-Clark (2011) adds that this involves identifying and selecting individuals or groups of individuals that are especially knowledgeable about the phenomenon of interest. In addition to knowledge and experience, there is the availability and willingness to participate, and the ability to communicate experiences and opinions in an articulate, expressive, and reflective manner. Creswell (2013) agrees that purposeful sampling is used in order to gain knowledgeable people who have in-depth knowledge about particular issues. In my research, English Teachers in these Four High Schools in the Tshwane District fit the explanation very well.

Public high school English teachers were purposively selected for this study because this investigation required participants' understanding and interpretation of the phenomenon which is studied. English language teachers were deemed suitable for this study because as language teachers they have the potential to better understand the phenomenon under investigation. More specifically, English language skills and communicative competence is the key to interpreting educational concepts. The research questions for this study were framed in a way that would explore whether teachers really understand the concept of self-initiated professional development and if it is achieving its desired outcome of promoting teacher development in public secondary schools

The target sample initially aimed at twelve (12) teachers from four secondary schools and four (4) English language HODs of public high schools from the Tshwane South District of the Gauteng province. Due to the outbreak of the corona virus pandemic, I was only able to interview eight (8) teachers. Nonetheless, due to the pandemic, three teachers were interviewed in School 1, three teachers in School 2, one teacher in School 3; one teacher in School 4.

Four HoDs, one from each selected school, as represented in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2: Participants in each of the four schools

Category	Head of Department	Teachers	Total
School 1	1	3	4
School 2	1	3	4
School 3	1	1	2
School 4	1	1	2

The reason for sampling both teachers and HODs was to enable data triangulation and improve trustworthiness. All the participants were intended to be high school English language teachers who have had the opportunity to participate in teachers' professional development for at least three years.

However, due to the pandemic, data collection was challenging. Teachers were not following their usual routine and only going to school on alternate days; that is to say some teachers would be at school on Monday for example, others on Tuesday and so on. Participants were both male and female and selected because their unique understanding and beliefs were considered to have the potential to offer significant information in order to address the research questions. The participants were divided into two sets (HODs responses) and Teachers' responses. The data were transcribed into text and then the preliminary analysis started during the transcription.

In the discussion of the data the participants were given names (codes) for ease of reference, for example

- Head of Department for school 1 = HOD1SCH1

- Teacher 1 school 1 = SCH1T1

The table below shows a brief description of the participants sampled for this research presenting the different categories, pseudonyms, and experience in the profession, qualification, race and gender.

Table 3.3: Participant demographics

Participant	Name	Subject	Experience in years	Race	Gender
School 1 HOD	HOD1SCH1	English	15 years	Black	Female
School 2 HOD	HOD2SCH2	English	10 years	White	Female
School 3 HOD	HOD3SCH3	English	12 years	White	Female
School 4 HOD	HOD4SCH4	English	20 years	White	Female
Teacher 1 School 1	SCH1T1	English	3years	Black	Female
Teacher 2 School 1	SCH1T2	English	3 years	Black	Female
Teacher 3 School 1	SCH1T3	English	1.7years	Black	Female

Participant	Name	Subject	Experience in years	Race	Gender
Teacher 4 School 2	SCH2T4	English	I.9 years	White	Male
Teacher 5 School 2	SCH2T5	English	3 years	Black	Male
Teacher 6 School 2	SCH2T6	English	4 years	Indian	Female
Teacher 7 School 3	SCH3T7	English	3 years	Black	Female
Teacher 8 School 4	SCH4T8	English	2 years	Black	Female

3.6 DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES

Considering that, this was a qualitative study into teachers' perceptions of the self-initiated professional development approach, document analysis and interviews and were used as data collection procedures. As stated by McMillan and Schumacher (2010), a combination of multiple methods could produce more meaningful insight about the topic, enable data triangulation and augment the credibility of the findings. The above-mentioned data collection methods are discussed as follow:

3.6.1 Document Analysis

Document analysis is a type of qualitative research, which includes identifying, obtaining and analysing electronic and printed document with the aim of adding meaning to a study (Brooks & Normore, 2015; Maree, 2015; Yin, 2014). Hence, document analysis was adopted in this study in order to determine how teachers perceive professional development, and in reflecting on their classroom practices, how they perceive and experiences self-initiated professional development activities. The rationale for using document analysis in this study was based on the idea that this method has the strength to disclose vital information that participants could not provide during the interviews. Another reason for adopting this method was to determine how teachers, through their classroom practices, translate professional development into reality. The documents used were policy documents and statutes retrieved online from the Department of Basic Education's website. Documents analysed in this study were the Integrated Quality Management (IQMS), the South Africa Council for Educators (SACE) and NPFTED policy documents, which are mandatory in public schools. McMillan and Schumacher (2010) refer to this as artefact collection, defined as the non-interactive method

for acquiring quality data with little or no with reciprocity between the researcher and the participant.

Table 3.4: Documents reviewed

Title of Document	Description
Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS)	Monitors an institution's effectiveness, evaluates a teacher's performance, and identifies the specific needs of teachers for support and development.
South African Council for Educators (SACE)	Legal body for educators that is responsible for the management of CPTD.
The National Policy Framework for Teacher Education and Development	The national policy framework mandates teachers "to take charge of their self-development".

Whilst conducting document analysis, two principles from Briggs, Coleman and Morrison (2012) were selected, which include meaning and credibility. The principle of meaning refers to whether the evidence is clear and understandable and both literal and interpretive meanings were considered. Literal meaning refers to the face value meaning of the document, which calls for the meaning to be restructured. In contrast, interpretative meaning requires the researcher to relate the face value meaning to the context in which the documents were produced. I related the documents to the context in which they were written and further ascertained the extent to which the content represented the current practice in the environment. For example, teachers' responsibility to self-initiate their professional development constituted face value meaning. In this light, I needed to ascertain the absolute value to understand how individual teachers perceive this phenomenon and how they were taking the initiative to self-initiate their professional development activities. As a result, participants were engaged to gather data that helped substantiate information obtained from the document analysis.

Credibility on the other hand means to analyse the document for accurateness and ensuring that there are no mistakes and alterations in the document (Briggs *et al.,* 2012). These were statutory and policy documents which indicate that they are a result of a group effort, which established that they were credible. The document analysis led to asking questions in the interviews as to whether the intended purposes of the documents were applicable.

3.6.2   Interviews

This study conducted face to face, one on one interviews with the participants as the main data collection method. Qualitative interviews have the capability to offer a new understanding into a multifaceted situation. The term interview refers to discussions where the interviewer allows the participants to articulate their opinions concerning a topic or experience in their own words, while considering privacy as crucial (Silver, 2013).

Interviews are considered a suitable strategy for data collection. In this study, interviews were used for data collection on the basis that they would ensure the collection of relevant data, and give the interviewer the ability and chance to probe further into answers, which were not easy to understand. This was beneficial in uncovering the perceptions of the participants. Similarly, Nieuwenhuisen (2011) asserts that interviews could assist the researcher in understanding the participants' psychological framework of their actual world. The use of an interview schedule as an instrument for collecting data originated from the necessity to elicit individual data, possibility for probing and prediction of positive responses.

Silver (2013) outlines three types of interviews in qualitative research, namely: open ended interviews, semi structured and structured interviews. In this study, semi-structured interviews were used as they could serve as a pertinent source for primary data collection from the participants. Yin (2014) sees semi-structured interviews as the type of interview, which provides a clear set of instructions for the interview and can provide reliable, comparable qualitative data. In this type of interview, the interviewer follows the questions set beforehand, but is able to follow topical trajectories in the conversation that may stray from the guide when it is deemed appropriate. In addition, semi-structured questions have no choices from which the participant can select but have the advantage that participants could say more than they would have said in responding to a closed or structured interview. Moreover, the nature of a normal discussion helps the participants feel free and discuss openly. This means that semi structured interviews provide greater flexibility and in-depth questioning than other data collection methods. In addition, using open-ended questions allow for individual responses; however, these should be specific in their intent (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010).

In conducting interviews, the interviewer must ensure that the interview is a positive; pleasant, beneficial; should convince the participants of their own worth (Cohen *et al.,* 2011). During interviews, it is important for the interviewee to speak more than the interviewer is, for the interviewer to listen attentively and be at ease with the interview. A twofold approach with

regard to the interviews was taken. I visited the selected schools and gave my interview schedules with the questions to the HODs and teachers beforehand. This was done in order for them to familiarise themselves with the content of the interview.

I collected their emails so that I could resend the interview schedule to them by means of email for follow-up purposes, but this they refused. Then, I arranged to interview the teachers and HODs at their convenient time. Some of the teachers were willing while others were reluctant to participate in the interview due to the pandemic. Once again, I requested email addresses so that I could send the interview schedule to the teachers for completion (those who were reluctant). Again, they refused stating that they did not have time and data to resend the email to me. I spoke to other English teachers who only agreed to be interviewed telephonically. Hence, I collected their numbers and made appointments with them regarding when I should call them for the interview. On the agreed date, the teachers still complained that they did not have time to do interviews via the telephone. I visited them repeatedly until I finally got them to agree that I could conduct a one-on-one interview with some while other teachers only accepted on the condition that they could only do the interview by filling in the interview schedule. In total one (1) HOD and five (5) teachers agreed to participate in a one-on-one interview and three (3) HODs and three (3) teachers participated by completing the interview schedule.

On the dates of the different appointments, I went to the various schools equipped with a facemask for myself and the participants and hand sanitiser, as per Covid-19 protocols, as well as a mobile phone for recording the interviews. The interview schedule and extra batteries were also on me. As the researcher, I prepared thoroughly before the interview, as this permitted me to feel and appear competent. Before commencing the interviews, I requested permission from the participants to use tape recorder (mobile phone) but ensure that I would maintain confidentiality and follow ethical guidelines during the process of data collection at each of the selected schools. The participants were allowed to express their views in their own terms and to add any additional information, while I spear headed the asking of the relevant questions.

Each of the participants was interviewed separately at different times most convenient to them. As the questions were already structured accordingly, the interview followed that process, maintaining the same order in questioning. I took a standpoint to direct the whole interview process and treated participants fairly well.

3.7   DATA ANALYSIS

Qualitative data analysis is an inductive process of organising data into categories and identifying patterns and relationships amongst the categories without being based on previous hypotheses (Maree, 2016). Recognising the main themes that stems from the data is vital to the investigation, which includes making sense of data in terms of the participants' meanings of the situation, and noting patterns, themes, categories and regularities. It is well known that thematic analysis can allow researchers to identify different cross-references that emerge between data and themes of a study (Ibrahim, 2012). Bearing this flexibility mind, researchers successfully use thematic analysis in both deductive and inductive methods (Jugder, 2016). Inductive analysis enables significant dimensions to be seen from the patterns that have been identified in the cases. Consequently, many interrelationships that exist among dimensions can be recognised.

3.7.1   Data Analysis Process

In this study, data analysis followed different phases, which are outline in Table 3.5:

Table 3.5: Phases of thematic analysis

Phase	Explanation of the process
1. Familiarising myself with the data	Reading, re-reading the collected data, transcribing the data while noting primary ideas.
2. Developing codes	Coding remarkable characteristics of the data in a systematic style.
3. Searching for themes	Gathering all data related to potential themes.
4. Reviewing themes	Reading through the themes work which relate to coded extracts.

Phase 1: Familiarising Myself with the Data

I started the process by reading the transcribed interview text to familiarise and internalise the data. I read and re-read the transcribed data repeatedly for familiarity as well as noting down initial ideals that emerged from the data.

Phase 2: Making Codes

After familiarising myself with the content of the data in the transcriptions, I highlighted the areas of the text that were related to the research questions and then coded those chunks of text. These important excerpts below taken from three participants' transcriptions and illustrate their perceptions of teachers' self-initiated professional development with their relevant codes.

Table 3.6: Examples of coding

Data Extracts	Coded For
It is when a teacher realises that they lack knowledge in one area of the career and they go out and they seek help; and they look for different ways on how they can improve on those areas where they need to be developed. For example, if a teacher is struggling with discipline in class, the teacher goes on Google to find different ways on how to handle difficult learners. Different types of difficult learners. The teacher can even ask for training where we look at the budget of the school and the teacher can attend the course on discipline and so forth (HOD1SCH1)	Self-directed learning
The purpose like I said is to enhance your professional identity Emmm ... also it also encourages to take notice of your problems areas Emmm...and to actually take that initiative and work on those problem areas (SCH1T1)	Self-development
Em to me it means enm taking upon yourself to develop your professionalism. Like the teacher activity according to SACE where the teachers have to take it upon themselves to self-develop. You know the school can only go to a certain extent. The system can only go to a certain extent too because as teachers we turn to become complacence at times like say I am an English teacher I know my subject and no one is going to tell me anything. Now teacher-initiated development is also self-initiated. So now, it is you taking the step that I need to know more. You know times are changing, things are changing and we need to adapt to that. Only we can do that. (SCH1T3)	Self-improvement

Phase 3: Looking for Themes

This phase offered an enormous significance to the raw data that could move the researcher to a higher level of understanding. All data that were related to themes were taken from the transcriptions to make sure that they were firstly connected to each specific code and to the themes. Any information that constituted the central idea of the collected data was looked upon as a theme.

