TOWARDS INCLUSIVE LEARNING SUPPORT TEACHER PRODUCTIVITY THROUGH THE INTEGRATED QUALITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM IN THE EDEN DISTRICT, IN THE WESTERN CAPE

by

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I declare that the above thesis is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

I further declare that I submitted the thesis to originality checking software and that it falls within the accepted requirements for originality.

I further declare that I have not previously submitted this work, or part of it, for examination at Unisa for another qualification or at any other higher education institution.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ABSTRACT

The main purpose of this study was to explore and develop a framework and conceptual understanding for a coordinated support framework which may contribute to productive professional development and subsequent professional growth of Inclusive Learning Support and Resource Class Teachers (LSTs and RCTs) in the Eden and Central Karoo Education District. A qualitative study, in the form of a phenomenological-instrumental case study, explored the experiences, constraints and challenges of LSTs and RCTs regarding their Integrated Quality Management System. A sample of 25 participants took part in the study. Data were obtained through semi-structured, open-ended, online asynchronous in-depth interviews and one online focus group interview.

The literature review focused on Bronfenbrenner's bio-ecological systems theory which lays the theoretical foundation for this study. The literature further explored National policy documents and their broader influence on the role conversion and subsequent development of LSTs and RCTs as transpired locally, the IQMS and the impact on support teachers with specific reference to their professional development.

Research findings exposed the IQMS measurement instrument to be an inappropriate, unfair, fixed, pro-mainstream designed document that does not understand, nor accommodates the specialised work sphere and developmental needs of specialist support teachers. Furthermore, the link between the appraisal instrument and professional development is questioned, since the accompanying systems that should enable the LSTs and RCTs to benefit from the whole appraisal process exclude rather than include them. The study proposes a multi-contextual, personalized, professional development framework for LSTs and RCTs. Recommendations are made to authorities on different levels of the educational environment to reach the objectives of this study.

Keywords: Inclusive Education; Learning Support Teachers; Resource Class Teachers; Learning Support Advisor; Integrated Quality Management System; Professional development; Teacher assessment; School-Based Support Team, District Based Support team; Job description; Key Performance Areas; Key Responsibility Areas.

OPSOMMING

Die hoofdoel van hierdie studie was om 'n raamwerk en konseptuele begrip vir 'n gekoördineerde ondersteuningsmodel te verken en te ontwikkel, wat kan bydra tot produktiewe professionele ontwikkeling van inklusiewe leerondersteuning en bronklasonderwysers (LOOs en BKOs) in die Eden en Sentraal-Karoo Onderwysdistrik. 'n Kwalitatiewe studie, in die vorm van 'n fenomenologies-instrumentele gevallestudie, het die ervarings, beperkings en uitdagings van LOOs en BKOs met betrekking tot hul Geïntegreerde Gehaltebestuurstelsel ondersoek. 'n Steekproef van 25 deelnemers het aan die studie deelgeneem. Data is verkry deur semi-gestruktureerde, oop-einde, aanlyn asinchrone in-diepte onderhoude en een aanlyn fokusgroep onderhoud.

Die literatuuroorsig het gefokus op Bronfenbrenner se bio-ekologiese sisteemteorie wat die teoretiese grondslag vir hierdie studie lê. Literatuur het Nasionale beleidsdokumente en die breër invloed daarvan op die rolomskakeling en daaropvolgende ontwikkeling van LOOs en BKOs soos plaaslik, sowel as die GGBS en die impak daarvan op ondersteuningsonderwysers met spesifieke verwysing na hul professionele ontwikkeling verder ondersoek.

Navorsingsbevindinge het die GGBS-meetinstrument blootgelê as 'n onvanpaste, onregverdige, vaste, pro-hoofstroom ontwerpte dokument wat nie die gespesialiseerde werksfeer en ontwikkelingsbehoeftes van spesialis ondersteuningsonderwysers verstaan of akkommodeer nie. Verder word die verband tussen die beoordelingsinstrument en professionele ontwikkeling bevraagteken, aangesien die gepaardgaande stelsels wat die LOOs en BKOs behoort in staat te stel om voordeel te trek uit die hele evalueringsproses, hulle eerder uitsluit as insluit. Die studie stel 'n multi-kontekstuele, persoonlike, professionele ontwikkelingsraamwerk vir LOOs en BKOs voor. Aanbevelings word aan owerhede op verskillende vlakke van die opvoedkundige omgewing gemaak in 'n poging om die doelwitte van hierdie studie te bereik.

Sleutelbegrippe: Inklusiewe onderwys; Leerondersteuningsonderwysers; Bronklasonderwysers; Leerondersteuningsadviseur; Geïntegreerde Gehaltebestuurstelsel; Professionele ontwikkeling; Onderwyserassessering;

Skoolgebaseerde ondersteuningspan; Distrikgebaseerde ondersteuningspan; Sleutel prestasieareas; Sleutel verantwoordelikheidsareas

UMXHOLO

Eyona njongo yolu phononongo kukuphononga nokuphuhlisa isakhelo kunye nokuqonda ingqiqo yemodeli yenkxaso elungelelanisiweyo, enokuba negalelo kuphuhliso lobungcali olunemveliso yeNkxaso eBandakanyayo yokuFunda kunye nooTitshala beeKlasi zeZibonelelo (LSTs kunye nee-RCTs) kwiSithili seMfundo sase-Eden nakwiCentral Karoo. Uphononongo olunobunjani, ngendlela lwento yokophononongo esisixhobo sephenomenological samava, imiqobo kunye nemingeni ye-LSTs kunye ne-RCTs malunga neNkqubo yabo yoLawulo loMgangatho oHlanganisiweyo. Isampulu yabathathi-nxaxheba abangama-25 bathathe inxaxheba kuphononongo. Idatha yafunyanwa ngodliwano-ndlebe olunokwakhiwa isiqingatha, olunesiphelo esivulekile, olweziwe kwi-intanethi ngendlala e-asynchronous (indlela yekhompyuta elawulwayo ngephalsi) enzulu kunye nodliwano-ndlebe lweqela elijoliswe kwi-intanethi.

Uphononongo loncwadi lujolise kwiNkqubo yeNgcingane ye-Bronfenbrenner's bio-ecological yenza isiseko sengcingane yolu phononongo. Uncwadi luye lwaphononga ngakumbi amaxwebhu omgaqo-nkqubo weSizwe kunye nefuthe elithe lalandelwa kuguqulo lwendima nophuhliso olukhaphayo lwee-LSTs nee-RCTs njengoko kwenzekile apha ekuhlaleni, i-IQMS nefuthe kootitshala benkxaso kugxininiswa ngokukodwa kuphuhliso lwabo emsebenzini.

Iziphumo zophando zibhentsise isixhobo sokulinganisa i-IQMS njengoxwebhu olungafanelekanga, olunesheyi, olusisigxina, oluyilwa ngokwenkqubo eqhelekileyo olungaqondiyo, okanye lungahlangabezani nenkalo yomsebenzi okhethekileyo kunye neemfuno zophuhliso zootitshala abanika inkxaso abaziingcali. Ngaphezulu, kuyabuzwa ikhonkco phakathi kwesixhobo sovavanyo kunye nophuhliso lobungcali, njengoko iinkqubo ezikhatshwayo ezifanele ukuba ii-LSTs nee-RCTs zixhamle kuyo yonke inkqubo yovavanyo zingabandakanywa endaweni yokuba zibandakanywe. Uphononongo luphakamisa isikhokhelo sophuhliso lwee-LSTs kunye nee-RCT ezineemeko ezininzi, ezenzelwe umntu ngamnye. Kwenziwa izindululo kwabasemagunyeni kumanqanaba ahlukeneyo ommandla wemfundo ngeenzame zokufikelela kwiinjongo zolu phononongo.

Amagama angundoqo: iMfundo eBandakanyayo; Ootitshala beNkxaso ekuFundeni; Utitshala weKlasi yeziBonelelo; Umcebisi weNkxaso ngokuFunda; Inkqubo eDityanisiweyo yoLawulo loMgangatho ; Uphuhliso lobungcali; Uvavanyo lukatitshala; IQela leNkxaso eliseziKolweni, iqela leNkxaso eliSekelwe kwiSithili; Ingcaciso yomsebenzi; IiNkalo zokuSebenza eziPhambili; Iinkalo zoXanduva oluPhambili

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ADHD	Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
ADS	Autism Spectrum Disorder
AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
BKOs	Bronklasonderwysers (RCTs)
CAPS	Curriculum Assessment Policy Statements
CDE	Centre for Development and Enterprise
CFAs	Core Functionality Areas
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
CPL	Continuing Professional Learning
CPTD	Continuing Professional Teacher Development
CTLI	Cape Teaching and Leadership Institute
DAS	Developmental Appraisal System
DBE	Department of Basic Education
DBST	District-Based Support Team
DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training
DoE	Department of Education
ECD	Early Childhood Development
ECKED	Eden and Central Karoo Education District
EEA	Employment of Educators Act

EGRA	Early Grade Reading Assessment
ELRC	Education Labour Relations Council
ERC	Ethics Review Committee
EST	Education Support Teams
EWP6	Education White Paper 6
FAS	Fetal Alcohol Syndrome
FP	Foundation Phase
GGBS	Geïntegreerde Gehaltebestuurstelsel (IQMS)
GOs	Government Organisations
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HODs	Heads of Departments
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IDEA	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
IE	Inclusive Education
IEPs	Individual Education Plans
ILSEs	Itinerant Learning Support Educators
ILSTs	Institutional Level Support Teams
IQ	Intelligence Quotient
IQMS	Integrated Quality Management System
ISLES	Inclusive Specialised Learner and Educator Support
ISP	Individual Support Plans

ISPFTED	Integrated Strategic Planning Framework for Teacher Education and Development
JD	Job Description
KPAs	Key Performance Areas
KRAs	Key Responsibility Areas
LITNUM	Literacy and Numeracy
LOOs	Leerondersteuningsonderwysers (LSTs)
LSA	Learning Support Advisor
LSEN	Learners with Special Educational Needs
LSEs	Learning Support Educators(s)
LSTs	Learning Support Teacher(s)
MSED	Metro South Education District
MSTs	Mainstream Teacher(s)
NCESS	National Committee on Education Support Service
NCSNET	National Commission on Special Needs in Education and Training
NEEDU	National Education Evaluation Unit
NGOs	Non-Government Organisations
NICPD	National Institute for Curriculum and Professional Development
NPFTED	National Policy Framework for Teacher Education and Development
NPOs	Non-Profit Organisations
OOS	Onderwysondersteuningspan

PAM	Personnel Administrative Measures
PD	Professional Development
PGPs	Personal Growth Plan(s)
PLCs	Professional Learning Communities
PMS	Performance Management
PSs	Performance Standard(s)
QMS	Quality Management System
RCTs	Resource Class Teachers(s)
SACE	South African Council of Educators
SAOU	South African Teacher's Union
SBST	School-Based Support Teams(s)
SDTs	Staff Development Teams
SEN	Special Educational Needs
SENCO	Special Educational Needs Coordinator
SGB	School Governing Body
SIAS	Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support
SID	Severe Intellectual Disability
SLES	Specialized Learner and Educator Support
SMTs	School Management Team(s)
SNE	Special Needs Education
TDS	Teacher Development Summit

TED ICT   Teacher Education and Development Support System

UNISA   University of South Africa

WCED   Western Cape Education Department

WSE   Whole School Evaluation

WWJD   West Coast-Winelands Learning Support Job Description

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.1   Introduction

The focus of this study is on the professional development of Inclusive Learning Support (LSTs) and Resource Class Teachers (RCTs) within their Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS). The LSTs and RCTs operate as part of the direct extension of the Department of Education's (DoE) school district teams within the broader Inclusive Specialised Learner and Educator Support (ISLES) system of the Western Cape.

Broader National policy legislations and systems impacted positively to advance inclusive practice although it harboured specific challenges for LSTs and RCTs. These support teachers, just like their mainstream colleagues, must be SACE (South African Council of Educators) registered. All teacher professional development in South Africa is situated in the IQMS and accompanying, Continuing Professional Teacher Development (CPTD) system. However, not all LSTs and RCTs have access to, or are not registered on the IQMS-related CPTD system yet. This could be challenging to LSTs and RCTs as personal growth plans derive from IQMS appraisal and impact directly on their professional development.

The dual role of the IQMS for assessment and professional development of all teachers, including LSTs and RCTs is problematic. One performance appraisal instrument with the same performance standards is being utilized for two varied positions, despite the different job descriptions and key performance areas of these parties. Furthermore, LSTs and RCTs are school-based, Post level 1 teachers, but their posts are designated at District level. Thus, they do not form part of the staff establishment of their base schools. The base school refers to the school that manages the itinerant LST's daily attendance and leave records via the People Management System, as for all the other teachers in that school. As such, they are multi-level inclusive role players with transformed specialist roles beyond the traditional remedial teacher functioning. The multi-layered district role of LSTs and RCTs in itself raised concerns and tension between them and mainstream teachers, largely due to their misunderstood core roles and specialist key responsibility and performance areas. This also raised controversy concerning the mark allocation of the LSTs and RCTs from

School Management Teams (SMTs) and principals, with consequent demotivation of support teachers.

Literature explorations by the researcher found little empirical evidence of the effects of the Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS) as an appraisal system for LSTs and RCTs and the contributions to their professional development. The development of LSTs and RCTs is as multi-layered as their diverse role or position within inclusive education, as will transpire in the rest of this study. This calls for addressing their developmental related issues in a holistic-institutional approach. An effective national appraisal system should provide meaningful development opportunities and should embrace appropriate adaptations to include LSTs and RCTs. These inclusive agents do not only support learners with barriers in their respective schools but are responsible for collaborative whole institution support that includes teachers and parents. Unless systemic and operation challenges are addressed on all operational levels, ineffective support and development of LSTs and RCTs will negatively impact their own efficiency and the inclusive education system as a whole.

1.2 Background

According to Yin (2011:11), Leavy (2017:49) and Creswell (2013:47), reflexivity in research requires that researchers should be as open as possible about their roles and the sources of their thinking during conducting studies. The researcher's status as a Learning Support Advisor (LSA) played a vital role as the main research instrument for collecting data in this study and as such, brought a particular lens to the data collection process (Schurink, Schurink & Fouche 2021a:400; Kennedy & Thornberg 2018:61). The role of the LSA is to support and develop the LSTs and RCTs in her circuits. With regards to the phenomena under investigation in this study, the researcher brought her own previous experiences as a learning support teacher, as well as those during her tenure as a Learning Support Advisor.

The Education White Paper 6 (EWP6) (DoE 2001:18) states that professional development of LSTs and RCTs is crucial because of the diverse roles they play as part of the support structures within the educational community. This study focussed on LSTs and RCTs for the following reasons. Firstly, because of their crucial role in the implementation of inclusive education, and secondly due to the opportunity for regular interaction between them and the researcher.

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Learning support dynamics from levels beyond South African and even African borders were framed by the socio-historical context of inclusive education. These changes did not only impact new curriculum approaches, but also the roles and responsibilities of special needs teachers. The developments also affected the productivity of the LSTs and RCTs in the Eden and Central Karoo. Several LSTs and RCTs started their learning support careers under the medical paradigm. The shift to more inclusive approaches transformed their roles to become more complex and challenging. LSTs and RCTs had to step out of their comfort zones by adapting to their transformed roles and capacitate themselves appropriately. With the role evolvement came the need for continuous professional development to improve their knowledge, skills, and confidence. Contextual issues compounded with their wide-scoped workload, extra-curricular expectations, administrative overload and persistent learning barriers, impact on their goal attainment and eventually on quality teaching and learning.

The IQMS is but one of a number of policies and Acts that govern teacher performance appraisal and professional development for public schools (CDE 2015:5). The IQMS is utilized for assessment as well as performance and professional development of all teachers (Mahlaela 2012; Martin 2013; Sekgale 2016; Rabichund 2011). This includes LSTs and RCTs as they are essentially teachers, also registered under the South African Council for Educators (SACE) (Rabichund 2011:3). The biggest challenge regarding the IQMS is that the job description of LSTs and RCTs has specific Key Performance Areas (KPAs) that differ significantly from that of mainstream teachers (Mahlo 2011:197). One instrument with the same, uniform performance standards for diverse key performance areas pose one of the biggest challenges for inclusive LSTs and RCTs. This is problematic and disadvantageous to LSTs and RCTs as personal growth plans (PGPs) derive from IQMS appraisal and impact directly on their professional development. Their key roles and responsibilities have evolved over the years into more specialised foci, that are often misunderstood by mainstream teachers. The development of Inclusive LSTs and RCTs development is as multi-layered as their diverse inclusive education roles. Another substantial barrier in professional development of Inclusive LSTs and RCTs within their IQMS include that all LSTs and RCTs do not have access to or are not registered on the national IQMS-related CPTD system.

1.3 Problem statement

The international inclusive paradigm shift and subsequent South African inclusion redirection from the 1990s onwards did not only dictate restructuring of support services. International and national inclusive trends interplayed on individual, group as well as work organizational levels. At the same time, there is always the linked to society's wider culture, social structures and processes (Watson 2017:6). The reciprocal multi-level transformations reflect Bronfenbrenner's fundamental belief that human life does not occur in a social vacuum, nor does it happen randomly (Watson 2017:5-6; Mahlo 2011:9; 67; Peppler 2017:2). Inclusive reforms posed challenges for the traditional remedial roles of LSTs and RCTs, and as a result dictated total role transformation and restructuring. This interconnectedness also related to the work life of LSTs and RCTs. Whether we are dealing with their activities on individual, group or work organizational levels, it is always linked to the wider culture, social structure and processes of the society in which it takes place (Watson 2017:6).

Although the learning support model of the WCED mirrors the transformed roles of LSTs and RCTs, a literature search found little evidence of a formal model or framework that explicitly focus on the professional development of LSTs and RCTs. Research on professional development in education mostly focuses on the development of teachers in general. Embracing the transformed roles of LSTs and RCTs (Dreyer 2013:62; Mahlo 2011:71,197; Arendse 2010:36, 71; Van Graan 2010:23) was two-fold. Role conversion firstly entail changes in the instructional strategies of LSTs and RCTs, commanding transformed or alternative professional developmental pathways that reflect the comprehensive, collaborative inclusive principles. Secondly, it brought about challenges regarding the IQMS of the LSTs and RCTs.

During the researcher's own experience with the IQMS as LST as well as LSA, it became clear that one performance measurement instrument was used for two different jobs with significantly different key performance areas. The IQMS is both assessment as well as performance development of all teachers (Mahlaela 2012), including LSTs and RCTs. During the IQMS-school visits in 2017, it became necessary for the researcher in her LSA role to defend the LSTs and RCTs on several occasions. The departmental heads of their schools, who had to administer their peer evaluation

in the IQMS, did not understand their key performance areas. This brought about uncertainty in both the LSTs and RCTs and their School Management Teams. Corollary to this, controversy with regards to the mark allocation of the LSTs and RCTs was raised by SMTs including principals because they did not understand the way of LSTs and RCTs function. This was especially the case concerning extra-mural and co-curricular activities, because of no stipulated key performance areas.

Current challenges of LSTs and RCTs about the IQMS find support in Mahlo's study (2011:197) that investigates the capacity of the IQMS to evaluate the work of Foundation Phase LSTs in a specific Gauteng district. Mahlo find the IQMS insufficient because the system utilizes one set of criteria to evaluate two jobs with varied key performance responsibilities. In that study, the researcher utilized Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory as a framework to explain the "interconnectedness" of the systems wherein LSTs must function (Mahlo 2011:67). Subsequently, Mahlo proposes a specific framework for the development of LSTs that should reflect the collaborative nature between all stakeholders concerned with learning support (Mahlo 2011:197).

The difference between the key responsibilities of mainstream teachers and LSTs suggests different collaborative platforms for both groups. Specific references are made to the very systemically inter-connected operations of LSTs, on various levels of the educational system (cf. 2.2). Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory explains LSTs and RCTs as active participants in their development and as interactive with the diverse levels of their environment. The support teachers and their surroundings function cooperatively in the processes and outcomes of their development (Bronfenbrenner 1992:188). Bronfenbrenner's "nested systems" (microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem and macrosystem that interact with the chronosystem) also form an important theoretical foundation for the current study and are further engaged with in-depth to describe the levels of engagement of LSTs and RCTs in their practice.

Prior discussion sketches the need for and guides the current study to investigate enhanced professional development through a framework that utilizes the specific KPAs of LSTs and RCTs as related to their interconnected functioning. The current researcher concurs that such a framework for professional development must explicitly stipulate the KPAs of LSTs and RCTs so that it is understandable for all stakeholders. The aforementioned challenges lead to the formulation of the following research

questions.

1.4   Research Questions

The above background and problem statement form the foundation for the main research question:

1.4.1   Main Research Question

How can the Integrated Quality Management System be enhanced as a framework to support professional growth of Learning Support and Resource Class Teachers in the Eden Central Karoo district?

1.4.2   Sub-research Questions

• What are the experiences, constraints, and challenges to professional development of Learning Support and Resource Class Teachers regarding their Integrated Quality Management System?

• How can the roles and functions of Learning Support and Resource Class Teachers be aligned to their key performance areas?

• What inclusive teaching and learning guidelines can be suggested to improve the professional growth of Learning Support and Resource Class Teachers in Eden Central Karoo?"

• How effective are the relevant education policies regarding professional development and Integrated Quality Management System of Learning Support and Resource Class Teachers?

1.5   Aim of the Study

The aim of this research is to generate data that can be applied to enhance the IQMS as a framework to support the professional growth of Learning Support and Research Class Teachers in the Eden Central Karoo district. In order to reach my aim, the following corresponding objective were set, so that this study further intends to:

• Explore the experiences, constraints and challenges of Learning Support and Resource Class Teachers regarding their Integrated Quality Management System.

• Examine how the roles and functions of Learning Support and Resource Class Teachers can be aligned in relation to their current key performance areas.

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• Investigate inclusive teaching and learning guidelines that can improve the professional growth of Learning Support and Resource Class Teachers in Eden Central Karoo.

• Evaluate the effectiveness of relevant education policies regarding professional development and Integrated Quality Management System of Learning Support and Resource Class Teachers.

1.6 Motivation and rationale for the study

The researcher is a Learning Support Advisor in a Western Cape Education Department district, namely the Eden and Central Karoo Education District (ECKED), also referred to in this study as the Eden and Central Karoo. Five of the researcher's overall 24 years of teaching experience time were in teaching learners with barriers to learning within a school of skills. Schools of skills offer alternative pathways to learners who cannot cope with the mainstream curriculum, through including skills subjects as well. The LSA spent three subsequent years as an LST in a mainstream inclusive school. The researcher's interest in this doctoral study sparked while she was busy with her Masters' degree in inclusive education during her term as LST. Three IQMS cycles occurred during her employment as a school based LST. Every year she had to defend her performance against IQMS standards. The researcher became a Learning Support Advisor (LSA) in another circuit, in July 2017, shortly before the 2017 IQMS cycle. The roles of an LSA include supervising LSTs and RCTs, managing their IQMS and subsequently providing support for continued growth to ensure effective learning support in mainstream inclusive schools.

The rationale of the study was to explore a framework for a coordinated support developmental framework, based on a performance instrument which stipulates criteria relevant to key responsibility areas to the specific job description of LSTs and RCTs. Such a framework, based on a system under structure, may contribute to understanding the research problem and a framework for workable solutions supported by previous research (Herselman & Botha 2018;65; Leavy 2017:9).

Previous research scrutinized by the researcher includes Dreyer (2008, 2013), Ladbrook (2009), Arendse (2010), Van Graan (2010), Mahlo (2011), Lebona (2013),

Van Wyk (2015), Barratt (2016), Wentzel (2016) and Conway (2017). Several of these studies were conducted on the development of and support for teachers in general, but very few South African studies investigated the roles and development of LSTs and RCTs. The collection of studies from 2008 to 2017 provides a broad overview of perspectives with regards to support within an inclusive education system, whether from a mainstream or ISLES position. Literature searches on Inclusive Learning Support Teachers in the South African context, with specific reference to their IQMS and changed roles could not produce work dated after 2017.

From this group of studies, only Dreyer (2008, 2013), Arendse (2010), Van Graan (2010), Barratt (2016), and Conway (2017) elaborate on the role of support teachers. Barratt (2016) however, briefly touches on the roles and responsibilities of a learning support educator within an Inclusive Education Outreach Team. Conway (2017) describes the role of one LST within a particular full-service school. Furthermore, only Dreyer (2008, 2013), Arendse (2010), Van Graan (2010) and Mahlo (2011) elaborate on the transformed roles of LSTs. Closest to this research is the studies of Arendse (2010) and Mahlo (2011).

The study of Mahlo (2011) refers to inclusive education implementation in a specific Gauteng district to investigate experiences of Foundation Phase LSTs. Mahlo used qualitative research and design methods of collecting data. In addition, Mahlo applies Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory to explain the support system of guiding and structuring the individual. Mahlo reviews different international and national views, including the medical model of support. The researcher found that LSTs need guidance and support in their daily practices.

The research findings of Mahlo (2011), Arendse (2010) and Dreyer (2008, 2013) uncovers relating matters that include unclear roles and job dissatisfaction of support teachers with inappropriate quality management performance measurements. Inadequate district support, lack of resources and inadequate, collaboration between the stakeholders and a lack of commitment from DoE to provide or design the guidelines policies into practice which govern the LSTs' practices remain challenges. Recommendations by Mahlo (2011), Arendse (2010) and Dreyer (2008, 2013) include the following. Firstly, that key performance areas for LSTs need to be developed that should consider their job description and in what they are involved. Secondly, revisiting

the post level or upgrading the LSTs' rank is advisable. Thirdly, guidelines that include performance appraisal are necessary on the duties of the LST. Fourthly, a district official should take responsibility for the LSTs evaluation and should draw up the IQMS because he or she understands the job description. Further research suggested by Mahlo (2011), Arendse (2010) and Dreyer (2008, 2013), and of particular interest to this study includes among others, a new template with duties clearly stated and designed specifically to suit the LSTs.

Arendse (2010) studies the challenges that Itinerant Learning Support Educators (ILSEs) in the Metro South Education District (MSED) experienced in terms of inclusive education policy transformation. She used a qualitative research approach to explore the participants' challenges in performing their duties. ILSEs as support teachers that serve two or more schools alternately (Arendse 2010:3). Arendse also investigates global and local inclusive approaches, specifically tracing more demanding role conversion away from traditional medical learning support approaches. The scholar touched on immediate support provision by Learning Support Advisors, and broader district and provincial support. The findings highlight that ILSEs experienced diverse contextual issue challenges that impacted effective inclusive practice delivery. They experienced their roles as very overwhelming, due to unrealistic expectations (Arendse 2010:60). In addition, ILSEs themselves had no clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities.

The researcher highlighted a lack of support structures for ILSEs. The IQMS of ILSEs was found to be inappropriate. The link was made between the post level, vague job description and performance management. There was a lack of sufficient official job descriptions accompanied by role and responsibility vagueness (Arendse 2010:66). This had a direct impact on their IQMS as their job descriptions linked to their IQMS performance. As Post level 1 teachers ILSEs are not being appraised unique to their specific roles. The same tool is used to appraise ILSEs and mainstream teachers. The criteria of the instruments do not reflect the real duties that they have to perform. They felt neglected in the matters of IQMS and planning. The study of Arendse recommends acknowledgement of such challenges and reviewing their job descriptions. Itinerant LSTs should be reoriented and trained to understand their new roles. Clear guidelines and support structures should be established. Guidelines include stability and clear guidelines on their positioning between the schools that they serve and the district,

where their posts are designated. An adapted, clear job description must be a framework to develop a learning support policy for the specific context of the school. The unfair IQMS criteria should be attended to so that the system and instruments can be more specific to ILSEs.

Dreyer (2008) evaluates the effectiveness of the learning support model that was introduced in some primary schools in the Western Cape. Specific references are made to schools within the West Coast/Winelands district. She used a mixed method research design, focusing on the evaluation of that model's process and outcomes. An ecosystemic, whole-school approach echoes in the WCED's adoption of a systemic approach to providing learning support in primary schools (Dreyer 2008, 2013:55). Both international and national inclusive learning support approaches were investigated with prominent reference to the LST's role conversion away from medical remedial support approaches. Dreyer found that the roles of LSTs became more diverse and complex and challenging within an inclusive education system. Dreyer advance that the evolvement of the job description of LSTs is beyond the traditional roles of remedial teachers bringing about a need for sustained provincial and district coordinated training and support programmes for LSTs (Dreyer 2013:7).

The changing roles and job descriptions of LSTs require proper acknowledgement to establish more authority. Dreyer introduces the role of the Learning Support Advisor, with a focus on facilitating learner placements and support to LSTs. Despite international similarities in LST roles as elaborated on in this Dreyer's work, national and provincial attempts at educational transformation contributions to LSTs roles still did not connect. She proposes that the WCED learning support model and the job description referred to in the study should be used as a foundation to develop a learning support policy. She provides a model for the improvement of learning support service delivery within a whole-school framework, provided that the school context must be considered. The scholar views a cascading model for training of LSTs as ineffective. Dreyer also recommends that LSTs should be promoted to higher than post level 1, due to their authoritative roles.

Issues from the findings and the subsequent recommendations in the studies of Mahlo and Arendse and Dreyer correlate very strongly with the challenges that the researcher in this study elaborated on above (cf.1.2). The work of Dreyer (2008, 2013) does not

include the IQMS specifically, however, her findings on role conversion subsequent demands on LSTs are valuable. Arendse (2010:97) focused on ILSEs in the Metro South Education District, who appeals for an IQMS specific to the job description of the support teachers. Arendse (2010) refers to itinerant LSEs, a system wherein one support teacher serves two or more schools alternately. Hitherto, this system is still utilized for some support teachers. The specific circuits of investigation in the current study had three itinerant LSTs. Therefore, issues and related recommendations are of specific reference worth in the current study. Relating matters include unclear roles and job dissatisfaction of support teachers with inappropriate quality management performance measurements.

Mahlo's findings of Foundation Phase LSTs in the Gauteng district echo results from the study of Arendse (2010). Mahlo (2011) did not distinguish between LSTs and RCTs, however, her specific findings and recommendations about the IQMS of LSTs (Mahlo 2011:197) reinforced the current researcher's decision to focus on a framework for coordinated support and developmental framework, based on a performance instrument which stipulates criteria relevant to the specific job description of LSTs and RCTs. The recommendations of Mahlo (2011:204) and Arendse (2010:97) include a new template that is tailored for LSTs, containing clearly stated duties. Dreyer (2008:237) also proposes a Learning Support Delivery Model with an ecosystemic perspective, however, with no reference to effective performance management for professional development of LSTs.

The three specific studies as summarised above investigated inclusive learning support roles with subsequent recommendations for development. However, their scope did not account for specific chrono-time role evolvement within different existing learning support teacher job descriptions. The IQMS and related instruments were not discussed in-depth to determine the scope and impact of the related challenges on support teachers and the broader inclusive education system. Although certain issues of disjunction were uncovered, there was no empirical determination of any compatibility (or lack thereof) between hitherto appraisal instruments and learning support job descriptions. Issues expounded thus far, provide a foundation for the following significance of the study.

1.7 Significance of the Study

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Although the teacher assessment system used hitherto has been found capable of facilitating teacher development to some extent (Mahlaela 2012:9), literature explorations by the researcher found little empirical evidence of the effects of IQMS as an appraisal system for LSTs and RCTs and its contributions to their professional development. This study gave LSTs and RCTs in the Eden and Central Karoo Education District the opportunity to reveal any challenges that they might have experienced with their IQMS. The study may further contribute to comprehending the perceptions of LSTs and RCTs concerning the effectiveness of IQMS on their professional development.

