

**THE EFFECTS OF DEVELOPMENTAL APPRAISAL POLICY
ON TEACHER LEARNING**

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DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

I, **MAMOLAHLUWA AMELIA MOKOENA**, declare that this doctoral thesis on **The Effects of Developmental Appraisal Policy on Teacher Learning** and submitted to the University of Pretoria is my work in design and execution.

All sources cited or quoted have been duly acknowledged. I have not previously submitted this thesis for a degree at any University. And I did not and will not allow anyone to copy my work with the intention of presenting it as her or his own work.

Signature:

Date:

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Case Study of the Developmental Appraisal System (DAS) is the main focus of this research inquiry. DAS is an instrument for teacher professional development aimed at enhancing the competency of teachers and accordingly, the quality of education. In the context of this exploratory study, informed by concerns about teacher learning, I sought to gain insight into how the implementation of government policy on teacher appraisal influences the way teachers strive to learn and change their practices.

Therefore, the purpose of this study was to trace the implementation of government policy on teacher development in different contexts and to determine the extent to which DAS policy influenced teacher learning in these diverse contexts.

The research inquiry is guided by one main research question:

- What are the effects of developmental appraisal policy on teacher learning as seen through the eyes of teachers working in different resource contexts?

In tracing the effects of DAS Policy, I focused on policy breakdown by looking at the views of implementers, i.e., educators at the level of the school. The study also explains how teachers understand the policy, which helped to lay the empirical foundation for exploring teacher learning.

The investigation draws on recent work on what is called “teacher learning” for the conceptual focus. The framework provided a descriptive function that helped to assign content to the new concept on “teacher learning” in education research. It also presented an empirical function and exploratory purpose that assisted in exploring the effects of DAS Policy on the teacher learning.

In seeking responses to the main research question, I conducted qualitative cases of 12 teachers who have been involved in the various phases of DAS. Teachers were selected from different resource contexts and sampled on the basis of their different profiles. I used teacher testimonies composed qualitatively through multiple methods of data collection, viz. biographical data, free writing schedule, semi-structured interviews, critical incident reports and teacher diaries. From the data generated, the following are the main findings of the study:

- Teachers find the developmental promises of DAS to be unpersuasive because of its identification with the previous inspection system, and because of teachers’ identification with more powerful sources of learning.
- The failure of the policy to give recognition in practice to the diverse contexts within which teachers work had a negative effect on teacher learning.

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- Teacher learning is an extremely complex process, and to pin down its critical features is very difficult in a developing country context.
- Teachers found it difficult to ascribe “learning” to their DAS experiences given the largely negative experiences of the policy implementation process.
- Context contributed to the disjuncture between understanding and practice in terms of teacher development and in particular to teacher learning.

Finally, given the importance of teacher professional development in the reform process there is need for further research on how to effectively promote teacher learning. In addition, in considering the implications that diverse work contexts have for teacher learning in developing countries, policymakers can aim at effective programmes that will strengthen teacher learning. Therefore, research needs to address the link between teacher learning and diverse work contexts in different ways.

KEY WORDS

Teacher Learning

Quality Education

Appraisal

Teacher Professional Development

Policy Implementation

Policy Intentions

Teacher Competence

Classroom Practices

Resource Context

Teacher Performance.

LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

C2005	Curriculum 2005
CES	Chief Education Specialist
COSATU	Congress of South African Trade Union
DAS	Developmental Appraisal System
DOE	Department of Education
EEA	Employment of Educator's Act, 1998
ELRC	Education Labour Relations Council
HODS	Heads of Departments
IQMS	Integrated Quality Management System
LPTC	Lower Primary Teachers' Certificate
MEC	Member of the Executive Council
NAPTOSA	National Association of Professional Teachers Organization of South Africa
NEPA	National Education Policy Act
NNSSF	National Norms and Standard for School Funding
NPDE	National Professional Diploma in Education
NWDE	North West Department of Education
NWP	North West Province
NQACC	National Quality Assurance Coordinating Committee
OBE	Outcome Based Education
PGP	Professional Growth Plan
PL1E	Post Level One Educator
PMDS	Performance Management Development System

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QA	Quality Assurance
QACD	Quality Assurance Chief Directorate
RNCS	Revised National Curriculum Statement
RTU	Research and Training Unit
SADTU	South African Democratic Teachers Union
SAOU	Suid Afrikaanse Onderwyser Unie
SDP	School Development Plan
SDT	School Development Team
SE	Systemic Evaluation
SGB	School Governing Body
WSE	Whole School Evaluation

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