Phase 4: Reviewing Themes

I carefully studied all the categorised extracts that linked to themes to ensure that they formed a sound pattern. After making sure that the main themes suitably represented the data, I examined the validity of each theme that related to the overall data.

3.9   TRUSTWORTHINES OF THE FINDINGS

Trustworthiness is a demonstration that a true picture of the phenomenon is presented, can be transferable and the data are dependable (Maree, 2016). Admitting that this study entailed a qualitative research data collection, validity and reliability were most concerning for this study. The trustworthiness criteria for assessing the rigour of findings in qualitative research includes dependability, confirmability, credibility and transferability. These criteria were adopted in this study and are discussed in the subsequent sections:

3.9.1   Credibility

Credibility in research refers to the degree to which the study can be trusted (Creswell, 2013). This means therefore that the information contained in a research study is acquired from original data and the analyses made are true reflections of the participants' own views. As such, the data triangulation, peer debriefing and member checking were used to enhance credibility in this study.

3.9.1.1   Data triangulation

Triangulation in the view of Flick (2014) refers to the use of multiple methods in investigating a phenomenon. In the same way, Meyer (2013) presents triangulation as a concept that uses various research methods in a single study. Maree (2016) adds that triangulation can improve research credibility. Bearing all these in mind, the data in this study were obtained from various sources with dissimilar features specifically: document analysis, interviews with HODs, male and female teachers, White, Black and Indian as well as a review of the literature, I equally interrelated with the participants; twice in person and followed this up with telephonic communication to elucidate certain aspects. This was done all through the data analysis phase and the aim was to verify and fill the gaps detected in the information after the fieldwork exercise.

3.9.1.2   Peer debriefing

A qualitative researcher needs to ask for academic assistance from experts who are ready to provide guidance and insights in the study. From the research proposal phase, I continually engaged my supervisor, co-supervisor and six of my friends from South Africa who were enrolled for their PhD at the Faculty of Education, University of Pretoria and University of South Africa to read and review my work. They were very helpful in enhancing the methodological quality of the research findings, particularly in aligning participants' points of

view. I also engaged a professional editor, not only to ensure the flow of language but also to provide expert review.

3.9.1.3   Member checking

Member checking is defined as the process of taking the collected data and interpretation back to the participants of the study with the aim of letting the participants validate the credibility of the information (Lori, 2013). Given the importance of member checking, researchers are required to integrate participants' voices in interpretation and analysis of the data. During the research, I confirmed the interview findings by giving a recapitulated report of remarks from each school that I visited with the participants of the study. This was done after making the draft report. In a situation where there was disagreement, the information was amended. In addition, two participants offered additional information, which they felt, had been omitted.

3.9.2   Dependability

Dependability is the consistency of the research findings over time and describes the degree to which the results of research can consistently give meaning. Dependability includes participants' engagement while reviewing the findings in order to ensure that data interpretations and recommendations emerge from the actual research participants (Cohen *et al.,* 2011). In addition, keeping an audit trail and code record were further strategies used to ensure dependability of the results

3.9.2.1   Keeping an audit trail

An audit trail in research shows the full research procedure to validate the findings (Anney, 2014). In this respect, a record of all the research processes were kept including documents that were reviewed, interview schedule forms that were completed by some of the participants and raw data in the form of audio recordings. This enabled the basis for re-reading/listening to the raw data for the purposes of verification.

3.9.2.2   Code record strategy

Dependability can be improved by getting consensus on the codes, themes and sub-themes which were developed during the data analysis (Maree, 2016). Consequently, after I transcribed the interview recordings and typing the responses of the participants who had completed the interview schedule forms, the transcriptions were printed out. A copy was given to a trusted colleague and I kept the other. We developed codes and themes which were later compared for

uniformity before the final analysis was done. A draft report of the interpretation and data analysis was then sent to my supervisor who equally made her contributions to improve alignment of the arguments and presentations.

3.9.3   Transferability

Transferability refers to how far a research finding can be transferred to another context with different participant, but with similar characteristics. This is similar to generalisability in quantitative research (Briggs *et al.,*2012). To ensure transferability of the study, I made use of thick description as follows:

3.9.3.1   Thick description

Thick description is an effort to gather rich descriptive data that enables a comparison of the research context with another. Maree (2016) asserts that thick description helps in providing judgement on how well the research setting fits other contexts. As such, I presented in detail the processes that the study followed. Thus, threads of the research problem, research questions, design, paradigmatic perspective, samples and methods used to gather and analyses the data collectively stand out. This can help in replicating the study in dissimilar contexts.

3.9.4   Confirmability

Confirmability in research refers to the extent to which the findings of a study can be confirmed by another researcher (Maree, 2016). The aim of confirmability is to ensure that the results of the study are not the imagination of the researcher, but have resulted from the data which the participants provided. In this regard, I kept a file which contained a record of what happened in the field during the data collection which includes one-on-one interviews and completed interview schedule forms. The file helped me to reflect on negative findings from the case analysis, especially the realisation that teachers are unclear on what self-initiated professional development really entails.

3.10   ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Conducting empirical research necessitates certain measures and morals that a researcher must take into consideration (Corbett-Whittier, 2013). Ethics is important in research given that there are a number of ethical issues for considerations that the researcher ought to adhere to. Amongst the issues that a researcher needs to consider for ethical consideration include respect of

participants (Yin, 2014), protection of participants from harm (Babbie, 2011), voluntary participation (Christians, 2011) and protection of participants' privacy and confidentiality (Christians, 2011). Therefore, it is imperative to make sure that these ethical issues are mitigated (Flick, 2014). As such, the study followed appropriate steps to ensure that they were effectively addressed during the data collection procedure. I also ensured that I followed all principled ethical requirements and in order to protect the rights of the participants I used the following measures:

3.10.1   Permission and Ethical Clearance

I applied for an ethical clearance certificate from the Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Education at the University of Pretoria to approve my study which was approved prior to the start of participant's recruitment (REFERENCE: EDU117/19) (*cf.* Appendix A). Separate interview schedules for HODs (*cf.* Appendix F) and teachers (*cf.* Appendix G) were designed for the selected schools and they were also approved. The necessary permission to conduct this study was also obtained from the Gauteng Department of Education (GDE) (*cf.* Appendix B). Permission letters and consent forms were equally designed for the selected school principals (*cf.* Appendix D), HoDs and English language teachers (*cf.* Appendix E) and approved by the Ethics Committee and the Gauteng Department of Basic Education.

3.10.2   Informed Consent Form

Firstly, I presented permission letters together with my approval letter from the Ethics Committee and Gauteng Department of Education to the school principals. I briefed them on the purpose of the research as detailed in the consent letters. I presented consent letters to the participants in which the purpose and entire process was explained. I briefed participants about the research. In addition to briefing the participants about the research, participants were given the chance to read the consent letters and to ask for clarity if the need arose. The participants were asked to sign consent forms as a symbol of their willingness to take part in the study. However, participants were given the freedom to withdraw from the study at any time given time if they wished because participation in any research is voluntary and free.

3.10.3   Anonymity and Confidentiality

Regarding the above aspects, all the participants' information, personal responses during the study were kept safely and private and secured at all times on a secure USB using a password-

protected computer solely for the purpose of the research. The findings were presented anonymously with the aim of protecting the identities of the participants and the names of schools. In addition, the interview schedule did not contain sections for participants' personal information.

3.10.4   Protection from Harm

The participants were guaranteed that they would not be exposed to any physical or psychological harm of any form. While conducting the research, I took a standpoint to be respectful, honest and understanding to all the participants. Thus, after the interview, I did not partake in any sort of debriefing.

3.10.5   Voluntary Participation

Since participation in any research is voluntary and free, the participants were told that they could withdraw at any time at their convenience. Fortunately, none of the participants withdrew from the study.

3.11   MY ROLE AS THE RESEARCHER

I executed my role as researcher with the view that it allowed me to enter into a mutual agreement to collect and analyse data. I also remained an observer by recording the phenomenon faithfully while asking questions and going deeper into the analysis of the phenomenon.

In reporting the findings, this was done in the form of a narrative research report. As stated by Creswell (2010), a research report is a completed study that reports on an investigation, shows questions to be addressed and includes data collection, analysed and interpreted by the researcher. I took a stance to write this research report by adopting and employing the following guidelines:

- I endeavoured not to use non-discretionary language in order not to discriminate against any of the participants;
- I endeavoured to use correct research terminologies;
- I made sure that I wrote in a sensitive way so as to avoid offending any of the participants;
- Lastly, I ensured that my voice was heard in this report.

3.12   CONCLUSION

This chapter described the research methodology followed by this research, which included a discussion on the paradigm perspective, approach, design used to investigate an analysis of teachers' perceptions of self-initiated professional development in four public secondary schools in Tshwane South District of Gauteng province, South Africa. A qualitative case study research design was used to investigate the topic as it provided opportunity for participants, comprising a sample of twelve participants, to state their views and experiences of the phenomena studied in their own words and setting. The sample illustrated two different structures at school level as heads of departments (HOD) and teachers. Data collection procedures such as document analysis and interviews were used to collect raw data. This led to transcribing, coding and analysing of themes that emerged. The following chapter presents the findings of the research.

CHAPTER 4: DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In the preceding chapter, Chapter 3, the research methodology followed in this study was discussed. This chapter presents participants' perceptions of the self-initiated professional development with respect to IQMS and SACE. The results of the study encompass an analysis and presentation of the data as constructed from the interviews with four HODs eight teachers from four public high schools.

The HODs and teachers have direct knowledge and experiences of professional development and more specifically the teacher-initiated professional development practices, which make them well placed to participate in and inform this study. McMillan and Schumacher (2010), hold that qualitative data analysis is principally an inductive procedure of making data into categories, and finding patterns and relationships. Bearing this in mind, the interviews were analysed according to themes grounded from the main research question and sub-questions. Consequently, the primary research question *how do teachers perceive the self-initiated professional development approach to their development* was used to construct answers found in the data, as well as the sub-questions:

1. What are teachers' understanding/perception of self-initiated professional development?
2. How do teachers perceive their experiences/engagement of the self-initiated professional development?
3. How do teachers perceive the effectiveness of self-initiated approach in schools?

The first section of the findings relates to document analysis.

4.2 IQMS, SACE AND NPFTED POLICIES

Prior to conducting interviews with the HODs and teachers, the IQMS policy document, which is informed by ELRC resolution, no 8 of 2003, was examined. The professional development

of teachers is implemented at schools using the IQMS policy document to evaluate areas of development, foster accountability, ascertain competency, offer development opportunities and monitor the overall effectiveness of an institution (Pylman, 2015; RSA, 1998).

The school principals are tasked with ensuring that teachers are able to access this document and understand its content fully. The IQMS offers guiding principles on the protocol regarding teacher observation, confidentiality matters and information control, record keeping and resolving of differences. Additionally, IQMS provides an execution plan and an appraisal instrument which comprises the criteria and rating scale. While the policy is detailed, it does not seem to consider any contextual factors when the actual observations of teachers occur.

Even though the National Policy Framework for Teacher Education and Development (RSA, 2007) suggests that teachers "take charge of their self-development by identifying the areas in which they need to grow professionally" (RSA 2007), it does not explicitly explain the important role that the teachers have in self-initiating their developmental activities, as advocated by Knowles theory, in identifying such needs. He advocates six important principles that should be taken into consideration for the planning of teachers' professional development.

The analysis of the SACE, IQMS and NPFTED policy revealed that if policies and programmes have to be designed, implemented and executed, then consultation and ownership need to be considered, if not, the policy and programmes may become foreign and even rejected by the targeted group. As such, the targeted group may instead implement it as a compliance practice.

Based on the interviews it became clear that Schools 1, 2, 3 and 4 are all aware of the IQMS and its objectives regarding teachers' professional development.