The research findings may offer valuable contributions to the development of an appraisal system that LSTs and RCTs fully understand and can use with confidence. Theoretical, the study may thus provide empirical findings that can offer valuable contributions to existing knowledge about current professional development initiatives of LSTs and RCTs in the WCED, not just at primary school level, but also at high school level. Although learning support is primarily provided in primary schools, it has only recently (to date) been introduced into high schools in the form of reading intervention programmes. This opens up opportunities for new or adapted support strategies to suit older learners from Grade 8 onwards. Methodologically, the study may thus contribute to the improvement and possible adaptation of already existing professional development initiatives for LSTs and RCTs at primary school level, as well as for LSTs who might be deployed into high schools.

1.8 Literature Review

Snyder (2019, cited in Schurink, Roestenburg & Fouche 2021:101), states that a literature review connects previous research and theories with the investigated problem. It is envisaged that a literature review can provide insights into different theories and literature on IQMS and professional development and assist to identify a rationale or need for the current study (Schurink et al. 2021:101, Leavy, 2017:128). A framework for coordinated support and developmental model, that stipulates criteria relevant to the specific job description of LSTs and RCTs, may facilitate comprehension of the research problem and contribute to a foundation for possible solutions supported by previous support, as attested in Schurink et al. (2021:95).

Several studies have been conducted, and articles written on the area of role development of, and the support for teachers in general (Hagelman 2013; Joorst 2010; Ladbrook 2009;

Mahlo 2011; Martin 2013; O'Gorman & Drudy 2011; Rouse 2008; Rabichund 2011; Sekgale 2016; Webster-Wright 2009). A few South African studies investigated the roles of LSTs and RCTs with suggestions concerning their development, including Dreyer (2008), Ladbrook (2009), Van Graan (2010), Mahlo (2011), and Mahlaela (2012). Rouse (2008) focus on the role of teachers and teacher education but also commented on the role of LSTs in England and Scotland. Mestry, Hendricks and Bisschoff (2009), Mahlo (2011), Rabichund (2011), Mahlaela (2012), Martin (2013) and Sekgale (2016) research the IQMS and teacher assessment for professional development. Only Mahlo specifically includes findings and recommendations with regards to the IQMS of LSTs and RCTs.

1.9 Theoretical Framework

Theory assists in creating questions, forming research designs, outcomes anticipation and intervention design (Babbie 2011:60). As introduced in the problem statement above, the multi-dimensional ecological model of Bronfenbrenner also explains the multi-layered challenges of LSTs and RCTs concerning their professional development within the IQMS. The ecological systems theory assisted the researcher to view and understand the phenomenon under study in a holistic, systemic context (Schurink *et al.* 2021:106). As suggested by the authors, meaning making is characteristic of inductive, constructive qualitative approaches. As such, Bronfenbrenner's theory guided this research, enabled links to research goals, and informed the overall design and methodology in this study. The ecological systems theory (Bronfenbrenner 1994:39) situates the developmental environment of Inclusive Learning Support Teachers within the "four nested systems" consisting of the microsystem, the mesosystem, the exosystem and the macrosystem that interacts with the chronosystem. Individuals and their surroundings function cooperatively in the processes and outcomes of their development (Bronfenbrenner 1992:188.) The "nested systems" theory thus formed an important theoretical foundation for the current study and is further engaged in-depth to describe the levels of engagement of LSTs and RCTs in their practice.

1.10 Research Design and Methodology

1.10.1 Research Paradigm

The researcher views the reality of the Learning Support and Resource Class Teachers with regards to their IQMS and related professional development through a constructivist-

interpretive lens. According to Leavy (2017:13), such a lens acknowledges that the participants, through their daily interactions, are active co-constructors of the meaning of the phenomenon under study. A constructivist-interpretivist paradigm explains how the researcher looked at the reality of the participants; knew about their situation; used theory to explain and investigate their dilemma; valued the realities of the participants and catered for their unique needs and well-being (Sefotho 2021:15).

1.10.2 Research Design

This study combines phenomenological and instrumental case study designs. A phenomenological instrumental case study enabled the researcher to gain insight into the participants' experiences, as well as their everyday knowledge and perceptions regarding IQMS and their personal growth (Leavy 2017:129; Cropley 2021:90; Schurink *et al.* 2021a:293-294). As a former LST, the researcher has initial knowledge about the IQMS but wanted to develop a more in-depth understanding, attempting to describe the first-hand experiences of the participants in their everyday life (Mohajan 2018:30). This instrumental case study mediated understanding of the experiences of LSTs and RCTs in the Eden and Central Karoo Education District and their journey of balancing everyday responsibilities, but also informed their professional development and IQMS dilemma (Cropley 2021:90; Yin 2011:18). According to Yin (2011:310), findings of this study have instrumental potential in that it might be applicable to other similar situations.

1.10.3 Research Approach

This research followed a qualitative approach, which has its basis in the interpretive/constructivist paradigm (Leavy 2017:18; Mohajan 2018:24; Taylor, Bogdan & DeVault 2016:12). Qualitative research is context-dependent and permits ongoing interaction with the participants (a:82). Therefore, qualitative research facilitates an understanding of their experiences and perceptions as occurring in natural settings and consequently, investigates their professional development (Mohajan 2018:24; Fouchè 2021:42)**.**

1.10.4 Population

A population is a group of an element of interest, from which researchers draw their samples to later lay claims, draw conclusions, or generalize about findings (Babbie 2011:119; Leavy 2017:76; Strydom 2021a:228). The population in this study refers to Inclusive Specialised

Learner and Educator Support of the WCED. The Western Cape Education Department comprises eight education districts that are further divided into 49 education circuits. The selected sample from this population consists of 25 learning support professionals from the eight ECKED circuits. The researcher initially intended to include only a group of LSTs and RCTs from four of the eight ECKED circuits. After careful consideration and motivation by more interest in the study, the learning support professionals from all the eight ECKED circuits were invited to participate.

The participants were selected purposively, based on the researcher's knowledge about, and judgement of the population as to be well-informed about the phenomena to be investigated in this study (Strydom 2021c:382-383). According to Strydom, purposeful sampling is not only cost-effective, but is less time consuming, easy to administer, and ensures a high participation rate and receipt of necessary data. This sample may thus provide for relevant, information-rich, in-depth study (Schreier 2018:88).

1.10.5 Sampling

This purposeful or purposive sampling is deliberate, but not just one of convenience. According to Schreier (2018:89) and Strydom (2021c:382), convenient sampling would select the sample of interest purely based on availability, practicality, and accessibility. Contrary to this, a purposeful, deliberately selection was made based on the researcher's knowledge of the population (Strydom 2021c:381). The identification of participants was done through a combination of an existing and generated sample frame and will be discussed in depth in Chapter Four (Methodology). The participants are LSTs and RCTs and LSAs from diverse cultural and socio-economic settings and possess the needed characteristics to be representative of the population and topic under study as attested by Stangor (2015, cited by Strydom 2021a:228).

The 25 participants consisted of 16 Learning Support Teachers, 5 Resource Class Teachers and 4 Learning Support Advisors from The Eden and Central Karoo Education District in the Western Cape. The sample included 24 females and one male participant, with an average age of 48 years. The researcher followed proper ethical protocol because the one male participant was one of only four male LSTs in the district, which demanded extra consideration for issues of protection and anonymity. Sixteen of the 25 participants were stationary Learning Support Teachers at their respective schools while five of them were itinerant, each between two schools. These LSTs and RCTs were operational in 26

primary and two high schools. The choice of these schools was not the primary objective per se, but the focus was on the participants, whom the researcher regarded as representative, knowledgeable and experienced with learning support in their respective schools. The specific primary schools were the workplaces of the respective participants. Ethical protocol was followed for all contributors to the study. Only LSTs and RCTs who experienced at least two cycles of the IQMS were eligible for participation in the study, whether they were contracted by the WCED or permanently appointed.

1.10.6 Data Collection Techniques and Instruments

The researcher as the main data collector in qualitative research (Creswell 2008:177; Yin 2011:131. Leavy 2017:147), initially propose to use face-to-face interviews, focus group interviews, observations, and document analysis to gather information. These intended data collection techniques were changed or adapted due to the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020, also known as the 2019 Novel Coronavirus or the novel coronavirus SARS-CoV-2 (severe acute respiratory syndrome-coronavirus-2). The University of South Africa (UNISA) Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) position statement on research ethics (8 April 2020), the UNISA COVID-19 guidelines for the Ethics Review Committee (ERC) (28 April 2020), and the subsequent UNISA COVID-19 guidelines, implications of alert levels for researchers and postgraduate students (26 June 2020), placed restrictions on face-to-face interviews and other methods that did not adhere to the restrictions of the national safety regulations.

Site visit field observations, as originally planned, could not happen due to the COVID-19 restrictions. Therefore, a reflex journal or research diary (Schurink et al. 2021b:395), was utilized for reflective notes during the research process. This assisted the researcher to diarize her own experiences and perceptions, tracking of own organisation, and as part of an ongoing analytic and methodological process. The face-to-face interviews were modified to online individual telephonic, or email interviews and Microsoft Teams focus group interviews. The participants in this study were given a choice between telephonic and email interviews (Bengry 2018:111; Remote Qualitative Data Collection 2020:2). All the participants selected to participate via online interviewing.

This study firstly employed semi-structured, open-ended, online asynchronous in-depth interviewing (Meho 2006:1284; Geyer 2021:356) or e-interviews, as referred to by Salmons (2012:5). The second data collection method entailed one online, synchronous (Geyer

2021:356) or real-time Microsoft Teams focus group interview with four of the seven Eden and Central Karoo LSAs, each with their circuit for supervision. Furthermore, analysis of other official documents added to the data collection strategies that provided the researcher with critical insight into the challenges of LSTs and RCTs. Relevant data related to IQMS effectiveness with regards to LSTs and RCTs were also scrutinized..

1.10.7 Data Analysis and Interpretation

Creswell (2013:35,45) and Mertens (2018:36) explain qualitative studies are interpretive or constructive by nature. An inductive analysis approach allowed the construction of meaning by converting multiple, raw data sources into specific meaningful themes (Leavy 2017:11; Yin 2011:309) The researcher could identify general ideas in the diverse interview data whereby participants tried to construct their reality (Cropley 2021:139). Generated themes made data more manageable, to conceptually organise findings related to the phenomenon under investigation (Schurink et al. 2021b:391) and ground findings in the reality of the participants. Units of meaning relating to the experiences of LSTs with IQMS about their professional development were identified by utilizing Creswell's hierarchical, bottom-to-top approach or "from the ground up" (Creswell 2009:185; 2013b:22; McMillan & Schumacher 2010:367).

1.11 Trustworthiness

Leavy (2017:154) describes trustworthiness as the accuracy and believability of data, while Cropley (2021:37) speaks about the extent of confidence in and acceptance of accurately reflected reality. Trustworthiness is also about validity and believability in the quality and methodology of a project (Leavy 2017:154). According to Schurink *et al.* (2021b:393), trustworthiness can be measured by dependability, conformability, transferability and credibility. Trustworthiness was assured by giving a full account of the specific account of her methodology and methodological decisions and the real issues of participants concerning the IQMS (Sefotho 2021:11). The next section on criteria ensures trustworthiness and its relevance to this study.

1.11.1 Credibility and Dependability

This refers to the degree to which the researcher captured what was intended (real issues of participants concerning their IQMS) and if there was evidence of the possibility for

replication of findings in similar contexts, with similar participants (Elmusharaf 2018). This study provided documented evidence and accurate descriptions of the phenomenon in question by laying out procedures and instruments in a way that others can attempt to collect data in similar conditions (Schurink et al. 2021b:394-395).

In-depth online interviews were conducted with LSTs and RCTs who experienced two or more IQMS-cycles as well as with LSAs. This allowed for trust-building and enough time for meaningful insight into the various participants' experiences and views. A thick description of the opinions of participants allowed readers to draw their conclusions from the data presented (Schurink et al. 2021b:395; Creswell 2013:252). Thick descriptions are supplemented by research journal keeping reflexive notes that gave exact and detailed explanations and verbatim accounts of interview contents.

Triangulation, by using multiple methods of data collection that include online open-ended interviews, online focus group interviews, document analysis and research journal reflexive notes, provided different insights on the issue (Flick 2018b:532; Cropley 2021:116). Verbatim recording and/or transcription of data as articulated and described by the participants (Knoblauch, Schnettler & Tuma 2018:375). Member checking where conclusions were returned to participants, after analysing all the data, to determine whether they agree or not (Tiidenberg 2018:475; Schurink et al. 2021b:397), so that participants can confirm (or not) the meaning or interpretation assigned to data.

1.11.2 Reflexivity

This assumes that researchers are as much a part of the research as the individuals being researched (Flick 2018a:6; Leavy 2017:49; a:279). It involves the idea of awareness that researchers are reflexive or self-questioning when they investigate (Morse, Cheek & Clark 2018:568). Leavy (2017:137) opines that researchers should be self-aware and reflect upon his/her role and possible bias. These researchers advance that reflexivity established credibility through showing as much as possible the procedures that have led to a particular set of conclusions. A research reflex journal combination openly acknowledges that the researcher's interpretation follows from her background with IQMS and personal development (Leavy 2017:136).

1.11.3 Transferability

Schurink et al. (2021b:393) refer to transferability as the extent to which the findings can be applied to other settings and contexts. Leavy (2017:155) and Scheier (2018) explain transferability in terms of "fittingness" between two contexts that transfer, rather than generalize understanding and meaning to or within the new context. Transferability was achieved by a detailed, thick description that madae full use of the original data that support the phenomena under study (a:246). According to Schurink et al. (2021b:395), such data include the participants' "lifeworld", their own language and interpretations of the issue and context at hand.

1.12 Ethical Considerations

Mohajan (2018:23-24) explains qualitative research as a social science method that explores people's experiences and perceptions of social, real-life meaning and events and conditions. Engagement with human beings and their social realities centralizes ethical considerations to protect research participants from harm (Leavy 2017:24; Strydom & Roestenburg 2021:118). Ethical research, therefore, should detail all ethical considerations as an integral part of planning and research methodology. According to Leavy (2017:24), ethics are generally considered to deal with beliefs about what is right or wrong from a moral viewpoint. In a research study, the researcher's responsibility was to ensure that ethical standards were adhered to. The following measures were therefore adhered to in this research.

Research ethics clearance was applied for from the Research Ethics committee of the College of Education of the University of South Africa (UNISA). Permission to conduct the study within the identified district was also requested from the WCED and the Eden and Central education district. Permission was also asked from the head of the Specialised Learner and Educator Support (SLES). The research also requested permission to conduct research in the selected schools from the director of Eden and Central Karoo Education District and the respective Circuit managers. Participants were informed about the research, and the intended use of data. Participants were furthermore kept informed regarding the progress of research and the provision of given feedback in writing once the research was completed.

The researcher secured informed consent from participants, and they were assured of complete confidentiality and anonymity. Anonymity was ensured by assigning each participant in the study with a unique arbitrary code number, LST1-16 and RCT1-5. Focus groups participants were referred to as LSA1-4, to protect participants' identity and right to privacy (Leavy 2017:108; Strydom & Roestenburg 2021:124; Tiidenberg 2018:295). Assurance was given to the participants on the issues of human dignity, protection against harm, and access to information. For further safety and anonymity, all data and reflexive notes were securely locked in a cabinet. Participants were given assurance that the recording of focus group interviews will be locked away in a secure cabinet until transcriptions are completed and that the research recordings will be preserved for one year after submission of the report of the findings.

Assurance of freedom of choice, meaning that participants were informed that they have the right to decline their consent at any stage of the research without giving any reasons and without penalty, are free to refuse to answer certain interview questions and can object to the use of data-gathering devices (UNISA 2013:13). Barratt (2016:71) refers to this as the principle of autonomy where every individual has the right of decision making about their own lives. Participants were assured of freedom of expression, as open-ended interview questions allowed participants opportunities for self-expression and elaboration, without fear of any judgment.

The justice principle (Barratt 2016:71) requires that fairness was strengthened by explaining to participants how and why they have been identified; clarifying the nature and extent of their participation; informing the participants of any possible future use of the information obtained; ensuring them that no information will be used to the detriment of any participant. The researcher properly acknowledged the direct and indirect contributions of colleagues such as fellow LSA. There was no need to ask for assent as no minors will be participating in this study.

1.13 Limitations and Delimitations of the Study

The study was delimited to a small geographic area, the Eden and Central Karoo Education District in the Western Cape. The Western Cape consists of eight education districts that are further divided into 49 circuits. The Eden and Central Karoo Education District is divided into eight circuits with 222 schools in total. The one male participant was the only one of

three possible male candidates who qualified for the study and who opted to participate. Eden and Central Karoo Education District had only four male LSTs at the time of the study. Other LSTs and RCTs in their particular circuits may have different views, challenges and experiences regarding professional development and IQMS. The same goes for the LSTs and RCTs other circuits, with regard to the overall sample. Some critics might argue that this does not leave much room for generalization to LSTs and RCTs in other districts as confirmed by Mohajan (2018:14) and Schreier (2018:85). However, Schreier argues that qualitative case study results can be generalized to some broader theory.

A methodologically delimitation is that this study is a constructivist, qualitative case study that gathered information through online, in-depth interviews and one online focus group interview. The current study is such a case study because it investigated the phenomenon of the IQMS and related professional development of LSTs and RCTs in its actual milieu. The generalization occurs when qualitative researchers study additional cases and transfer findings to the new cases.

To repeat a case study's findings in a new case setting requires good documentation of qualitative procedures, such as a protocol for documenting the problem in detail and the development of a thorough case study database. With regards to generalisation and transferability, Scheier (2021:89) points out that chosen sample units are precisely criterion-based, and that they have particular features and characteristics to represent a location in relation to a key criterion. In this study, the LSTs and RCTs represent the total population as units of information-rich cases that could yield an in-depth understanding of issues important to a study and which might be emulated by that study (Strydom 2021c:383). The aim of this study was not to indicate general trends. It seeks in-depth information from the point of view of the participants of the interviews.

The study was motivated by the researcher's professional experience with regard to IQMS. The researcher played a dual role which may prejudice the research. Firstly, being employed as an education specialist (Learning Support Advisor) who must support and train all the participants and their respective schools, it could not be assumed that participants will necessarily cooperate. Secondly, the LSA had the role of a research instrument (Schurink et al. 2021b:399) that had to gather and analyse data as well as produce meaningful information. From the nature of the work of an LSA, the researcher had

regular personal contact with participants and the situation under study. This might raise concerns about the subjectivity of the approach. To mitigate this type of situation, confidentiality was emphasised, and participants were allowed to check on the perceptions of the interviewer. Furthermore, McMillan and Schumacher (2010:207) recommend that the interviewer should make participants feel comfortable and show interest in their welfare.

Doctoral dissertations commonly consume several years (Yin 2011:60). Yin (2011:237) and Kumar (2011:237) propose a work schedule for systematic planning with certain time frames and checking against indicated steps for completion of tasks. Practical and time constraints included other limitations that were indeed evident in all the operational challenges brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. The researcher tried to overcome these by a properly planned (but open to flexibility) schedule in collaboration with the ECKED Learning Support Coordinator, the Circuit managers and the Learning Support Advisors of the respective circuits intended for investigation.

Availability of funding from external or personal resources might affect the possibilities of the study in terms of scope, period of study and even data that can come from multiple sites. In the case of this study, the researcher had the opportunity to apply for financial support in the form of a bursary from the particular institution of study. However, the possible limitations as laid out above, the researcher envisioned that these constraints could be overcome by adhering to protocol and proper well-timed practical arrangements.

1.14 Definition of Key Concepts

The following section clarifies the terms and concepts that were relevant and central to understanding the study. This is a developmental section which continued to grow throughout the study.

1.14.1 Inclusive Education

There have been several definitions of inclusive education (Schuelka 2018:1). Shuelka describes inclusive education as a never-changing educational process with clearly stipulated value measures, emphasising all children being taught together in mainstream schools despite barriers to learning. Chauhan and Mantry (2018:24) explain inclusive education as a process that addresses and responds to all diverse learner needs, by reduced exclusion through increased participation in learning communities. For this study,

Inclusive Education (IE) means value-based education provided to all learners with different or diverse learning needs, within ordinary schools.

1.14.2 Educator/Teacher

Educator and teacher are two words that are often interchanged wrongly (The Eduvation Network 2017). However, the inclination in research is more to the use of the word "teacher". The literature distinguishes between the terms such as educator being a mentor who informs and inspires, versus a teacher as being a trainer who is skilled to impart knowledge (Sackstein 2016; The Eduvation Network 2017). The role of LSTs and RCTs encompasses all of the described roles, as will be elucidated in the rest of the research. This study will utilize the word teacher, to align with the constructs of Learning Support and Resource Class Teachers. In this study, a teacher means an adult person who transfers knowledge or offers instructional learning to learners.

1.14.3 Learning Support Teacher/ Resource Class Teachers

In South Africa, Learning Support and Resource Class Teachers are specialist teachers with specialist knowledge and skills, who are mainly working with primary school learners with difficulties in learning (Mahlo 2011:16; Rouse 2008:14). Dreyer (2008:24) explains that LSTs and RCTs also support the system to ensure effective learning for all learners. For this study LSTs and RCTs refer to multi-functional specialist teachers who promote inclusion by instructing learners with diverse learning needs and also strengthen all systems within and around schools.

1.14.4 Learning Support Advisor

Learning Support Advisors are office-based with their main role as direct managers or supervisors of LSTs and RCTs (WCED 2014). They are not only responsible to guide, supporting, monitoring and evaluating the LSTs and RCTs, but must also supervise school-based learning support. This comprises the empowerment of LSTs and RCTs as well as mainstream teachers to address barriers to learning (Dreyer 2013:24,111). The research also informs that LSAs are also called Learners with Special Educational Needs (LSEN) advisors, LSEN thus referring to Learners with Special Educational Needs. In this study, LSAs are officials who support learners and teachers, and manage and advise regarding

learning support implementation and provision, by coordinating training and inclusive support.

1.14.5 Integrated Quality Management System

Sekgale (2016:10) explains the IQMS as a staff appraisal system utilized for teacher evaluation, aimed at the improvement of teachers' performance and learner achievements. Emekeko (2018:4) describes the IQMS as a monitoring system of appraisal and feedback whereby teacher needs are uncovered, while accountability and overall teacher performance were improved. In this study, the IQMS is a standardised system with instruments that monitor and evaluate teacher performance to provide teachers opportunity for ongoing self-assessment that is directed at professional self-enhancement, and subsequent improved quality teaching and learning in schools.

1.14.6 Professional Development

Steenkamp (2018:2) explains Professional Development (PD) in terms of varied, well planned formal, specialised or advanced training whereby teachers improve their knowledge, skills and competence and overall effectiveness. According to Saleem and Dogar (2021:54), professional development is an ongoing teacher empowerment and innovation skills development process that builds teacher confidence as well as improves school performance. For this study professional development refers to the continuous improvement of teacher expertise, knowledge, skills and attitudes that contribute to subsequent professional growth as well as self and systemic effectiveness.

1.14.7 Teacher Assessment

The terms *"assessment"* and *"appraisal"* are indicated as synonyms, having the same meaning (Thesaurus). Most significant to the current study is Emekako (2018:55) explains teacher assessment as a performance management strategy that forms part of individual appraisal and feedback that intend to identify strengths and weakness aimed at professional development. Mngomezulu (2015:19) explains assessment as a monitoring strategy to evaluate teaching effectiveness and that can inform leadership and other stakeholders to make informed decisions. Teacher assessment for this study refers to monitoring, recording and evaluation of teacher proficiency using appraisal documents or activities with improved professional growth.

1.14.8 District-Based Support Team

The District-Based Support Team (DBST) comprises groups of departmental professionals who form the core support providers at district, regional or provincial levels (DoE 2010:49; DoE 2011:23; Mahlo 2011:15). Their primary function is co-coordinating professional support and strengthening school-based support systems in the systematic and effective accommodation of learner diversity (Nel *et al.* 2016:3). For this study, a DBST is therefore a district-level, expert support team, whose core purpose is the coordinated strengthening of and support provision for school-based support systems to accommodate learner diversity effectively.

1.14.9 School-Based Support Team

The School-Based Support Team (SBST) is the primary coordinating system of learner and educator support in schools through identification and addressing learner, teacher and institutional needs (Mahlo 2011:18; DoE 2010:49; DoE 2011:23). The Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support (SIAS) Policy [Department of Basic Education (DBE) 2014] utilizes keywords such as "coordinating" and "collectively" in describing the core purposes of the SBST and adding support to parents and caregivers (DBE 2014:30). For this study, an SBST is a collaborative and coordinated support system (team together with a shared vision and mutual objective) wherein every member cooperates (exchange relevant information and resources) to identify and address learner, teacher and institutional needs within an inclusive ethos, while simultaneously supporting parents and caregivers.

1.14.10 Job Description

The construct "Job Description (JD)" is self-explanatory. It's a written instrument that describes the exact duties that its holder should perform and should entail the skills, abilities and responsibilities required job holder (Krishnam & Banerjee 2017:1). Kapur (2020:1) explains a job description as all the job duties, including the task, responsibilities and expected behaviour. For this study a job description is therefore a detailed explanation of the key roles and responsibilities to be performed in a specific job, accompanied by the duties, tasks, corresponding knowledge and skills necessary to be executed to fulfil these roles.

1.14.11 Key Performance Areas

According to the Human Resource (HR) dictionary (2012), Key Performance Areas (KPAs) refer to the complete range of activities and functions that an individual must execute, and which are not always result-oriented. Rehman (2009:187) refers to job responsibilities or the key tasks that a position comprises. To build capacity for role players to support learners at risk (KPA) for example, one must develop and implement training programmes for these role players to prevent and address barriers to learning. Thus, key performance areas encompass all the particular tasks or responsibilities (KRAs) that one must execute to perform in those specific areas. For this study key performance areas are an overall list of the core functioning areas, which are not always result-oriented, but that one must perform to contribute to the overall performance and functioning of an institution as to reach specific goals.

1.14.12 Key Responsibility Areas

The Indeed Editorial Team (2021) explains Key Responsibility Areas (KRAs) as a detailed summary of goals and tasks that an individual is expected to do at the workplace. George (2014:30) explains the "key responsibility areas" as tasks to be performed to fulfil the duties and responsibilities of a job. In the example below, one must identify training needs and compile training material for programmes (KRAs), to build the capacity of role players for early identification of and intervention with regards to support for learners at risk (KPA). Thus, to perform in a specific area (KPA), one has to conduct certain duties or responsibilities (KRAs) to get to the result. For this study, key responsibility areas refer to a detailed synopsis of clustered, related core activities and functions which are result oriented and essential for the execution and fulfilment of a job.

1.15 Outline of the Study

Chapter One: Introduction to the study

Introduction and background, the significance of the study, research problem, aim of the study, introduces the research design and methodology to the reader, the trustworthiness of the study, terms, ethical considerations and limitations of the study. Chapter One also outlines the rest of the chapters of the study.

Chapter Two: Theoretical framework of the study

This chapter is an exploration of Bronfenbrenner's ecosystemic systems theory that forms the theoretical foundation for this study. The main ideas as relevant to the study are elaborated on. Levels explorations are expanded to inform chrono-time role transformation and effects on Learning Support and Resource Class Teachers on both National and international levels.

Chapter Three: Literature Review

Continuum of role transformation over a set period in the South African context. Changed roles in relation to the current job description. Skills needed and consequent professional development undertaken/ available. IQMS overview and purpose. Factors impacting on LSTs and RCTs IQMS. Transformation with specific reference to the job description of LSTs and RCTs. IQMS practicality for LSTs and RCTs. Teacher development in South Africa. Previous teacher professional development in South Africa. Professional development as a consequence of developmental appraisal. Suggested professional development. An old IQMS process versus a continuous IQMS process.

Chapter Four: Research design and methodology

This chapter deals with the description of the research design and methodology, sase study design, population, sample and sampling procedures including data collection instruments, reflexivity, ethics in research.

Chapter Five: Data presentation, analysis and interpretation

Chapter five presents the research findings and discusses key findings that emerged. It furthermore includes the data analysis and interpretation of the data.

Chapter Six: Summary, conclusions and recommendations

Summary of the study that include the findings, drawing of conclusions and making recommendations for professional development within an adapted IQMS framework. Furthermore, the limitations of the study and themes identified that justify further research are presented.

1.16 Chapter Summary

This study was contextualised in the field of inclusive education and seeked to explain why the researcher developed an interest in a development framework for LSTs and RCTs. Subsequently, the chapter highlights issues of LSTs and RCTs regarding their IQMS and professional development in relation to their job description and key performance areas. These issues are enlightened by literature while the theoretical foundations of the study are also reviewed.

The chapter further briefly deliberates on the underlying philosophical paradigm for this research and outlines the design and methodology applied in the study. Furthermore, issues of trustworthiness, credibility and reliability, dependability and conformability were discussed. The methodology section was followed by a description of the anticipated ethical guidelines for this study while the role of the researcher and limitations were also explained. The last section clarifies concepts that would be used in the study, followed by chapter divisions and a description of the research plan and timeline. The theoretical framework that underpins the study will be discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER TWO

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

2.1 Introduction

This chapter serves to lay the theoretical basis for this study. The purpose is to explore a framework for enhanced productivity of Inclusive LSTs and RCTs within the Eden and Central Karoo Education District.

Firstly, the researcher employed reviewed literature recommendations (Arendse 2010; Mahlo 2011) to assist with a rationale for the need of the researcher's study, which is to improve professional practice, based on problems experienced in the profession of learning support. Literature connects previous research and theories with the investigated problem (Snyder, cited in Schurink *et al.* 2021:101) and can provide insight into different theories and literature on IQMS and professionals. Findings and recommendations with regards to the IQMS of LSTs (Arendse 2010:102; Mahlo 2011:197) reinforced the current researcher's decision to focus on a framework for coordinated support and developmental model, based on a performance instrument which stipulates criteria relevant to the specific job description of LSTs and RCTs. For the rest of this study, the researcher also utilizes the term "learning support specialists" or "support teachers" interchangeable as collective terms when referring to LSTs and RCTs.

Secondly, the researcher wanted to establish what transpired in the IQMS-CPTD domain of LST and RCT in the Eden and Central Karoo Education district. Bronfenbrenner's systems approach was employed to explain developments with regard to learning support roles globally and locally. Kennedy and Thornberg (2018:51) advance that qualitative theoretical frame working serves as an analytical lens in the data collection and analysing process. Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory added to the analytical lens in linking effectively with interpretive-constructivist meaning-making on the interactive multi-level platforms of support teacher development issues. The ecological system theory also assisted in creating questions, forming research designs, outcomes anticipation and intervention design in this study (Schurink *et al.* 2021:103; Creswell 2013:255).

The next section will conceptualize and set the theoretical parameter for the rest of this study within the Bio-ecological systems theory of Bronfenbrenner.

2.2   Bronfenbrenner's Bio-Ecological Systems Theory

As stated in the introduction, the overarching framework and theoretical foundation for the current study is Bronfenbrenners' bio-ecological theory to get a better understanding of the connections between the basic patterns and specific actions or arrangements that impact the development of support teachers on the different levels of their environment. Ecology theory defines the ecological environment as a nested arrangement of inter-contained structures (Bronfenbrenner 1977:514; 1979:3). Bronfenbrenner's theory posits that the ecological environments extend beyond the immediate situation of the developing individual to include objects and people which and with whom the person interacts on a face-to-face basis.

Relating to systems theory, certain aspects of sociology will also be discussed as applicable to the role and professional development of Learning Support Teachers. Sociology asserts that *"individuals make society and society make individuals"* (Watson 2017:10). Although sociology theory was not originally proposed as a prominent part of this study, it contains important "building blocks" that relate to Bronfenbrenner's systems theory, especially linking to the work-life, the role and professional development of LSTs and RCTs. Bronfenbrenner's systems theory and sociology theory share the basic belief that human life does not happen randomly, nor does it take place in a social vacuum (Watson 2017:5-6; Mahlo 2011:9, 67; Peppler 2017:2). Instead, it is organised with identifiable patterns. These patterns include social structures, cultures and institutions. The same applies to work organisations that produce services in co-operation with each other, but also sometimes in competition (Watson 2017:6). The interconnectedness perspective relates to the work-life of LSTs and RCTs. Whether we are dealing with their activities on individual, group or work organisational levels, it is always linked to the wider culture, social structure and processes of the society in which it takes place (Watson 2017:6).