4.2.1 School 1

At School 1, it is mandatory for the teachers to first identify their developmental needs and search for available courses to attend. The HOD explained that the Department sends circulars/memos to inform them of training sessions which are to be held. The teachers are not forced to attend these courses or training hence, it is voluntary. The IQMS policy has a cycle where the HOD will visit the classrooms, listen to the teacher presenting a lesson and assess the teacher. Every year teachers get 1% pay progression from the results of IQMS in addition to the 7% annual increase. The IQMS system uses a scoring style whereby if a teacher has a low score, he/she will not get the 1% pay progression. This implies that teachers attend professional development activities to align with IQMS requirement and for the 1% salary

progression. However, although the HOD discussed the circulars and memos, she was unable to offer any further understanding of IQMS. She stated as follow:

"*In this school, the Department of Education sends us circulars, which are memos when they are trainings going on at the Department of Education. So, it is the teachers who are supposed to identify their needs and then look at the available training course that they can attend. Nobody forces them... We just make the information available to them. We also have IQMS, ehm which means ehm, IQMS I can't remember.*"

4.2.2 School 2

At School 2, teachers complete the IQMS process that is taken very seriously. The teachers know that they are assessed on annual bases. HOD2SCH2 explained that after completing the IQMS forms, teachers must present proof of completion of documentation and the development file must include the details of the developmental activities that teachers have attended. She explained as follows:

"*The IQMS forms must be completed and proof presented. Development file must include the details of development…SACE also requires proof of development on an annual basis.*"

4.2.3 School 3

At School 2, the IQMS process is implemented and teachers are assessed on an annual basis. Teachers complete the IQMS scores sheets as well as the professional growth and development forms based on their individual strengths and weaknesses. However, HOD3SCH3 revealed that the Department of Basic Education does not assist in the development of teachers and the process does not seem to have the expected outcomes:

"*There is no process… We complete forms, submit and that is that. The Department does not do anything to develop the educators as a whole. They only focus on subject content.*"

She clarified further that:

"*Educators merely complete the forms because they have to. This results in a circle of educators not being developed and the education system as a whole never functioning at optimal capacity.*"

4.2.4   School 4

In School 4, the HOD has a very negative impression of the IQMS. The system does not really develop the educators, but rather focuses on marks which are not evenly distributed. She explained as follows:

> *"The IQMS is run by the Department of Education…assessment is done at school and verified by the Department. Sometimes the school's IQMS system is chocked by department. It is a paper system and not practical because the mark allocation per sub-item is only for marks."*

She explained further that there are administrative and technical issues which are a challenge:

> *"…we have to fill in what we do to the SACE. But the programmes still have many glitches. It is not always possible to upload documents. The server is frequently down. The programme is not user friendly."*

The findings and analysis above reveal that IQMS is not achieving the expected outcomes in many of the schools. However, it may be that IQMS has not have been well implemented as was intended. Some of the HoDs hold a negative perception regarding the IQMS. More specifically the negative perceptions outnumber any positive ones. It seems as if IQMS is too regulatory and necessitates stern compliance, however, once the results are submitted, the process of development does not continue. This may be the reason why HOD4SCH4 terms IQMS as a paper document. In addition to the statement mentioned above, it is questionable whether the developmental appraisal instruments are valid and reliable. The word validity here means whether or not the IQMS achieves what it claims to achieve. On the other hand, reliability here refers to the consistency of the IQMS document.

4.3   FINDINGS EMERGING FROM THE ANALYSIS

This section presents themes developed after coding and categorising the collected data. The table below, Table 4.1, shows the themes developed to answer the research questions and sub-questions.

Table 4.1: Themes emerging from the analysis

	THEMES
1	Understanding of professional development
2	Understanding of self-initiated professional development
3	Teacher self-awareness and self-realisation
4	Experiences of self-initiated professional development
5	Positive aspects of self-initiated professional development
6	Negative aspects of self-initiated professional development
7	Feedback regarding professional development
8	Evidence of effectiveness of teachers' self-initiated professional development
9	Challenges of self-initiated professional development
10	Integrating the self-initiated professional development into the curriculum

4.3.1 Theme 1: Understanding of Professional Development

In this study, all participants gave similar responses regarding their understanding of professional development of teachers. Participants' understanding seem to suggest that Schools 1, 2 ,3 and 4 may be practising developmental activities for teachers. The empirical data found that all the participants had a good understanding of the purpose of professional development. A growing pattern from participants was an experience of understanding and believing in the positive impact that professional development could make on teaching and learning respectively. In this light, SCH1T1 remarked as follows:

> *"Teacher professional development is enhancing your professional identity through your workshops, going to school, observations. So, you're professional.... you are enhancing yourself professionally…you are also getting more credentials within your profession so that you can become a better teacher..."*

SCH1T2 confirmed that attending meetings, going to school and workshops were professional practices for developing lifelong learning and self-improvement. In this sense, attending meetings and sharing knowledge/collaboration were ways of aligning teaching practices. SCH1T2articulated this as follows:

"Working with people and developing yourself so, any meetings that we attend to share knowledge with facilitators you can develop as a teacher. Like a teacher is a lifelong learner."

Her comment emphasises that teachers are lifelong learners and as such must constantly develop themselves in order to stay abreast with educational changes and trends. This is articulated in the response of SCH3T7 as follows:

"...is an act where as a teacher you decide to elevate yourself in terms of your professional career. PD is intended to help build yourself holistically because if at any point in your teaching career you notice that you are lacking internally as an educator you can take a course that will build your skills and make you a better person. For example, if you do not have time management skills or admin skills you can register for a course to build yourself."

The above perspectives of the participants illustrated a positive mind set to conform and be ready to participate in professional development activities to improve their teaching practices by developing teachers as lifelong learners to resolve classroom practices. This might be on the basis of what they had acquired from previous staff development sessions. Most of the participants explained their understanding of professional development as continuous. This is consistent with the literature on the definition of professional development as continuous learning and development of/by teachers to improve teaching and learning practices (Adu & Okeke, 2014) and enhance teachers' proficiency (Mkhwannazi, 2014; Ono & Ferreira, 2010). These findings reveal that teachers' professional development should be a personal decision where a teacher realises that he/she has a professional deficiency gap and is thus motivated to pursue developmental activities that would enhance professional and personal growth. SCH1T3 confirmed:

"It is an act where as a teacher you decide to elevate yourself in terms of your professional career. PD is intended to help build yourself holistically because if at any point in your teaching career you notice that you are lacking internally as an educator you can take a course that will build your skills and make you a better person."

This finding correlate with the principles of Knowles (1984) adults' learning theory which frames this study, that adult learners can direct their own learning processes and are internally motivated to learn. It emerged that most participants have a good mastery of the concept of

professional development as well as its purpose in that they indicated the purpose is to assist them grow professionally and personally, as SCH1T1 puts it:

"*Teacher professional development is enhancing your professional identity … So, you're professional.... you are enhancing yourself professionally.*"

This is consistent with the literature on the purpose of professional development to meet teachers' developmental needs and learner achievement (Ajani, 2018; Ravhuhali, 2014). These findings seem to suggest that teachers cannot rely on knowledge and skill that they had acquired during their pre-service training throughout their teaching career, particularly as there have been many curriculum changes and many innovations in the 21st century. Hence, continuous professional development for teachers is imperative.

4.3.2   Theme 2: Understanding of Self-Initiated Professional Development

Self-initiated professional development refers to activities initiated by the teachers themselves depending on their individual needs which they have identified. It is based on the idea that teachers take responsibility to plan and control their own professional development activities. This is to say that it originates from teachers' own development of ideas, experiences and attitudes. As such, the process is internally instilled and developed. In this study, all participants offered similar responses regarding their understanding of self-initiated professional development of teachers. Participants' understanding seems to suggest what Schools 1, 2, 3 and 4 may be practising. The empirical data revealed that participants had a fair understanding of self-initiated professional development purposes. A growing pattern from participants was an experience of understanding and believing in the positive impact that self-initiated professional development of teachers could make on teaching and learning practices. In this light, SCH1T1 remarked as follows:

"*…enm taking upon yourself to develop your professionalism. Like the teacher activity according to SACE where the teachers have to take it upon themselves to self-develop. You know the school can only go to a certain extent. The system can only go to a certain extent too because as teachers we turn to become complacent at times like say I am an English teacher I know my subject and no one is going to tell me anything. And now teacher-initiated development is also self-initiated. So now it is you taking the step that I need to know more. You know times are changing, things are changing and we also need to adapt to that. And only we can do that.*"

In this observation, SCH1T3 firmly states that teachers need to take the lead role in initiating their developmental activities since they are the ones in the field and know their problem areas best. For SCH1T1, teachers need to assume primary responsibility for planning, implementing, and evaluating their activities. She articulates this as follows:

"…you are initiating it. You are the one taking the role in developing those problems areas that you have. You are playing that role and not waiting for somebody else to tell you to go because you know your problem area."

Her remark highlights that teachers have a primary role to play in initiating their own development. This correlate with the principle of the theoretical framework of this study that teachers can self-direct and plan their own developmental activities as they have had previous experience in the field. Being the top stakeholders for providing quality education, being the practitioners in the field, they have a better grasp of the kind of developmental activities that they need. It also seems to suggest that teachers need to be assiduous and zealous about professional development in particular and teaching practices in general. This is echoed in the response of HODSCH2 as follows:

"It is when teachers take the initiative whether formally or informally to improve their skills, qualifications or knowledge for personal or professional reasons."

The perspectives of the participants above illustrated a sound understanding of the self-initiated professional development where teachers take responsibility for their own learning. This is consistent with the literature in the definition of self-initiated professional development as the teacher takes the primary role in planning and executing their own professional development as personal professional development begins with self-awareness and self-motivation and progresses with self-direction as teachers make choices, and claim ownership for the decisions they make in their professional development (Thiyagarajah, 2009). These findings seem to reveal that teachers' desire to ownership of their professional development, which aligns with the literature that teacher-centred learning, which originates from theories on adult learning, confirms teachers' autonomy in their own development (Louws *et al.,* 2017). This finding concurs with the theory of this study that teachers who are adult learners have an independent self-concept and can plan their own professional development activities (Knowles, 1984). HOD1SCH1 confirmed:

"The fact the person him/herself has to identify the problem and look for the solution. That makes a huge difference as opposed to when someone tells you what do."

This statement correlates with the principle of internal motivation (Knowles, 1984). The first principle of andragogy - the need to know -which means that teachers want to know how learning will take place, followed by knowing what will be learned and then why it is important to learn a given programme. Fulfilling the need to understand the purpose behind the learning experience can result in more effective mutual planning of the learning experience, increased motivation to learn and more positive results in the pedagogical content knowledge of teachers and their classroom practices.

The majority of participants in this study seemed to be positive and contented regarding the self-initiated professional development of teachers with the view that it might assist them to grow personally and professionally. SCH1T2 confirmed *"it's for self-enrichment and gaining general knowledge and understanding which just makes you a better educator all round"*; which may be because education is a dynamic and lifelong process wherein teachers need to be forever learning to improve their teaching and learning practices and stay abreast with new innovations. This finding seems to correlate with the literature which uncovers in many cases, teachers have not been fully prepared to embrace the 21st century environment despite the introduction and implementation of the IQMS (RSA, 2007), and consequently, highlighting that self-initiated professional development of teachers is significant in the improvement of teaching and learning practices.

It emerged that the majority of the teachers and HoDs have a good understanding of self-initiated professional development in that they indicated its purpose and significance particularly to them as the main beneficiaries, which is helping them to grow personally and professionally. HOD2SCH2 says:

"It is when teachers take the initiative whether formally or informally to improve their skills, qualifications or knowledge for personal or professional reasons."

HOD1SCH1 explains that it is significant to teachers, learners and the school in general:

"It is also for the benefit of the learner, for the benefit of the school because the results are used to rate the standard of the school. It is for the benefit of everyone. The teacher himself will become more confident; the learners will benefit because they will do better. The school will benefit because the name will be put on the map".

On the other hand, a notable finding emerged from SCH1T1 and HOD1SCH1 that the understanding of self-initiated professional development may not translate into any form of practice due to compliance HOD1SCH1 said:

"… *if you are waiting for everybody to do something, some people are like wheel barrows. They will wait for someone to push them…if we could get everyone to assess themselves and to find ways on how to improve that would be perfect. But it's not always the case."*

SCH1T1 confirmed that:

"*I don't think it is successful because not a lot of people self-initiate. You know, we... we wait for...to be told to attend certain workshops and what happens is that we sometimes don't even go to those workshops."*

This seems to imply that despite the importance of self-initiated professional development for teachers, there are disadvantages to this approach. This is consistent with the literature as Morgan (2010) state that the knowledge and skills which teachers gain from self-initiated learning are not enough to make important changes in their classroom practices.

It also emerged from the study that some of the participants were unclear as to what self-initiated professional development really is. SCH2T5 mentioned that the term is a foreign to them:

"*To an extent it is still a bit of a foreign terminology."*

This implies that some teachers do not actually self-initiate their own developmental activities or perhaps there is not much awareness of the concept in schools. This concurs with the literature as Badri *et al.* (2016) state that professional developments for educators are not very clear on the concept which seems to imply that teachers do not self-initiate their own professional development activities.

However, HOD1SCH1 emphasised that self-initiated professional development is something that every teacher should be engaging in.

"… I think it is the route that everyone should take now".

In confirming this, SCH1T1T1 explained that:

"I think it is very essential and I think it is something that needs to be spoken about more in the teaching profession because I think as teachers, we tend to get comfortable to a point where we do not initiate such professional development programmes. I think it is a conversation that we really need to start talking about so that we can keep thinking, how can I improve, what can I do, how can I help, what programme can we actually set up in school here that can benefit everyone and those who are to come. The self-initiated professional development is less talked about in schools and among teachers."

It emerged that participants explained their understanding of self-initiated professional development by stating that it needs to come from within (intrinsic motivation) without anybody telling you what to do or forcing them to attend planned workshops. This implies that they perceive/view self-initiated professional development as a means to showcase who a teacher is and to enhance their teaching career. Participants seemed to comprehend the significance or positive impacts of self-initiated professional development. Hence, SCH1T3 said:

"Firstly, I think it's something that each teacher needs to know and needs to understand. I feel that it is the most crucial part of a teachers' development. I think it's when the teacher does introspection, looks at herself from within and sees the parts that need to develop and goes for it without asking or waiting for a certain schedule meeting or workshop. With self-initiated professionalism you are able to bring in yourself into being the teacher and I feel like the more the teacher is herself, the better she does, the better she works. You know instead of having this idea of how a teacher should be, you should actually be who you are but do it professionally."

From the above findings, both HoDs and teachers seem to understand self-initiated professional development as they could highlight its importance to them as helping them improve personally and professionally, achieve career advancement and develop as lifelong learners. Nonetheless, though the participants appeared to have some teaching, administrative, classroom management skills and current knowledge in their field or discipline, the literature stresses a serious need for them to continue to develop and foster their teaching practices in order to meet up with changing educational demands. Aligning with this bearing, it is argued that this is achievable through continuous teachers' self-initiated professional development.

4.3.3 Theme 3: Teacher Self-Awareness and Self-Realisation

During the data collection process, I was directed by the themes in the literature review and theoretical framework on the understanding of self-initiated professional development. As a result, participants were asked how they understood self-initiated professional development with respect to their professional development. Thus, many of the participants revealed that self-initiated professional development is linked to self-realisation, self-awareness and self-efficacy for enabling the teacher to be autonomous and responsible so as to reduce inefficiencies and maximise their teaching and enhance their classroom practices. Some participants' perspectives that emerged from the findings also linked self-initiated professional development to self-awareness and self-realisation. Arguments to this perspective pointed to the idea that without self-realisation and awareness, professional development may not serve the need of the teachers. While articulating her view to this stance, SCH3T7 had this to say:

> *"Yes. It constitutes towards self-initiated professional growth only if you have realised that you need that particular work shop or seminar and you know it will help in your holistic development as a teacher and if you will use the information presented at the workshop."*

In the same line, HOD1SCH stressed her feelings about self-initiated professional development as self-realisation thus:

> *"According to me, it is when a teacher realizes that they lack knowledge in one area of the career and they go out and they seek help. And they look for different ways on how they can improve on those areas where they need to be developed. For example, if a teacher is struggling with discipline in class, the teacher goes on Google to find different ways on how to handle difficult learners. Different types of difficult learners. The teacher can even ask for training where we look at the budget of the school and the teacher can attend the course on discipline etc…"*

SCH3T7 also concurs with the above two comments:

> *"Self-initiated professional development is deciding that you as a teacher would like to expand your knowledge without anyone pushing you to do so because it is part of your professional growth plan. For example, when you sign up for a webinar about personal growth in the work place or how to carry yourself in the workplace."*

From the above excerpts, it is evident that participants viewed self-initiated professional development as necessary for sustainable growth and development. Their perspectives equally suggest that for self-initiated professional development to contribute to teachers' development there is need for self-realisation. Teachers must first realise that they are lacking in their professional and personal skills and then proceed to identify and choose appropriate developmental activities which suit their individual needs. This view is consistent with the literature. Bandura and Wood (1989) state that people's self-concepts grow when they realise that they have previously been functioning under wrongful presumptions about their skills and aptitudes. This means therefore that life's fulfilment grows when people feel a sense of personal ability about their objectives and when those objectives line up with their personal needs. This may be the reason for a majority of the teachers being of the opinion that the workshops which they are told to attend sometimes does not yield fruit in their classroom practices and the reason why self-initiated professional development appear unsuccessful at schools. This is echoed in the voice of SCH1T1 as:

> *"I don't think it is successful because not a lot of people self-initiate. You know, we... we wait to be told to attend certain workshops and what happens is that we sometimes don't even go to those workshops."*

Lastly, their views suggest that participating in self-initiated activities requires teachers' autonomy. For example, the Department of Basic Education designs and determines professional development activities for teachers which teachers then attend the predetermined sessions. According to the participants, attending workshops and seminars do not constitute self-initiated professional development because they are not the initiators of such developmental activities.

4.3.4   Theme 4: Experiences of Self-Initiated Professional Development

In this study as earlier indicated, a majority of the participants understand the notion of self-initiated professional development for self-growth, improving teaching and learning practices. However, some of the participants had not experienced any form of self-initiated professional development, as indicated by SCH1T3:

> "*I don't really see it, yeah I don't really see it. I think also schools are just only focused on attending workshops and they don't realize that something should come from within. Yeah, I think, I think this is something that actually needs to be instilled in teachers. We*

need to develop ourselves. We rely too much on you know, our superiors, SACE, and things like that."

Her remark highlights that due to complacence, teachers do not take the initiatives to self-develop themselves because of the workshops that the Department offers. She stresses her stance by saying that:

"Ehm I think then everything has been planned out for you from the start to finish. The only thing you do is to attend and some times when I do attend workshops and seminars, I always tell myself that this should have been better instead of me being in this group."

SCH1T1 also concurred with the above ideas as she said:

"First it is the workshop that they tell us to go to and then the professional learning community (PLC) meetings as well. So, going back to what I was saying, I think there is more that I can do because my role basically I have been doing what I have been told to do. I have not really taken the initiatives to work on my own individual processes."

SCH2T2 had a similar view as she expressed in the following words:

"Someone plans them but we in our school we do have times that we are coming to share ideas. But I do not think I have participated in the planning of any professional development activity. But I feel that it is not right to set out rules for people."

SCH2T5 had the following to say:

"...not really, not really basically because enm, for instance which ever development stream I was oversight viz a viz my HoD. So, there is already enm well planned enm structured ways of doing things. What you just have to do is learn."

HODSCH3 confirms the above view by saying that:

"I feel that the process as a whole (in the true sense of the word) has not been applied at schools."

The emerging findings reveal the prevailing ambiguity concerning the implementation of self-initiated professional development (Type 1 Activity) at Schools 1 and 2. Type 1 activities are activities which are initiated by each teacher individually based on their personal and professional development requirements. In other words, the process is internally instilled and developed by the teachers personally where both new and experienced teachers see themselves

as the source of professional development. Teacher-initiated activities consist of CPTD activities attended, completed or initiated by each educator individually based on their unique personal and professional development needs. Thus, it can be said that SACE seeks to shape teachers to be pivotal in endeavouring to improve their pedagogical content knowledge and their classroom practices. This is similar to the NPFTED's (RSA, 2007) intentions which are to empower South African teachers with relevant skills which will enable them to be well equipped to meet the demands of their teaching profession. The NPFTED seeks to map out a long-term vision of a picture perfect synchronized and consistent system of continuing professional development for teachers and pays great attention to the general role that professional development for teachers has in the transformation of the entire education system. Therefore, this means that, teachers' cognition possibly underlies some aspects of teachers' work leading to a platform for teacher-centred learning. This is corroborated by HODSCH1 as follows:

> "If I tell you that you need to improve on 1,2,3 it is not the same as you yourself identify your problems... I think it is the route that everyone should take now, so that we now take accountability and responsibility for the things that happen in our professions."

This finding shows that there is a mismatch between policy and practices regarding teachers' self-initiated development. Self-initiated professional development should allow teachers to undertake the main duty for planning, implementing, and evaluating the learning processes. If it is so, then teachers' cognition needs to be considered as an important element in the designing and delivery of professional development activities that could successfully be used to enrich and enhance teacher professional proficiencies. But from the above excerpts, it seems that the self-initiated approach which encourages teachers to identify their own development needs and build up their individual knowledge and concepts, appears to be a myth as teachers only attend stipulated or predetermined activities.

However, in contrast to the ideas above, SCH2T4 agrees that attending workshops and seminars constitute self-initiated professional development if the facilitator of the activity is knowledgeable. He said this in the following words:

> "If I attend a workshop, I think to a certain extent it could be depending on the presenter. If the presenter is skilled and the seminar that you are attending is put together then yes it can have a positive impact. Otherwise, if it is poorly put together and the presenter does not equip to talk about a certain subject then no."

T5SCH2 aligns with this view as he stressed that:

"I think so because they are, they are voluntary. Some workshops are compulsory but majority are voluntary. So, it is...if you want to go, you go. But if you do go you will grow, you will learn. Enm definitely you will learn so I think it yes."

The perspectives expressed above suggest that despite the fact that the majority of the participants have a good understanding of the concept of self-initiated professional development; it seems as if there is confusion about what activities constitute a self-initiated activities and which activities are counted as externally initiated. Therefore, participants appear to be confused given that the same professional development activities which are considered as self-initiated are equally considered as externally and school-initiated activities. While other participants consider attending workshops and seminars, not to be considered self-initiated, it all depends on how knowledgeable and prepared the facilitator of a given training is. The views also articulate that planning for teachers' professional development activities requires the direct participation of the teachers who influence and direct efforts, interest and passions. Finally, the views suggest that teachers desire to be responsible for the planning of their own professional development activities which address their needs and not just attend predetermined workshops planned by the Department.

In terms of policy, the views coming from the interviews reveal that South African education sector and particularly professional development for teachers is guided by a number of educational policies, specifically the IQMS, SACE, the personal growth plan and the self-improvement plan. In explaining how these documents direct the professional development activities for teachers and the quality education, HOD1SCH1 pointed out as follows:

"...yeah, that is the IQMS system. The form is very specific. You complete or fill it up. Like I said there's 1% increase for improving in terms of the IQMS. The IQMS system uses a scoring style. If you score low, you are not going to get a 1% pay progression. Every year we get 1% pay progression from the IQMS. There are three assessment forms that you get where you assess the teachers' presentation, the teachers' classroom management and administration. The teacher will assess himself, and the peer and the senior. All these have files. You have the self-assessment where the teacher assesses himself or herself, we have a peer assessment where another teacher who is chosen by this teacher will assess the teacher and then we have an assessment done by the senior".

In addition to the above view, HOD3SCH3 had this to say:

"…yes. IQMS scores sheets and professional growth and development forms. Educators complete the forms based on their own options in terms of strength and weaknesses pertaining to themselves as educators, as subject teachers and as professionals. From there, a score is given per section and a total is calculated…Should an educator not complete the IQMS, they can face not getting a salary increase. Hence educators are only completing the forms because they have to. The DBE must reconsider their current system and look at the needs of educators beyond teaching subjects."

Participants' views suggest that participants are aware of the policies that govern professional development for teachers and acknowledge that educational institutions do follow the processes and procedures of IQMS. Professional development should be guided by the IQMS provisions to meet the needs of the teachers with respect to their professional development. It emerged that some participants valued the initiative from the Department concerning the intentions of the policy. The IQMS policy encourages that schools be transparent, democratic and collaborative. However, the findings seem to suggest that the focus is on gaining the extra points for a salary increase rather than for authentic professional development. This means that teachers complete the IQMS forms just for compliance and salary increment. In addition, the Department appears to be doing very little for teachers' development, and as such IQMS has been termed a 'paper system'.

4.3.5 Theme 5: Positive Aspects of Self-Initiated Professional Development

In overall acceptance, the participants from Schools 1, 2, 3, and 4, both the teachers and HODs, overwhelmingly articulated that self-initiated professional development brings enormous benefits in their personal and professional career. In particular, benefits such as enhancing teaching practices as SCH1T1 said:

"You enhance your professional identity you know. You learn with the process and you find different ways of teaching, of serving, of giving back and actually making a difference. You know you learn more from it…learning more, take the initiative to learn and find out how you can improve in your problem area. Just learning is the positive outcome. I would say realising that teaching as a profession does not end with you…it does not end at school, you know. You actually realise that it is a continuous learning process."

In sharing a similar opinion, SCH4T7 had this to say:

"You grow as a person and as a teacher. As you engage yourself in the self-initiated development mind set you realise or rather see where you lack as an individual and as a teacher and you are trusted so much with more responsibility. I have become more patient and understanding. My interpersonal skills and improved tremendously. My admin skills have since become so good that I was made secretary for my department."