Christensen (2016:26) reiterates Bronfenbrenner's emphasis on the individual's development within a context in that society influences the lives of all people in the way of

their interaction. Paquette and Ryan (cited in Christensen 2016:25) however, hold the opinion that the individual needs to be seen for their state and that individuals' ability to impact their success should enjoy more focus. Whether the focus is on the individuals and their environmental patterns or the interconnectedness thereof, Watson (2017:6) highlights that such understanding may contribute to greater opportunity for human control (applicable to this study, that of LSTs and RCTs) over their work and their professional growth. Bronfenbrenner (1979:3) perceives interconnected relations as critical for development as events are located within particular settings. For this reason, all the levels of Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory are of utmost importance to the professional development of support teachers.

The researcher wanted to establish what transpired in the IQMS-CPTD domain of LST and RCT in the Eden and Central Karoo Education district. The "four nested systems" ecological model consists of the microsystem, the mesosystem, the exosystem and the macrosystem that interacts with the chronosystem (Bronfenbrenner 1979:3; Mahlo 2011:67; Geldenhuys & Wevers 2013:4; Barratt 2016:25; Peppler 2017:2).

2.2.1 Microsystem

Bronfenbrenner (1977:514; 1994:39) explains a microsystem as the compounded activities, social roles, and interpersonal relations between the developing LSTs and RCTs and the environment in their immediate containing setting. The microsystem in this study is the direct interactive environment or "close-to-person" or "face-to-face" context (Bronfenbrenner 1979:7; Geldenhuys & Wevers 2013:4; Peppler 2017:3) of the support teachers, thus referring to their workplace or school. The environmental aspects that are most influential in forming the course of their growth within their daily living contexts (Christensen 2016:24) will be those that have meaning to them in their respective work or school situations (Bronfenbrenner 1979:22). The school in itself is a microcosm, consisting of various "smaller or microstructures" or "small size social systems" (Härkönen 2007:9; Mobara 2017:67; Friedman & Allan 2014:7) that form the close-to-person network system of the specialist teachers.

Elements of their particular work setting include the SBST of which they form an integral part; different mainstream classes where they support teachers and learners; SMTs; the School Governing Body (SGB) to whom they must report and render support; Government and Non-Government Organisations (GOs and NGOs) who work inside the school daily; parents and the surrounding community.

Bronfenbrenner (1992:227) accentuates that all the role players in the daily workplace contain unique temperamental and personality traits as well as diverse belief systems. Furthermore, it is emphasised that one should not underrate support teachers' capacity and strength to respond constructively to any ecological setting (Bronfenbrenner 1979:7). Hence for productive day-to-day interaction, the characteristics of specialist teachers themselves are equally important to those of other social role players in their environment. The "bi-directionally" influential (Mobara 2017:72; Johnson 2008:2) and "mutualistic" (Nand 2017:56) relationship between specialist teachers and their surrounding social agents can favourable or unfavourable impact their daily functioning and further development. On this micro level, the specialist teachers contribute to the construction of their environment through supporting learners who experience barriers to learning as well as teachers in need of support strategies. Challenges on the micro level include special schools or resource centres, parent and community support and NGOs (Nand 2017:56; Mobara 2017:67).

Although based at a school, LSTs and RCTs are district dispensations and their daily interaction with the DBST, (based at the district office) consists of regular interaction via email, telephone, or personal contact. The district forms a microsystem on a different level in the ecological environment of the support teachers, which is the mesosystemic level

2.2.2 Mesosystem

The mesosystem refers to the linkages and processes between two or more major settings containing the developing LSTs and RCTs (Bronfenbrenner 1977:515; 1979:7; 1994:40). A mesosystem is formed whenever the developing LSTs and RCTs move into a new setting (Bronfenbrenner 1979:25). This explains the interactive relations of the support teachers (school microsystem) and the DBST (circuit microsystem). Even though Peppler (2017:4; Mobara 2017:67) highlights the embedded interactions of individuals in microsystems,

Bronfenbrenner further elaborates on interconnectedness as "other persons" active participation in both settings. These include formal and informal communications amongst settings and the extent and nature of knowledge and attitudes that exist in one set about the other.

Illustrative of this inter-microsystemic interaction is the relations between LSAs as supervisors and support teachers. LSAs are actively involved in both schools in the circuit as well as at district level. LSTs, RCTs and the LSA (and other DBST members) communicate regularly via email, telephone, or personal contact. On their different levels, LSAs and support teachers are knowledgeable about outcomes and expectations regarding learning support, with awareness of general existing attitudes towards learning support. The district, functioning on the mesosystemic level, is the centre of education support services and provides the connections between the different structures in the microsystem of the support teachers.

Linking to Mahlo's (2011:24), Ladbrook's (2009:38) and Mobara's (2017:67) situating of the district on the meso level, the researcher in this study furthermore regards the district and DBST as an important microsystem in the ecological context of the learning support. Otherwise, Mahlo's, Ladbrook's and Mobara's classification of the districts to the meso level, strongly implies the continual interaction between schools as microsystems that are geographically separated from the DBST. The researcher's view of districts and DBSTs as separate microsystems on different levels finds support in Härkönen's (2007:9) advocacy of the idea that microsystems are not geographic but refer to the degree of participation of an individual in any system.

As within the microsystem, bi-directional influences also occur on the mesosystem level between various microsystems (Johnson 2008:2). Everything that happens in one microsystem impacts another microsystem. This, therefore, refers to the impact of continual connections and processes between specialist teachers, SBST, SMTs, school governing bodies, government organisations, NGOs, mainstream teachers, parents and/or learners. The researcher herewith adds a cross-directional dimension, specifically emphasising the interaction between different level microsystems (LSTs, DBST role players). The webbing

cross-relational and laterally connected interactions between all these mentioned micro agents on the meso level, can either have conflicting or encouraging effects on the development of support teachers. Challenges from both district and provincial levels include slow implementation of recommendations of the EWP6 and human resources/ financial constraints (Mahlo 2011:68), as related to the exosystem level that follows next.

2.2.3 Exosystem

According to Bronfenbrenner (1979:25), an exosystem refers to one or more settings that do not involve the developing person as an active participant. It consists of the linkage and processes that take place between two or more specific formal and informal social structures that do not in themselves hold the developing person (Bronfenbrenner 1977:515). Mahlaela (2008:17) and (Ferriera 2019:70) refer to external networks and decision-making bodies that exert ripple effects on the developing person. In the case of this study, any events and decision making that occur in the non-containing larger Western Cape Education Department (Provincial level), indirectly affect the processes within the immediate setting in which the developing support teachers exist (Bronfenbrenner 1994:40).

On the exosystemic level, other microsystems in which the support teachers are involved, but not directly embedded consist of amongst others, Integrated Health Services, Government and non-government organisations, community organisations, special schools / resource centres and parents. The WCED, at the exosystem, is responsible for decisions and implementing learning support in accordance with their provincial needs. Although support teachers may never participate in the exosystemic provincial level, they play active roles in their respective immediate work settings. As such, they are not part of the decision-making process and policy formulation in the WCED, but they are affected by such decisions and policies. Support teachers may experience challenges if support systems like human resources, finances and regulations on provincial level are not in place or not fully functional.

2.2.4 Macrosystem

The macrosystem refers to the wider socio-cultural environment that includes the interconnected micro, meso, and exosystem characteristics of the given culture or subculture (Ferreira 2019:71; Anam 2017:58; Nand 2017:57; Bronfenbrenner 1977:515). The overarching patterns and principles, including political and other dominant ideologies and policies that are defined by the macrosystem filter down to affect every interaction of all other layers (Bronfenbrenner 1979:8; Peppler 2017:5; Anam 2017:59). In the South African education system, the national Department of Education (DoE) comprises national trends, policies and initiatives that have bearings on learning support. Provinces are provided with the guidelines to implement a particular policy according to their needs, including inclusive education.

The larger cultural world around the support teachers includes underlying belief systems and aspects such as Government/ educational policies, including ISLES policies. Peppler (2017:4; Ferriera 2019:71) posits that development in all other systems is influenced by the macrosystem, such as an inclusive policy that is developed on national level. This position supports Mahlo's (2011:21) finding that, on the macro-systemic level, LSTs experience the need for support strategies to fulfil their duty regarding inclusive education. During the time of conducting her study, Mahlo found that there were no clear structures or guidelines documented at this level to regulate the practices of LSTs. She also found it evident that despite very well-written policies in place in South Africa, their practical implementation is challenging (Mahlo 2011:22). These investigated constraints impacted support practices over time, an aspect of the ecological system theory elaborated on next.

2.2.5 Chronosystem

Although not one of the four system layers intrinsically, the chronosystem refers to the developmental framework changes or consistency over time, including both person and environment characteristics (Bronfenbrenner 1994:40; Ferreira 2019:71). Nand (2017:57) expounds that the micro, meso, exo and macro levels operate in the chronosystem that encompasses both time and space, which can profoundly affect development. Johnson (2008:3) accords and adds that the chronosystem can refer to both short- and long-term

time dimensions of the individual throughout a lifespan, as well as the socio-historical time dimension of the macrosystem in which the individual lives. The chronosystem of support teachers may be represented by both their minute-by-minute (micro-time), day-to-day and year-to-year developmental (meso-time) changes that occur in their teaching and professional development.

Over the past two decades, there have been major developments and changes in all areas of education, including special needs education. This not only impacted new curriculum approaches as well on the roles and responsibilities of special needs teachers. Chrono-time had a significant impact on the implementation of the IQMS and related professional development during the COVID-19 restrictions (2019 to 2022). The minute-to-minute and day-to-day operations were influenced by adapted/modified district operational plans. Face-to-face classroom visits and observations were restricted. Circuit and District-level support switched to more technological or online methods. This in itself impacted Support teachers who were not so technologically inclined, as they were forced to adapt or develop very fast in that area. Support by the LSA and other development occurred through daily telephonic, WhatsApp, Micro-soft teams or other platforms. Instead of face-to-face training, support teachers had to commit to online training. Thus, the chrono-time impacted very positively on Support teacher attitude to self-enhancement and development.

Macro level time concept would be more concerned with historic changes across generations of inclusive and special needs education (Swart & Pettipher 2016:16). However, recently forced adaptations to IQMS and related CPTD implementation oblige relevant authorities to view the development system in a different way. Thus, the impact of the development of support teachers will only be evident in large scale changes that occur over time. The socio-historical context of inclusive education also frames learning support dynamics from levels beyond South African and even African borders as evident below.

2.2.6 Global System

Christensen (2016:25) explains that Bronfenbrenner's model does not display what could be regarded as an international level, referring to the universal force of globalisation. As a result, Drakenberg (2004, cited in Christensen 2010:105) complements Bronfenbrenner's

model with a fifth level, an ex-macro level. According to the Drakensberg, the development of support teachers in the current study would be influenced by the patterning of events in their environment, life course transitions, together with socio-historical conditions, referring to the chronosystem as explained in section 2.2.5 above. Christensen refers to this as a global village or macro-environment in which political, economic, social, technological and environmental factors are inter-depend. The international arena referred to by Drakenberg (2004:11) as the ex-macro level, constitutes the global system that includes the international views, issues and trends in inclusive education and learning support (Christensen 2016:26; Dreyer 2008:11).

Alternative ways of thinking away from exclusion to inclusionary practices like mainstreaming and integration, as elaborated on in the next section (cf. 2.3), are global level transformations that filter way down to, and impact the micro level environment and subsequent development of support teachers. For this study, the global system thus relates to international trends and dynamics concerning inclusive education, learning support provision and associated professional development needed for support teachers.

2.3 Global and National Trends in the Roles of Learning Support and Resource Class Teachers

The interplay between international and national trends with regard to learning support roles features on the ex-macro level (Drakenberg 2004, cited in Christensen 2010:105; Christensen 2016:27) or global systems level.

Dreyer (2008), Mahlo (2011), Wentzel (2016), Ferreira (2019) and Mabaso (2019) elaborate that policy development in the different countries is strongly impacted by global dialogue, advancements and worldwide declarations, such as the 1994 Salamanca Statement. These types of declarations brought about the paradigm shift away from the segregated, medical model approach to a social-ecological model or more human rights-based inclusive one. Lebona (2013:44) argues that the ecological systems approach came afore in opposition to the medical model and the academic deficiency concept. According to Swart and Pettipher (2016:7, 8) and Lebona (2013:23), international trends announced normalisation, introduced in Scandinavia to give people with "handicaps" the right to

"normal" school. This gave rise to mainstreaming, more used in the United States and integration used more in European countries. Swart and Pettipher describe mainstreaming and integration as the forerunners of inclusion which brought about challenges concerning the ability of support staff and teachers to respond to the needs of all learners in the mainstream. Support staff includes all individuals other than Learning Support Teachers and Resource Class Teachers who provide additional assistance to learners, for example, teacher assistants.

Inclusive trends challenged existing schemas of best practice in special needs education (Donohue & Bornman 2014:4) and subsequently called for transformation with regard to the roles of learning support staff and teachers. International researchers found that the vague role of the LSTs increasingly compelled role identification within the new inclusive education context and practice (Ladbrook 2009:52; Dreyer 2008:65, 66). In corroboration, the research of Rouse (2008:10, 11) paints a picture of a lack of consistency in the roles and responsibilities of support teachers, due to the rapidly changing policy context.

The varied roles of specialist teachers can be tracked through global inclusive education practices and policies. Cyprus, in 1999, appointed "special teachers" whose roles were teaching learners on individual or group levels, but in their own separate classrooms. Likewise, in Norway, support teachers also utilised the individual or small group withdrawal system. Support teachers in Italy worked in the mainstream classes, but also taught individual children with special needs. Integration assistants in France were expected to support the child to develop academically, socially and morally within special school integration classes. As part of the "Special Support Network for Children in Difficulties", these assistants also had to attend to the child's motivation and socialisation (Dreyer 2008:38). They were appointed to assist in the inclusion process, as their learners had the opportunity of transferring from the special classes back into the mainstream (Ebersold 2003, as cited in Dreyer 2008:39).

Furthermore, prominence is given to the evolvement of the roles of LSTs over a long history of separate special education systems and specialist teachers within countries like England, Spain, The Netherlands and Australia (Joorst 2010; Hagelman 2013). The separate special

education system described by the researchers is rooted in the medical model, which became redundant by the inclusive trend to enhance mainstream teaching. The shift raised an expectation that support teachers should take on a more proactive role. The Netherlands changed their support model to that of the "ambulante begeleiding" or the "visiting teacher model", while West Australia adopted a similar extensive visiting teacher network (Dreyer 2008:41, 44). Trends in Australia suggested a direction into flexible standardised roles of support teachers to best suit the constantly changing needs of a diverse clientele. The Centre for Inclusive schooling utilises an extensive network of visiting teachers, and existing special education teachers who are also referred to as LSTs. These types of models put more emphasis on closer collaboration and consultation in mainstream schools, which would directly impact the role of specialist support teachers.

A focus on collaboration and peer support was highlighted by Canada's redefinition of special class teachers and resource teachers as method and resource teachers (M&R teachers). The resource teachers in Canada are responsible to provide direct and effective support for the classroom teachers (Mahlo 2011:35). The collaboration role also finds special emphasis in a study done by Hagelman (2013), in the New Orleans region. Hagelman mostly utilizes the term "special education teacher".

Ireland distinguishes specialist teachers as learning support and resource teachers (Special Educational Needs (SEN)/Resource teachers) (Henry, Casserly, Coady & Marshall 2008:2). The LSTs support pupils with literacy and numeracy difficulties, whilst the resource teachers provide one on one, small group or in-class support. These two roles strongly relate to the system of learning support and Resource Class Teachers as utilised in the Western Cape, which will be elaborated on in the following section.

The United Kingdom appointed a Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO), whose role relates more to the LSA in the Western Cape. They must act as catalysts, facilitators and managers to support mainstream teachers in carrying out their responsibilities, whilst accommodating the great diversity of learner needs. O'Gorman and Drudy (2011:12) corroborate that the role of the SENCO was found to be strongly managerial, with various expected responsibilities, skills and attributes. Rouse (2008:10) echoes the managerial

function of LSTs and adds the consultancy role as part of the job. An extensive teaching load on top made the role of the SENCO most challenging. The very high workload in the role of support teachers is a major theme in international research (O'Gorman & Drudy 2011:14, Rouse 2008:11). According to Dreyer (2008:67), a United Kingdom school changed the term "special needs and special needs coordinator" to "learning support and learning to support coordinator as a reflection of their commitment to an inclusive learning support definition.

Under the medical model, LSTs were expected to provide specialised and individual support in mainstream or special classes. Dreyer argues that this "individual learner view" approach implied specialist treatment for "special" learners. Symeonidou (2002, cited in Dreyer 2008:66) opted for a "curriculum view" rather than an "individual learner view", wherein LSTs are increasingly expected to provide more guidance to mainstream teachers to enable them to support learners with difficulties within the mainstream classes. Corresponding development in Sweden transformed the role of LSTs ("special educators") from small group teaching of learners with learning difficulties into one where they are responsible to guide colleagues in the working team (Dreyer 2008:40). The LSTs are further responsible to initiate and lead developmental work in neighbouring schools (Emanuelsson *et al.,* 2005:122).

Hagelman (2013:17) found that with additional legislation like the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)*, there was a movement of schools to a more inclusive education model that included students in the mainstream school and classroom. Special education teachers together with students with disabilities moved into general education classrooms. This shift to enhance mainstream teaching to accommodate special needs placed the role of the LST in an entirely new framework which resulted in a gradual role transformation into the current form. In the new framework, support teachers were expected to be instruments of change towards inclusion.

As inclusive instruments, LSTs and RCTs should play a more proactive role, away from withdrawal and individual remedial programmes, to establishing inclusion in schools. They

must provide professional guidance and support to mainstream teachers, assistants, external agencies and families, thus acting as an advisor, facilitator and collaborator.

As multi-agents, LSTs and RCTs should work with social services, school psychology services and health authorities. They should enable the implementation of modified programmes in the regular classes. There must be collaboration with other teachers, identification of students with special educational needs, and monitoring and reassessing student progress increased in importance. These role conversions did not only hold global challenges, but the effects thereof also filtered down to have local macro level impacts as elaborated on next.

2.4   Chronological Continuum of Role Transformation over a set period in the South African context

The studies of Dreyer (2008, 2013), Ladbrook (2009), Mahlo (2011), Wentzel (2016) and Van Graan (2010) provide an overview of the transformation over time in South Africa. With particular reference to the new roles of support teachers as key role players in the establishment of inclusive education in schools, firstly a summary of the major developments that laid the foundation for the transformation of learning support services in South Africa. Dreyer (2013:54) opines that support teachers in South Africa have their roots in the individualised medical paradigm. From the 1960s, the medical model of categorising was followed by South Africa wherein learners were labelled according to "special education needs" from within themselves (Conway 2017:21).

In the 1990s, South Africa started to view disabilities more holistically (Conway 2017:21). Dreyer (2008:81; 2013:54) elaborates that South Africa took on inclusion from a wider socio-political position to adapt to a new democratic dispensation, by undertaking an "international metamorphosis" with regard to learning support provision in schools. The process embraces the "education for all" notion to reflect a paradigm shift towards systemic change (Dyson & Forlin 1999; Lomofsky & Lazarus 2001; Engelbrecht, 1999, cited in Dreyer 2008:83).

The first democratic election of April 1994 was followed by the National Commission on Special Needs in Education and Training (NCSNET) and the National Committee on Education Support Service (NCESS) (DoE 1997), which recommended an overall transformation in all aspects of the education system. This included a paradigm shift to one inclusive education system. The 1997 report of the NCSNET and NCESS proposed holistic and integrated learner support through inter-sectoral collaboration and community-led support systems focusing on preventative and developmental approaches (Conway 2017:34). This development led to the Education White Paper 6 (DBE 2001), the formal introduction of inclusive education in South Africa.

The Education White Paper 6 provides the framework for the implementation of inclusive education in all public schools in striving to steer away from the categorisation and separation of learners according to disability (Wentzel 2016:27; Geldenhuys & Wevers 2013:2). The aim is to facilitate maximum participation in the education system. The principles of Education White Paper 6 gave birth to The National Strategy on Screening, Assessment and Support (SIAS) (DBE 2014). As envisaged by Education White Paper 6, the SIAS policy was developed in 2005, (Du Plessis 2013:85) and first released in 2008 as one component of inclusive education in South Africa. The SIAS policy introduces new roles and responsibilities for all stakeholders (Wentzel 2016:27, 29), particularly referring to LSTs and RCTs in this study.

2.5   Chapter Summary

This chapter establishes a theoretical foundation for further exploration of a framework to improve the efficiency of support teachers within a particular education district. The multi-level role transformation of support teachers and the effects thereof were put into perspective by employing Bronfenbrenner's bio-ecological systems theory. The global impact of inclusive education forced education, in particular specialised learning support education, to undergo a total metamorphosis in terms of values, attitudes and beliefs towards diverse learning needs. The transformation is also evident from role conversion on local level as displayed through the comparison between international and national trends on the roles of LSTs and RCTs. With all the changes came the need for appropriate

sustained professional development to fulfil the increasingly demanding responsibilities of support teachers. The next chapter (Chapter Three) will explore National policy documents and their broader influence on the role of conversion and subsequent development of LSTs and RCTs as transpired locally. The focus of Chapter Three will further be on the IQMS and the impact on support teachers. Specific literature references will be made to their professional development. Discussions will be based on Bronfenbrenner's bio-ecological systems theory as expanded on in this Chapter Two.

CHAPTER THREE

LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1   Introduction

Literature in the previous chapter was based on the professional development of LSTs and RCTs within Bronfenbrenner's bio-ecological systems theory and as such accentuated a perspective that there is a relation between the development of individuals and their social contexts. Likewise, Chapter Three will scrutinize literature and official policy documents to build insight into the phenomena of the learning support role transformation and consequent IQMS as a system that embeds continuous professional development in South Africa. The literature will embed IQMS and related professional development within the local context and with specific reference to support teachers. Bronfenbrenners' interconnected bio-ecological principles are still the foundation for all discussions.

3.2   Learning Support Teacher Role Conversion: National Trends

The following section highlights trend related policies and contextualizing policies influences to placing the policies within Bronfenbrenner's system theory for more interconnectedness.

3.2.1   Trend Related Policies

The focus of his section is on research from South African scholars. Throughout history, societal changes recurrently accompanied new paradigms and alternative ways of thinking, especially in the field of learning difficulties (Swart & Pettipher 2016:5). International inclusive practices with regards to learning support and the role of LSTs as elaborated on in the previous section (2.3) provide a framework for exploring practices in SA. Dreyer (2008:49) and Mahlo (2011:185) elucidate that South Africa underwent major democratic changes that had profound implications for the development of IE within the country. A new constitution in 1996 and a Bill of rights outlining the right to access quality education was the culmination of South Africa's move toward democracy, amidst a worldwide change towards IE (Garner 2009, cited in Wentzel 2016:2). Therefore, it is important to first and

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foremost highlight the crucial macro-systemic legislations and policies directly related to the South African IE system development and implementation. Swart and Pettipher (2016:19) highlight the following policy legislation that facilitated the shift to IE in South Africa:

- The White Paper on Education and Training (DBE 1995);
- South African Schools Act (RSA 1996);
- White Paper on The Rights of Persons With Disabilities (RSA 2015);
- White Paper 6: Special needs Education: Building an IE and training system EWP6) (DBE 2001), (resulting from the findings and recommendations of the 1997 reports by the National Commission on Special Needs in Education and Training (NCSNET) and the National Committee on Education Support Services (NCESS); and
- The Policy on Screening, Identification Assessment and Support (SIAS) (DBE 2014).

Lebona (2013:157) highlights the following policies and guidelines as sequential to the EWP6, to ensure effective IE implementation within schools:

- The report on Implementing Inclusive Education in SA (2008);
- Guidelines for Full-service/Inclusive Schools (2010) (FS-IS);
- Guidelines for Inclusive teaching and learning (2010); and
- Responding to Diversity through the National Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (2011).

3.2.2 Contextualizing Policies Influences

Amidst international influences and South Africa's concomitant political changes, subsequent recommendations of the NCSNET/NCESS obliged the embracement of a human rights-based, social justice systemic model (Swart & Pettipher 2016:17, Dreyer 2008:82, 84; Mahlo 2011:185). Lebona (2013:50) and Wentzel (2016:39) accord that EWP6 (DBE 2001) aims to create a systemic education system in SA in line with international trends where the transformational change in education was obvious.

Placing this study and the policies highlighted above within Bronfenbrenner's systems theory makes it comprehensible that a systemic education system should be built on

interconnectedness and collaboration. Collaboration is implied by "reciprocal interactions" and "mutual accommodation" between persons and/or the environment (Bronfenbrenner 1979:22). Bronfenbrenner (1979:47, 57) further postulates that inter-dependent, interconnected and coordinated activities lie in "joint activities" within inter-personal relationships. Collaboration of all role players on every level of the educational ecosystem finds emphasis in the ideologies that underscore constructive support for learning (Landsberg & Matthews 2016:96; Mahlo 2011:32). These defining ideologies of inclusive education in South Africa include the beliefs of acceptance of constitutional principles and values, human rights and social justice for all learners, participation and social integration, and equal access to one inclusive education system (DBE 2001:5).

The EWP6 (DBE 2001) echoes the collaborative narrative. The roles of LSTs and RCTs are not specifically stipulate in the EWP6 but mentioned as part of the SBST or DBST. More holistic, systemic intervention approaches which is consistent with new international approaches are advocated, rather than to focus on the development of the individual LST and RCT (DBE 2001:7,19). The focus of the EWP6 thus raises the need for alternative approaches to the Continuing Professional Development (CPD) of LSTs and RCTs.

3.3   Role Transformation

The following section explores policy related role conversion of LSTs and RCTs against role conversion under the medical paradigm, to shed light on the transformed roles of LST and RCTs.

3.3.1   Policy Related Role Conversion

Despite providing for systemic collaboration to support at national, provincial, district, as well as school levels, the transformation in the South African context, occurred under numerous and concurrent changes. This situation complicated the roles of support staff. Barratt (2016:6) elaborates on the complexity of transformation to an inclusive paradigm and cites Dreyer (2008:233), who highlights an expectation that inclusion lies among other reasons in the changing roles of teachers, including support teachers. Phasing out remedial

education in favour of more inclusive principles, impacted the role of support teachers in South Africa just as equally as the international trends explained in Chapter Two.

Under a traditional remedial paradigm, their role and function, in service of racially segregated education departments, were focused on fixing the learner (Dreyer 2008:82; Mahlo 2011:2; Barratt 2016:5). Transformation moved special needs and support services centrally into the mainstream education system as opposed to segregated special education from the apartheid era. With the notion of transformation away from segregation, Swart and Pettipher (2016:19) also propagate a shift away from conventional, negative connoted terms such as" special needs" or "special educational needs" to more inclusive terms like "specific needs" or "specific learning needs". Subsequently, the call for restructuring of support services posed challenges to the roles and functions of support staff like LSTs and RCTs.

Role modification gets elaborated on further in the studies of Ladbrook (2009), Dreyer (2008) and Van Graan (2010) who make use of the term "learning support educators" (LSEs). Ladbrook (2009:132) explains that these LSEs have previously been working in a given school but have later been redeployed to service many schools. Coming from former special, adaptation and remedial classes, these LSEs themselves had to be trained for their new roles. LSEs are now known as Learning Support Teachers (Process Mapping for Specialized Learner and Educator Support (SLES) Pillar 2014). As an additional role, the responsibility of training mainstream teachers for inclusion fell on the shoulders of LSTs as part of their functioning in the DBSTs, but on the micro level in their schools. Just like mainstream teachers, specialist teachers who were redeployed as LSTs in accordance with White Paper 6 (DBE 2001), also needed to be retrained to step into their new role of functioning as part of a multidiscipline team (Dreyer 2008:95; Van Graan 2010:86). In this case, the trainee also had to perform as a trainer, which added to the role complications.

Role diversion got challenged even more. LSTs and RCTs fall under the pillar of ISLES, as a direct extension of the Department of Education's (DoE) in DBSTs as mentioned above. Ladbrook (2009:12:91) and Van Graan (2010:32) further explore the role of support teachers as members of SBSTs. As such, they also play diverse roles as part of the support

structures within the educational community (DBE 2005:18). Although school-based and placed centrally as part of the ground level district support, these support teachers are expected to take responsibility for the organisation of the SBST as competent and innovative individuals with good collaborative skills (Landsberg & Matthews 2016:100). In addition to being good collaborators, Van Graan (2010:24, 25) also describes LSTs as agents of change, team leaders, problem solvers and information and consultant agents. In this capacity, they have to play an essential role within schools as the drivers of Inclusive education and first-level supporters for both learners and mainstream teachers. The next section will elaborate on the role of LSTs and RCTs under the medical paradigm.

3.3.2 Role Conversion for Learning Support and Resource Class Teachers under the Medical Paradigm

The traditional remedial paradigm formed an explanatory framework that shaped and determined the ideas, beliefs, functioning and responsibilities of professionals relating to support practices (Swart & Pettipher 2016:5, 6). Remedial teachers were seen as specialists in the area of restoring ("herstel van") learning problems (Van Graan 2010:4) because any deviations from the spontaneously and naturally learning process were considered abnormalities or deficiencies (Ladbrook 2009:12). Swart and Pettipher (2016:5, 6) refer to this notion as the "within-child" model, in which professionals like remedial support teachers followed and fulfilled the "find-out-what-is-wrong-and-cure-it" function. This task was followed by a support effort to correct or improve the "deficiency" to enable the learner to" fit into" the mainstream (Mahlo 2011:57).

The approach as explained was followed by LSTs in the Western Cape during the particular period of study by Dreyer (2008). Ladbrook (2009:50) described IE in South Africa at that stage as still to be in its infancy stage, trying to refocus away from the" specialness" (Swart & Pettipher 2005, cited in Mahlo 2011:56) of remedial education. During the same timeframe of Ladbrook's research, the study period of Mahlo (2007 to 2011) still exhibited remedial characteristics of individualistic, medical-based, fragmented and inadequate withdrawal support (Mahlo 2011:57). Mahlo (2011:7) argues that even though most of these LSTs come from 'remedial special classes, they should have capacities essential for

inclusive support. Two years later, Dreyer (2013:62) corroborates and concludes that the role of LSTs was still deeply embedded in the medical model perspective.

3.3.3   Transformed Role of Support Teachers (LSTs and RCTs)

Researchers illustrated that the role transformation not only brought about changes in the instructional strategies of LSTs and RCTs but also added to a more comprehensive, systemic and collaborative approach within an inclusive system. The following role expansion within the SIAS (IE) framework was compiled from the research of Dreyer (2008, 2013), Ladbrook (2009), Van Graan (2010), Mahlo (2011) and Conway (2017).

LSTs and RCTs are expected to be agents of change that must be instrumental in establishing inclusive schools. They must coordinate and facilitate learning support provision/ programmes, through SBSTs collaboration to address barriers. Direct support must be rendered through core group withdrawal. Expertise must be shared with general classroom teachers through cooperative learning. Professional guidance and capacitating mainstream teachers in support strategies to support learners can happen through in-service training. LSTs and RCTs must further facilitate consultations with parents and teachers and offer them moral support and motivation. They must design individual programmes or Individual Education Plans (IEPs) accompanied by curriculum adaptation/ and differentiation. Relevant programmes and materials must be compiled. LSTs and RCTs must implement modified programmes in the mainstream classroom, which include strategies to improve literacy and numeracy in schools. Arranging and administering assessments for learners to identify specific areas of need.