In addition to the above view, HOD1SCH1 said the following:

"The fact the person him/herself has to identify the problem and look for the solution. That makes a huge difference as opposed to when someone tells you what do. Sometimes the attitude becomes very defensive and usually people wouldn't want to work when they feel very defensive. You are able to help someone if they acknowledge that they have a problem."

When the participants acknowledged that self-initiated professional developmentmakes them better teachers and professionals, and it enhances their professionalism. It also creates an opportunity for them to show off their personal skills and carry themselves as the professionals that they are meant to be. There is equally the aspect of personal growth and self-reflection, learning with the process, finding different ways of teaching, serving, giving back and actually making a difference. Above all, the fact that it is the teacher himself/herself who takes the initiative is very important as opposed to when they are told what to do.

However, T1SCH1 noted that in as much as the self-initiated professional development enhances their career and personal growth, it could have a negative impact too. In her words she said:

"I think maybe it can come to a point where you miss the major problems that you do not see, you know… I think you can focus on a point so much that you exclude other problem areas if it is self-initiated. I think so."

In alignment with this view, HOD1SCH1 had this to say:

"Some people do not take the initiative…. some people are like wheel barrows. Another thing that I also think that is negative is that some people will find ways that are not so good to improve. People could end up doing things that they are not supposed to do because they went out on their own. And they learned the wrong thing."

She went on further to elaborate as follows:

"I think they should be a balance. ...yes, we wait for people to find solutions but we also make the solutions available, so that we don't just wait for the person to initiate a movement. We push for them to do something about it."

From the above-mentioned quotes, some of the participants of this study were of the view that self-initiated professional development for teachers enables the teacher to self-improve. Therefore, in order to learn comprehensively how teachers self-initiate their own professional development, follow-up support and feedback are required.

4.3.6 Theme 6: Negative Aspects of Self-Initiated Professional Development

As previously reported, participants from Schools 1, 2, 3, and 4 articulated that self-initiated professional development brings enormous benefits to their personal and professional career. However, when asked whether the self-initiated professional development has negative outcome, HOD4SCH4, HOD1SCH1, SCH2T5, SCH4T8, HOD3SCH3 mentioned some shortcoming of the self-initiated approach. In particular, shortcomings such as some teachers do not take the initiative, teachers' compliance and reluctance; teachers may use illegal methods to handle challenges as HOD1SCH1 responded:

"Some people do not take the initiative. So, if you are waiting for everybody to do something some people are like wheel barrows. They will wait for someone to push them...if we could get everyone to assess themselves and to find ways on how to improve that would be perfect. But it's not always the case."

She adds further that:

"I also think that its negative is that some people will find ways that are not so good to improve. For example, may be another teacher who enh tells you that this is how I discipline my class. And you find that it's actually illegal. So sometimes you.... People could end up doing things that they are not supposed to do because they went out on their own. And they learned the wrong thing."

Furthermore, SCH4T8 noted that:

"It requires an open-minded approach from the individual and requires an active decision on that persons' part to utilise the tools provided. I have also found that a 'silver bullet' approach is often presented and this does not always work in all situations and environments."

HOD3SCH3 equally said that:

> *"Educators not being truthful when completing forms or realising their shortfalls but not attempting to better themselves."*

This view was correlated by HOD4SCH4 as follows:

> "*Not everyone is equally interested in self-improvement when opportunities are given to the whole staff."*

These comments concur with the literature as Morgan (2010) argues that the experiences which teachers obtain from self-initiated learning are not always enough to construct general and more important changes in their classroom practices. Bozat *et al.* (2013) add that institutional involvement in professional development for teachers cannot be ignored considering their inputs in creating more focused programmes for teachers.

4.3.7   Theme 7: Feedback Regarding Professional Development

A significant facet as stated by the IQMS is the post appraisal feedback which should offer important information to the teachers regarding what was noticed in their lessons. It suggests that it should concentrate on performance, be specific and objective, alternatives should be provided, and that individual needs are considered. Consequently, in this study, it was important to find out whether feedback was provided to teachers and whether it was indicated that they needed development. It was also important to find out how teachers reacted to the feedback.

HoDs 1, 2 and 4 stated that adequate feedback was given through meetings or one-on-one session with the teachers and via emails. HOD1SCH1 had this to say when asked if adequate feedback was provided to the teachers:

> *"We have regular meetings remember at each department."*

She explained further as follows:

> *"For example, at the English department we meet every fortnight where we address all the issues."*

In support of the above view, HOD2SCH2 and HOD4SCH4 had this to say:

> *"Orally or by e-mail and via staff meetings, departmental meetings, SMT meetings, one-on-one interviews."*

HOD3SCH3 was very direct and said that *"No feedback is provided"* at her school. The response of HOD3SCH3 is a cause for concern. It should be noted that the HODs are the ones who are supposed to provide feedback to their teachers. This implies that the HOD may not be aware of her responsibilities. This goes further to strengthen the fact that the self-initiated professional development needs more awareness and clarity.

But she explained that in some way:

> *"Educators who qualify will receive a 1% of their salary as compensation. The DBE should go through these forms and areas of need and from there develop workshops/ courses/training to assist educators. By doing this, educators will be more confident in their teaching as they have grown and developed themselves."*

The teachers responded to the question on feedback in different ways. Some of the teachers noted that feedback was provided to them after they indicated a development need. Meanwhile some have never indicated the need for development like SCH1T1 who said:

> *"NO NO… I have never; I have never indicated that I need PD to anyone."*

Meanwhile SCH2T5 noted as follows:

> *"Yes, I have marking, ehm generally the set-up of a class. Like where you can put the desk, as simple as that. Filing, admin the whole side of marking has been a huge experience for me so I have been indicating that to my HoD. She has been very helpful, I have developed files, you know methods of doing things. Even discipline yeah".*

In confirmation to the above view, SCH3T7 had this to say:

> *"Feedback is provided by my HoD's actions because every single document she needs is always readily available without having to rummage through unnecessary papers."*

In addition, the participants were asked how feedback was received, whether positively or negatively. HOD1SCH1 reported that generally teachers are very positive when it comes receiving feedback. She articulated in her own words as follows:

> *"Most teachers in my department are very positive. They will listen to what you have to say and if they don't agree, they tell me why they don't agree. We discuss it and we conclude together."*

On the other hand, HOD3SCH3 thinks that no adequate feedback is provided to teachers and the teachers end up regarding their professional development activities as a mere waste of time as she said:

"They feel that the process is a waste of time as no constructive feedback is given".

The response of HOD3SCH3 is somewhat strange because the HODs are responsible for proving feedback to their teachers. From her response, one would say that some of the HODs do not really understand their specific responsibilities.

4.3.8 Theme 8: Evidence of Effectiveness of Teachers' Self-Initiated Professional Development

As this study intended to explore the perceptions of teachers regarding self-initiated professional development for improving teaching and learning, it became vital to capture appropriate views of participants concerning the phenomenon under study. In this study, participants stated that self-initiated professional development appears not to be at the top of the teachers' to-do list as the concept is less talked or not talked about at all in the schools. SCH1T1 echoed her view as follows:

"...No no, not at all. That is why I find this very interesting that we need to talk about because at one point we need to self-initiate not constantly relying on what they are giving you."

She adds further that:

"First it is the workshop that they tell us to go to and then the PLC meetings as well. So going back to what I was saying, I think there is more that I can do because my role basically ehm I been doing ehm..I haven't been doing much regarding that... I have been doing what I have been told to do and I have been focusing on my academics. I have not really taken the initiatives."

SCH1T3 agreed with the above view as follows:

"...like I said in the beginning I think it is because the self-initiated professionalism is not really taken seriously in most schools. They don't really focus on it, yeah. So that is why I think there is insufficient information on it."

SCH2T5 confirmed the above perspective in the following words:

"…not really, not really. To an extent it is still abit, abit of a foreign terminology. Enm I feel like there is a lot that I can contribute, I for one I can plan. But no not enough I think there is still space."

For SCH2T4, SCH2T6 and SCH3T7 accessed information about self-initiated professional development online. SCH2T4 stated that:

"…Yes, I think it is online. One can go online and develop from there. Nothing that I am aware of. There on the annual plan the Department I suppose has it on their record but it is not addressed every day."

SCH4T6 responded thus:

"No, I had to do research on my own."

In a similar manner, SCH3T7 responded that:

"Yes, I did receive adequate information about the process via google and word-of-mouth from my peers who had similar problems."

From these excerpts, participants think that the self-initiated professional development approach has to be talked about more in their respective schools and among their peers. However, this study found that there is no indication of self-initiated professional development among teachers. The teachers only attend workshops and seminars which to them do not constitute self-initiated professional development. There is no indication of how self-initiated professional development unfolds as there is no evidence of these activities among the teachers. The fact that some of the teachers term it a 'foreign terminology' is concerning as it makes one ponder upon the Type 1 activity stipulated by SACE (2012). In addition to the above, the fact that the participants wish that self-initiated professional development should be talked about more in schools in order to create awareness is equally a case for concern. Finally, the fact that teachers accessed information of self-initiated professional development approach online is even more worrisome. This means although SACE (2012) mandates teachers to self-initiate their activities, the teachers do not have adequate knowledge of the concept and hence the reason why some teachers do not even understand what it is all about. This finding reflects the ineffectiveness of the teacher-initiated activity (Type 1) (SACE, 2012) as there appear to be a challenge in the implementation of the policy.

4.3.9 Theme 9: Challenges of Self-Initiated Professional Development

Some of the participants in this study raised similar views about the professional development challenges experienced in general and self-initiated professional development in particular in the sampled schools. Time constraints for professional development activities seems to be a major challenge, funding and irrelevant content of activities which are more generic (one size fit all) and subject-focused rather than building teachers according to their individual needs were major challenges according to some of the teachers and HoDs. The response of participant SCH2T5 was as follow:

> "*Yes! There is one thing. The times because you don't get enough support…the workload and of course the pay doesn't reflect yourself.*"

Referring to limited funding and support as one of the challenges of teachers' professional development shows the imbalances in terms of their levels of resources. The areas of professional developmental needs which teachers identify are sometimes not attended to because lack of material and human resources or funding. The lack of funding has a negative impact on the effective implementation professional development activities at some schools. Fundamentally, the School Management Teams (SMT) are supposed to resolve the issue of funding regarding professional development from their provincial allocations. This seems to be a common challenge as all the participants in this study reported that funding and support was inadequate at their respective schools.

HOD3SCH3 confirms that:

> "*… More than often these workshops are strictly subject related and not for teacher's development based on other skills needed in this profession (classroom management, discipline etc).*"

Irrelevant content for professional development activities which are more generic (one-size-fits-all) and subject focus rather than building teachers according to their individual needs were revealed in this study. This phenomenon has led to discourse among researchers regarding the significance of the current teachers' professional development activities (Queen-Mary & Mtapuri, 2014). Teachers' unsatisfactory experiences suggest shortcomings in the planning and implementation of professional development activities.

She explained further that:

"The Department does not do anything to develop the teachers as a whole. They only focus on subject content…Teachers is very negative towards the process as it is wasting their time since nothing will be done regarding their areas of need."

In the same line, SCH1T1 had this to say:

"…to be told to attend certain workshops and what happens is that we sometimes don't even go to those workshops. Maybe it is on a week end, maybe it is after work, and then we are exhausted we want to go home."

From the responses of the participants, timing emerged as an aspect that greatly hinders professional development activities. Teachers are at work for most of the school day and find it difficult to participate in their developmental activities after school hours, whether self-initiated or externally initiated. This study argues that the lack of ability for teachers to make time to self-initiate their own professional development could stem from teachers not understanding that they have an obligation to initiate and participate in development activities.

The response from SCH1T1 suggests that teachers' professional development at this school is not really a pressing issue. This equally suggests that teachers are not aware they have an obligation to devote 80 hours yearly for development activities, as stated in the Employment of Educators Act of 1998, especially as time is allocated for teachers' professional development by the EEA (RSA, 1998).

At school level, teachers expect to be provided with sufficient time to reflect on their classroom practice. The concept of limited time being a challenge may signify that when professional development activities are not connected to practice, it has a little impact on learning and learning outcomes. This view is directly linked to the fourth principle of adult learning which is readiness to learn. In adults, in this case the teachers, the readiness to attend professional development workshops depends on the relevancy of the topic.

The IQMS and SACE appear not to be helping matters as teachers complete the IQMS forms just for compliance. As a policy, the IQMS is regarded as enhancing the teaching profession, but it does not seem to translate into an effective practice.

HOD4SCH4 explained that:

"… it could be linked to a salary increment. Above a certain mark you get 1% salary increment for as long as you stay above that mark. The mark is 79/128."

In fact, the focus seems to be on gaining a salary increment rather than on professional development. However, even the 1% salary increase does not seem to motivate teachers to value professional development activities. This is a cause for concern, as the IQMS is aimed at promoting quality learning and teaching. At this point, it could be said that the developmental system of the IQMS is failing to achieve its intended goals. Designers and facilitators of professional development have to identify the needs of teachers. This is important because when teachers are assured that a professional development activity has the potential to improve teaching and their classroom practices, they will in turn apply the knowledge and skills learned in their classrooms, which will ultimately lead to improved learner achievement which has a positive effect on the school in general.

4.3.10 Theme 10: Integrating Self-Initiated Professional Development into the Curriculum

Professional development activities that focus on traditional forms usually adopt the idea of imparting knowledge to teachers instead of formulating new knowledge. Professional development activities that are too general cause teachers to have negative perceptions. Conversely, professional development activities that integrate and address each teacher's needs can motivate enthusiasm. During the interviews, participants were asked if the self-initiated teacher professional development is incorporated into the curriculum and professional development. In response to this, HODSCH4 had this to say:

> *"It is used to assess the need for development in certain areas and then the school tries to meet this need by getting an expert in that specific area to address the staff."*

HOD1SCH1 supported this view as follows:

> *"...we also have the school improvement plan (SIP), the deputy principal will take the files of all the teachers and identify the different needs. And if the needs can be addressed as a group, then he arranges for training. But if the needs are individual then individual teachers will be given suggestions on what they can do in order to improve."*

She explained further that:

> *"...we have those meetings where we discuss those issues and then in every term, we have a day when I will visit the teacher so that we look at the progress...there is follow-up."*

HODSCH4 and HODSCH1 share a similar opinion about incorporating self-initiated teachers' professional development into the professional development curriculum of teachers, namely that it is used to identify and assess the developmental needs of teachers:

"If the needs can be addressed as a group, then they arrange for training. But if the needs are individual then individual teachers will be giving suggestions on what they can do in order to improve and/or the school tries to meet this need by getting an expert in that specific area to address the staff."

Meanwhile, HODSCH3 sees it as not being incorporated into teacher professional development. According to her, it is simply a process of submission and not a process of development and responded as follows:

"...It is not, as it is a process of submission and not a process of development."

SCH2T5 said:

"No! only for the SMT."

For SCH2T4 and SCH1T1 they appear quite unsure as to whether self-initiated professional development is incorporated into the curriculum of teacher development.

SCH2T4 reported:

"I'm not sure, am not sure if it is in the curriculum."

SCH1T1 seem not to know as she said:

"I don't know."

The empirical data above raises several concerns regarding professional development, curriculum and the self-initiated professional development of teachers. Teachers' professional development has been frequently criticised as being a one-size-fits-all approach (Alberth *et al.,*2018) rather than other valuable formats (Desimone & Garet, 2015). Teachers have different learning needs (Louws *et al.,* 2017) and different needs for their development as well (El Afi, 2019). However, teachers are constantly asked to participate in workshops regardless of their needs or requirement. This study found that such practices have little potential for significant changes teaching and classroom practices and perhaps the reason why to some teachers, attending professional development activities has little value. HODSCH4 and HODSCH1 were the only HoDs who use self-initiated professional development to encourage the professional

development for teachers in their respective schools. This is a cause for concern as the Type 1 activity's underlying purpose is to promote quality teaching and learning, and the findings above imply thus that Type 1 professional development is not delivering its intended aims.

The findings emerging from this study seem to suggest that SACE together with the Department of Basic Education do not evaluate the effectiveness of the self-initiated professional development activities. The fragmented nature of these activities is also of concern. These findings point to the dire need for re-examination of professional development as a joint endeavour of teachers, designers and facilitators aimed at promoting and enhancing not only for teaching and learning but for all stakeholders of education as a whole.

4.4   CONCLUSION

This penultimate chapter discussed the findings of the study emerging from the data collected through document analysis and interviews. In this study, participants expressed both similar and dissimilar views and experiences against the background of the contextual practices at their respective schools regarding their perceptions of self-initiated teacher professional development. A point worth noting is that majority of themes discussed have a direct bearing of self-directed learning stemming from the theoretical framework and the literature review Where both local and international literature was reviewed. The final chapter gives a general overview of the research project, the summary of the main findings together with the recommendations emanating from the major findings.

CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this final chapter is to present an overview of the chapters and the summary of the key findings. In addition, recommendations are offered as well as implications for further research. The findings presented in the previous chapter were based on the themes that emerged from the data and attempted to answer the research question: *How do teachers perceive self-initiated professional development?*

5.2 OVERVIEW OF CHAPTERS ONE TO FIVE

Chapter 1: presented an introduction and background of the study, exposition of the problem and the purpose of the study, rationale and significance of the study as well as the research questions. It also presented the supposition on which the study was grounded, and concept clarification.

Chapter 2: comprised an overview of connected literature which included both local and international researchers' work. The purpose of the literature review is mainly to ascertain how the practices, the literature gaps and approaches to teacher professional development in developing teachers personal and professional proficiency in general, and more specifically self-initiated professional development in improving teaching and learning practices were identified together with the theoretical framework and guiding principles for effective professional development.

Chapter 3: illustrated the research methodologies used in the study. It presented the research approach and design as well as the population and sampling. Date collecting techniques used in this study included document analysis and interviews. Data analysis which followed several phases was discussed. The final section related to the role as the researcher, validity trustworthiness, and ethical considerations.

Chapter 4: presented the findings which emerged from the data analysis. In this chapter, teachers' perceptions of the self-initiated professional development was investigated for improving teaching and learning practices in three public high schools in the Tshwane South District in Gauteng province.

Chapter 5: is the final chapter, constituting a synthesis of the findings from qualitative research, suggestions for further research, recommendations and concluding remarks.

5.3   SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

This study investigated participants' perceptions and understanding of professional development and more specifically their views and experiences of the self-initiated professional development. This section focuses on key findings presented according to the identified sub questions.

5.3.1   RQ1: How do teachers perceive/understand self-initiated professional development?

In this study, participants expressed a basic understanding of professional development, teachers' professional development, and continuous professional teacher development as well as self-initiated professional development and were generally able to indicate their purpose and significance to enhance them personally and professionally. Although participants portrayed some understanding of self-initiated professional development, they appeared not to understand the difference between professional development activities in general and self-initiated professional development activities in particular.

Participants had multiple understanding of self-initiated professional development which indicates that they tended to engage in professional development for different reasons and interests. Participants reported that self-initiated professional development is a role that should be taken by the individual teacher himself/herself depending on their identified professional deficiency needs, which aligns with the theoretical framework which is the self-concept of the adult learner or teacher is self-directing and autonomous (Knowles, 1984).

Although participants were optimistic about the concept of self-initiated professional development, acknowledging that it led to self-enrichment, professional growth, confidence, respect from the community, understanding of career requirement for future positions, as well as improving teaching and learning, they admitted that self-initiated professional development is not discussed in schools and to some participants, it was seen as a 'foreign' concept. This means that in many cases teachers are not taking the responsibility for their own professional development and in some cases, teachers were inadvertently engaging in self-initiated development.

Some of the participants, however, understood self-initiated professional development from their personal knowledge as practitioners and not necessarily because they had been given formal information about this concept. In contrast, some of the teachers had no idea that SACE requires them to engage in self-initiated professional development. As a result, many of the participants do not self-initiate their developmental activities because they were not aware of this responsibility. It should be noted that there is a major difference between defining and understanding a concept and putting the principles of such a concept into practice, in fact, simple understanding may not translate into any form of practice

There seems to be confusion about the difference between professional development activities and self-initiated activities. Some activities which constitute professional development for teachers are the very same activities which constitute self-initiated professional development. Despite the fact that a majority of the participants portrayed little experience in self-initiating their own professional development, teachers felt that attending workshops, seminar and conferences that have been arranged by the Department of Basic Education does not constitute self-initiated professional development because the programmes have been planned externally. This lack of clarity has led to participants not being involved in their professional development and not taking ownership.

Self-initiated professional development is related to teacher-led initiatives. A growing number of scholars have advocated the need for engaging in self-initiated professional development programmes as a substitution for traditional professional development activities. This aspect was acknowledged by some participants that participating in self-directed professional development activities would be useful for personal and professional growth. This perspective aligns with the principle of adult learners' desire to learn which means that teachers' sense of professional responsibilities, self-motive and fulfilment are the components of professional practices that are evident in their self-initiated professional development activities. However, teachers find it challenging to distinguish between professional development activities which are mandatory and self-initiated developmental activities.

Even though teachers are tasked with identifying their professional needs in the IQMS process, there tends to be a major difference between needs identifications and self-initiating one's own professional development. IQMS was introduced in schools with the aim of enhancing teachers' pedagogic content knowledge and the standard of education. Some schools implemented the IQMS policy document which identified needs and then informed types of

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professional development required by the teachers. Needs identification is just a step for teachers to identify the professional deficiency gaps but taking ownership of personal development is the next. It seems that most participants have a negative attitude towards the process and may end up not taking the lead to self-initiate their professional development. In addition, teachers feel that participating in professional development activities is a waste of time as workshops are subject-centred, of little value and generic. Teachers indicated that these activities tend to be a one-size-fits-all and offer little for actual development. This makes one wonder why teachers' participation in professional development activities is optional and is not compulsory to ensure the development of teachers' pedagogical content knowledge and proficiency.

Teachers expressed the need to be involved in planning their professional development as they understand their areas of development. However, it is ironical that teachers' desire to take part in planning their developmental activities yet they do not take the initiative/role to self-initiate their own professional development activities. Even though teachers all indicated that self-initiated professional development could be a valuable process, they felt that it is not yet a priority.

5.3.2 RQ2: How do teachers perceive their experiences/engagement of the self-initiated professional development?

Participants' responses and engagement in professional development activities generally were regulated by relevance of the content of the programme instead of their type of professional development. Consequently, teachers' level of engagement is dependent on the designers who plan; decide the content, aims and the layout of the activities. However, self-initiated professional development activities have the potential to enhance participants' personal and professional growth, resolve classroom challenges and improve teacher quality.

Some participants took the initiative and used the internet as an intervention tactic to augment their professional and personal competences. These participants expressed their intrinsic motivation for self-development which aligns with the andragogy principle of motivation that teachers are mostly self-driven in achieving their goals. However, the majority of participants had little or no experiences in self-initiating their professional development. Even though some teachers had identified their individual areas for development via the self-improvement and school improvement plans, they had not been proactive even though they confirmed that they preferred self-initiated professional development.

It was suggested that more meaningful outcomes could be achieved with a combination of departmental and institutional supports and interventions as well as self-initiated professional development. As the functions and roles of schools keep changing, the same happens to the responsibilities of teachers. The primary movement implicit for teachers to self-initiate their developmental activities is the shift from dependent to self-directed learning. This approach tends to be more significant than predefined professional activities presented by facilitators who sometimes may not themselves understand the content. Professional development that is too general often results in teachers developing a negative perception and conversely, professional development activities that integrate teachers' needs can motivate teachers' enthusiasm for professional development. Therefore, considering teachers' needs, involving them in the decision making with regards to the type of professional development needed, in collaboration with the Department could result in effective outcomes.

Policy makers should be made aware of the discrepancy in understanding professional development and take into consideration self-initiated professional development. Participants' perceptions of professional development as a technique for maintaining the quality of their professional practices both as individuals and practitioners by fulfilling their wider responsibilities to the work environment differs from the traditional perspectives of professional development in the literature. This is because participants' views were subtler and covered alternative applications of professional development. Though the participants viewed professional development as a positive learning model which may permit them to attain several perceived results, they also uncovered unconstructive perceptions.

To sum up, findings suggest more subject and individual professional development activities should be offered for teachers' professional development that integrate teachers' views and knowledge in combination with those of the Department and institutions without treating professional development as a fragmented practice.

5.3.3   RQ3: How do teachers perceive the effectiveness of self-initiated activities?

Some participants were able to suggest what could be considered in order to make self-initiated activities for professional development effective. Participants suggested that the concept of self-initiated professional development activities should be discussed and understood among teachers and in the teaching profession as a whole to fully comprehend its process and its value.

Teachers' learning from professional development is determined largely by the nature of the developmental activities in which they engage.

The findings confirm that the capacity of professional development to bring about change in teachers' values and practices is connected to their perceptions of the effectiveness of a given activity. The study equally found a significant correlation between participants' learning from professional development activities and subsequent efforts to enhance learners' improvement. Nonetheless, participants did not always change their classroom practices through learning from professional development especially when there was conceptual divergence between what participants perceived they would learn and what professional development facilitators actually provided. Hence, they sometimes see professional development as adding little value.

The effect of external facilitators, especially in the case where the facilitators themselves did not master the content of a given developmental activity, can thwart teachers' learning from professional development activities. Though the level of teachers' self-efficacy was sufficient to introduce practice-based changes in their classroom practice, their ability to intensify learners' knowledge via these practices is uncertain as a good number of the teachers are lacking in pedagogic content knowledge. Teachers thus need more knowledge and clarity about the self-initiated professional development initiatives.