The roles as laid out above, reflect the responsibilities of support teachers, also contained in the EWP6 (DBE 2001), the SIAS document (DBE 2014) and the Guidelines for Full-service/Inclusive Schools (DBE 2010:21). The EWP6 (DBE 2001) do not utilize the term Learning Support Teacher/educator or Resource Class Teachers but refers to the learning support function and roles of specialist teachers and education support personnel within district support services (cf. 3.2.2; DBE 2001:41). The SIAS (DBE 2014) document does employ the term "Learning Support Teacher" as part of the SBST or DBST. The roles of LSTs in the SIAS document are highlighted as part of the DBST.

3.4 Learning Support Job Descriptions

The Western Cape Education Department (DBE 2001) particularly, embraced a learning support model which mirrors the transformed role of LSTs and RCTs from traditional remedial teachers to inclusive specialist teachers. LSTs and RCTs are generally based in primary schools, but recently, a few LSTs have been deployed into some high schools as well. Some of these high school support LSTs are itinerant between the high and a primary school. The LST will perform different duties in the two levels of schooling. The primary school focus is more remedial, whilst the high school emphasis is more on study methods. Although school-based, the posts of LSTs and RCTs are district-dispensationed.

3.4.1 WCED According to Dreyer (2008)

Dreyer (2008:97, 98) highlights the following duties from the WCED job description (at that time) of school-based LSTs:

- Small group withdrawal of learners with SEN (maximum of 8 learners) from the mainstream class for specific Literacy and Numeracy support;

- Mainstream teacher empowerment and support to adapt the curriculum, and develop relevant programmes and materials development;

- Learner support in the classroom context through collaborative teaching, workshops/information sessions with the staff, and inclusive education;

- LSTs must support parents of Learners with Special Educational Needs; and

- Execute any relevant task (with the focus on learning support) within the ability of the teacher.

The literature illustrates that embracing the transformed roles of support teachers was three-fold. Firstly, as elaborated on above, role conversion brought about challenges with regard to new ways and strategies (Dreyer 2013:62; Van Graan 2010:22). Secondly, transformation impacted professional development (Van Graan 2010:23, 81) and corollary to this, the IQMS of the support teachers. Thirdly, Mahlo (2011:233) and O'Gorman and Drudy (2011:172) expound that new roles and responsibilities would impact the job description of support teachers, as would happen in any profession or job.

3.4.2   Changed roles related to current Job Descriptions and the impact thereof

Drawing on the principles of Bronfenbrenner as applied by Berk (2013:5, 28, 571), it is important to keep in mind that events in the lives of LSTs and RCTs are not static but constantly changing. The events include the role transformation of the support teachers that do not only impact both short- and long-term operations but on all levels of their interaction (Barratt 2016:26; Peppler 2017:4). Changing roles imposed on LSTs and RCTs may force them to modify and develop their skills to learn new approaches. How they do so, depends on their physical, intellectual and personality characteristics, as well as their environmental opportunities.

Bronfenbrenner (1979:7; 1992:227) exactly guards against underestimating human capability to respond to ecological changes in a constructive way, as they contain unique traits to do so. Whether changes in support teachers may be due to external (new roles) or internal motivations, it might alter the relationship between them and their work environment and lead to dynamic developmental (skills) changes. However, LSTs and RCTs must adapt to the changes that happen over time in special needs education. Ever growing challenges as elaborated on above in this chapter, and the interplay of all the forces within IE are dynamic and ever-changing.

The time aspect of role transformation place demands on support teachers of all ages to adapt to their new roles as well as on the organisation they belong to. In a metaphoric application of Berk's (2013:571) notion that parents must adjust to their developing youngsters who become more competent, it can be argued that LSAs must adjust the way they treat their more competent special needs teachers. It is thus important that each member on every level in the learning support organisation must adapt to LSTs and RCTs as they acquire new skills to embrace the new roles encompassed in their job descriptions.

According to Barratt (2016:11) and Dreyer (2008:235; 2013:55, 62), a well-written job description that reconceptualises support to learners will encompass a definition of learning support with all activities, practices, roles and responsibilities, to provide clear direction to LSTs and RCTs and thus enhance their effective functioning. Arendse (2010:84), Mahlo (2011:22, 130) and Dreyer (2008:71) opine that clear guidelines and support structures for

support specialists will curb many of the challenges they have to face in their respective contexts.

In 1999, the WCED implemented The Model of Learning Support (Dreyer 2008) with a structured job description that expanded and transformed considerably from 2008 to 2017 (cf. 3.4.3). To relate the transformed roles to the job description currently in operation for LSTs and RCTs, the researcher in this study had to scrutinize different job descriptions to get to a final comparison. The starting point for this comparison was the 2002 Westcoast-Winelands Learning Support Job Description (WWJD) (Van Graan 2010).

3.4.2.1 The WWJD compared with the process mapping for Specialized Learner and Educator Support (SLES) Pillar

The WWJD and the SLES process map display major differences as well as certain similarities: Firstly, an obvious difference between these two documents is the amendment in terminology from Education Support Teams (EST) or "Onderwysondersteuningspan" ("OOS") in Afrikaans, to SBST (School-based support team). The WWJD utilizes the old term EST ("OOS") also known as Institutional Level Support Teams (ILSTs). This practice is in line with the terminology utilized in policies that were implemented during that era, such as EWP6 (DBE 2001). The SLES process map (WCED 2014:8) utilization of the term SBST, reflects an alignment with the SIAS policy (DBE 2014). Secondly, the SLES process map appears to be more straightforward or condensed in terms of the roles and responsibilities of the support teachers. Thirdly, crucially applicable to the current study, is that according to the SLES process map, it is the responsibility of support teachers to participate and adhere to the IQMS process. The IQMS was not in existence when the 2002 WWJD was presented, as it was only introduced in South African schools in 2005 (Rabichund 2011:57). Other roles worth mentioning, that are not contained in the 2002 WWJD, are that of the SIAS policy with Individual Support Plan (ISP), working within the Whole School Evaluation (WSE) framework, providing input regarding policy formulation and development of mainstream teachers, input regarding professional, supporting research and ensuring quality assurance regarding learning support in schools.

The two job descriptions however do display the same primary goal, which is to support mainstream teachers and learners with barriers to learning. Common roles and responsibilities include that LSTs and RCTs must be supportive of the SBST functioning while supporting mainstream teachers. They must reinforce relevant inclusive policies through advocate and supporting inclusive environments in schools. Early identification and support of learners experiencing barriers to learning take centre stage. Learning and developmental barriers in the mainstream school must be addressed by implementing strategies for improvement. Literacy and Numeracy must be addressed by working collaboratively with other disciplines and community members. Parents and teachers must be capacitated. School Management Team members must be assisted to execute learning support activities in the schools.

3.4.2.2 *Comparison 2: Stages in the development of the roles of LSTs and RCTs within the official job description (Appendix J)*

The main objective gets extended from mainstream support, to support in mainstream/inclusive/ full services schools and special/resource centres. The 2017 WCED Learning support memo heralded a significant extension from learning support in primary schools to small group support in high schools as well. This was to be accomplished by high school projects for learners with high-level needs. The support includes the assessment of learners at risk. The WCED learning support memo goes hand in hand with the most recent job description (WCED 2017) for support teachers.

Further streamlining saw the roles and responsibilities condensed into four Core Functionality Areas (CFAs):
- Human resource development;
- Develop ordinary schools into full service/ inclusive schools'
- Increase the capacity of the system to address barriers to learning and become more inclusive; and
- Foster inter-sectorial partnerships to enhance support and inclusion.

The final job description in use hitherto (WCED 2017), clearly demarcates the responsibilities and/or roles by organising it according to three Key Responsibility Areas or

KRAs. The main purpose of this job description is to render learning support / remedial education services within Public ordinary schools. The KRAs are as follows:

- KRA1: Implement learning support capacity building programmes for early identification of and interventions relating to barriers to learning;

- KRA 2: Provide specialised learning support to strengthen SBSTs; and

- KRA 3: Participate in inter-and intra-sectorial networks and collaborations.

3.4.2.3 Comparison between the streamlined roles and responsibility document and the current, most recent Job description (Appendix K)

The following table (Table 3.1) illustrates how the 4 CFAs (3.4.2.2) of the Roles and Responsibility documents are integrated into the 3 KRAs of the hitherto used job description.

Table 3.1: Core Functional Areas/Roles and Responsibilities

Current JD	Roles and Responsibility document
KRA1: Implement learning support capacity building programmes for early identification of and interventions relating to barriers to learning	CFA1: Human resource development CFA3: Increase the capacity of the system to address barriers to learning to become more inclusive
KRA2: Provide specialised learning support to strengthen SBSTs.	CFA2: Develop ordinary schools into full service/ inclusive schools
KRA3: Participate in inter-and intra-sectorial networks and collaborations	CFA4: Foster inter-sectorial partnerships to enhance support and inclusion

Referring to Table 3.1, it should be noted that the Roles and Responsibility document does not become null and void by the current job description, but should be read in conjunction. The Roles and Responsibility document provides the finer explanatory detail that might be very helpful especially for beginners or new LSTs and RCTs, as they will be able to understand how and where it fits into their job description. The document also provides clear guidance on minimum targets for performance standards to be achieved per term.

A few points of contention are however evident from the hitherto used job description (WCED 2017). Firstly, adherence to the IQMS process is not stated or implicated at all. Secondly, the KPAs are indicated as KRAs.

By definition, KPAs are performance goals that stipulate the main responsibilities areas or the key tasks that a job comprises (George 2014:91; Rehman, 2009:187; HR dictionary 2012). This job description displays three main performance goals or KPAs namely, learning support and capacity building programmes implementation for early identification of and interventions regarding barriers to learning; specialised learning support provision to strengthen SBSTs; inter-and intra-sectorial networking, participation and collaborations. To perform in a specific area (KPA), one has to conduct certain tasks or responsibilities (KRAs) to get to the result. Key results areas (Munzhedzi 2011:42) or key responsibility areas (George 2014:30) are all the tasks to be performed to fulfil the main duties of a job.

As in any job description, the current, hitherto learning support job description recommends a certain set of skills to be able to perform all the roles and responsibilities as set out above. The following Table 3.2 displays the skills required and possible subsequent developmental needs.

Table 3.2: Skills as identified in learning support Job descriptions

The current hitherto JD (WCED 2017)	The 2017 (previous) ECKED required:
• Organisation and Planning skills • Report writing skills • Systemic analysis and reasoning skills • Interpersonal skills • Computer literacy • Communication and language skills (2 Official Languages) • Presentation, facilitation and empowerment skills • Problem Solving and Analysis skills • Client-Orientation-and-Customer-Focus	• Facilitation and presentation skills • Sound interpersonal and communication skills • Self-motivation, accountability and dedication. • Ability to perform under pressure. • Ability to create structure within a systematic working environment.

3.5 Skills Identified from Research

The following section elaborates on research identified skills and include collaborative skills, and administrative and managerial skills.

3.5.1 Collaborative Skills

Researchers agree that collaborative skills are one of the most crucial skills for special education teachers (Arendse 2010; Barratt 2016; Conway, 2017; Dreyer 2008, 2013; Ladbrook 2009; Mahlo 2011; O'Gorman & Drudy 2011; Van Graan 2010; Wentzel 2016:45). Capabilities identified as necessary for good collaboration encompass the following.

3.5.1.1   *Good communication skills*

Good communication skills to build trust and enhance skills for liaising and consultation on various levels (Whole-school level) including with teachers, parents, other external agencies and support stakeholders. A skilled communicator will be able to share knowledge and expertise with colleagues (Barratt 2016: 43,189; Conway 2017:85; O'Gorman & Drudy 2011:150; Van Graan 2010:28).

3.5.1.2   *Collaborative partnerships skills*

Collaborative partnerships (Conway 2017:40) require support teachers to be able to act as collaborative team players and to provide systemic support in conjunction with the SBST or ILST. For successful collaboration, a good team player must possess good interpersonal skills to function as part of a team (Conway 2017:115). Collaborative team players also need collaborative planning and organisation skills to enable them to plan appropriate support programmes in collaboration with their general classroom colleagues as well as fellow support teachers.

3.5.1.3   *Collaborative team leader skills*

Collaborative team leaders (Dreyer 2013:54; Mahlo 2011:60; Van Graan 2010:24, 29, Wentzel 2016:44) or team facilitators (O'Gorman & Drudy 2011:205) must have good problem-solving skills to approach challenges or conflict from different perspectives. A combination of good communication and good problem-solving skills will enable effective and appropriate management of different people with different needs. Van Graan (2010:32)

opines that being an effective team leader includes the ability to set targets for effective time management to get to all the tasks referred to them.

3.5.1.4   Inter-sectorial collaboration

Inter-sectorial collaboration (Barratt 2016:126; Conway 2017:37, Van Graan 2010:104) calls for support teachers to be skilled information-consultation agents, with good networking, team facilitation and consultation skills. These skills must firstly enable LSTs and RCTs to support the DBST in sustaining the functioning of SBSTs in their respective micro-environments or schools. Secondly, it will empower them to offer professional input on support provisions at SBST meetings on, guidelines for teachers and parents to address learning barriers on a regular basis.

3.5.2   Administrative Skills and Managerial Skills

This section elaborates on Administrative and managerial skills such as good record keeping and report writing as well as being agents of change and in-service trainers,

3.5.2.1   Good record keeping and report writing

Support teachers must be able to plan, study, update and monitor records of learning support. This includes:

- Individual support plan development and implementation;
- Effective time management and scheduling are linked to being an effective team leader;
- Assessment of learning difficulties and diagnostic teaching linked to assessment;
- Appropriate planning for learners with additional needs, curriculum adaptation and the compilation of relevant programmes and materials; and
- Updating records of students and paperwork of applications for resources, special schools and exemptions. (Arendse 2010:24; Barratt 2016:58; Dreyer 2013:60; O'Gorman & Drudy 2011:178; Van Graan 2010:28)..

3.5.2.2   *Agents of change/ In-service trainers*

Dreyer (2013:55), O'Gorman and Drudy (2011:173) and Van Graan (2010:25) further regard support teachers as "Agents of change" that must have good presentation and facilitating skills to present work sessions for general classroom teachers. Barratt (2016:104) accords by referring to the ability of support teachers to act as "in-service trainers". This requires that LSTs and RCTs must have mastery over comprehensive knowledge with regard to guidelines for addressing specific barriers to learning. Good knowledge, however, is not sufficient to be an instrument of change. A repertoire of additional qualities gets added (Van Graan 2010; Barratt 2016; Arendse 2010). These include optimism and enthusiasm; Strong inclusive values; Competence, self-functioning ("self werksaamheid") and self-reliance; Innovation and creativity to restructure existing systems of support; Self-confidence in own abilities and to build good relations.

The aforementioned skills were identified in both national and international research. In the process, evidence of incremental patterns of workload complexity was uncovered that consequentially demand highly educated and skilled special education support teachers. This tendency, combined with progressively more learners with a diversity of special educational needs, demands Continuing Professional Development (CPD) in different aspects of inclusive and special needs education (O'Gorman & Drudy 2011:1). Diverse types of organised CPD activities form building blocks for increased Continuing Professional Learning (CPL) (cf.3.7.1.1) over time. Therefore, the researcher finds favour in the positive comparison between the developmental skills that were identified in the literature and the requirements identified from current learning support policy documents. All the factors elaborated on above, are dynamics that underlie the professional development of support teachers. The latter is dealt with in the next section.

3.6   Professional Development Implications

Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory as applied in this study, explains that development over time on all levels of inclusive and special needs education (micro, meso, exo- and macro level), impacts the development of all support teachers. For LSTs and RCTs, the aspects that are most influential in forming the course of their growth within their immediate daily

setting will be those that have meaning to them in their respective work or school situations (Bronfenbrenner 1979:22; Christensen 2016:23). Webster-Wright (2009:5) found the workplace to be a crucial environment for continuous learning as well as research into such learning and utilize the term "work-based learning". Friedman and Allan (2014:9) argue that development will even be affected by occurrences in environments where the support teachers are not present, with special reference to policy developments on the macro-systemic level.

Such a policy development is Education White Paper 6 (DBE 2001:18), which states that professional development of support teachers is vital because they have diverse roles to fulfil as part of the support structures within their educational communities. Accordingly, Rabichund (2011:4) avers that continuous growth and professional development form a critical part of all professions and the researcher in this study concurs that support teachers are no exception. With the evolvement of the professional development of LSTs and RCTs far beyond the traditional roles of remedial teachers, comes an increased need for training to improve knowledge, skills and confidence (Dreyer 2013:57; Ladbrook 2009:60; Van Graan 2010:22; Rabichund 2011:4).

Growth and change, however, are only likely to happen when the strengths of a specific organisation have been identified (Christensen 2010:11). What underlies such strength, or what would make an effective growth-promoting special education system? This question prescribes that all aspects of a specific system should be investigated for prospective development opportunities, including each role-playing individual. Bronfenbrenner's Developmental Ecological theory (1979) views individuals as both the cause and the effect of their situation.

Even though the emphasis is on the individual's development within context, Christensen (2016:26) argues that there should also be more focus on a person's capacity and resilience to impact their accomplishments. Supporting, but also extending Christensen's argument, Berk (2013:28) opines that neither external conditions only, nor just inherent qualities command growth or improvement. Relating to this study, it means that educational changes combined with skills or the lack thereof will impact the amount of development of LSTs and

RCTs. What is needed to support teacher development is both the surrounding environment related to special education challenges and the in-school learning support contexts in relation to individual capacity.

Individual capacity needs grew over time with the role transformations that accompanied the course of educational support needs development through the years. Individual capacity requirements for support teachers, as identified by previous research, have been discussed above in Section 3.5. It would thus be fitting to venture firstly into development opportunities as were identified through previous research. The researcher in this study envisages that literature on previous development initiatives might set the foundation for possible developmental structures to be explored in later chapters of this research. Furthermore, aligning with Bronfenbrenners' theory, this chapter centres on the developing person into the inclusive special education environment and explore opportunities according to the capacity needs as identified by prior literature and hitherto learning support documents. Clustering the identified required skills boils down to the following developmental need areas or skill sets.

3.6.1 Collaboration skills set

Collaborative skills encompass communication, planning and organisation, time management, networking, inter-sectoral collaboration, liaising, consultation, problem solving and conflict management, and good interpersonal skills.

3.6.2 Administration and managerial skills set

This set of skills involves team leadership, appropriate planning, time management, report writing skills, record keeping, relevant programme and material development, including ISPs, teaching and assessment.

3.6.3 Inclusive agents

Included in this skills set are good presentation and facilitation, peer support, in-service training and empowerment, comprehensive knowledge of learning support guidelines,

policies and intervention strategies and self-sustainability skills as elaborated on in the following section.

3.6.4 Resilience

Resilience encompasses a range of personal capacity building attributes that will assist support teachers to adapt successfully to challenges in their work environment. According to Christensen (2016:26) and O'Gorman & Drudy (2011:129), these personal qualities include being inclusive value-driven and goal-orientated with self-confidence, self-motivation, self-reliance, innovation and creativity, optimism and enthusiasm. These are attributes that can impact positively on the competence of an individual and need to be developed appropriately.

3.7 Development Approaches and features of Professional Development

In utilizing an umbrella metaphor, an overall collaborative or collaboration umbrella theme (Figure 3.1) is visible in the development needs section above (cf. 3. 6.1). To be a resilient, inclusive agent with good administration and managerial skills a person must possess most (if not all) of the qualities mentioned in the collaborative competence skills area. Schön (1995, cited in Webster-Wright 2009:6) however cautions that competencies, as elaborated on above, should not be viewed as the acquisition and application of attributes that should be taught separately as different parts. Thus, the above-mentioned developmental needs (cf. 3.6.1), should not be the only basis for evaluating existing or possible professional development practices as reviewed in the literature. An integrated, multi-perspective approach is called for, as summarised in Figure 3.1 below (Own interpretation).
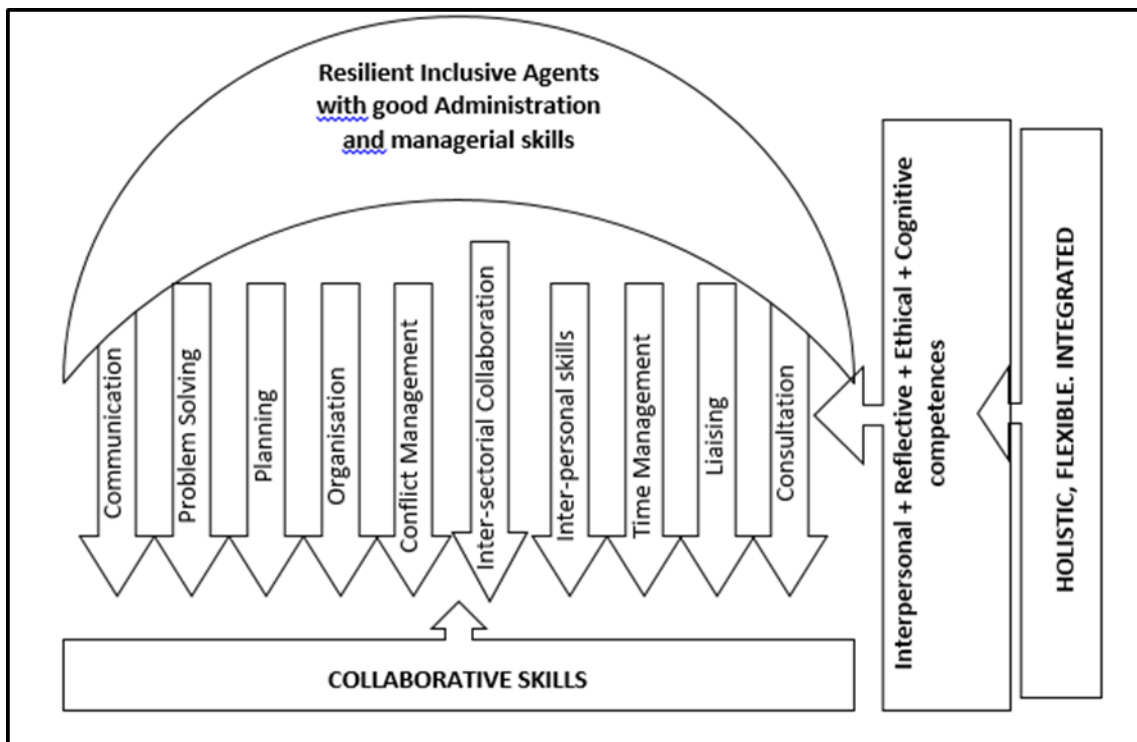
Figure 3.1: Collaborative development theme

Figure 3.1 further contextualise the argument of O'Gorman and Drudy (2011:23) that an effort of developing an "all-inclusive" individual, competencies ("useful grouping of capabilities and capacities") should be holistic, allow flexibility and integration of interpersonal, intellectual, reflective and ethical values, as well as cognitive ones. Research studies highlight and propose certain features of the development construct.

Darling-Hammond, Hyler and Gardner (2017:1), Tyagi and Mishra (2021:118), Roberts (2011:27), Mahlangu (2014:1378), and Mahlaela (2012:13) elaborate on the following features of professional development. These include: Self-directedness through structured learning; it is self-involvedness in various ongoing activities; Self-enhancement for individuals or groups; Acquisition and enrichment of knowledge, skills and attitudes; Continuous growth, review, renewal and extension of a commitment to change; Holistic and in-practice situated.

O'Gorman and Drudy (2011), Webster-Wright (2009:1, 4, 6) and Darling-Hammond et al. (2017:2-3) give more prominence and support to the "holistic view". The researchers

provide support to a collaborative umbrella approach, by arguing that the focus of development efforts should be to understand and support authentic professional learning that is holistic, collaborative and interactive. The recommendation is made that professional development should adopt a holistic approach with a focus on "learning", rather than "development" (Webster-Wright 2009:2). The author opines that effective professional development is exactly based on a notion of professional learning that is continuing, active, social and related to practice. Deduced from this explanation thus, the term Continuing Professional Learning (CPL) (own interpretation) is elaborated on next.

3.7.1 Continuing Professional Learning

Webster-Wright does not investigate specific professional development programmes but utilizes the phrase "continuing professional learning" to describe the learning of practising professionals. Furthermore, the author argues that professional learning can inform professional development practice. Webster-Wright (2009:2, 5, 11; Darling-Hammond et al. (2017:2-2) highlights the following distinctive features of Continuous Professional Learning (CPL) including Context dependant; Dynamic, active engagement; social and related to practice; constructed and embedded within authentic (genuine problems) professional practice; holistic and best situated a learning supportive community; work-based or relates to workplace learning; continuing over the long term; Active Critical reflection.

Continuous, sustained professional learning activities may span over different combinations of diverse formal professional development programmes, work-colleague interactions, or outside work experiences (Webster-Wright 2009:4; Darling-Hammond et al. 2017:2-3). Utilizing a holistic, collaborative approach to professional learning gets further support from other research as well, including Barratt (2016:44), Conway (2017:42), O'Gorman and Drudy (2011:194). These researchers propagate for holistic professional learning and development for the specific potential benefits thereof. These are elaborated on below.

3.7.2 Holistic learning

Mahlangu (2014:1378) propose a more holistic focus for development programmes that include collaborative relational learning to encourage reflective practice. Both O'Gorman

and Drudy (2011:15) and Webster-Wright (2009:4) accord that a holistic, integrative, and reflective approach to learning holds the potential for transformative development because it involves the whole person within their socio-cultural community. For effective development, drawing on the reasoning of Phelan (2004, cited in Lebona, 2013:46), transformation thus requires that an individual should not be understood in isolation from the surrounding factors that can both create and reinforce behaviour and interaction patterns. Professional learning in the context base professional development within active continuing, socially related or job-embedded practice (Darling-Hammond et al. 2017:1). Social relatedness is specifically supported by Bronfenbrenner's (1979:3) ecological theory of interconnected relations that is critical for development since events are located within particular settings. The call for holistic, socially related learning also confirms the ecological systems view that human (professional) development must be understood within the context of an individual's relationship with the environment, rather than in isolation. Webster-Wright (2009:2) further maintain that, for learning to be integrated into changes in everyday work, learning must be part of active engagement with other individuals in authentic or genuine problem-solving efforts. Authentic learning experiences are explained in the following section.

3.7.3 Authentic continuous learning experiences

The authenticity of support teachers (LSTs and RCTs) is embedded in their active engagement in their everyday classrooms or work environments where they are expected to be skilful and able to adapt their teaching to the needs of learners with diverse learning barriers. Webster-Wright (2009:13) applies the term "authentic professional learning" to the lived experiences of professionals as and while they are continuing to learn. With reference to education, authenticity refers to genuine, real-life tasks and activities.

Real-life authentic activities therefore directly refer to dynamic, everyday interactions and inter-relations that might provide practical experiences for learning and development. These types of embedded day-to-day interactions of individuals in their respective microsystems are particularly referred to by Peppler (2017:4). In accordance, embedded real-life inter-relatedness is endorsed by Bronfenbrenner's belief in the significant impact that interactions

of overlapping ecosystems can impose on a developing individual (Lebona 2013:45; Conway 2017:26; Webster-Wright 2009:12). Bronfenbrenner (1992:227) further emphasises human capacity and strengths to respond constructively in the daily (authentic) workplace, but to be more effective, such development should occur continuously over longer durations of time. Therefore, professional development that prepares educators and supports teachers for collaboration, while simultaneously preparing them to understand their specific roles and responsibilities (Lebona 2013:10), should be based on a collaborative framework. The following section will elaborate on collaborative strategies as highlighted by the literature.

3.7.4 Collaborative based developmental strategies

Several strategies are expounded on in the literature, initial, pre-service combined with ongoing in-service training for both training and re-training, "in-career training" or learning within the workplace context that fosters everyday professional growth (Conway 2017; Darling-Hammond et al. 2017; Wentzel 2016; Arendse 2010; Mhlangu 2014; Webster-Wright 2009). Unlike pre-service or initial training, in-service training is an ongoing process of professional development that according to Hergarty (1993, cited in Joorst 2010:73), possibly constitutes the most important determinant of the degree of effective transformation. Through continuous professional development, teachers must improve their skills, knowledge and attitudes while being employed. Just as professional development goes beyond workshops and in-service training so in-service training adds up to more than just workshops (Darling-Hammond et al. 2017:1). For this specific reason, Webster-Wright (2009:9) reframes professional development to CPL to steer the focus away from training, education or development toward professional learning. With this separation, the author implies a difference between learning at work and learning through attending workshops. Furthermore, Webster-Wright (2009:21) describe professional growth as a social, dynamic and integral part of being professional within their (dynamic) working context. Relating, to workplace learning, Feldman (2014:19) refers to on-the-job practice where newly learned strategies must be integrated and incorporated to become accepted intellectually, embraced emotionally, and so become part of an individual's daily behaviour within a real dynamic practice.

Ladbrook (2009:28) proposes that a dynamic learning organisation is an integrated system of knowledge and resource management, therefore implying that pre-and in-service training should be an interaction between the overlapping ecosystems that can significantly impact teachers' development. According to Webster-Wright (2009:12), there is a link between formal learning and professional development programmes and informal learning at work. Thus, the scholar emphasises the socio-culturalness of professional learning. The learner cannot be separated from the context. There is thus the need for flexible learning environments that enable the learning of sustainable skills and competencies like being effective collaborative team members and problem-solvers, instead of fragmented and uncoordinated systems (Roberts 2011:36; Webster-Wright 2009:12). Mestry et al. (2009:482) even highlight that programme designers and implementers, as well as programme recipients, should collaborate closer to prevent competing initiatives that can drain and dilute their resources and efforts. Continuous support for the growth and development of support teachers should thus be a collaboration and/or coordination on all levels of their ecological working context.

At the macro level, decisions are being made with regard to national policy frameworks and funding for teacher development. Included in these decisions may be initiatives with regards to appropriate professional development like pre-and in-service training for LSTs and RCTs. National policy frameworks also dictate or suggest structures on different levels through which professional development can take place, etc., DBSTs and SBSTs. Therefore, it is vital that through collaboration, provincial and district education departments should coordinate their services and programmes to provide teachers with access to appropriate pre-and in-service training and professional training (Ladbrook 2009:33; Mavuso & Moyo 2014:1085). Macro level support for development also lies in community partnerships and voluntary organisations or NGOs. Various national and international courses in Inclusive Education are available on this level and teaching staff are encouraged on a micro level to attend and participate (Conway 2017:89).

Meso level support includes the recruitment of knowledgeable and skilled trainers and the development of pre-and in-service training programmes. Programmes designed on this level should provide a positive orientation to the inclusion of special needs. Networking

should be established with universities to play an advisory role (Ladbrook 2009:33). O'Gorman and Drudy (2011:35) highlight the crucial role of higher education institutions at all stages of teacher education from initial, through induction, to continuing in-career professional education. Florian and Rouse (2012: iv) further maintain that university-school partnerships play a vital role in teacher education in that they can build on and make links with current in-school inclusive practices. Webster-Wright (2009:6) reports educational research on higher education that found a shift to innovative pedagogical practices, like action learning, practice-focused learning, problem-based learning and the use of flexible and interdisciplinary strategies of teaching on a more collaborative level. According to Webster-Wright, this move displays a shift of focus away from knowledge transfer toward the notion that students are partners in the co-construction of knowledge.

On the micro level, the LSTs and RCTs may be influenced by their knowledge, training and classroom experience (Ladbrook 2009:76). This is where most stimulation of professional learning or growth is required. Florian and Rouse (2012: iv) highlight that there are varying levels of regard for inclusion in different schools and classrooms, which makes it vital that student teachers get the opportunity of learning to negotiate their way through difficult professional situations. Negotiation skills on a micro level already may particularly be valuable in pre-service training through working closely with other adults on developing skills of reflective practice and using evidence from their teaching for informed decision-making (Florian & Rouse 2012: iv). In an engagement on this level, initial and in-service training sessions can provide support teachers with opportunities for real situations and knowledge sharing. Thus, they can share what they know, discuss their learning and can connect new strategies and concepts to their unique situation. Barratt (2016:27) accords with Ladbrook that these types of bi-directional influences on this level have a meaningful impact on individual growth. For this reason, Barratt (2016:42) proposes that specialised teams provide supplementary training programmes with hands-on training and practical skills development on a micro level and as such, foster more in-depth, ongoing supportive engagements on the level where it is needed most.