5.3.4 Main research question: How do teachers perceive self-initiated professional development?

The main purpose of this study was to examine teachers' perceptions towards self-initiating their own professional development at selected high schools in the Tshwane South District of Gauteng province. The findings indicate that participants agree to the value of professional development, consider professional development activities as important and were positive about taking the responsibility to initiate their developmental activities instead of being dependent on the Department, external facilitators and their schools.

Self-reflection as a concept was raised to reflect on their teaching and classroom practices to improve in their practice with the realisation of taking ownership to enhance their professional and personal skills is vital, understanding the value of professional development in enhancing their practice which would in turn have a positive effect on teaching and learning.

Teachers referred to the significance of being included in the planning of their professional development and offered suggestions for cooperation as well as working collaboratively in

sharing experiences with other colleagues, networking and developing new techniques and activities.

However, participants were not taking responsibility to self-initiate their own professional development activities because they have little knowledge of self-initiating their own professional development activities. Although participants viewed the purpose of self-initiated professional development in a positive manner, they were not self-initiating their own professional development activities and raised challenges such as lack of time, funding and resources as well as inadequate information.

Teachers' self-initiated professional development means that teachers themselves are responsible for setting goals for their individual growth and learning. Consequently, teachers need to be offered the status of knowers who are capable of sustaining their own professional development (Borg, 2014). This mean that the opportunity for teachers to undertake professional development activities devoid of institutional domination may permit them to acquire more meaningful learning experiences and hence become lifelong learners to overcome the demands of the 21st century teaching.

5.4   RECOMMENDATIONS FOR POLICY AND PRACTICE

Based on the finding of this study, the following recommendations are offered:

Recommendation 1: Developing an understanding of self-initiated professional development

Generally**,** self-initiated professional development is connected with teacher-led initiatives regulated by self-governing professionalism that often prioritises teachers' independent goals and needs. Researchers have advocated for the necessity to take on self-directed professional development activities as substitutes for unfocussed professional development programmes which may not be relevant to teachers' developmental needs.

It is thus recommended that the Department of Basic Education should ensure that there is clarity between teachers' professional development activities and the activities that constitute self-initiated professional development as well as provide adequate awareness and understanding of this concept. The methods on how these activities needs to be carried out should be clearly stated and the teachers must ensure that their participation is documented for accountability with the Department of Basic Education providing teachers with basic advanced

personal knowledge management skills for effective engagement in self-initiated professional development initiatives.

Recommendation 2: Support for engaging in self-initiated professional development

There is evidence from the findings to confirm that self-initiated learning could support teachers' professional development. This suggests that teachers should reflect and take ownership in planning, making decisions and changes in their teaching and learning practice. Considering teachers' self-efficacy illustrates their readiness to improve their classroom effectiveness to enhance learner outcomes. However, support is needed.

It is recommended that the Department of Basic Education, together with institutions and school governing bodies provide organisational support, financial and other required resources to utilise the outcome of learning from self-initiated professional development activities.

Recommendation 3: Implementing and managing self-initiated professional development

It is recommended that the Department of Basic Education and other policy makers should develop greater more awareness of and acknowledgement of teacher-initiated professional development. Teachers should be equipped with the latest professional development policy documents which outline opportunities, courses, activities and programmes for development. This means that teachers take the lead role of planning, organising, leading and implementing their own learning and development. This should be aligned with IQMS which incorporates a component of teacher development, where teachers attain their professional growth by focusing on monitoring their professional growth plan and documenting all forms of professional development which they self-initiate for tracking, record keeping and accountability.

5.5   LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The use of interviews to a certain extent could be seen as a limitation as McMillan and Schumacher (2010) assert that some researchers have shown disproval for using interviews as instrument for data collection on the grounds that interviews can influence the findings of a research project. McMillan and Schumacher (2010) add that the researcher could collect fake information as their presence might influence participants' responses.

This study used semi-structured interviews to ascertain teachers' perceptions, experiences and effectiveness of self-initiated professional development practices. The collected data were based on their perceived experiences and engagement. Though this qualitative research

instrument has the potential to discover teachers' perspectives and learning from professional development programmes, understanding their experiences based on post participation may attract limitations. If the data had been collected analogous to their participation in self-initiated professional development activities, divergent views would probably have been uncovered. For example, observing teachers while they undertake the self-initiated professional development activities would have been an important method to achieve this. Nevertheless, identifying teachers' perceptions of self-initiated PD via observations could have been more complicated given the prevalence of the pandemic. Hence, it may not have offered a holistic understanding of their perspectives.

A final limitation for this study was the restriction placed on research by the Covid-19 pandemic and the fact that I am an international student.

5.6   CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE STUDY

This study offers a short report of the perceptions and experiences of English language HODs and teachers at selected high schools of Tshwane South district regarding self-initiated professional development activities for improving teaching and learning practices. This study has the ability to contribute to relevant stakeholders in the Department of Education, which is responsible for quality assurance and teachers' professional development. In this light, findings based on the research questions raised major aspects to be scrutinised by the Departmental officers, professional development designers, SMTs, HODs and teachers concerning teachers' professional development for improving teaching and learning practices.

Moreover, the findings of this study could contribute to the field of English language teaching generally and in particular, self-initiated professional development. The findings could be helpful for developing English language curriculum and higher education institutions. Furthermore, it is important to reconceptualise what English language teaching entails and how the teachers carry out their professional development is also necessary. The transformation in teachers' professional development and the education system in general needs teacher ownership to drive this initiative and ensure that teachers become aware of their role and the importance of self-initiating their own professional development.

5.7   DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

In order to create and improve the results of the study, some suggestions can be made as to how future research should be conducted.

In order to achieve a more thorough understanding of teachers' perceptions and experiences in their professional practices as a result of engaging in professional development activities, these research questions used in this study should be tested with different groups of teachers. This may determine whether their perceptions deviate from or conform to the findings of the current study.

This study investigated teachers' understanding of and experiences of self-initiated professional development activities as a post participation investigation. However, there is a need to broaden this research and examine another group of teachers' learning obtained from self-initiated professional development. By examining participants' perspectives of the same activity, it would enable the identification of how different people interpret contextual factors in personal development activities in general and specifically self-initiated professional development on their learning and interactions. A semi-structured and focus group interviews can be suggested for such a study which may be significant as it would investigate the extent to which participants' perceptions on the same activity may be different.

Research can equally be conducted to identify the perceptions of professional development facilitators, policy makers and institutions concerning both self-initiated professional development and externally/school initiated professional development. In addition, research could be conducted on the reasons that teachers do not self-initiate their own professional development activities despite the fact that policy clearly mandates them to do so.

It could be a good idea to inform teachers about action research as a means of self-initiated development as well encourage them to engage in action research and learn from their experiences. Encouraging teachers to become their own classroom researchers can be of benefit in the curriculum because it has the potential for self-development as research can create sustained and genuine school improvement.

5.8   MY REFLECTIONS OF THE RESEARCH AND LEARNING JOURNEY

To begin my reflections on this interesting journey, I need to disclose what motivated me to undertake my research topic as well as some of the curiosity and emotions I have experienced. After completing my first degree in law and political sciences in Cameroon, I realised that being a lawyer was not really something I was passionate about and as such, needed to change

professional direction. In 2010, I attended Teachers' Training College where I obtained a Grade 1 certificate as a nursery and primary school teacher. I subsequently worked for five years as a nursery and primary school teacher where I noticed with keen interest that teachers' opinions were never taken into considerations when planning professional development activities.

I later travelled to South Africa to join my husband and it was here that I decided to further my studies in the teaching field. On application to University of Pretoria for entry into a master's programme in the field of education, my qualifications did not meet the requirement; however, I then was accepted into the honour's education programme. Interactions with students revealed that teachers in South Africa encounter a similar challenge in teachers' professional development just like teachers in my country, Cameroon, and realised the importance of effective professional development as a tool for teachers' development.

My research interest was driven by my career as a teacher and my curiosity as to why teachers are not involved in planning their professional development. Initially the topic of this research was how teachers are involved in planning their own professional development activities. But as I continued to read and ask more questions about teachers' developmental activities in South Africa and how teachers were involved in planning their professional development activities, I discovered that teachers are required to identify their developmental needs via the personal growth plan. After needs identification, professional development programmes are arranged by the employer who is the Department of Basic Education. This process is called teacher-initiated activities. To my astonishment, I realised that teachers do not know that they have the responsibility to self-initiate their professional development. I thus wanted to discover whether other high school teachers in South Africa are aware of teacher-initiated activity, which motivated the topic of the research from "investigating teachers' involvement in planning their professional development" to "how do teachers perceive the self-initiated professional development?"

My research journey has brought me happiness, frustration and tears. The happiness it brought was discovering that I was not the only teacher who experienced glitches in the professional development of teachers. However, the main frustration of the study dealt with the interviews and the cancellation of appointments made. In addition, fieldwork was conducted during the Covid-19 pandemic and strict protocols were in place. What was even the most frustrating was the fact that some participants during the interview would make use of their local language which I did not understand.

A challenge was related to finances. Given that the country went into national lockdown for close to year, my permit for asylum expired and I could not renew it. Prior to the national lockdown, I had a student job at the department at the university. Barely two months after acquiring this student job, my permit expired and the contract was terminated immediately. In addition, my husband's business was also closed due to the national lockdown and finances were tight. I became frustrated and the only person who came to my aid was my supervisor, Dr Rakgadi Phatlane. My study was delayed because there was a delay in conducting interviews which meant that my study was carried over to the following academic year. I began to worry about how I was going to pay school fees but I was granted a studentship bursary which assisted and I could then focus on completing the research.

I have come to the realisation that this master's dissertation is just the first step in my journey as a researcher. During my research journey, I experienced some joy and frustration as well. There were delays along the way due to unforeseen circumstances, but I learned to be patient. Conducting research is not an easy process especially where your case study is not your country of origin. I would never have been able to complete this study without the mercy of God Almighty and the support of my supervisors, family and friends.

5.9   A FINAL WORD

I have grown as an individual through the process. I have done much self-introspection to find out who I really am during this research journey. I have to read widely in the area of professional development for teachers both locally and internationally to widen my knowledge. I have improved my skills as a researcher by gaining in-depth knowledge in conducting research using a qualitative research approach. I feel I am now at a point on the journey of becoming a researcher. I have gained a number of insights about teacher-initiated activities, school-initiated activities and externally initiated activities regarding the professional development of teachers in South Africa. The challenge that I have for now is to investigate these issues particularly the unanswered questions that emerged from the research.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Ethical Clearance

22 June 2020

Mrs B Asonglefac

Dear Mrs B Asonglefac

REFERENCE: EDU117/19

We received proof that you have met the conditions outlined. Your application is thus **approved**, and you may start with your fieldwork. The decision covers the entire research process, until completion of the study report, and not only the days that data will be collected. The approval is valid for two years for a master's and three for Doctorate.

The approval by the Ethics Committee is subject to the following conditions being met:

1. The research will be conducted as stipulated on the application form submitted to the Ethics Committee with the supporting documents.
2. Proof of how you adhered to the Department of Basic Education (DBE) policy for research must be submitted where relevant.
3. In the event that the research protocol changed for whatever reason the Ethics Committee must be notified thereof by submitting an amendment to the application (Section E), together with all the supporting documentation that will be used for data collection namely, questionnaires, interview schedules and observation schedules, for further approval before data can be collected. Noncompliance implies that the Committee's approval is null and void. The changes may include the following but are not limited to:
   - Change of investigator,
   - Research methods any other aspect therefore and,
   - Participants.

The Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Education does not accept any liability for research misconduct, of whatsoever nature, committed by the researcher(s) in the implementation of the approved protocol.

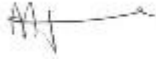Upon completion of your research, you will need to submit the following documentations to the Ethics

Committee for your

Clearance Certificate:

   - Integrated Declaration Form (Form D08), • Initial Ethics Approval letter and,
   - Approval of Title.

Please quote the reference number EDU117/19in any communication with the Ethics

Committee. Best wishes

Prof Funke Omidire

Chair: Ethics Committee

Faculty of Education

Appendix B: Permission from Gauteng Province

GAUTENG PROVINCE

Department of Education

REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

	8/4/4/1/2

GDE RESEARCH APPROVAL LETTER

Date:	04 August 2020
Validity of Research Approval:	04 February 2020 — 30 September 2020
	2019/556
Name of Researcher:	Asonglefac B
Address of Researcher:	132 Bergartillerie Road
	Danville Ext S
	Pretoria West
Telephone Number:	0719709236
Email address:	bridgetasong@yahoo.com
Research Topic:	Investigating teachers perceptions of the self — initiated professional development
Type of qualification	Master's in Education
Number and type of schools:	4 Secondary School
District/s/HO	Tshwane South

Re: *Approval in* Respect *of* Requestto *Conduct* Research

This letter serves to indicate that approval is hereby granted to the above-mentioned researcher to proceed with research in respect of the study indicated above. The onus rests with the researcher to negotiate appropriate and relevant time schedules with the school/s and/or offices involved to conduct the research. A separate copy of this letter must be presented to both the School (both Principal and SGB) and the District/Head Office Senior Manager confirming ″permission has been granted for the research to be conducted.

The following condition to GDE research. The researcher may proceed with the above study subject to the conditions listed below being met. Approval may be withdrawn should any of the conditionslisted below be flouted:

14. *Letterthatwouldindicatethatthesaidresearcher/shas/havebeengrantedpermissionfromthe GautengDepartmentofEducationtoconducttheresearchstudy.*

03/08/2020

1

Making education a societal priority

Office of the Director: Education Research and Knowledge Management

7°^ Floor, 17 Simmonds Street, Johannesburg, 2001 Tel: (011) 355 0488

Email: Faith.Tshabalala@gauteng.gov.za

2. *The District/Head Office Senior Manager/s must be approached separately, and in writing, for permission to involve District/Head Office Officials in the project.*

3. *Because of COVID19 pandemic researchers can ONLY collect data on//ne, telephonically or may make arrangements for Zoom with I/ie school Principal. Requests for such arrangements should be submitted to the GDE Education Research and Know/edpe Management directorate. The approval letter will then inc/icate//ietypeo/'arrangements that have been made with the school.*

4. *7*he Researchers are ac/v/sec/ to make arrangements with the sc/ioo/s via Fax, ema//or telephonically with the Principal.*

5. *A copy of this letter must be forwarded to the school principal and the chairperson of the School Governing Body (SGB) that would indicate that the researcher/s have been granted permission from the Gauteng Department of Education to conduct the research study.*

6. *A letter/document that outline the purpose of the research and the anticipated outcomes of such research must be made available to the principals, SGBs and District/Head Office Senior Managers of the schools and districts/offices concerned, respectively.*

7. *The Researcher will make every effort obtain the goodwill and co-operation of all the GDE officials, principals, and chairpersons of the SGBs, teachers and learners involved. Persons who offer their co-operation will not receive additional remuneration from the Department while those that opt not to participate will not be penalised in anyway.*

8. *Research may only be conducted after school hours so that the normal school programme is not interrupted. The Principal (if at a school) and/or Director (if at a district/head office) must be consulted about an appropriate time when the researcher/s may carry out their research at the sites that they manage.*

9. *Research may only commence from the second week of February and must be concluded before the beginning of the last quarter of the academic year. If incomplete, an amended Research Approval letter may be requested to conduct research in the following year.*

10. *Items 6 and 7 will not apply to any research effort being undertaken on behalf of the GDE. Such research will have been commissioned and be paid for by the Gauteng Department of Education.*

11. *It is the researcher's responsibility to obtain written parental consent of all learners that are expected to participate in the study.*

12. *The researcher is responsible for supplying and utilising his/her own research resources, such as stationery, photocopies, transport, /'axes and telephones and should not depend on the goodwill of the institutions and/or the offices visited for supplying such resources.*

13. *The names of the GDE officials, schools, principals, parents, teachers and learners that participate in the study may not appear in the research repod without the written consent of each of these individuals and/or organisations.*

14. *On completion of the study the researcher/s must supply the Director.'Knowledge Management & Research with one Hard Cover bound and ane/ectronic copy of the research.*

15. *The researcher may be expected to provide short presentations on the purpose, findings and recommendations of his/her research to both GDE officials and the schools concerned.*

16. *Should the researcher have been involved with research at a school and/or a district:/head office level, the Director concerned must also be supplied with a brief summary of the purpose, findings and recommendations of the research study.*

17.

The Gauteng Department of Education wishes you well in this important undertaking and looks forward to examining the findings of your research study.

indine Regards

Mr Gu

Bani'Mukatuni

Acting CES: Education Research and Knowledge Management   DATE: ....03/08/2020……….

Office of the Director: Education Research and Knowledge Management

Making education a societal priority

7'^ Floor, 17 Simmonds Street, Johannesburg, 2001 Tel: (011) 355 0488

Email: Faith.Tshabalala@gauteng.gov.za

Appendix C: Letter of permission to Gauteng Department of Education

Letter to the district

Department of Education Management &Policy Studies

Faculty of Education

 University of Pretoria

0002 Pretoria

The district of Tshwane South

265 Pretorius Street

Pretoria central

Pretoria

0001

March 13, 2020

Dear Mr./ Mrs. Director of the Tshwane south district

Subject: Request for permission to conduct research at schools

My name is Bridget Asonglefac and I am a Masters student at the University of Pretoria. I am conducting research project on the topic: Investigating teachers' perceptions of the self-initiated.

My project is supervised by Dr Rakgadi Phatlane at the University of Pretoria. The Department of Education has approved my research and a copy of the approval letter is attached to this document. The study has also been approved by the Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Education of the University of Pretoria and has been given the reference number EDU117/19.

The purpose of this letter is to request that you grant me permission to invite teachers and HODs in your district to participate in this interview.

The aim of the study is to determine through teachers' experiences and practices how teachers view the effectiveness of the self-initiated professional development (teacher-initiated) approach.

The data will be collected by means of interviews which will take about 45 minutes to complete. Only teachers and HODs who give their consent will participate in the interview. Data collected will be kept strictly confidential and neither the school nor the participant will

be identifiable in any report. The participants who agree to participate may withdraw at any time during the research process without any penalty.

After I have received approval from the department of Education Management and Policy Studies from the Faculty of Education, University of Pretoria to approach teachers and HODs in your district to participate in this interview. I will obtain consent from teachers; and arrange time for data collection in the respective schools after school hours.

The findings of this study might be useful to education practitioners. The research study has the ability to provide insight to Education Management and Policy issues in schools.

If you have any questions regarding this study, please contact me (see contact details below) or my supervisor (Dr Rakgadi Phatlane, phone number: 0124205512; e-mail rakgadi.phatlane@up.ac.za).

Thank you for taking time to read this information.

Kind regards

Cell no: 0719709236, Email bridgetasong@yahoo.com

Date_____

Signature of district director_____

Signature of supervisor_____

Appendix D: Permission letter to school principals

LETTER TO SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

Department of Education Management &Policy Studies

Faculty of Education

 University of Pretoria

0002 Pretoria

The principal

13 March 2020

Dear sir/madam

Subject: Request for permission to conduct research at schools

My name is Bridget Asonglefac and I am a Maters student at the University of Pretoria. I am conducting research project on the topic "investigating teachers' perceptions of the self-initiated."

My project is supervised by Dr Rakgadi Phatlane at the University of Pretoria. The Department of Education has approved my research and a copy of the approval letter is attached to this document. The study has also been approved by the Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Education of the University of Pretoria and has been given the reference number EDU117/19

The purpose of this letter is to request that you grant me permission to invite teachers and HODs in your district to participate in this interview.

The aim of the study is to determine through teachers' experiences and practices how teachers view the effectiveness of the self-initiated professional development (teacher-initiated) approach.

The data will be collected by means of interviews which will take about 45 minutes to complete. Only teachers and HODs who give their consent will participate in the interview. Data collected will be kept strictly confidential and neither the school nor the participant will be identifiable in any report. The participants who agree to participate may withdraw at any time during the research process without any penalty.

After receiving approval from the department of Education Management and Policy Studies from the Faculty of Education, University of Pretoria to approach teachers and HODs in your district to participate in this interview. I will obtain consent from teachers; and arrange time for data collection in the respective schools after school hours.

The findings of this study might be useful to education practitioners. The research study has the ability to provide insight to Education Management and Policy issues in schools.

If you have any questions regarding this study, please contact me (see contact details below) or my supervisor (Dr Rakgadi Phatlane, phone number: 0124205512; e-mail rakgadi.phatlane@up.ac.za).

Thank you for taking time to read this information.

Kind regards

Cell no: 0719709236, Email bridgetasong@yahoo.com

Date_____

signature of principal_____

Signature of supervisor_____

Signature of investigator_____

Appendix E: Consent letter to teachers

Department of Education Management &Policy Studies

Faculty of Education

 University of Pretoria

0002 Pretoria

Title of the research project: <u>Investigating teachers' perceptions of the self-initiated professional development.</u>

I confirm that I have been informed about the nature of the research and that my rights have been explained to me. I have discussed the project with the researcher, student name Bridget Asonglefac, who is conducting the project for her Maters degree, supervised by Dr Rakgadi Phatlane in the Department of Education Management and Policy Studies at the University of Pretoria. I understand that if I consent to participate in this project, I will take complete the questionnaire form.

I understand that if I participate in this interview my contribution will be kept confidential and I will not be identifiable in any research report. I also understand that there are minimal risks associated with this study. I understand that I will remain anonymous, my participation is voluntary and I have the right to withdraw at any time during the research process. My withdrawal will not affect me in any way.

For more information and questions, I may contact the researcher, Bridget Asonglefac, cell phone number 0719709236; email: bridgetasong@yahoo.com……………………………. the supervisor, Dr. Rakgadi Phatlane; email rakgdai.phatlane@up.ac.za.

Date_____

Signature of participant_____

Signature of supervisor_____

Signature of supervisor_____

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Appendix F: Interview questions for HoDs

Research title: Investigating teachers' perceptions of the self-initiated professional development.

Interviewer: Bridget Asonglefac

Please complete the following questions to the best of your knowledge

1. What is self-initiated teacher professional development according to you?

2. What do you see the objective of the teacher initiated professional development approach?

3. Do you consider it as being a valuable and worthwhile process?

4. How is the teacher-initiated process applied in the school? (This question will deal with all aspects of the implementation process)

5. Who is in charge of teacher development in your school?

6. How do teachers self-initiated their own professional development?

7. When do teachers carry out the self-initiated activities?

8. Does the school use any documentation for self-initiated professional development?

b) How is it done?

9. If teachers indicate that areas of development are needed, what is the process that the school follows?

10. How is feedback provided to the teachers?

11. What are teachers' responses to the feedback?

12. Do they view the feedback in a positive light, or is it seen as a criticism?

13. How is the feedback gathered incorporated into the curriculum planning and/or teacher development?

14. What is the general impression of the self-initiated approach in the school?

15. Is the teacher initiated professional development outcome linked in any way to salary increments?

b) If yes, how is this implemented?

16. In your opinion, what has been the most significant or positive effect of the teacher-initiated activities?

17. In your opinion, what has been the most problematic or negative effect of the teacher-initiated activities?

18. What do you think can be done to resolve the challenge?

Appendix G: Interview questions for teachers

Research title: Investigating teachers' perceptions of the self-initiated professional development.

Interviewer: Bridget Asonglefac

Interviewee: A secondary school English teacher at a public secondary school

Please answer the following questions as far as you understand them

1. What do you understand by teachers' professional development?

2. According to you, what does the term "self-initiated professional development" mean?

3. What according to you is the purpose of the self-initiated professional development approach?

4. How do you participate in planning your professional development activities?

5. Does attending workshops and seminars constitute self-initiated professional development?

6. How often do you participate in the self-initiated professional development?

7. What are your experiences of the self-initiated process? Please elaborate.

8. Explain your perceptions of the self-initiated professional development as a whole?

9. Have you ever indicated that you needed development in any particular area?

b) Did you receive the necessary support you needed?

10. How is feedback provided?

11. Did you receive adequate information about the self-initiated process? Please explain in details.

12. What kind of self-initiated professional development opportunities have you engaged in?

13. What do you consider as the positive aspects of the self-initiated system?

14. What do you consider as the negative aspects of the self-initiated system?

15. Is the teacher initiated professional development outcome linked in any way to salary increments?

16. Do you feel that the self-initiated process leads to better quality of teaching? Please explain in details

17. What is the general impression of the self-initiated approach in the school?

18. Are the outcomes of the self-initiated system incorporated into the overall curriculum and strategic planning of the school?

19. In your opinion, what has been the most significant or positive effect of the teacher-initiated activities?

20. In your opinion, what has been the most problematic or negative effect of the teacher-initiated activities?

21. If you could change any elements of the process, what would they be?

Appendix H: Proof of editing

To whom it may concern

This letter serves to confirm that editing and proofreading was done for:

Bridget Asonglefac

U18216979

Master in Educational Management and Leadership

Faculty of Education University of Pretoria

Supervisor: Dr Rakgadi Phatlane

Co-supervisor: Prof Chika Sehoole

Investigating Teachers' Perceptions of Self-Initiated Professional Development

Cilla Dowse
05 September 2021

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Student's signature

Supervisor's signature_____