Practical application is in line with Darling-Hammond et al. (2017:1) and Webster-Wright's (2009:9) notions of job-embedded learning and Conway's (2017:41) emphasis that

inclusion is not just an isolated knowledge discipline. Instead, knowledge is fundamental to the everyday practice of teachers, including support teachers. Support teachers are after all expected to be inclusive agents, therefore, any training initiatives for LSTs and RCTs should not only be an exercise of "keeping up-to-date" (Webster-Wright 2009:22). This is especially applicable because inclusion is a continuous and evolving process that requires ongoing or lifelong learning (Array, 2013, cited in Conway 2017:41). Hence, instead of development initiatives just for topping up new information, knowledge and skills, opportunities for professional learning should be well planned to also consider and foster positive attitudes towards establishing and maintaining inclusive education (Lebona 2013:26; Mbelu 2011:71; O'Gorman & Drudy 2011:9).

O'Gorman and Drudy (2011:34) argue that positive emotional confidence and coping skills need to be developed for and inside the continuous classroom support context of the always-changing South African context. These would be the settings where support teachers will be tested with regards to their attitudes towards, beliefs of inclusive education and their coping skills to support learners with support needs. Mestry et al. (2009:485) report on complaints from district officials and NGOs that due to poor teacher attitudes and culture, together with a lack of commitment, support to struggling teachers seldom gets translated into practice. This is in stark contrast with the notion that inclusive practices are largely dependent on the (positive) attitudes and beliefs (together with knowledge and skills) of teachers (Florian & Rouse 2012:6). In-depth exploration of personal beliefs, value judgments and attitudes can enable individuals to change their existing thinking patterns to more inclusive opinions (Mezirow 2000 & Yang, 2004, cited in Martin 2013:103) to face challenges in (South African) class contexts.

It is not just enough to provide brief training programmes that focus on a couple of skills (Donohue & Bornman 2014:9; Darling-Hammond et al. 2017:1). Continuous support, whether for knowledge enhancement, practical learning or confidence building needs a commitment to avail substantial time to professional development from service providers (trainers) as well as service receivers (trainees) on all levels. Florian and Rouse (2012:11) mention that time constraints are already impacting negatively on the initial preparation of

student teachers as they can impossibly anticipate all types of challenges they might experience during their professional lives.

The research of Roberts (2011) focuses on educators' experiences of their training for the implementation of the SIAS process in full-service schools but suggests valuable guidelines for the development of support teachers whose daily practice is guided by inclusive education and the SIAS process. Some of the suggestions for improved ongoing and in-service training are that trainers and service providers revise the timeslots of training (in terms of what time of the day it occurs) and to provide enough time for in-depth, practical engagement with materials and reflection on the content of the sessions (Roberts 2011:68). In corroboration, Feldman (2014:19) argues that mere knowledge of a new procedure (and knowledge) does not guarantee automatic use thereof. More time for active reflection and engagement with trainers thus provides opportunities for interactive discussions and collaboration on new strategies. Subsequently, teachers and support teachers get the chance to internalize and consolidate new information, which is critical to their confidence in practicing their profession (Feldman 2014:20).

Enough time for practical engagement with theoretical content can also allow opportunities for support teachers to observe modelling and demonstration real-life situations (Darling-Hammond et al. 2017:3). Such practical experience can allow for the transfer of knowledge to practice. One such knowledge transfer practice suggested by Joorst (2010:37), is micro-teaching lessons that present the genuine classroom situation, presented via video footage. The time dilemma also filters through to the issue of ongoing support that should continue after the training (Roberts 2011:72). This calls for continuous engagement and support and monitoring of implementation to evaluate progress with training.

Ongoing support as discussed above includes what Roberts (2011:72) and Darling-Hammond et al. 2017:3) consider as a continuation of support between trainees and trainers (including departmental officials), who are responsible to monitor and evaluate progress made after training. The need for such collaborative partnerships is highlighted in research into the situated and social nature of workplace learning that has an impact on professional development, as evident by the increasing use of internships, mentors, and

networks to support professional learning at work (Webster-Wright 2009:6). Shulman (2007, cited in Florian & Rouse 2012:7), conceptualises professional learning as "apprenticeships of the head, hand and heart", translating into preparing teachers to become inclusive practitioners through a framework that combines knowledge, skills or doing and attitudes and beliefs. Florian and Rouse (2012:19) propose that the capacity to learn can be enhanced through transformability. Transformability can be applied to professional development as it views learning as a dynamic process of social interaction that occurs over time and within specific contexts, linking to Webster-Wright's realities of authentic professional learning. Such dynamic processes provide for more reflection on ways to understand and respond to the complexities of inclusive training strategies (Darling-Hammond et al. 2017:4).

Initial, pre-service and in-service mentorships on various levels of the professional learning ecological system, reflect through the discussions in the section above. Directly linking to time are social constraints that can limit interaction for support of learning. Conway (2017:100), O'Gorman and Drudy (2011:202) and Webster-Wright (2009:4) suggest that social constraints in professional learning can be alleviated by social practice that allows engagement with formal professional development or informal discussions with colleagues and thinking about work in "communities of practice". Such communities can sustain continuous learning over the long term as it is best situated within a collaborative culture of collective reflection and learning (Conway 2017:89, 100; Webster-Wright 2009:2). Collaborative learning communities establish professional learning as socio-cultural and as such support the connection of theory with practice. Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) are encouraged by the WCED as platforms where groups of teachers can gather regularly to share expertise on genuine issues and challenges. PLCs build on Bronfenbrenner's concept of proximal processes which uphold that development or learning occurs through interaction and reciprocal relationships between individuals and the environment, including other individuals in that specific setting or context (Conway 2017:26, 28). Such relation building is precisely the focus of relational learning through holistic development (Webster-Wright 2009:4; Barratt 2016:44; Conway 2017:42; Mahlangu 2014:1378; O'Gorman & Drudy 2011:194; Roberts 2011:35).

Arendse (2010:101) recommended moving away from withdrawal in favour of in-class (mainstream) support by special education teachers. The implied type of collaborative teaching between general or mainstream and special education is what Pancsofar and Petroff (2013:1) describe as co-teaching. Villa, Thousand and Nevin (2008, cited in Pancsofar & Petroff 2013:10) suggest that both general and special education teachers need to be trained in co-planning skills, effective interpersonal communication, problem-solving, and other critical skills of collaboration. All these aforementioned skills are capabilities required by the new role transformation of LSTs and RCTs as discussed earlier in this chapter. Both pre-service and in-service training on co-teaching can build teacher confidence, interest and positive attitudes. Pancsofar and Petroff (2013:1) therefore suggest that teacher professional development, especially around co-teaching, should consider variables such as frequency, length and duration of training opportunities.

Whether initial, pre-service, in-service, in-career on-the-job or workplace training, the professional growth needs of support teachers must be addressed in ways that equip them to cope with the ever-changing challenges of special education. The strategies expounded on above are by no means exhausted but fit the specific goal of this study. The strong collaborative foundations attempt to address the transformational needs that shifted from an exclusionary separation approach with its linked remedial support teacher roles to that of overall collaborative roles and responsibilities.

The primary objective of this research is data generation for the enhancement of the IQMS as a supporting framework for the professional development of support teachers. In accordance with the definition of the IQMS generated for this study (Chapter One), an in-depth study of the IQMS standardised monitoring instrument will be done. That will be followed by an exploration of how continuous professional development is located in the IQMS. Firstly, however, an overview of the history of the IQMS.

3.8   Background and History of the Integrated Quality Management System

According to the Centre for Development and Enterprise (CDE), the Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS) developed from the new quality management programmes was a result of South Africa's 1994 political transformations (CDE 2015:5). The goal was to

move away from an inspectorial system to a self-evaluative and external evaluation system (Rabichund 2011:54). The IQMS integrates the three existent programmes of Developmental Appraisal (DAS), Performance Management (PMS), and Whole School Evaluation (WSE) (Education Labour Relations Council 2003:4). A lack of meaningful connection between these systems lead to a formulation of one quality management system (IQMS) by the Education Labour Relations Council (hereafter referred to as the ELRC) in 2004. The aim is to improve teaching and learning and better integration of different mechanisms in the process of quality management. The performance of educators was to be evaluated by performance standards that were determined by the Minister as a requirement of Schedule 1 of the Employment of Educators Act (hereafter referred to as the EEA), No. 76 of 1998 (ELRC, 1998).

3.8.1   Integrated Quality Management System

This section explores the definition, related concepts and the purpose of IQMS. This study defines the IQMS as a standardised monitoring and evaluation system or instrument that provides teachers with an opportunity for ongoing self-assessment that is directed at professional self-enhancement, and subsequent improved quality teaching and learning in schools (cf. 1.13.5). The main purpose of the IQMS is, firstly to determine the support and developmental needs of school-based teachers, schools and district officials; Secondly, to continued growth provision and support; thirdly, accountability promotion; fourthly, to overall institutional effectiveness monitoring and teacher performance evaluation (DoE 2004:1). With these aims, the DoE wants to assure quality public education for all and constant improvement in the quality of learning and teaching (Rabichund 2011:54).

As stated above (cf. 3.8), the IQMS consists of the Developmental Appraisal System (DAS), the PMS and the WSE. Each component serves an important purpose. The purpose of DAS is to appraise individual teachers to determine strengths and weaknesses and compile individual developmental programmes. The PMS evaluates individual teachers for salary progression, grade progression, appointment affirmation and rewards and incentives. The WSE evaluates the quality of teaching and learning within and the overall effectiveness of a school (DoE 2004:1).

3.8.2 Guiding Principles of the Integrated Quality Management System

The following principles guide IQMS implementation (DoE 2004:2):

- Fairness: Meaningful developmental opportunities before any sanctions against teacher performance;

- Transparency and open discussion to minimise subjectivity; and

- Professional, uniform and consistent use of the IQMS instrument.

3.8.3 The Integrated Quality Management System Instrument

The exposition that follows is compiled from the information contained in the Collective Agreement number 8 of the ELRC (hereafter referred to as Resolution 8) (ELRC 2003). Lesson observation in practice is the main source of evidence for performance measuring in the IQMS (ELRC 2003:8). However, it is not meant to be a judgemental process, but rather an opportunity for critical constructive feedback aimed at developmental support and guidance (CDE 2015:17). The IQMS instrument consists of 12 Performance Standards (PSs) of which only the first seven are applicable to Post level 1 teachers (this includes LSTs and RCTs). These performance standards are further divided into two parts. The first part is for lesson observation and consists of four performance standards the second part relates to the performance of teachers outside the classroom, consisting of eight performance standards. Of these eight, only PS5 to PS7 applies to Post level 1 teachers, which include LSTs and RCTs. Each performance standard asks one main question. Below, firstly a breakdown of the lesson observation performance standards (cf. Table 3.3), followed by outside of class performance standards, each section with its signature questions (cf. Table 3.4). For every performance standard, there are a number of Criteria (cf. Table 3.5). These criteria are further divided into four descriptors, derived from the four-point rating scale (cf. Table 3.6).

Table 3.3: Lesson observation Performance Standards

Performance Standard (PS)	Signature question
PS1 The creation of a positive learning environment	Does the educator create a suitable environment for teaching and learning?
PS2 Knowledge of curriculum and learning programmes	Does the educator demonstrate adequate knowledge of the learning area and does s/he

	use this knowledge effectively to create meaningful experiences for learners?
PS3 Lesson planning, preparation and presentation	Is lesson planning clear, logical and sequential, and is there evidence that individual lessons fit into a broader learning programme?
PS4 Learner assessment	Is assessment used to promote teaching and learning?

Table 3.4: Outside of class Performance Standards

Performance Standards	Signature question
PS5 Professional development in the field of work/ career and participation in professional bodies	Does the educator participate in professional growth activities?
PS 6 Human relations and contribution to school development	Does the educator create and maintain sound human relations with colleagues and learners?
PS7 Extra-curricular and Co-curricular participation	Does the educator participate in extra-curricular and co-curricular activities and is she/he involved with the administration of these activities?

Table 3.5: Criteria per Performance Standard

Performance Standards	Criteria
1. Creation of positive learning environment.	a) Learning space
	b) Learner involvement
	c) Discipline
	d) Diversity
2. Knowledge of curriculum and learning programmes	a) Knowledge of learning area
	b) Skills
	c) Goal setting
	d)Involvement in learning programmes
3. Lesson planning, preparation and presentation	a) Planning
	b) Presentation
	c) Recording
	d)Management of learning programmes
4. Learner assessment/ achievement	a) Feedback to learners
	b)Knowledge of assessment techniques
	c) Application of techniques
	d) Record keeping
	a) Participation in professional development

5. Professional Development in field of work/career and participation in professional bodies.	b) Participation in professional bodies
	c) Knowledge of education issues
	d)Attitude to professional development
6. Human relations and contribution to school development	a) Learner needs
	b) Human relations skills
	c) Interaction
	d) Co-operation
7. Extra-curricular and Co-curricular participation	a) Involvement
	b) Holistic Development
	c) Leadership and coaching
	d) Organisation and Administration

Table 3.6: Rating scale

Rating Scale	Performance Level	Descriptor of level of performance
Rating 1	Unacceptable	Performance does not meet minimum expectations and requires urgent interventions and support.
Rating 2	Satisfies minimum expectations	Performance is acceptable and is in line with minimum expectations, but development and support are still required.
Rating 3	Good	Performance is good and meets expectations, but some areas are still in need of development and support.
Rating 4	Outstanding	Performance is outstanding and exceeds expectations. Although performance is excellent, continuous self-development and improvement are advised.

3.8.4 Integrated Quality Management System Challenges

Challenges for LSTs and RCTs with regard to the current IQMS were raised, among other researchers, by Arendse (2010), Mahlo (2011), Dreyer (2013) and Van Graan 2010). One of the biggest challenges is that one performance instrument is used to support teachers as well as for MSTs. As Post level 1 teacher, LSTs and RCTs usually have another Post level 1 mainstream teacher (MST) as a peer evaluator. The impact of inappropriately matching peers and its far-reaching consequences will follow next., by considering the Integrated measurement instrument challenges.

a) Support teachers versus mainstream teachers

As this study is about the experiences of LSTs and RCTs with regard to IQMS, it must be highlighted that the EEA (ELRC 1998) does not distinguish between MSTs and special needs educators or teachers. The EEA (ELRC 1998) only utilize the term educator, which is described as:

> Any person who teaches, educates or trains other persons or who provides professional educational services, including professional therapy and education psychological services, at any public school, further education and training institution, departmental office or adult basic education centre and who is appointed in a post on any educator establishment under this Act (EEA, No. 76 of 1998, para. 1).

In terms of the EEA (ELRC 1998), the Personnel Administrative Measures (PAM) were determined by the Minister of Education. The PAM, No. 170 of 2016 (DBE 2016) applies to all educators as set out in the EEA (ELRC 1998). Neither the PAM (DBE 2016), nor the EEA (ELRC 1998) differentiate between support and Mainstream teachers. However, looking at the definition of an educator as per the EEA (ELRC 1998), and in line with SLES roles and responsibilities for support teachers, LSTs and RCTs do train other persons (including learners, parents and teachers) and provide professional educational services in public school, further education and training institutions (EEA, 1998, para. 1.1). The PAM, however, does refer to educator posts that include teaching staff for learners with disabilities (DBE 2016:21). Teaching staff, however, includes educators and other professionals in special school settings and do not necessarily refer to LSTs and RCTs, who are mostly based in mainstream schools.

Furthermore, the PAM set out the core duties and responsibilities of educators on the different levels of the educational system. Furthermore, the PAM states that specialised duties and responsibilities may be added to the staff, in addition to the core duties (DBE 2016:19). To discern the type of added specialised duties, the researcher further scrutinized the PAM in terms of the roles and responsibilities of the different ranks of Post level 1 educator (Teacher, Senior Teacher, Master Teacher), Post level 2 educators (Departmental heads) and Post level 3 educators (Deputy Principals). A comparison with the roles and responsibilities in the job description of support teachers reflects that they have to perform duties that spread over the whole spectrum of the aforementioned Post

levels. Specific reference is made to categories of supervision, management, training, liaising, and communication.

As already established, the EEA (ELRC 1998) and the PAM (DBE 2016) do not distinguish between support and MSTs. This non-distinction between MST duties and that of support teachers becomes one of the biggest contributors to the IQMS dilemma of LSTs and RCTs. MSTs have no or very little knowledge of the specific job description and key responsibility areas of the support teachers. This led to support teachers reporting that they are not being "measured uniquely" to their particular job description (Arendse 2010:71), thus leading to lower performance scores. They are thus being "judged" according to the mainstream frame of reference with regard to the performance requirements. Arendse (2010:90) finds that extra- and co-curricular activities of a Post level 1 educator, as mentioned in the PAM (DBE 2016:27,28) are as follows, the performance standards in the IQMS instrument do not address the requirements of support teachers, which lead to negative scoring.

b) Contentious performance area

The most significantly different performance area between support teachers and mainstream teachers is that of co-curricular and extra-mural responsibilities. Despite such dissimilarities, the IQMS functions as an assessment as well as a performance development instrument for both LSTs and mainstream teachers This, notwithstanding the significant difference in the job descriptions and key performance areas of these parties. Differences in scoring between mainstream peers and learning support supervisors are exactly because of a misunderstanding or possible lack of insight into the following learning support key performance areas:

- Assisting the departmental head in identifying aspects in need of special attention and assisting to address or handle them;
- Catering for the educational and general welfare of all learners in his/her care; and
- Assisting the principal in supervising the counselling, guidance and careers of all learners, as well as their discipline and the general welfare.

In contrast to that of mainstream teaching (Post level 1), the co-curricular and extra-mural responsibilities of LSTs and RCTs are highly collaborative. Collaboration gets emphasized

by various researchers, who accord that collaborative skills are most crucial for special education teachers (Arendse, 2010; Barratt 2016; Conway 2017; Dreyer 2008, 2013; Ladbrook 2009; Mahlo 2011; O'Gorman & Drudy 2011; Van Graan 2010; Wentzel 2016:45).

The following specified extra-mural and co-curricular activities are prescribed roles and responsibilities to enhance learning support practices. The minimum target is four of these activities per week which must be evident on the timetable and in the weekly planning of LSTs and RCTs (ECKED 2017): Intervention groups; Parental development sessions; Training sessions with teachers; Programme development; Lesson planning; SBST meetings; Updating learner profiles of learners withdrawn by LST.

The mentioned activities align with KRA3 in the Learning Support job description (WCED 2017), which is to network and foster inter-sectorial partnerships with other disciplines and community members to advocate and address barriers to learning. Networking partners involve District Psychologist, District Social Worker, and WCED outreach teams from Special School Resource Centres. Governmental departments (Health, Social Welfare, Public Works), Community outreach teams and interest groups and NGOs.

The performance standard in the IQMS that aligns with the key responsibility area of networking and fostering inter-sectorial partnerships is Performance Standard 7, Extra-curricular and Co-curricular participation. The criteria for Performance Standard 7 consist of involvement; Holistic Development (of learners); Leadership and Coaching; and Organization and Administration.

Directly linking to the networking and inter-sectorial KRA is Human relations and contribution to school development (Performance Standard 6). The criteria involved in this Performance Standard 6 are learner needs; Human Relations Skills; Interaction; and Cooperation. The following table (Table 3.7) illustrates how the extra-mural and co-curricular activities that form part of the prescribed roles and responsibilities, the related key responsibility area as reflected in the learning support job description, and the specific performance standards in the IQMS are linked.

Table 3.7: Extra-mural and co-curricular Roles and Responsibilities linked to the Integrated Quality Management System Performance Standards

Roles and Responsibilities ECKED 2017)	KRA3 in the Learning Support JD (WCED 2017)	PS7, IQMS Extra-curricular and Co-curricular participation.	PS6, IQMS Human relations and contribution to school development
Intervention groups Parental development sessions Training sessions with teachers Programme development Lesson planning SBST meetings Updating learner profiles of learners withdrawn by LSE	Network and foster inter-sectorial partnerships with other disciplines and community members. Networking partners involve District Psychologist, District Social Worker, and WCED outreach teams from Special School Resource Centres. Governmental departments (Health, Social Welfare, Public Works), Community outreach teams/ interest groups, NGOs.	Involvement; Holistic Development Leadership & Coaching; Organization and Administration	Learner needs Human Relations Skills Interaction Co-operation.

Performance Standards 6 and 7 encompass the essence of the difference between the job descriptions of support teachers and MSTs. The key performance area that relates to Performance Standards 6 and 7 do not only hold implications for the professional development of LSTs and RCTs, but also the practicality of their IQMS. Therefore, a bigger need for explicitly stipulating the crux of what each criterion encompasses, particularly with reference to the key performance areas of LSTs and RCTs. The detail of each criterion must also be in alignment with the skills identified through research. More elaboration on these skills identification per criteria follows in the next section.

3.8.5 Effectiveness of IQMS to contribute to Professional Development of Learning Support and Resource Class Teachers

Chapter Two elaborated on the role expansion and transformation of support teachers as well as the challenges that such changes brought about. Barratt (2016:26), Johnson (2008:3) and Peppler (2017:4) argue that the impact of changing events may force support teachers to learn new skills to be competently ready for every level of their interaction.

Adapted approaches were demanded by changes within the Special Needs Education (SNE) organisation over time. Therefore, not only the SNE organisation needs to adapt to embrace the more competent support teachers, but also other systemic influencers such as broader education, policies and regulations. The IQMS is one such major influencing system.

3.8.6 Integrated Quality Management System: Fairness and transparency

For a national appraisal system like the IQMS to abide by its principles of fairness and transparency, the instruments of such a system should also embrace and reflect appropriate adaptations to be inclusive of educational staff. Fairness and transparency with regards to the appraisal of support teachers are only possible if the quality instrument utilized allows for what Mestry *et al*. (2009:483) refer to as "effective analysis of teacher performance" to allow for prioritising of their developmental needs.

Spreen and Vally (2010, cited in Martin 2013:100) state that for policy aims to influence transformation, the needs, understandings and social realities of its primary clients should be reflected in such policy's design and implementation. The clients in this study are LSTs and RCTs and their challenges with appraisal and subsequent development. A significant connection between developmental appraisal and professional development is required for LSTs and RCTs. This type of lack of meaningful connection between DA, PM and WSE finds evident in the decision of the ELRC to formulate the IQMS (ELRC 2003:4). According to Resolution 8 of 2003 (ELRC 2003:19), the IQMS was to replace the three separate systems, to determine teacher competence, assess strengths and areas in need of development, and provide development opportunities for continued growth assurance, accountability promotion, and monitoring of overall effectiveness of institutions. However, a review of the IQMS by the National Education Evaluation Unit (NEEDU 2008), uncovered problems that lead to the evolvement of new policy frameworks on teacher appraisal and development (CDE 2015:6).

3.8.7   Evolving Policy and Legislative Frameworks

The IQMS is but one of a number of policies and Acts that govern teacher performance appraisal and professional development for public schools (CDE 2015:5). The National Policy Framework for Teacher Education and Development in South Africa (hereafter referred to as the NPFTED) (DoE 2007) has two main goals, Firstly, it attempted to address the need for teachers who are suitably qualified. Secondly, to have more attention being paid to the professional development of teachers in South Africa (Gulston 2010:5). The NPFTED mandates SACE with the overall responsibility to implement, manage and quality assure the CPTD Management System (DoE 2007:18). All teachers (including LSTs and RCTs) must be registered at SACE, which also managed the continuous professional development of the teachers and ensure that they adhere to the Code of Professional Ethics. Continuous professional development is implicated in the Norms and Standards for Educators (DoE 2000), wherein the educator gets depicted as a lifelong learner (Gulston 2010:1).

In 2009, the Teacher Development Summit (TDS) was called by the DBE and the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) in reaction to continued challenges with the IQMS (TDS 2009). The purpose of this multi-stakeholder summit was to investigate the challenges in terms of teacher development and propose strategies to address such challenges (CDE 2015:7). Recommendations were made for the development of a clear, coherent policy included in a new, strengthened, integrated national teacher development plan (TDS Declaration 2009:3). This policy was to encompass both teacher appraisal and teacher development. A re-evaluation of the relevance of the content of the assessment instrument was also suggested for streamlining and rebranding the IQMS. Rebranding of the IQMS became the responsibility of the ELRC (CDE 2015:7).

The TDS (2009) resulted in the Integrated Strategic Planning Framework for Teacher Education and Development (ISPFTED) in SA 2011-2025 (also known as the Plan and hereafter referred to as such). The Plan includes the education section of the National Development Plan (2012) and has as its main purpose the improvement of quality teacher education and development, for enhanced quality of teachers and teaching. The Plan also

supports the CPTD Management System, under the management of SACE. More elaboration on the Plan and its purpose to incorporate teacher appraisal and development follow later in this chapter.

3.9   Rebranding the IQMS

The following section briefly introduce the new Quality Management System that was introduced near to the final stage of the current research. Furthermore, the new Continuing Professional Teacher Development (CPTD)Management System are elaborated on, followed by the connection between IQMS and CPTD system.

3.9.1   The new Quality Management System

The efforts of the ELRC to rebrand the IQMS lead to the development of the new Quality Management System (QMS) (CDE 2015:8). After many modifications by the government, the ELRC approved the QMS in November 2014. According to stakeholder interviewees (CDE 2015), the QMS was an improvement over the IQMS as it was a simpler process with more credible appraisal criteria. Furthermore, the QMS has a grievance and moderation process. However, the QMS could not be implemented because of teacher union bargaining issues (CDE 2015:8).

The new QMS, informed by the *Collective Agreement Number 2 of 2020,* was eventually agreed to by the employer as well as all employee parties at the ELRC (DBE 2021). The new system was to replace the IQMS for school-based educators (DBE 2021). However, the new QMS was not the focus in the current study that started out way before finalization and implementation of the new QMS in 2021. From January 2021, the QMS was implemented for Principals, while all other post level 1 to 3 school-based educators were trained from January 2022.

While the IQMS, includes the school-based development component, the QMS does not. Within the QMS, individual educators are obliged with their school-based development within the national CPTD system. The main aims of the QMS include evaluating the performance levels of individual school-based educators, enhancing their efficiency, and improving accountability levels in schools (CDE 2015; DBE 2021). The QMS would

measure educator performance as aligned to their particular roles and responsibilities. This feature is particularly crucial to the purpose under investigation in this study. The QMS would also provide a foundation for assessment tools, which take into account the contextual factors surrounding educators. In addition, the QMS would offer a platform for decisions on paying salary progression, rewards and other incentives.

3.9.2 The New Continuing Professional Teacher Development Management System

Both the QMS and the Continuing Professional Teacher Development (CPTD) system were to be introduced as new systems, respectively as teacher appraisal and professional development management systems. These are two separate systems. Although the QMS did not realize by then, the new CPTD system was phased in by SACE in 2014, as mandated by the NPFTED (RSA 2007:26). The new CPTD system was not the same as the IQMS, and neither was it replacing the IQMS. Instead, the CPTD system was meant to run alongside the IQMS. The challenges of LSTs and RCTs with regard to the IQMS have been elaborated on in section 3.6 above. Although the new CPTD system aimed to strengthen teacher development and enhance teacher quality (CDE 2015:9), it brought about its own challenges for LSTs and RCTs. To shed more light on the impact of the new CPTD system on the development of LSTs and RCTs, a brief account of this management system follows.

SACE recognises three types of activities or programmes for CPD of teachers, Type 1 professional development activities or programmes are mostly teacher-initiated and used by teachers to address their developmental needs; Type 2 professional development activities are school initiated for addressing School Improvement Plans; Type 3 professional development activities are used by Districts and Provinces for addressing District and Province Improvement Plans. The CPTD Management System recognises all useful teacher development activities by teacher-initiated activities, school-initiated activities, or externally initiated activities by providers. The system requires educators to:

- Load or report their participation in professional development twice a year;
- Maintain a professional development portfolio according to SACE guidelines; and

- Accumulate 150 professional development points in every three-year cycle.

Points can only be collected from SACE approved service providers. However, an educator must first sign-up manually or electronically on the CPTD Self-Service Portal before they can participate in their 1st CPTD Cycle.

3.10 Connection between IQMS and CPTD system

The IQMS and the CPTD System have shared characteristics about aspects of development. The IQMS appraises individual teachers to determine strength and weakness areas, after which an individual development programme or personal growth plan is drawn up. The CPTD system provides a SACE database, as well as a menu of SACE, endorsed professional development activities and programmes addressing the identified needs. The following Diagram (cf. Figure 3.2) illustrates the relationship between IQMS and CPTD.
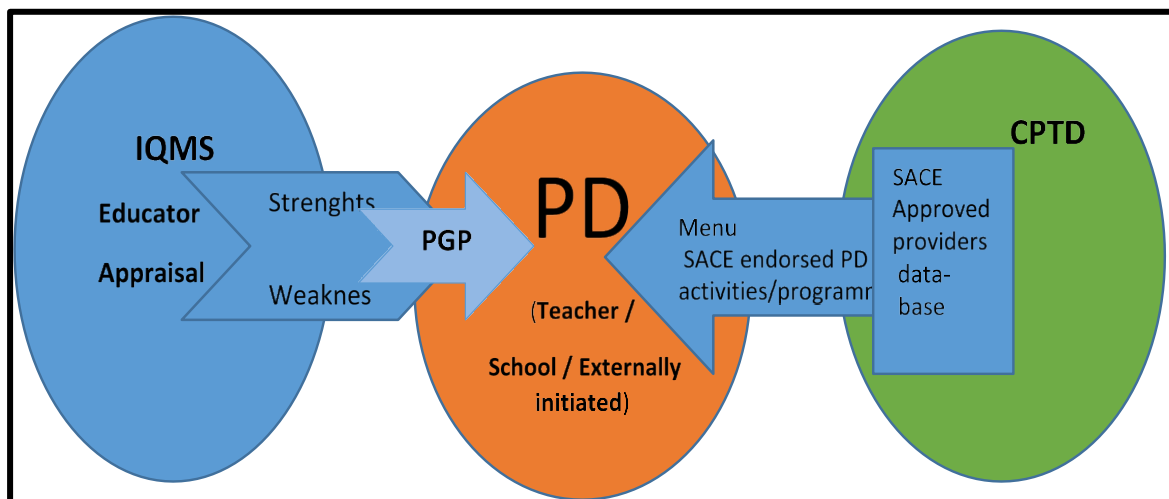
Figure 3.2: Relationship between IQMS and CPTD

The LSTs and RCTs participate in all three types of SACE recognised activities or programmes that include teacher-initiated activities, school-initiated activities, and externally initiated activities by providers. Although they are Post level 1 teachers, they do not form part of the staff establishments of their base schools because their posts are designated at the district level. Only LSTs who transferred into special needs posts in recent years (to the date of this study) were registered because they completed the sign-up process while they were still in mainstream teaching. What would then be the possible implications for LSTs and RCTs who were in learning support before the CPTD Management System was introduced?

3.11 Implications: Connection between IQMS and CPTD for Learning Support Teachers and Resource Class Teachers

The most crucial complication in the professional development of LSTs and RCTs lies in the above-illustrated relationship between the IQMS and the CPTD system. The process of CPTD signing up as explained above in Section 3.8, means that LSTs and RCTs are supposed to be in their second CPTD Cycle. However, a lot of LSTs and RCTs reported (orally, in informal discussions) that they have been struggling for quite some time to sign-up, could not sign-up yet, or could not manage to upload professional development activities up until now. However, teachers who struggle to access the CPTD sign-up system (CPTD IS) electronically, do have the option of Manual Sign-up. They can sign-up manually by filling in the manual profile form and return it to SACE (RSA 2016; SACE 2011 and SACE 2016a:6).

Whatever the reasons for not being able to sign-up, not being able to do so could cause LSTs and RCTs to miss out on their first CPTD Cycle from January 2015 onwards. As mainstream teachers, LSTs and RCTs were supposed to be part of the third cohort of post level 1 teachers who was to sign-up for the January 2016 to December 2016 sign-up phase. The sign-up was in preparation for their 1st CPTD Cycle that was about to start from 2017 to 2019 and thereafter every three years (SACE 2016b, slide 50).

According to the SACE-CPTD System brochure (RSA 2016:1), the CPTD system is a mode for SACE to encourage the professional development of teachers. Every teacher has a

professional development point account with SACE and they are expected to earn 150 professional development points triennially. The SACE-CPTD System brochure also describes professional development as an "all-teacher and all-school affair" (RSA 2016:3). Although the LSTs and RCTs are in District designated posts, they fully adhere to the "all-teacher and all-school affair" by participating in the annual IQMS cycles at their respective schools. Through this process, their specific needs and strengths are identified and personal growth plans are compiled for each of them. As prescribed by SACE, they participate in all three types of SACE recognised activities or programmes that include teacher-initiated activities, school-initiated activities, and externally-initiated activities by providers.

If the IQMS aims to quantify the performance of a teacher to recognise his/her support and development needs and to provide support for continued growth in the form of CPTD, then the accompanying national CPTD system must enable every SACE registered teacher to attain their professional development points. Figure 3.3 below), indicates exactly where the break in the whole process becomes a stumbling block.

The relationship between IQMS and CPTD System can be illustrated in the follows:

STEP 1: Teachers are at the centre of the education system. They take responsibility for their own professional development. The key goals of professional development is to improve classroom practice and learning outcomes

STEP 2: Teachers identify PD needs through IQMS and other related processes

STEP 3: Teachers develop their professional development/growth plan and choose activities that will help them address the identified needs from the database of the SACE approved providers and endorsed PD activities

STEP 4: Teachers participate in quality SACE Endorsed Professional Development Activities / Programmes (Teacher / School / Externally initiated) in order to improve teaching and learning.

STEP 5: Teachers earn PD Points from the SACE Endorsed PD activities / programmes they participated in over a three year cycle

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Figure 3.3: IQMS and CPTD Management System (ELRC 2019)

LSTs and RCTs fulfil the IQMS requirements up until step 4. The inability to complete step 5 by registering on or loading points to the CPTD system, withholds them from fulfilling their full professional developmental cycle. With SACE as the manager of the participation of all teachers in the CPTD System, a question relating to functionality is how effective this body is with regards to maintaining the professional development portfolios of LSTs and RCTs. Emekako (2018:228,259) finds (especially in high schools) that, although teachers get very involved in CPTD activities, some principals described the national CPTD instrument as non-operational and inadequate, while others seemed to be unaware of the system. Some of the findings of Emekako (2018) reflects a problematic implementation by those responsible for realising the SACE professional development programme objective. With compulsory attendance, with no exemptions to SACE professional development (Emekako 2018:229), what are the implications for LSTs and RCTs who are unable to commit themselves to the SACE code of conduct by keeping up to date with educational trends and developments and promoting ongoing development (SACE 2018).

According to the National Education Policy Act, 1996 (ACT No.27 of 1996), teachers who do not achieve the minimum number of professional development points over two successive cycles of three years, will be accountable to SACE (DoE 2007:20). Such teachers will be required to re-register with SACE (DoE 2007:25). The CPTD Management System Overview (SACE 2016b, slide 2) however states that for the first six years, no penalties will be imposed by SACE for not reaching targets, but that SACE will review and decide about non-compliance. If educators however refuse to participate in the CPTD Management System or defy it, they will be guilty of contravening Section 7 of the SACE Code of Professional Ethics (SACE 2016b, slide 53).

Gulston (2010:26) opines that it remained to be seen how SACE will use the CPTD (CPD points system) alongside IQMS. Although the IQMS and CPTD are tools that strive not to be punitive, the NPFTED (DoE 2007) makes provision for educators to be accountable to

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SACE if they fail to attain the minimum number of points over two successive cycles of three years (Gulston 2010:26).

3.12 NICPD Integrated Strategic Planning Framework for Teacher Education and Development in South Africa, 2011–2025

The National Institute for Curriculum and Professional Development (NICPD) is part of the 15-year timeframe of Integrated Strategic Planning Framework for Teacher Education and Development (ISPFTED) in SA 2011-2025 (The Plan), introduced in sub-section 3.2 above. The Plan is essentially a framework for the ongoing development of teachers over time and should be read in conjunction with the Teacher Professional Development Master Plan, 2017 to 2022. The primary aim of the Plan is the improvement of quality teacher education and development so that the quality of teachers and teaching can improve (DoE 2011).

Provision is made for quality teacher development, through specific outputs and related activities. Within the Plan, teachers are at the core of improved teacher development efforts, as it transfers responsibility for self-development to the teachers themselves. Important to the interest of this study are the reasons for the development of the NICPD. Most applicable, because teacher appraisal through the IQMS was founded to be ineffective in sufficiently evaluating teacher competence, and as such did not contribute to the identification of teacher needs (DoE 2011:4). It was vital to establish a non-punitive system for the assessment of current teacher competencies to support the teachers in their development needs areas.

The NICPD (DoE 2011) was to ensure that the new Plan for professional development and the work of the SACE- CPTD are aligned and coordinated. For this reason, other planning processes such as those related to the IQMS, WSE, NEEDU and the CPTD Management System must consider the 15-year plan. Most important for this study is the alignment of the Plan with the IQMS and CPTD processes. SACE plays a crucial management role within the context of the Plan (DoE 2011:3), as to assure that professional development courses can lead to point accrual after successful completion. Just as the electronic CPTD system where professional development activities must be uploaded to accumulate points, the NICPD proposed to develop an online Teacher Education and Development Support

System (TED) Information and Communications Technology system for supporting the deployment of diagnostic self-assessments and CPTD short courses. The TED ICT system is to be aligned with the SACE-CPTD management system to allow access to approved service providers, professional development point allocation and ultimately, point accrual. The TED ICT system also provides opportunities for applications to register for programmes and for funding to pay for studies.

The first five years of The Plan (2011/12-2015/16), were to include development opportunities for Special Needs teachers (Category E) that should include LSTs and RCTs, although they are not explicitly identified in The Plan. The Plan pledges immediate support for future underqualified teachers in special needs schools to complete their qualifications (DoE 2011:11). Although the document mentions that all the identified categories cover all teachers in the system (DoE 2011:9), it specifically makes mention of teachers in special needs schools, while the LSTs and RCTs referred to in this study, work in mainstream schools. Similarly, the follow-up document to The Plan, the Teacher Professional Development Master Plan 2017-2022 (DBE 2019:44), also refers to Special needs teachers under the Teacher education for Inclusive teaching. However, there is again no distinctive reference to LSTs and RCTs in mainstream schools.

The first step for LSTs and RCTs to become part of the coordinated national system for teacher education and development as proposed by the Plan is to get full access to the national systems that should allow them to do so. If some of these support teachers already experience challenges to get onto the CPTD Management system (preliminary oral reporting), how will they get access to the linked or aligned online TED ICT support system? Restricted access (for whatever reason) to all the electronic systems would be discriminating against LSTs and RCTs, as they will not be able to partake in diagnostic self-assessments and CPTD short courses and will ultimately not be able to comply with their SACE responsibilities.

Gaps in literature with regards to the development outputs of LSTs and RCTs firstly stem from National policy documents. The Norms and Standards and Department of Basic Education policies set out roles for teachers in general and emphasize the need for their

ongoing development. LSTs and RCTs are nowhere pertinently mentioned or stated. The Teacher Development Summit (TDS) in 2009 provided insight into teacher development, specifically in relation to the IQMS of teachers in general. The National Policy Framework for Teacher Development in South Africa (DoE, 2006) and the Integrated Strategic Planning Framework for Teacher Education and Development (ISPFTED) in SA (2011-2025) specifically focuses on development of some specialized teachers that is assumed to include LSTs and RCTs with their specific performance and responsibility areas.

Educators who refuse to participate CPTD Management System or defy it, will be regarded as guilty of contravening Section 7 of the SACE Code of Professional Ethics (SACE 2016b, slide 53). However, there is no alternative provided for recognition of development that could not be loaded to system in accessibility.

Both the EWP6 (2001) and the SIAS policy (DBE 2014) only employ the term "Learning Support Teacher" as part of the SBST or DBST. LSTs and RCTs are nowhere mentioned according to their specific roles and responsibilities. In the absence of clear policy guidelines for LSTs and RCTs, should it be automatically understood that such policies assume their underlying, all-encompassing diverse roles as part of the support structures within the educational community (DBE 2005:18)? Notwithstanding well-defined guidelines for the LSTs and RCTs, there is still advocacy for transformation, stating the needed to retrain support teachers so that they can step into their new role of functioning as part of multidiscipline teams. This brings about the need for alternative approaches to the Continuing Professional Development (CPD) of LSTs and RCTs.

Only a few South African studies investigated the roles and development of LSTs and RCTs, especially relating to their appraisal system (Mahlo 2011; Arendse 2010; Dreyer 2013). A new template with clearly stated duties specifically suited for Learning Support Teachers were proposed, however not linking to, or based in IQMS. There is still the issues of inadequate district support and lack of resources, and inadequate collaboration between the stakeholders, and a lack of commitment from DoE to provide or design the guidelines policies which govern the LSTs practice.

3.13 Chapter Summary

This chapter analysed literature and policy documents to shed light on the role of conversion of LSRs and RCTs within an ever-changing inclusive education ethos. Further literature on professional development issues and approaches were also scrutinized as related to the role transformation phenomenon. The IQMS and the accompanying instruments were discussed in-depth, with a focus on the systems challenges as applicable to LSTs and RCTs. Specific reference was made to conflicting areas as they impact the efficiency to contribute to the professional development of the support teachers. A question raised during the investigation of the IQMS is whether the system adheres to its principles of fairness and transparency concerning the appraisal of support teachers. Further developments in professional development policies and legislation that led to the rebranding of the old IQMS were discussed, as well as the implications that it holds for support teachers.

Throughout, the discussions in this chapter, the interconnectedness of all systems and policies and the effects thereof became evident. Inter-related policy documents on different levels of the work environment of support teachers form a unique social context that might impact their professional development. This place renewed emphasis on Bronfenbrenner's bio-ecological systems theory as it may provide possible explanations for or reasons for the challenges experienced with the evaluative systems. The researcher's awareness of current challenges with the IQMS and CPTD Management system is based on literature searches, personal experience and preliminary oral reporting. The actual effects of the aforementioned systems, as well as that of reform initiatives like the NICPD, the ISPFTED in SA (2011-2025) and the proposed alignment with SACE-CPTD, remain to be explored during data gathering and analysis in the following chapters. The next chapter (Chapter Four) will discuss the research design and the methodology to be employed in this study.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

Chapters Two and Three reviewed literature on the experiences of LSTs and RCTs with regard to their IQMS and professional development. The research design, methodology and the rationale behind the selection thereof are described and discussed in this chapter. The chapter will begin with the research aim and research question that underlies the choice of methodology, followed by an overview of the research design, a description of the population, sample, the instruments and the different procedures employed for data collection and analysis. A qualitative research paradigm is employed to describe and understand the experiences of LSTs and RCTs concerning their continued professional development. The chosen paradigm will be discussed in terms of its epistemological, ontological, meta-theoretical, methodological and axiological positions.

4.2 Research Aim and Research Questions

The aim of this research was to generate data that could be applied to enhance the IQMS as a framework to support professional growth of Learning Support and Resource Class Teachers in the Eden Central Karoo district. The following objectives were identified:

- To explore the experiences, constraints and challenges of Learning Support and Resource Class Teachers regarding their Integrated Quality Management Systems;
- To examine how the roles and functions of Learning Support and Resource Class Teachers can be aligned in relation to their current key performance areas;
- To investigate inclusive teaching and learning guidelines that can improve the professional growth of Learning Support and Resource Class Teachers in Eden Central Karoo; and
- To evaluate the effectiveness of education policies regarding professional development and Integrated Quality Management Systems of Learning Support and Resource Class Teachers.

To fulfil the above-stated objectives, this study purposed to facilitate answers to the following research questions. The main question asked how the IQMS could be enhanced as a framework to support professional growth of Learning Support and Resource Class Teachers in the Eden Central Karoo district. The following sub-questions were identified in support of the key question and the objectives of this study:

- What are the experiences, constraints and challenges to professional development of Learning Support and Resource Class Teachers regarding their Integrated Quality Management System?
- How can the roles and functions of Learning Support and Resource Class Teachers be aligned to their key performance areas?
- What inclusive teaching and learning guidelines can be suggested to improve the professional growth of Learning Support and Resource Class Teachers in Eden Central Karoo?"
- How effective are the relevant education policies regarding professional development and Integrated Quality Management System of Learning Support and Resource Class Teachers?

4.3 The Research Paradigm

Sefotho (2021:15) describes a paradigm as "a way of looking at the world" that leads and guides thinking and action. Paradigms are worldviews that determine your role in and perspective or how you understand the issue under investigation (Mertens 2018:36; Leavy 2017:38). This study utilized a constructivist-interpretive lens to view the experiences of the Learning Support and Resource Class Teachers about their IQMS and related professional development. Constructivist-interpretivism allowed the participants to construct their own meaning from their experiences with the phenomenon under study.

4.3.1 Constructivist-Interpretivist paradigm

As explained by Creswell (2013:38), the social constructivism paradigm view is often combined with interpretivism. Mahlo (2011:81) also elaborates that the interchangeable use of terms such as constructivist, constructivism, interpretivist, and interpretivism are formed

by user intent. While Costantino (in Given 2008:116) distinguishes that the interpretive view is generally labelled as constructivism, Gray (n.d.:20) explains interpretivism as a theoretical perspective linked to constructivism. In this regard, Crotty (cited in Gray n.d.:19) suggests an interrelationship between the theoretical stance (interpretivism) and the epistemology or view of the researcher (constructivism).

Constructivist-interpretivist researchers use systematic procedures but assume that there are multiple socially constructed realities (McMillan & Schumacher 2010:6; Leavy 2017:129). Creswell (2013:8) refers to social constructivism wherein the individuals develop subjective meanings of their experiences to understand the world in which they live and work. Subjects thus create their own meaning in different ways, because truth and meaning are constructed not discovered (Gray n.d.:20; Sefotho 2021:7). An interpretive-constructivist or constructivist-interpretivist (the term to be used onwards in this study) paradigm is therefore ideal for this study because knowledge about the specific problem is constructed by those involved in the process, which is the learning support and Resource Class Teachers.

4.3.2   Paradigm Positions

As with all paradigms, the constructivist-interpretivist view operates within the epistemological, ontological, meta-theoretical, methodological, and axiological positions. (Sefotho 2021:6). While epistemology deals with what can be known, ontology describes the nature of reality. Sefotho (2021:10-11) and Leavy (2017:12) explains that meta-theory explores the theoretical lenses of the researcher, whereas methodology guides the methods of data collection and analysis. Axiology guides the particular values of a specific paradigm (Sefotho 2021:10).

In this study, knowledge and understanding of the IQMS and professional development were constructed by the participants as well as the researcher. All the LSTs and RCTs as well as other stakeholders brought about or constructed multiple realities and different opinions (ontology), about the issues at hand, because the perceptions of every individual are equally important. Ontology is the reality of the LSTs, RCTs and LSAs and the challenges to their being and existence within specialised education. Every participant

understands their social context, as in this case, their work environment and the accompanying challenges regarding their professional development. The researcher has his/her own belief (epistemology) about the nature of knowledge or the different ways of acquiring and demonstrating such knowledge. Sefotho (2021:7) refers to this as "how we know what we know".

Meta-theory or the "theory about theory" (Sefotho 2021:11) that guides the current study includes Bronfenbrenner's biological systems theory to describe and explain the specialized teacher development. Furthermore, interpretivist theory intends to uncover meanings and values for a better understanding of participants who are directly involved in the professional development phenomenon.

Methodologically, this study depends on qualitative research to obtain an in-depth understanding of the multiple realities of the LSTs and RCTs. In the process of data collection and analysis, researchers also endeavour to empathise with and share the social values of those under study, while considering their personal opinions as part of the process (Sefotho 2021:11). Neubauer (2019, cited in Schurink *et al.* (2021b:14) argues that both the researcher and participants are important role players in the interpretative process.

Axiological, constructivist-interpretive researchers value the multifaceted understanding and unique realities of their participants. Sefotho (2021:11-12) explains that such researchers will openly discuss the values that shape their research. Such discussions will not only include their interpretations, but also those of the participants.

4.4   Research Design

The study combines phenomenological and instrumental case study designs of which the following are key.

4.4.1   Phenomenological Tradition

People's experiences of a social reality form the foundation of any effort to understand their reality (Gray n.d.:24). According to Leavy (2017:129) and Sefotho (2021:293), this stance is a reflection of the phenomenological intellectual belief that influences constructivist-

interpretivism. Phenomenology explains how individuals make sense of the world surrounding them. As such, phenomenology epistemologically directed the researcher to knowledge that she deemed worthwhile to study. A phenomenological approach thus enabled the researcher to understand the participants' experiences, as well as their everyday knowledge and perceptions regarding IQMS and their personal growth. As a former LST, the researcher has initial knowledge about the IQMS but wanted to develop a more in-depth understanding in an attempt to describe the first-hand experiences of the participants in their everyday world (Cropley 2021:145).

4.4.2   Instrumental Case Study Design

Furthermore, Mohajan (2018:32-33) explains that case studies are context-bounded, based on extensive data collection and can be based on an individual, group of individuals, an activity, event, or an in-depth programme. This study was also instrumental in that it did not only present a particular situation, but it is also intended to inform other situations or cases (Cropley 2021:90). Flyvbjerg (2011, cited in Schurink et al. 2021b: 289) refers to "Context-dependent knowledge and experience" and reaffirms that a case study embraces such knowledge and expertise to the core. Furthermore, it allows for in-depth investigation of a bounded system, based on extensive data collection (Creswell 2013;99). As applicable to this study, a case can be on a micro level, (person/interpersonal), meso level (organisation/institution) or macro level (communities/country) (Rossman & Rallis, 2017, cited in Schurink et al. 2021b:303). An instrumental case study allowed the researcher insight into the phenomena at hand namely, the experiences of LSTs and RCTs in a particular circuit in the Eden and Central Karoo Education District and their journey of balancing their everyday responsibilities with the expectations of the IQMS for professional growth.

4.4.3   Phenomenological-Instrumental Case study

A Phenomenological-Instrumental case study allowed the researcher to gather knowledge and understanding from experiences, everyday knowledge, and perceptions of the participants (Mohajan 2018:29). The researcher regards such knowledge as worthwhile in the effort to shed light on the issue of the IQMS and professional development of LSTs and

RCTs. Everyday knowledge and lived experiences of the participants permitted detailed description and authentic representation of the real-world context phenomenon under study (Cropley 2021:143). The study self is instrumental because it intends to inform other cases and situations, whilst presenting a current state of affairs (Creswell 2013:98).

4.4.4   Research Approach

This research follows a qualitative approach, which has its basis in the constructivist-interpretivist paradigm (Schurink *et al*. 2021b:304; Leavy 2017:38; Cropley 2021:135) The qualitative research allowed ongoing interaction with the participants that facilitated an understanding of their experiences as occurring in natural settings. Consequently, such interaction enabled the researcher to investigate their professional development (Mohajan 2018:30; Leavy 2017:149). Qualitative researchers intend to develop theory on the issues under study. However, this was only possible after the researcher has spent some time with the participants and subsequent data collection (Sukhray 2008:112). A clear research design directed the researcher to put together the parts of the professional development puzzle of the LSTs and RCTs.

4.4.5   Population

Leavy (2017:31, 76) describes a population as the group of interest from whom researchers want to select the participants to draw conclusions from later. A population is further described as the total group of elements or case records, persons, events, and organisational units concerned with the research problem (Strydom 2021a:228). The organizational unit or population in this study is the Inclusive Specialised Learner and Educator Support of the Western Cape Education Department.

The Western Cape Education Department comprises eight education districts that are further divided into 49 education circuits. Figure 4.1 (below) illustrates the eight education districts of the Western Cape, while also highlighting the research focus area.
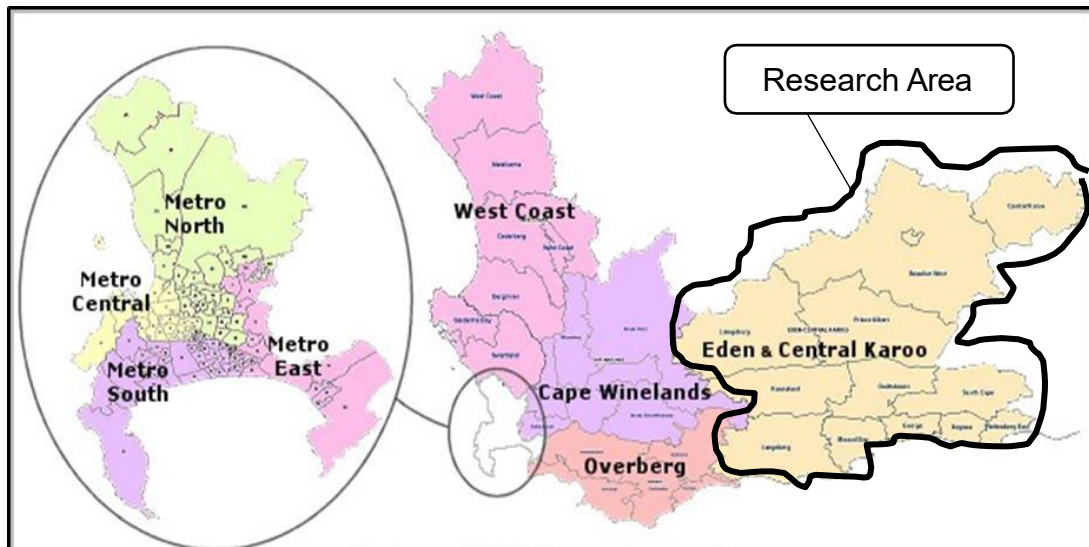
Figure 4.1: Education districts in the Western Cape (WCED 2012)

Four of the districts are urban or Metro, including Metro Central, Metro East, Metro North and Metro South (Figure 4.1 above). These are located within the city of Cape Town. The other four education districts are rural, including Cape Winelands, Eden and Central Karoo, Overberg and West Coast.

Figure 4.2 (below) particularly highlights the area of research namely, the Eden and Central Karoo district.
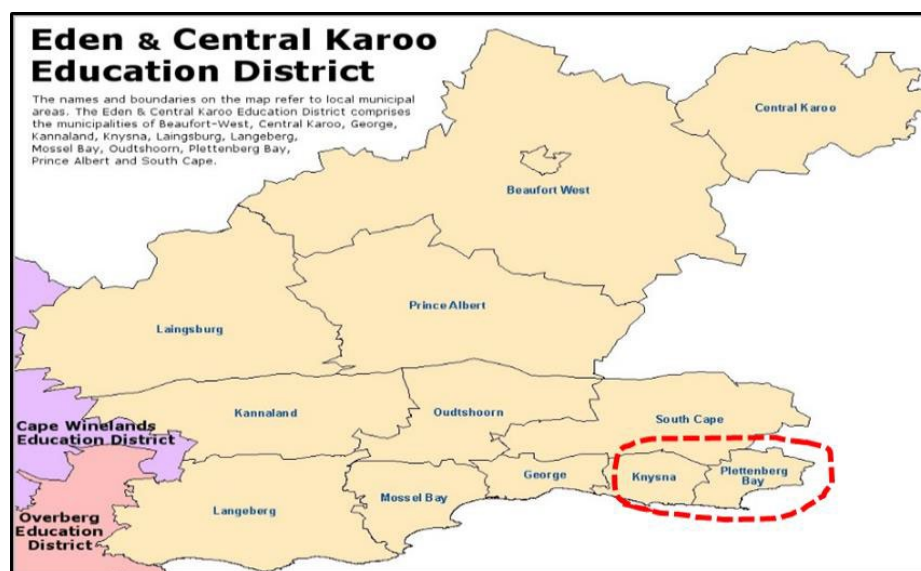
Figure 4.2: Eden and Central Karoo Education District (WCED 2019)

The service area of the researcher entails the Knysna-Plettenberg Bay area, which constitutes Circuit 4. At the time of the study, the Eden and Central Karoo Education District comprised 97 LSTs/RCTs, out of the 614 support teachers in the overall Western Cape Education Department. Circuits 1 to 8, each with its Learning Support Advisor, comprised 101 LSTs and RCTs in Eden and Central Karoo Education District at the time of the study. Support teachers from four of the eight Eden and Central Karoo Education District circuits participated in this study. These four "participating" circuits comprised 53 LSTs and RCTs. The base circuit under the supervision of the researcher had 10 LSTs and 4 RCTs.

The participants were selected purposively (see selection criteria below on Sampling in section 4.7). The researcher's knowledge of the population guided the inclusion of the particular participants because they were considered knowledgeable and informative about the phenomena to be investigated (Strydom 2021c:382-383). Strydom further argues that purposeful sampling is not only cost-effective but also less time consuming and easy to administer. Furthermore, purposeful sampling ensures a high participation rate for researchers to receipt all necessary data. This sample thus provided for relevant, information-rich, in-depth study (Schreier 2018:88; Yin 2011:88).

4.5   Sampling

This study utilizes purposeful or purposive sampling. Although the sampling method was deliberate, it was not just one of convenience. In convenient sampling, the sample of interest would purely be selected based on availability, practicality, and accessibility (Schreier 2018:89; Yin 2011:88). Contrarily, as suggested by Strydom (2021c:382) the researcher made a purposeful, deliberate selection based on the researcher's knowledge of the population. More important to the aim of this study, a purposive sample with uniqueness or specific characteristics or qualities (cf. Chapter Two, section 2.4), can contribute to a detailed exploration and understanding of the IQMS professional development puzzle under investigation (Strydom 2021c:383).

4.5.1 Participant Selection

Participants were identified and selected through a combination of existing and generated sample frames.

4.5.1.1 Existing sample frame

Verification or identification of prospective participants occurred from membership in the Specialised Learning Support group, supported by an official contact list from the learning support coordinator. Formal approval for the use of official contact lists was available after approval by the Provincial and District offices. The researcher formally applied for this after obtaining official ethical clearance.

4.5.1.2 Generated sample frame

Some prospective participants were already approached informally before the COVID-19 Lockdown commenced. This occurred during learning support training and meetings. The researcher identified LSTs and RCTs who were willing to consider taking part in the study. The researcher requested formal permission to contact them privately to discuss the study in detail.

4.5.2 Accessibility, Inclusion, Exclusion and Recruitment of Participants

This section explains constructs and criteria of accessibility, inclusion, exclusion and recruitment of the participants.

4.5.2.1 Accessibility

As an LSA, the researcher had direct supervision and regular contact with the Support Teachers in her particular circuit. These constituted 14 participants. The initial intention of the researcher was to only include a group of LSTs and RCTs from four of the eight ECKED circuits. After consideration with regards to credibility and transferability (Given & Saumure, Given 2008:896), the researcher decided to invite learning support professionals from all the eight ECKED circuits to participate.

4.5.2.2 Inclusion criteria

To be included in the study, the learning support participants had to be LSTs or RCTs from Inclusive Specialized Learner and Educator Support of the WCED, who experienced at least two cycles of the IQMS. They should have been working in mainstream ordinary and /or mainstream Full-Service schools, based in one of the eight circuits in the geographic location of ECKED. For the LSA participant component, only LSAs from Eden and Central Karoo Education District were considered. Prospective participants were considered to be knowledgeable and informative about the phenomena to be investigated in this study.

4.5.2.3 Exclusion criteria

Only LSTs and RCTs who experienced at least two cycles of the IQMS were eligible for participation in the study, whether they were contracted by the WCED or permanently appointed. There were no exclusions to the LSA group.

4.5.2.4 Recruitment

As stated in Section 4.7.1.1 above, initial informal recruitment and establishing interest in the study already started before the COVID-19 pandemic. Participants were afterwards formally recruited through a combination of telephone and email invitations. A call log was maintained with the results of every call. With regards to the online asynchronous interviews (cf. 4.7.1), the researcher had several ways to get into initial contact with prospective participants. The first group (Circuit 4) was the LSTs and RCTs directly under the supervision of the researcher. The study was introduced and explained shortly during a cluster meeting. The prospective participants were informed that they will receive the formal invitation to participate via email. The formal invitation would include the study as well as other ethical particulars to assist them in making an informed decision to give consent or not. From her supervisory position, the researcher had the email addresses of this group of participants, who granted permission for the use of their contact details. They were informed with regards to the email procedure of delivering consent electronically.

The researcher also ascertained other possible participants' interest in this study in informal discussion during several developmental gatherings and workshops. This included the LSA

component, as well as the only male participant in this study. They were also informed with regards to the email procedure of delivering consent electronically, as was explained in the previous paragraph.

Other participants were invited to participate via a WhatsApp group that was created by their own LSA. The researcher was still a member of that specific WhatsApp group, since her days as an LST. However, not to take advantage, the researcher got permission from the specific LSA to invite the prospective participants. The participants had the option of responding via their personal WhatsApp, directly to the researcher's number that was provided. This was preliminary consent as the researcher explained that they will get full information via their email. After the initial WhatsApp consent, the formal informative consent letter was emailed to the participants. They could then respond with their formal informed consent via email to the researcher. Respective to all the participants, informed consent was gained (Appendices F and G) afterwards.

4.5.3   Elaboration on Participants

The first group of participants were LSTs and RCTs from diverse cultural and socio-economic settings. This participant group included coloured, black and white females and a male, average age of 48 years. This group possessed the needed characteristics to be representative of the population as attested in McMillan and Schumacher (2010:137). The second group of participants comprised the LSAs of the respective ECKED circuits.

The total number of 25 participants comprised 16 LSTs, 5 RCTs and 4 LSAs from the Eden and Central Karoo Education District in the Western Cape. The sample included 24 females and one male participant. The male participant was one of only three male support teachers out of a total of four in the district who had more than two years of IQMS experience. The proper ethical protocol was followed as this demanded extra consideration to issues of protection and anonymity. In data analysis and reporting, the participants were at all times referred to in code form. Learning Support Teachers were coded as LST1, LST2, etc., and Resource Class Teachers, as RCT1, RCT2.

The LSTs and RCTs were operational in or between 26 schools, including both primary and high schools. The schools selected it selves, as the worksites of the purposefully chosen Learning Support Teachers. The choice of these schools was not the primary objective per se, but the focus was on the participants, who are regarded by the researcher as a representative, knowledgeable and experienced in learning support in their respective schools.

The additional stakeholders, namely fellow LSAs from Eden and Central Karoo Education District were also approached, as they yielded valuable insight into the phenomena of IQMS and professional development of LSTs and RCTs. The LSA participants were also coded and referred to as LSA1 to LSA4.

4.5.4 Instrumentation and Data Collection Techniques

Schurink *et al.* (2021:400), Yin (2011:131) and Leavy (2017:147) argue that the researcher is the main data collector in qualitative research. As such, the researcher in this study initially proposed to employ face-to-face interviews, focus group interviews, site visit observations and document analysis to gather information. However, the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020, also known as the 2019 Novel Coronavirus or the novel coronavirus SARS-CoV-2 (severe acute respiratory syndrome-coronavirus-2), forced the researcher to adjust these intended strategies. Face-to-face interviews and other methods that did not adhere to the restrictions of the national safety regulations were restricted (Unisa 2020a; 2020b). No site visit field observations could occur. These restrictions resulted in the modification of face-to-face interviews to online individual telephonic or email interviews. The face-to-face focus group was changed to a Microsoft Teams focus group interview. Additionally, other official documents were analysed. After being given a choice between telephonic and email interviews (Kazmer & Xie 2008:260; Geyer 2021:356; Remote Qualitative Data Collection 2020:2), all the support teacher component participants selected to make use of the online email interview option.

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4.5.5 Online, Asynchronous, In-depth Email Interviewing

Firstly, online, asynchronous, in-depth email interviewing (Meho, 2006:1284; Geyer 2021:356, 359; Morgan & Hoffman, 2018:259) or e-interviews (Salmons 2012:5) were employed. Online asynchronous interviews are further explained as semi-structured, open-ended email interviews (Meho 2006:1284; Geyer 2021:356). A total of 21 online interviews occurred over 10 months, including single follow-up exchanges with seven of the participants and no attrition.

This method holds benefits as well as challenges worth elaboration on. A major disadvantage of normal interviewing as raised by Kumar (2011:142) and Geyer (2021:356) is that it can be time consuming and expensive, especially when potential participants are scattered over a wide geographical area. For this study, on the other hand, online interviews allowed reach potential participants over the whole of the Eden and Central Karoo Education District. In further reflection, the current researcher experienced that online asynchronous email interviews held their own time constraint challenges. Although such interviews allowed for sending and receiving questions and answers at any time (Geyer 2021:356; Salmons 2012:4; Kee & Thompson-Hayes, cited in Long 2012:202), there was no guaranteed feedback time from the participants in this study. One aspect that the researcher had no control over, was that the participants decided when they wanted to respond (Long 2012:194). This relates to the finding of Meho (2006:1292) and Geyer (2021:357) that the degree of commitment and motivation can impact the length of the data collection period.

After the initial invitation to all the Eden and Central Karoo LSTs and RCTs, and many promises of participation, a lot of the prospective participants did not respond at all. Only 22 support teachers eventually responded, of whom one did not fit the 2-year IQMS experience criteria (cf. 4.6.2.2). Four participants sent their feedback within two weeks after receiving their invitation to participate. Thereafter, the overall response rate was very slow. Only after four months after the first submission, did the researcher receive another six interview feedbacks. This was followed by a second two-month lapse before receiving six more interview feedback. The researcher had to send several follow-up reminders to ten

participants, of whom all of them were very appreciative, considering their busy schedules. Some reminders were followed by requests to resend the interview schedules. The researcher also had to be very mindful not to overburden the participants with follow-up emails that would make them feel pressurized to participate.

Another challenge worth reflecting on was a lack of access to technology, electronic device issues, connectivity and/or hesitancy to technology usage (Long 2012:197, Hawkins 2018:496; Geyer 2021:361). Where most of the participants typed their responses to the research questions, a few did handwritten feedback and returned via email. Two participants returned their feedback via fax, instead of emailing, because of either internal electronic device and/or connectivity problems. Handwritten, faxed responses defeated the online interview intend and contributed to the prolonged conversion of scripts into transcripts that could facilitate coding and analysis. The researcher, however, concurs with Hawkins (2018:496, 498) and Geyer (2021:356) that written (typed) email responses enable quick and easy transcriptions (cutting and pasting) and concurrent coding and analysis that contributed to transcription expenditure in the case of this study.

However, the challenges experienced, online open-ended interviews (Interview schedule, Appendix I) hold more, specific advantages applicable to this study. As email interviews are mediated by technology like computers and the internet, they allowed asynchronous sending and receiving of questions and answers at any time. (Geyer 2021:356; Salmons 2012:4; Kee & Thompson-Hayes, as cited in Long 2012:202). Although over a longer period, it allowed the gathering of information concerning the experiences of LSTs and RCTs in professional development and IQMS (Roberts 2011:6; Geyer 2021:356; McMillan & Schumacher 2010:355). This provided the researcher access to the thoughts, ideas and memories in the participants' own words, interactively (Meho, 2006:1291; Geyer 2021:358).

The researcher obtained honest, open opinions and sentiments from participants against her expectations. Reflexivity in the role of the researcher is of utmost importance in this instance (cf. 1.10.2). The openness of participants may be ascribed to the "Insider" role, where the researcher is perceived as an experienced and knowledgeable professional who would understand the concerns related to the issues at hand (Leavy 2017:241, Bengry

2021:101). As part of the researcher's ethical obligation, anonymity and confidentiality were also assured in advance as well as throughout the data collection process (cf. 1.11).

This qualitative strategy of online open-ended email interviewing thus brought understanding from the own meaning and experiences of the participants. In contrast, closed-ended, structured quantitative interviews limit participants to single-word answers to elicit the meanings of a researcher (Yin 2011:135). Although the agenda for a semi-structured interview is guided by the interest of the researcher, it provides room for more participant "free-ranging" or spontaneous conversation about the researched phenomenon. (Roulston & Choi 2021:233). The preliminary literature reviews informed and guided the interview questions according to the objectives of this study.

A further benefit of email interviews is their cost-effectiveness since the researcher was spared from long-distance travelling to conduct face-to-face interviews. Electronic format data generated from online interviews do not need much editing. This enabled easier processing and analysis and decreased transcribing costs (Meho, 2006:1287; Geyer 2021:256). Where the researcher initially intended to focus on her circuit group of LSTs and RCTs, she could invite participants over the larger Eden and Central Karoo geographical area. Follow-up and clarification could happen due to convenient access to the participants that according to Hawkins (2018:498) and Geyer (2021:359) ensure accuracy for more trustworthy findings.

While in-depth, online asynchronous interviews enabled the researcher to gather information about the experiences of LSTs and RCTs in professional development and IQMS (Roberts 2011:6, Geyer 2021:356; McMillan & Schumacher 2010:355), Microsoft Teams focus group interviews (Appendix H) allowed for a variety of common perspectives from specialists and experienced support teachers (Rabichund 2011:129).

4.5.6 Microsoft Teams Focus Group Interviews

at a time that suited the participants. According to Geyer (2021:361), Moran and Hofmann (2018:250), focus group interviews allow access to a range of participants who can engage in purposeful discussions. However, focus groups can lack detail about each participant,

an aspect that is covered rather by in-depth individual interviews (cf. 4.8). The LSA participants constituted a group with a similar background (specialised educational needs), common experiences and presumed shared views on the IQMS process (Geyer 2021:361; Morgan & Hofman 2018; 251). The participants were comfortable with each other and freely exchanged views. As such, not only similar views were shared, but also differences or contradictories in standpoints and experiences.

Focus group interviews that last about an hour, with an average group size of six to ten participants are advised (Creswell 2009:232; Kumar 2003:124). Geyer (2021:361) postulates that a minimum of three to 20 is sufficient. A small group does not only allow for a diverse range of perspectives but is also easy to guide and control (Strydom & Bezuidenhout, in Du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.* 2014:183). The researcher concurs with Richie, Lewis and Elam (2003:37) and Strydom and Bezuidenhout (in Du Plooy-Cilliers *et al*. 2014:183), concerning the group size and management of focus groups.

In this study, as already mentioned, the focus group consisted of four LSAs who were available. The researcher experienced that she could handle the group of four effectively within the scheduled one hour, as deemed sufficient by Kumar (2003:124) and Geyer (2021:361). Inputs were easily accommodated by an agreed-upon round table format. The number of 12 interview questions, the total of four participants and the one-hour timeframe suitably aligned to allow efficient focus group execution. Each one of the four participants was allowed enough response time for every one of the 12 questions and could also add to the comments of fellow participants. However, no one was obliged to participate in every round. This provided valuable, in-depth perspectives from LSA concerning the IQMS process of LSTs and RCTs. The researcher postulates that a bigger number of focus group participants, an average group size of ten, as advised by Creswell (2009:232) and Kumar (2003:124), would not have allowed such richness of LSA perceptions.

During the focus group discussions, the researcher had to act as a facilitator/ moderator, since the scheduled moderator was not available on short notice. Morgan (in Given 2008:352) also refers to this as "researcher-led" group discussions, although Richie, Lewis and Elam (2003:271) expound that the researcher adopts more of a listening position at

times. The researcher raised issues or questions that could stimulate free and open group discussion to explore views or interpretations of, and the level of position with reference to the IQMS/CPTD.

Barbour (2021:223) encourages a flexible, thus less structured approach focused on topics that are most important to the participants. All group members were encouraged to express their views with minimum or no direction from the moderator's side. Barbour (2021:223) adds that participants can be encouraged to seek clarification by asking questions from one another and can comment on what they have heard. Such clarification seeking occurred when two LSAs searched for clarity regarding the question on accountability, how are you as an LSA held accountable for implementing IQMS as a member of the DBST? Two LSAs interpreted the word "accountability" as their "responsibility", whereas the two others were not clear on what was asked of them. The discussion around the two terms leads to a valuable understanding of what is expected from the LSAs regarding the IQMS process in their capacity as supervisors.

Despite the challenges of focus groups, such as the gaining of efficiency and loss of depth, participants may be more open to freely participating and expressing their views as part of a group (Geyer 2021:365). Other dynamics that had to be managed by the moderator included the risk of one-person dominance over the groups' discussion or expert-roll adoption, (Geyer 2021:363; Strydom & Bezuidenhout, in Du Plooy-Cilliers *et al*. 2014:183; Yin 2011:142). Participants received the focus group interview schedules in advance and were asked to have them during the interview. The participants had the option to jot down notes per question in advance. The researcher postulates that the participants who responded more or elaborated more on certain questions used the interview schedule to jot down their thoughts in advance. This proved to add to the productive utilization of the scheduled one-hour timeframe, by providing more in-depth, honest sentiments and triggering more interaction and responses from some of the other participants.

Focus group dynamics as included above, were facilitated by establishing certain ground rules as part of the first stage of the session. Strydom and Bezuidenhout (in Du Plooy-Cilliers *et al*. 2014:187) highlight the importance of the researcher/moderator to remain

impartial and build rapport to set participants at ease with him/herself, their fellow group members and the interview setting. Having a pre-prepared shortlist of specific topics or questions to start discussions ensured continuous flow, asking relevant open, breadth-evoking questions, encouraging focused group interaction and participation and pursuing emerging issues (MacDonald & Headlam n.d.:44; Richie, Lewis & Elam 2003:176).

4.5.7 Document Analysis

Leavy (2017:146) and Strydom (2021b:341) explain document analysis as a process where a researcher will investigate texts in a systematic way. Documents can be both primary and secondary text-based files. Secondary data analysis is the reworking or re-analysis of existing or archived data sources, to bring a new perspective to that data or information (Strydom 2021b:347). On the other hand, primary data documents are original sources, produced by researchers and in the case of this study, included transcriptions of interviews and reflexive journal notes (Strydom 2021b:342). This research also employed document analysis by making use of secondary data that will be scrutinised for answering the research question.

The usefulness of document analysis is not only located in its value in terms of data verification or triangulation but also provides supplementary data to enhance understanding of a phenomenon within context (Martin 2013:59; Sekgale 2016:28, Mahlo 2011:96). Mahlo (2011:96) opines that document analysis of significant documents can provide the researcher with critical insight into the challenges of LSTs and RCTs. Likewise, Sekgale (2016:29) advises that any documents about the IQMS and even public documents are valuable for collection and analysis. Various documents were scrutinized and evaluated as part of the theory and literature chapters (cf. Chapter Two; Chapter Three) of this study. Three sets of documents were utilized.

Firstly, three literature reviews scrutinized and compared different learning support job descriptions and SLES documents to track role transformation and related issues. Strydom (2021b:341) supports the use of such official or procedural documents where the history of events or experiences has relevance. Focus also fell on SA policy legislation to provide critical insight into the possible impact that macro systemic changes might impose on the

roles of LSTs and RCTs. Policy documents include The White Paper on Education and Training (DBE 1995); South African Schools Act (SASA) (RSA 1996); White Paper On The Rights Of Persons With Disabilities (RSA 2015); The White Paper 6: Special needs Education – Building an Inclusive Education and training system (DBE 2001) and the Policy on Screening, Identification Assessment and Support (SIAS) (DBE 2014).

Secondly, Chapter Three analysed document sources included amongst others including the Employment of Educators Act No. 76 of 1998; The PAM, No. 170 of 2016 (DBE 2016); The Education Labour Relations Collective Agreement Number 8 of 2003 on IQMS and policies on IQMS; Department of Education Manual on the Implementation of IQMS; SACE and other IQMS-professional development documents.

4.6   Qualitative Data Analysis and Interpretation

The process of data analysis facilitated meaning from the gathered data, by reducing, organising and structuring, interpreting and substantiating such data (De Vos, Strydom, Fouche & Delport 2011, quoted by Bezuidenhoudt & Cronje, in Cilliers *et al.* 2014:232; Van Niekerk 2009:20; Bezuidenhoudt & Cronje, in Cilliers *et al.* 2014:233; Creswell 2009: 185,186; Terre Blanche, Durrheim & Kelly 2006:322).

This study is a Phenomenological-Instrumental case study (cf. 4.4.3) and as such it strived to produce a holistic understanding of the IQMS and professional development phenomenon, especially with respect to the LSTs and RCTs in the Eden and Central Karoo Education District. Primarily, this study started with an interpretive (constructivist) data analysis approach, emphasising the importance of multiple socially constructed realities (Sefotho 2021:7, Leavy 2017:129). An interpretive analysis transpires as data collection and analysis interplay to provide thick descriptions of the characteristics, processes and contexts that embody the IQMS and professional development of LST and RCTs, with a full description of the researcher's role in this process (Kennedy & Thornberg 2018:61; Schurink *et al.* 2021b:400; a:235).

The researcher ultimately had to make meaning of the collected data. Creswell (2008:207) and Schurink *et al.* (2021b:400) argue that the choice of data analysis approach depends

on the researcher's intention. Where quantitative researchers mostly employ deductive reasoning, qualitative researchers largely favour inductive approaches (Kennedy & Thornberg 2018:61; Leavy 2017:9; Creswell 2013:45). Kennedy and Thornberg (2018:50) and Roestenburg (2021:199) explain that deductive reasoning operates from pre-defined general theory to specific themes, giving rise to predetermined schemes. Contrasting, induction allows for patterns and associations to derive from data. Kennedy and Thornberg (2018:51) distinguish between conclusions based on evidence from data (inductive), versus the use of evidence that supports conclusions (deductive approach).

Researchers, however, explain that qualitative data analysis can be deductive, inductive, or a combination of these approaches (Creswell 2013:45; Kennedy & Thornberg 2018:50; Schurink *et al.* 2021c:403). Although Yin (2011:93) describes deductive and inductive approaches as contrasting, Schurink *et al.* (2021:403) and Creswell (2013:45) are of the view that the two approaches are not mutually exclusive. The two approaches should thus not be considered independent events, but should both be involved at different stages of the analysis process. An overall inductive approach was adopted for this study and will be elaborated on next.

4.6.1   Overall Inductive Approach

This research employs an overall inductive approach that endeavours to organise data into categories, identify underlying patterns and relationships and develop themes from the bottom up (Creswell 2009:185; 2014; McMillan & Schumacher 2010:367; Schurink, Roestenburg & Fouche 2021:403; Leavy 2017:152). Starting with specific data, ending in categories and patterns, will according to McMillan and Schumacher (2010:367) and Leavy (2017:152) facilitate meaning from the data. According to Yin (2011:309), this type of induction will eventually ground the findings in the original reality of the participants. Creswell (2009:175,185) explains a bottom-up approach to qualitative inductive data analysis that builds patterns, categories and themes.

Figure 4.3 below, illustrates the inductive, interactive, iterative patterns and association generating analysis process.

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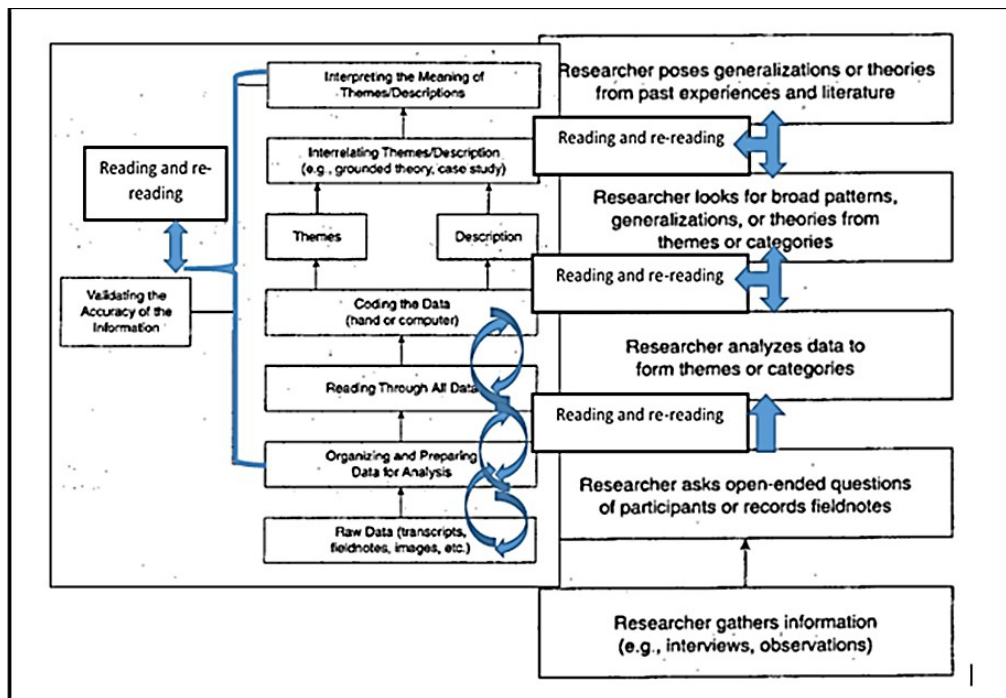
Figure 4.3: Creswell (2009:63, 185) Qualitative, bottom-up approach to inductive data analysis, adapted

The process as illustrated above entails the whole data analysis process from data preparation onwards. It should by no means be interpreted as a linear or hierarchical process, but rather as an interactive, iterative practice (Creswell 2009:185; Yin 2011:186; Schurink *et al*, 2021c:403), Creswell (2013:178) describes data analysis as rather a spiral process. Furthermore, McMillan and Schumacher (2010:369) and Leedy and Ormrod (2010:152) reason that there is no one right way of qualitative data analysis. However, the scholars warn that in finding their own way of analysis, researchers are still guided by general principles of analysis.

The mere fact that the researcher in this study selected the particular IQMS and professional development issue of LSTs and RCTs, implies a previous judgement about what is an important subject for research. This was a values and concepts dependent choice, which assisted in formulating the overall purpose and importance of this research (Gray n.d.:18; Yin 2011:95). Although the IQMS and professional development related values and concepts might be perceived as preconceived schemes (deductive approach), the researcher endeavoured to allow the evidence to emerge from the experiences and

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understandings of the participants, attesting to the inductive foundation of this study. As suggested by Schurink *et al.* (2021:403), the intertwined data analysis processes build meaning of the multiple-source raw data that in the case of this study include qualitative online, asynchronous, in-depth interviewing, focus group transcripts and document reviews (see section 4.8 above).

4.6.2 Data Analysis Steps

The data analysis steps will firstly explain the data organisation and preparation, and secondly the detailed analysis process that was subdivided into a manual and electronic engagement with responses.

4.6.2.1 Data organization and preparation

The first step in the process was to prepare the data. Before the collected data could be analysed, it was sorted and arranged into different types, depending on the sources of information (Creswell 2009:185; 2013). The researcher familiarised herself with the data by reading and re-reading through all the data. This assisted the researcher to gain a general sense of the information, as to reflect on its overall meaning. Even the development of ideas and theories about the roles of learning support, the IQMS and professional development of support teachers, contact with gatekeepers and setting up interviews can contribute to preliminary comprehension of the meaning of data (Terre Blanche *et al.* 2006:323).

An important step in the data preparation process entailed compiling an excel spreadsheet that formed the researcher's first database (Schurink *et al.* 2021b:403). The email interview responses from the individual interview sheets were copied verbatim and pasted onto the excel spreadsheet document. The excel spreadsheet with the email interview responses comprises 28 columns. Columns 1 to 8 contain the demographic details of the participants (cf. Chapter Five, Table 5.1).

The LSTs and RCTs were assigned codes for anonymity purposes, etc., LST 1 to 16 and RCT 1 to RCT4. Columns 9 to 18 consist of the online email interview responses, organised per interview question. O'Gorman and Drudy (2011:144) refer to this overview of participants' profile knowledge and views as a "verbal picture" of the participant group, while

McMillan and Schumacher (2010:370) refer to a visual review that enables researchers to familiarise themselves with transcribed data (Bezuidenhoudt & Cronje, in Cilliers *et al.* 2014:236). Even though the interview question might be perceived as preconceptions (cf. 4.8 above), the researcher was very mindful not to make hasty conclusions. This was only the starting point to order and organise the data effectively. The transcription of the Team's focus group interview will be discussed further below in this section.

Data from online, asynchronous, in-depth interviewing and focus group interviews were transcribed, interpreted and analysed. These include the beliefs, thoughts and perceptions of LSTs and RCTs and other stakeholders. Throughout this immersion process, the researcher made notes and used index cards and spreadsheets for easy, meaningful arrangements. Schurink *et al.* (2021b:403) and Leavy (2017:136) propose memoing, by making reflective notes that include remarks, questions and self-reminders of thoughts as related to the text. This in itself was already part of the coding process. These scholars advise that such notes can increase trustworthiness as they can serve as evidence of the process that was followed.

4.6.2.2 Detailed analysis process

After initial reading and self-immersion into the text, a detailed analysis and coding process commenced. Table 4.1 (below), further illustrates Creswell's (2002) inductive coding process, as demonstrated by Thomas (2006:242).

Table 4.1: A General Inductive Approach for Analysing Qualitative Evaluation Data (Thomas 2006:242, American Journal of Evaluation)

The Coding Process in Inductive Analysis				
Initial reading of text data	Identify specific text segments related to objectives	Label the segments of text to create categories	Reduce overlap and redundancy among the categories	Create a model incorporating most important categories
Many pages of text	Many segments of text	30 to 40 categories	15 to 20 categories	3 to 8 categories

Source: Adapted from Creswell (2002, p. 266, Figure 9.4) by permission of Pearson Education, Inc. (© 2002, Upper Saddle River, NJ).

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The above-illustrated process should again be interpreted within a continuous back-and-forth read-and re-reading perspective. (Schurink et al. 2021b:406; Creswell 2013:45) explain the interconnected process of coding, categorisation and theme creation as follows including coding attempts to make sense of several pieces of information gathered from the field or during interviews. Connections between the separate chunks or codes, including similarities of meaning, can produce categories. Categories assisted the researcher is clearly describing what has been observed, making data more manageable and conceptually organising findings related to the IQMS and professional development phenomenon.

Yin (2011:178) and Creswell (2009:175) refer to the breaking down action as the disassembling phase, where the researcher is not bound to a fixed coding routine. The researcher opted for a two-phased approach that started with manual engagement with the responses, followed by a more formal Microsoft word processing analysis. Firstly, an elaboration on the manual analysis process.

a) Manual engagement with responses

The manual analysis resulted in seven manual landscape-format drafts. The first round (3 sheets) contained initial meaning elements from responses to questions 1 to 10 (Appendix L). After reading and re-reading the researcher started to plot the meaning segments of the first respondent, working through all the questions. The researcher proceeded with the rest of the participants, again question by question. Identified segments involve words, *in vivo* codes (exact words), sentences or phrases of the relevant information units per response. Working through participants 1 to 4, the researcher started to notice similar responses, wordings, terms and/or different terms with similar or more or less similar meanings. These units of meaning became the initial coding elements under which the participants' numbers /codes were plotted or grouped. The same process continued throughout both the manual and electronic analysis stages, which will be elaborated on below. These initial codes are referred to as open or level 1 codes (Yin 2011:188; Kennedy & Thornberg 2018:57; Schurink *et al.* 2021b:40). As recommended by Bezuidenhout and Cronje (in Du Plooy-

Cilliers *et al.* 2014:237) the specific research questions of this current study led the researcher in her identification of the coding units that she needed to use.

The second manual round of level one coding, allowed the researcher to become aware of ways in which the initial codes relate and to recognize potential categories (Yin 2011:188). The researcher combined different combinations of questions onto A4 landscape pages, to enable making correlations and identifying dominant trends and patterns between responses (Appendix M). The questions combined in this series entailed questions 4, 2 and 10, namely the perceptions of participants regarding IQMS effectiveness and Contribution to professional Development and the benefits of participation in IQMS/CPTD. The landscape layout with different combinations of questions and responses allowed good overviews of the information that assisted in making comparisons and identifying patterns. The researcher used coloured arrows to combine related/contrasting meaning units.

The third manual round progressed to level 2 or category codes (Yin 2011:188), which already started with the recognition of potential categories in which the level 1 open codes may fall. The researcher needed a wider range for a better overview and correlation. The A4-size pages were swapped with A3 paper size. The landscape layouts again enabled a more effective cross-correlation of responses. The different combinations of questions entailed questions 1,7,8,3 and 9 (Appendix N). Keeping the main research question in mind, these entailed the concepts of the IQMS, professional development, the link between the IQMS and CPTD and the perceived challenges with both the IQMS and CPTD. Again, colour coding assisted in highlighting similarities and/or differences.

The fourth manual draft of questions contained only questions 4 and 10, referring to the effectiveness and benefits of the IQMS and continuous professional development. These two correlations allowed for effective cross-correlation between the initial codes. Colour coding again served a valuable organising purpose.

The last and fifth manual draft structured questions 5,6,14, which entailed the roles of the principal in the IQMS process, DOE/ district/Learning support advisers/ other organizations. Colour codes were again used to identify commonalities and/or differences. The rest of the

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interview data for questions 15 to 18 were more electronic analysis to enable refinement and conversion to visual presentations (cf. Chapter Five).

b) Electronic engagement with responses

The second phase, as with the manual engagement (cf. 4.9.2.2 above), entailed three rounds of electronic analysis formats. In the first round, the manual drafts were refined into several Microsoft Word format drafts, which illustrates the iterative nature of a coding approach (Bezuidenhoudt & Cronje, in Cilliers *et al.* 2014:242).

In the first Word draft, the exact combinations of questions for the manual phase were employed for the Word format sheets. Response codes (segments) were copied and pasted from the Excel sheet into the Microsoft Word format/templates. Here, the same units of meaning of the manual stage were used as coding elements. The word-find-function of Microsoft Word assisted to identify additional as well as similar and/or opposite words and units of meanings as to those that were already uncovered during the manual analysis stage. The following table (cf. Table 4.2, below) presents an example of an electronic Microsoft word analysis.

Table 4.2: Example of an Electronic Microsoft Word Analysis

	4. What is your overall perception of the effectiveness of IQMS to promote/contribute to PD of LSTs/RCTs?	2. How does (has) the IQMS contributed towards your development?	10. What benefits do you see for LSTs/RCTs participating IQMS/CPTD?
RCT1	Personal Development can be achieved if you use your time correctly and if get the necessary assistance superiors	My LSA (Beatrice Treurnicht) has been great in organising training sessions personal and virtual	Maybe the need for more schools of skills and resources will become available and a concerted effort will be made to equip LST/RCT classes with that which is so urgently needed to make these classes conducive to learning and teaching.
RCT2	It is always good practice to identify needs and to set goals for improvement. To me this is a lifestyle. In many other cases, it seems to just be empty words.	Not at all. I would engage in personal development and accountability anyway.	It depends how it is managed. It could mean very little or it could be highly beneficial.
LST3/5	I consider it effective in respect to development. Training needed are easily identified. Sometimes the training can be provided within the circuit. Other more specializes training can be sourced from WCED or other organizations. It is however not effective in addressing all the aspects of Learning Support. Learning Support's scope is very wide and sometimes specialized training from organizations outside government can be expensive.	It points out areas that I need to develop more. In teaching there is always change and new ways of contributing to the process of learning. By bringing focus to areas that need development, the necessary steps can be taken to make sure development takes place. The LSA in our circuit takes areas where development is needed to use as an indicator as what training should be done. Sometimes the areas of development can be addressed within our circuit and fellow LSE's present the training.	For personal development it is great. The quality assurance is an integral part of teaching. Areas can be identified for development with the necessary proof. The scope that we as learning support teachers cover are not covered by the IQMS process. We are limited by the IQMS process.
LST4/6	IQMS dra definitief by tot Profesionele Ontwikkeling. Jy stel vir jouself doelwitte en ook 'n tydperk waarin jy daardie doelwitte wil bereik en probeer tot die beste van jou vermoë om daardie doelwitte te bereik. IQMS is ook deurlopend en dit motiveer my om my doelwitte te bereik sodat daar gesien kan word dat ek myself wil ontwikkel in Leerderondersteuning.	Jy sien waar daar tekorte is en waarop jy jouself kan verbeter, jy stel vir jouself doelwitte en probeer om daarop te verbeter. Dit help dat daar deurgans ontwikkeling is, sodat jy as opvoeder nie stagneer.	Om jaarliks te groei en vir jouself doelwitte te stel.
LST5/7	Dit hang alles af wat jy daarvan maak. Dit kan net nog 'n opdrag wees om te doen sodat jy die 1 persent verhoging te kan kry. As jy die waarde daarvan in jou eie ontwikkeling besef word dit iets positief om jouself mee te meet en verbeter om te kan groei en ontwikkel. Vir my persoonlik het dit waarde omdat ek daarvan hou om te kyk waar kan ek my werk verbeter.	Ek kan sien waaraan moet ek meer aandag gee en bietjie erkenning kry vir wat ek reg doen. Dit is ook die spreekbuis aan werkgewer oor watter opleiding of ondersteuning ek nog nodig het. (Needs identification Tool)	Ons het ook nodig om op hoogte te bly en onsself te verbeter en dit is die stelsels wat daarvoor in plek is. Evalueer jou werksprestasie en persoonlike ontwikkeling in die jaar. Waaraan jy meer aandag moet gee. Watter opleiding jy voor moet kyk en probeer doen. My werkgewer kan sien waar ek meer ondersteuning of opleiding nodig het. So hul kan hul personeel se ontwikkeling beplan vir die

In the second electronic round of analysis, responses in the Word Format drafts were summarised into one table, utilizing the exact coding segments for the separate Word format tables. The sub-questions of the five distinct sections from the email interview schedule functioned as the main organisers for the coding segment summary (cf. Table 4.3 below). As for the second round of manual analysis above, coding segments could be combined, enabling effective dominant trends identification, association, and comparisons. This particular table included columns for high ratio responder codes and to indicate similar and/or different responses.

Table 4.3: Example of a summarised second phase electronic Word Format draft

1. Concept of IQMS	1.3 IQMS CONTRIBUTION TO DEVELOPMENT (Question 2) *Training/Development*	Developmental Needs identification /Point out areas of need/specific developmental Need identification: assist Role players to develop you/ preekbuis aan werkgewer oor watter opleiding of ondersteuning (5)	RCT5,LST3,4,5,9,12
		Promotes accountability/Responsibility	RCT4, LST9,11
		Doelwitstelling vir Selfverbetering	LST1,3,4
		support for needs and development, continued growth	RCT5,LST9
		Deurgaanse ontwikkeling /Verhoed stagnering (Nooit te oud om te leer nie)	LST4,11
		Measure /Evaluates the performance of the educator/ in the workplace	RCT4,LST13
		Professional development (Holistiese) volgens Prestasie aanduiders	LST1,14
		it has NOT been effective for me towards my development	LST7
		lately because it an fixed document which	LST6
		does not cater for 2021 challenges we face in our classrooms and school environment	
		Not at all: IT'S A ONCE A YEAR EXERCISE THAT IS OF NO IMPORTANCE/	LST6
		Raamwerk waarbinne kan verbeter	LST1
		You will obtain points for development / AS LONG AS YOU GET ABOVE THE MINIMUM MARK.	LST12/LST6
		Marks: IS DECIDED BY YOUR PEER THAT IS GRADING YOU. EVERYTHING IS A PERCEPTION TESTING THE PERCEPTION OF YOUR ADVISOR/PEER'S OF YOU AS A TEACHER	LST6
		Always change and new ways of contributing to learning process	LST3
		It monitors the effectiveness of teaching and learning	RCT4

Tables 4.2 and 4.3 above encapsulate part of the rigorous analysis process. The tables display how the exact coding segments from the Microsoft word response were organized according to the distinct sub-questions.

The third consecutive electronic round of analysis (cf. Table 4.4 below), involved the response codes from different combinations of all the interview questions, further allowing for patterns, similarities and differences to find answers to the main research question and the ensuing sub-questions.

Table 4.4: Response codes from different combinations of all the interview questions

2. How IQMS CONTRIBUTE TO DEVELOPMENT		4. Perceived EFFECTIVENESS of IQMS TO PROMOTE PD		10 Benefits to participation in IQMS/CPTD	
Developmental Needs identification / Point out areas of need/specific developmental Needs identification: assist Role players to develop you/ spreekbuis aan werkgewer oor watter opleiding of ondersteuning (5)	RCT5,LST3, 4,5,9, 12	Training needs identified/highlighted /Needs awareness	LST3,LST10,13	Professional & Personal skills Development: Attributes/ Groei	RCT 3,4, LST1,LST3,5,8,13, 14
Promotes accountability/Responsibility	RCT4, LST9, 11	Eie wil/persoon tot persoon/ selfverbetering	LST1,LST5	Bly op hoogte/ Keep updated/Guides /Info gathering	LST5,RCT4
Doelwitstelling vir Selfverbetering	LST1,3,4	1 persent salarisverhoging	LST1,LST5	Improvement to tackle challenges (Agility)	LST7,LST1
support for needs and development, continued growth	RCT5,LST9	Contributes to Professional Development	LST3,4, RCT4	quality assurance tool /Evalueer werksprestasie	LST3,RCT5
Deurgaanse ontwikkeling /Verhoed stagnering (Nooit te oud om te leer nie)	LST4,11	supporting tool: gained valuable insights, encouragement and support	LST7,12	Doelwitstelling wat lei tot groei	LST4,15
Measure /Evaluates the performance of the educator/ in the workplace	RCT4,LST13	Achieved with Time and assistance	RCT1	Urgent Needs identification: more resources and Special schools	RCT1,5
Professional development (Holistiese) volgens Prestasie aanduiders	LST1,14	Verpligte profesionele ontwikkeling	LST1	150 points through PD	LST9
it has NOT been effective for me towards development lately because it an **fixed document** which does not cater for 2021 challenges we face in our classrooms and school environment	LST7 LST6	Om Posbeskrywing te adresseer	LST1	Benefits depends how it is managed	RCT2
Not at all: IT'S A ONCE A YEAR EXERCISE THA NO IMPORTANCE/	LST6	Monitoring Tool	LST2	provides a platform for discussions regarding challenges	LST2
Raamwerk waarbinne kan verbeter	LST1	Doelwitstelling om deurlopend vermoe te verbeter	LST4	acknowledges the positive contributions made towards learning support	LST2
You will obtain points for development / AS LONG AS YOU GET ABOVE THE MINIMUM MARK.	LST12/LST6	Motivering/self motivering om doelwittete bereik	LST4	ensures that the LST is adequately / effectively equipped	LST2
Marks: IS DECIDED BY YOUR PEER THAT IS GRADING YOU.	LST6	Proof (sodat daar gesien kan word dat ek myself wil ontwikkel)	LST4	Proof for development	LST3

Following the third electronic round, the researcher endeavoured to streamline the analysis even further. The exact combination of interview questions that were used in round 3 above, was tabled again, but this time, similar responses across the questions were rearranged side by side (cf. Table 4.5 below).

Table 4.5: Similar responses across questions rearranged side by side

2. How IQMS CONTRIBUTE TO DEVELOPMENT		4. Perceived EFFECTIVENESS of IQMS TO PROMOTE PD		10 Benefits to participation in IQMS/CPTD	
Developmental Needs identification / Point out areas of need/specific developmental Needs identification: assist Role players to develop you/ preekbuis aan werkgewer oor watter opleiding of ondersteuning (5)	RCT5, LST3,4, 5,9, 12	Training needs identified/highlighted/ Needs awareness always good practice to identify needs/ and to set goals for improvement/ To Assist realise where I still need improvement	LST3, LST10,13 RCT2 LST8	Urgent Needs identification: more resources and Special schools	RCT1,5
Spreekbuis aan werkgewer oor watter opleiding of ondersteuning	LST5			Werkgewer kan sien waar ek meer ondersteuning of opleiding nodig het/ ensures that the LST is adequately / effectively equipped Inform Staff development planning	LST5 LST2
Lead to relevant training as well as information sharing sessions.	LST2	training from organizations outside government can be expensive	LST3	Watter opleiding jy voor moet kyk en probeer doen.	LST5
Deurgaanse ontwikkeling /Verhoed Stagnering (Nooit te oud om te leer nie)	LST4,11	Verpligte profesionele ontwikkeling	LST1	Improvement to tackle challenges (Agility)	LST7,LST1
support for needs and development, continued growth	RCT5,LST9	Contributes to Professional Development/ Growth in LS	LST3,4, 15,RCT4	Professional & Personal skills Development: Attributes/ Groei	RCT 3,4, LST1,3,5, 8,13,14
Doelwitstelling vir Selfverbetering	LST1,3,4	Doelwitstelling om deurlopend vermoe te verbeter	LST4	Doelwitstelling wat lei tot groei	LST4,15
Assure that development takes place	LST3	supporting tool: gained valuable insights, encouragement and support	LST7,12	Bly op hoogte/ Keep updated/Guides /Info gathering	LST5,RCT4
Promotes accountability/Responsibility	RCT4, LST9, 11	Proof (sodat daar gesien kan word dat ek myself wil ontwikkel) To me this is a lifestyle.	LST4/RCT2	Proof for development	LST3
it has NOT been effective for me towards my development lately because it an **fixed document** which does not cater for 2021 challenges we face in our classrooms and school environment	LST7 LST6	KRA's should be more aligned to our actual core functions. not effective in addressing all the aspects Learning. Support/ scope is very wide	LST2 LST3	all need to go through the same measuring tool...appropriate level scope that we as learning support teachers cover are not covered by the IQMS process We are limited by the IQMS process.	LST10 LST3 LST3

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This process above also allowed the filtering of dissimilar and/or irrelevant responses. These were listed at the end of the table, to be used later. Ritchie, Spencer and O'Connor (in Ritchie 2003:229) advise that researchers should not dismiss any material as irrelevant, even though reasons for inclusions thereof may not be clear straight away.

Every round of analysis afforded the researcher additional reflection opportunities (Bezuidenhoudt & Cronje, in Cilliers *et al.* 2014:236). Every re-shuffling of ideas and finer trimming strategies were noted, to enable more in-depth scrutiny of data responses. Even reminders to revisit particular data were noted. This was particularly critical in identifying dissimilarities

4.6.2.3 Use of the coding process to generate a description

The coding process should generate a description of the setting or people as well as categories or themes for analysis (Creswell 2009:185). The description of the process was detailed to render information about participants and events in the research setting. Then the coding was used to generate a small number of themes or categories. These themes are the ones that appear as major findings in Chapter Five. Creswell (2009:185) further advises that themes should display multiple perspectives from individuals and be supported by diverse quotations and specific evidence.

4.6.2.4 Narrative description and presentation of themes

Themes and categories will be displayed in the form of tables as well as graphic representation (Chapter Five). The descriptions of themes will be represented in narrative passages to convey the findings of the analysis, discussion of chronological events and themes with sub-themes (Creswell 2008:189). Many qualitative researchers also use visuals, figures, or tables as aids to the discussions, and will also be employed in Chapter Five of this research.

4.6.2.5 Interpreting or meaning of the data

The final step will entail making meaning of the data required through this study, by asking. Lincoln and Guba (1985, cited in Creswell 2008:189) advise that a researcher must reflect

on what lessons were learned. Data will also be compared with and based on literature to ensure the final step of meaningful integration and summarization.

4.7 Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness refers to the accuracy and believability of data or the extent of confidence and acceptance of a reality that is accurately reflected (Leavy 2017:154; Cropley 2021:37). Leavy further argues that trustworthiness also means the validity and believability of projects' quality and methodology (Sefotho 2021:11). Schurink *et al.* (2021b:393) posit that trustworthiness is measurable by dependability, conformability, transferability and credibility. Constructs of credibility and trustworthiness measures taken in this study are described below.

4.7.1 Reliability

Reliability, as relevant to qualitative studies, also refers to sustainability which assists in the strengthening of data, while validity refers to the well groundedness of such strong data. Soundness in evidence is especially essential for the generalisation or transfer of findings to other contexts (Richie, Lewis & Elam 2003:270). Richie, Lewis and Elam (2003:270) explain that reliability and validity concern the replicability of qualitative research findings. Replication in qualitative studies is however not encouraged by constructivist researchers (Hughes & Sharrock, 1997; Marshall & Rossman, 1999; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Holstein & Gubrium, 1997, as cited in Richie, Lewis & Elam 2003:270). Reasons offered include the dynamisms of qualitative research and the fact that multiple realities and contexts exist. Additionally, Anfara (in Given 2008:934) guards against the reduction of qualitative research to a practice of "cookbook" methodology. The purpose of the current qualitative study is not to generalise, but as reiterated by Koonin (in Du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.* 2014:253), rather to provide in-depth understanding and therefore, trustworthiness in such results.

4.7.2 Transferability (Applicability)

Generalisation is sometimes referred to as transferability in qualitative research (Strydom 2021c:395). Schurink *et al.* (2021b:393) explain transferability in qualitative as the extent to which the findings can be applied to other similar settings or contexts and deliver the same

results. Transferability rather than generalization also refers to the "fittingness" to transfer meaning between two contexts. Fittingness of data in this study depends on its reliability or groundedness and soundness of such strong data as explained in 4.9.1 above. Transferability in this inquiry was strengthened by careful sample selection and a rich description of issues and contexts under study (Schurink *et al.* 2021b:395). Verbatim accounts made full use of the original data that support the phenomena under study, including the participants' real-life issues, language and interpretations.

4.7.3 Credibility (True Value)

Credibility, more closely related to validity in quantitative research, is suggested as equivalent to reliability in qualitative research (Leavy 2017:154). It refers to project quality, rigorous methodology employment, and subsequent believability of a study. Accuracy, truth and believability are directly linked to trustworthiness as explained by Mertler and Charles (cited in Sekgale 2016:32). Mohajan (2018:42) refers to the true value and believability of results based on the context of the participants. In the current research, the participants (LSTs and RCTs) must find the researcher's description of their experiences with IQMS and professional development truthful and believable. This study involved support professionals with first-hand experience of the IQMS/CPTD processes and their accompanying challenges within their unique contexts. The researcher conducted in-depth online interviews with LSTs and RCTs who experienced two or more IQMS-cycles, as well as a follow-up online focus group interview with their LSAs. Thick descriptions of participants' sentiments and opinions accounts were supplemented by reflexive journal notes. Therefore, the researcher was able to provide exact delivery of various perspectives and experiences, which according to Creswell (2013:250) will add to the validity or true value of data. Triangulation of multiple data from the online open-ended email interviews, online focus group interviews, document analysis and research journal reflexive notes enhanced believability and trustworthiness of this study.

4.7.4 Dependability (Consistency)

A credible and dependable study accurately and rightly describes the phenomenon in question and give a layout of procedures and instruments in a way that others can attempt to collect data in similar conditions (Given & Saumure, in Given 2008:896).

Trochim and Donnelly (2007, in Kumar 2011:172), ask that if one could observe the same thing twice, one would get similar results. Dependability thus relates to reliability to enable replication of studies (cf. 4.9.1), as well as believability (cf. 4.9.3), implicating that findings should accurately express the meanings intended by the participants. In this regard, dependability recognizes that contexts of research are evolving. Koonin (in Du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.* 2014:259) argues that particular knowledge of or experience with a specific phenomenon cannot be understood as a singular moment in time. For this reason, the researcher was constantly aware of and kept track of all divergence from the original design in the proposal. Changing contexts and subsequent alterations in the research design were tracked and documented thoroughly (cf. 4.7 above).

4.7.5 Confirmability (Neutrality)

According to Koonin (in Du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.* 2014:259), confirmability refers to how well the collected data support the findings and interpretation of the researcher. Interpretations and findings should match the data (Given & Saumure, in Given 2008:896). The researcher describes the research process in full to assist others to examine the research design and data. The use of different sources of information (data) from online email and focus group interviews, document analysis and research journal reflexive notes enabled triangulation whereby clear and precise research findings could be improved and confirmed (Richie & Lewis, 2003:275)

As such, others can come to similar conclusions as the researcher (Schurink *et al.* 2021b:394) and subsequently confirm or corroborate the results (Kumar 2011:172).

4.7.6 Reflexivity

Credibility, and thus trustworthiness, were established through reflexivity (McMillan & Schumacher 2010:332; Snape & Spencer, in Ritchie & Lewis, 2003:20). Reflexivity assumes that researchers are as much a part of research as the individuals being researched (Leavy 2017:49; Flick 2018a:6). According to Morse *et al.* (2018:568) and Leavy (2017:137), researchers have awareness about their reflexiveness, or they are self-questioning when they investigate and thus open about their own bias. The researchers reflected upon and offered ways in which bias might creep in and acknowledged that her background and beliefs can be relevant (cf. 1.1). A research reflex journal assisted the researcher in this regard.

4.7.7 Ensuring Trustworthiness

In qualitative research, stringent research processes are essential to guarantee that findings are credible and trustworthy, without compromising relevance (Mahlo 2011:96). Trustworthiness and reliability are inter-related terms in their underlying meaning (own interpretation). If one trusts in something, one might rely on or believe that it will produce the desired outcome. Likewise, one relies on something because of the trust or belief that you have in it. Many scholars use the terms such as reliability, conformability, trustworthiness and dependability as resonating more with the goals and values of qualitative research (Richie, Lewis & Elam 2003:271). Each of these terms has its own unique but inter-related meaning and function as expanded on here in this Section 4.9. Together, the terms are core to the trustworthiness of a study, and as such researchers should ensure the existence and measurement of these qualities in their work.

Trustworthiness was assured by attending to issues of reliability (cf. 4.9.1), transferability (cf. 4.9.2), credibility (cf. 4.9.3), and dependability (cf. 4.9.4) and confirmability (cf. 4.9.5) and as elaborated on above in this section. A full account was given of the real issues of LSTs and RCTs regarding their experiences with the IQMS process. No information was omitted from the detailed descriptions of their perceptions of and experiences with IQMS. Constructs of trustworthiness were achieved by:

- Methodological procedures, sources and research instruments are explained in-depth so that readers and participants can make sense of it (Sefotho 2021:11).

- Participants in the study appropriately are LSTs and RCTs with experience in the topics under study that is, the IQMS and professional development. Additional views on the particular topic were also obtained from colleagues such as fellow LSAs and (proper ethical protocol was adhered to).

- Appropriate multiple data-gathering techniques (including open-ended online interviews and focus groups) were used to allow participants to define their context and meaning.

- Triangulation allowed different insights into the issue at hand and was obtained by the use of multiple methods of data collection that included open-ended, online email interviews, focus group interviews and document analysis and reflexive notes (Flick 2018b:532; Cropley 2021:116). The researchers argue that triangulation assumes that the use of different sources of information will help both to confirm and to improve the clarity or precision, of research findings.

- Conducting in-depth online interviews with LSTs and RCTs who experienced two or more IQMS-cycles. It allowed for trust-building and enough time for meaningful insight into the various participants' experiences and views.

- A thick description of the issue at hand will allow readers to draw their own conclusions from the data presented (Schurink *et al*. 2021b:395; Leavy 2017:134; Creswell 2013:235).

- A verbatim recording of data as articulated and described by the participants. (Knoblauch, Schnettler & Tuma 2018:375).

- Member checking where conclusions were returned to participants, after analysing all the data, to determine whether they agreed or not. (Tiidenberg 2018:475; Schurink *et al.* 2021b:397).

- Cross-referencing interview questions to the study's research questions to get accurate construction of the participants' perspectives (Anfara, in Given 2008:932).

As advanced by researchers in Section 4.9.6, credibility was also established through reflexivity in the following ways:

- Potential researcher bias was minimized by employing multiple data collection strategies (cf. 4.8 above) to verify findings (Leavy 2017:170)

- Showing as much as possible the procedures that have led to a particular set of conclusions (cf. 4.8 above).

- Participants recognise, by allowing the participants to speak for themselves to capture the essence of their experiences (McMillan and Schumacher 2010:333).

- A field log/reflex journal combination to openly acknowledge the researcher's interpretation following from her background with IQMS and personal development. Chronologically keeping a document of sight visits to keep an open account of how assumptions and values might have affected data collection, interpreting of results any other matters that might have biased the research (Flick 2018b:532; Cropley 2021:116).

4.8   Research Ethics

Yin (2011:7) and Creswell (2014) explain qualitative research as a social science method that explores the meaning of people's lives under real-world conditions. The scholar further highlights the need for a strong sense of ethics that should be directly related to specific procedures for the protection of human subjects. This claim is further supported by the following quote.

> "All social research involves consent, access and associated ethical issues since it is based on data from people about people" (Punch, quoted by Marais 2007:12).

Creswell (2013:65) and Strydom and Roestenburg (2021:117) support Yin and Punch with their statement that social sciences emphasize researchers' primary responsibility to adhere to ethical guidelines and to protect the most vulnerable populations. Ethical research ensures the protection of the rights and interests of human participants and forms an integral part of planning and research methodology. According to Leavy (2017:24) and Mertens (2018:33), ethics are generally considered to deal with beliefs about what is right or wrong from a moral viewpoint. In this research study, the researcher's responsibility was

to ensure that ethical standards are adhered to. The following measures were therefore adhered to:

- Research permission and ethical clearance were requested from and granted by the Research Ethics committee of the College of Education of the UNISA (Appendix A).

- Permission was also requested and was granted by the WCED and the relevant education district to conduct a study within the identified district (Appendix B and C).

- Permission was requested and was granted per email by the Director as well as the head of the Specialised Learner and Educator Support (SLES) (Appendix C).

- Permission was also requested and was granted per email by the director of the Eden and Central Karoo Education District and from the relevant circuit managers to conduct research in the selected schools (Appendix C).

- Permission was requested and was granted per email by the Eden and Central Karoo Learning Support Advisors (Appendix E).

- Permission was requested and was granted per email by the Eden and Central Karoo Principals of particular schools with Learning Support Teachers (Appendix D).

- Participants were kept informed regarding the intended use of data, the progress of research and the provision of given feedback in writing once the research was completed.

- Informed consent was obtained from participants with the assurance of complete confidentiality and anonymity (Appendices F and G).

- Assurance was given on the issues of human dignity, protection against harm, and access to information (Appendices F and G).

- Assurance of freedom of choice, meaning that participants were informed that they have the right to decline their consent at any stage of the research without giving any reasons and without penalty, are free to refuse to answer certain interview questions and can object to the use of data-gathering devices (UNISA 2016:14) (Appendices F and G).

- Assurance of freedom of expression, as open-ended interview questions allowed participants with opportunities for self-expression and elaboration (Appendices F and G).

- Anonymity was ensured by assigning each participant as well as their respective schools in the study with a code, as to protect the participants' identity and right to privacy (Tiidenberg 2018:472; Leavy 2017:108). Code examples for LSTs are LST1 and LST2. Code examples for schools would be S1, S2, S3, etc.

- For further safety and anonymity, all data and field notes were securely locked in a cabinet.

- Assurance was given that the focus group online recording of interviews would be locked away confidentially until transcriptions were completed and that research recordings would be preserved for one year after submission of the report of the results (Appendix F).

- Fairness was strengthened by explaining to participants how and why they have been identified; clarifying the nature and extent of their participation; informing the participants of any possible future use of the information obtained; ensuring them that no information will be used to the detriment of any participant.

- The researcher properly acknowledged the direct and indirect contributions of colleagues such as fellow LSAs.

- The informed consent states that because of the nature of focus groups, the researcher cannot guarantee the confidentiality or anonymity aspect of it. The participants were requested to respect each other and not share information outside the group. Therefore, while the researcher would always try to lay the basis for this through preliminary ground rules, participants should also always be aware that what they say might be disclosed beyond the group.

4.9 Chapter Summary

This chapter aimed to outline the research method and design, with a description of the population, sample, and the instruments that were used to answer the research questions. Procedures were discussed, study participants described and data collection elucidated. Interview questions were also deliberated. These procedures demarcated the details of

how the study was conducted and who participated in the study. A constructivist-interpretivist theory methodology was employed to develop a theory on the professional development of LSTs and RCTs. All study participants contributed to this theory and framework development by sharing their experiences with and perspectives on IQMS and professional development. The goal of Chapter Five is to deliver the study results and to demonstrate that the researcher followed the methodology as was described in Chapter Four.

CHAPTER FIVE

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, AND INTERPRETATION

5.1 Introduction

This study voices the perceptions of Learning Support and Resource Class Teachers in the Eden and Central Karoo Education District, concerning their Integrated Quality Management System and related professional development. This is proposed to serve as a starting point to generate data that may be applied to enhance their development framework for optimal professional growth. Preceding, Chapter Four outlined the research methodology, including the design and investigative procedures. As elaborated on in Chapter Four, qualitative online, asynchronous, in-depth interviewing combined with Microsoft Teams focus group interviews were employed in an attempt to answer the main research question, how can the IQMS be enhanced as a framework to support the professional growth of LSTs and RCTs in the Eden Central Karoo district? Furthermore, document analysis adds value to data verification or triangulation and provides supplementary data to enhance understanding of a phenomenon within context (Martin 2013:59; Sekgale 2016:28; Mahlo 2011:96).

Chapter Five provides a comprehensive analysis, interpretation, presentation and discussion of the acquired data, as to contribute to the objectives flowing from the main question. These objectives entail finding out what constraints to professional development the LSTs and RCTs experience regarding their IQMS, how their roles and functions can be aligned to their key performance areas; suggested inclusive teaching and learning guidelines that can improve the professional growth of LSTs and RCTs in Eden Central Karoo; the relevance of education policies regarding professional development and IQMS of LSTs and RCTs.

An interactive, iterative data analysis approach inductively contributed to identifying underlying patterns and relationships, categories and themes (Creswell 2009:185, 2014; Yin 2011:186; Leavy 2017:152). Themes were enabled by the process of coding and therefore allowed the display of multiple perspectives from individuals that will be supported

by diverse quotations and specific evidence (Creswell 2009:185). In this inquiry, the results are cross-referenced to the existing literature with the key themes under discussion. Reflexive notes that were done during online interaction sessions with the participants, also contributes to detailed interview content for this chapter. Reflexive notes kept the researcher aware of her own role in this whole research process (cf.1.11.2). Document analyses further allowed for scrutinizing important policy documents such as the EWP6, thus adding different insights and enhanced understanding of the data..

5.2   Participant Background

The participants in this research were spread over the Eden and Central Karoo Education District, which is one of the eight WCED education districts (cf. Figure 4.1, Chapter Four). Participants are referred to with codes; Learning Support Advisors are LSA1, LSA2 etc., Learning Support Teachers are LST1, LST2 and Resource Class Teachers are RCT1, RCT2, etc. Figure 5.1 and Table 5.1 below, provide a summary presentation of the participant characteristics of the Learning Support Advisors.

5.2.1   Information about the Learning Support Advisors

A total of 6 Learning Support Advisors were invited to participate in the Teams focus group interview. Although all six agreed to participate, two could not tune in due to work commitments. The four LSA participants who were part contributed valuable insights into the phenomena under study, namely the IQMS and professional development of LSTs and RCTs. Figure 5.1 on the next page provides a visual presentation of the information about Learning Support Advisors.

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Figure 5.1: Information about Learning Support Advisors
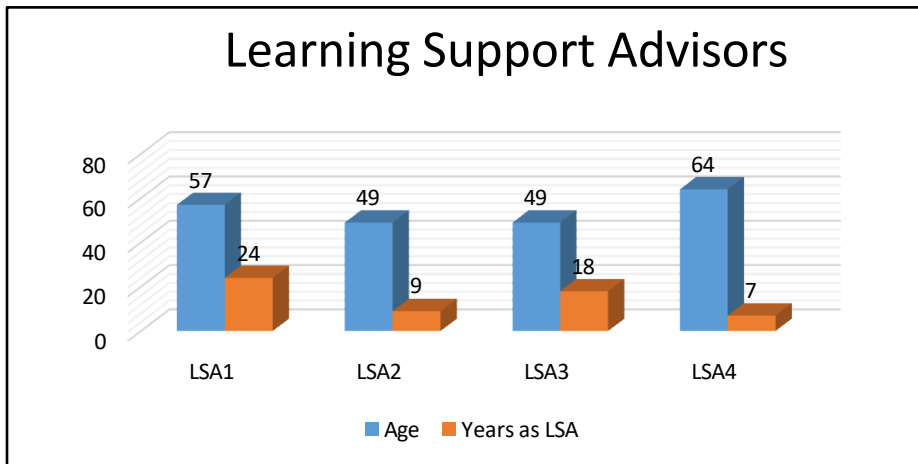
Figure 5.1: Information about Learning Support Advisors

The four LSAs were all women and represented four out of the eight circuits in the Eden and Central Karoo Education district. There were no male LSAs in the Eden and Central Karoo Education District at the time of the study. The participating LSAs constituted 57 percent of the total number of Eden and Central Karoo LSAs when including the researcher. Two participants were 49 years of age, while the other two were respectively 57 and 64 years old at the time of the study. LSA1 had 24 years of experience as an advisor, LSA2 had nine years, LSA3 had 18 years and LSA4 had 7 years of experience. The number of Learning Support Teachers supervised per Learning Support Advisor varies.

5.2.2 Information about Learning Support Teachers and Resource Class Teachers

5.2.2.1 *Gender distribution of LSTs ad RCTs*

The female LSTs and RCTs represented 95 percent participation, with only 5 percent male representation. In the whole of Eden and Central Karoo Education District, there were only four male Learning Support Teachers at the time of the study, of whom two qualified according to the inclusion criteria of this study (cf. Chapter Four).

5.2.2.2 *Characteristics of learning support and Resource Class Teachers*

Although the ages of the participants were not part of the research interview questions, it was obtained from an official learning support staff database, and proper protocol was

observed. The age of participants provides valuable background motivation for more depth about the professional development of participants in this study. The average age of the LST and RCT participant component was 48 years, with a respective average of 16.5 years of teaching experience and 10.5 years of experience in SNE (cf. Figure 5.2).

More detail regarding the qualifications of the LSTs and RCTs are displayed in Table 5.1 further below. Figure 5.2 below, indicates that the participants entered special education teaching at different stages of their careers.
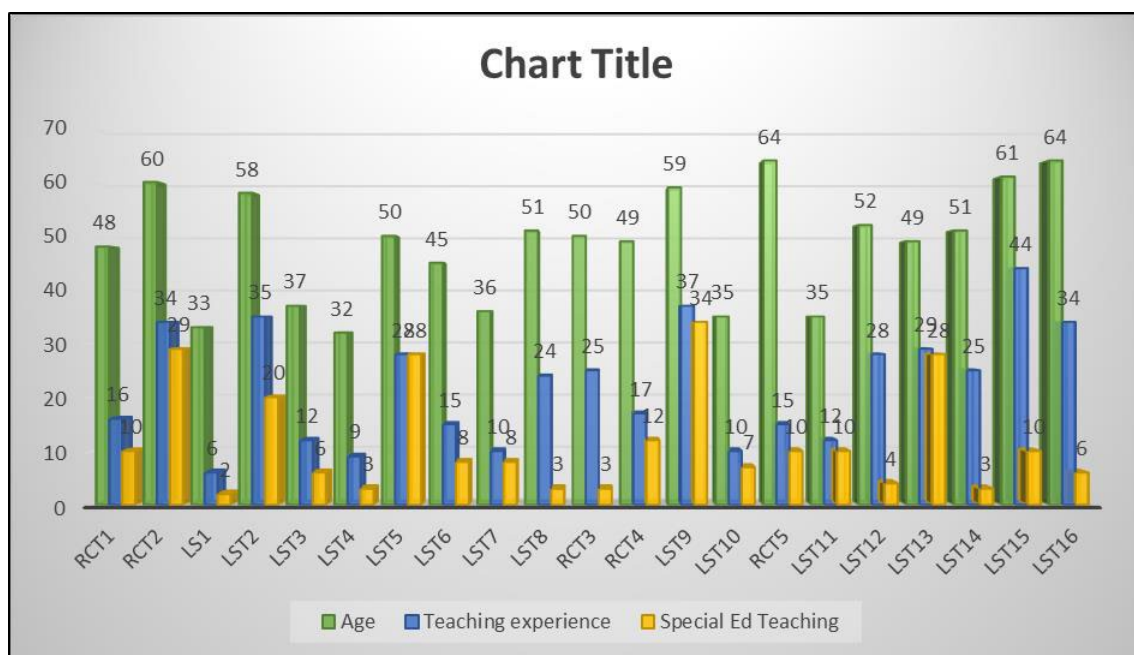
Figure 5.2: Characteristics of learning support and Resource Class Teachers

As clear in Figure 5.2 above, all participants were above 30 years of age at the time of the study, with six between 30 and 40 (LST1, 3, 4, 7, 10, 11), six from 41 to 50 years (RCT1, 3, 4, LST5, 6, 13) and nine who were 51 to 64 years (RCT2, 5, LST2, 8, 9,12, 14, 15, 16). Teaching experience ranged from 6 to 44 years. Special education teaching ranged from 2 to 34 years. The following few paragraphs will expound on how they have entered their specialised careers at different stages in their teaching years and lives.

RCT2 and LST9, who were respectively 60 and 59 years of age at the time of the study, spent most of their teaching careers in special needs education (SNE) (average 31,5years).

In contrast, their age cohort colleagues, LST15 and LST 16 who were respectively 61 and 64 years old spent most of their teaching years (average of 48years) in mainstream and have been in SNE for the latter 6 to 10 years of their careers.

Similar to RCT2 and LST9, a special needs career path was also started very early by LST5 and LST13, covering 28 years. Lastly mentioned LSTs, started already at the beginning of their teaching careers.

LST8, RCT3, LST12 and LST14 shared an average age of 45 years, teaching experience of an average of 25 years with an average of three years of special education teaching. This indicates that they also started their SNE careers at a late stage in their careers. LST2, also in the age range of these four participants (LST8, RCT3, LST12 and LST14), had 20 years of SNE experience.

LST6, RCT1 and RCT4 shared an average age of 47 years, teaching experience of an average of 15 years with an average of 10 years of SNE. This indicates that they also started their SNE careers at a later stage.

LST1, LST3, LST4, LST7, LST10 and LST11 shared an average age of 35 years, teaching experience of an average of 10 years with an average of six years of SNE. This is an indication that they also started their SNE careers at a late stage.

The exposition above on age and special needs experience relation, attempted to indicate that years of experience in SNE and age are not necessarily connected. As already mentioned, the participants started in SNE at different stages in their careers. Every individual has their own motivations for how and when they alter their career paths, as is emphasised by Bronfenbrenner's systems theory (cf. Chapter Two) that human life does not happen randomly, nor does changes occur in a vacuum. Watson (2017:6) and Christensen (2016:24) further underscore the prominence that Bronfenbrenner ascribes to any change and individual developments within the context of the society in which it occurs. These include both personal and working life.

Every level of Bronfenbrenner's ecological system (micro, meso, exo and macro levels) impacts career opportunities in learning support. At the exosystem level, the Western Cape Education Department is responsible for implementing learning support in accordance with their provincial needs. With this background, one should bear in mind that learning support posts are very rare commodities. Learning support posts mostly become available when LST or RCTs decide to move away, exit SNE to follow other career paths, or retire. Transfers from mainstream to SNE occur as and when learnings support posts become available.

Individuals are also in control of their own professional growth. Only 14 out of the 21 learning support participants had specialised degrees, diplomas or other formal specialised related training (cf. Table 5.1). Although RCT1 had no specialised qualifications, she had the experience of working in a specialised school of skills for 10.5 years. LST9, LST16 and RCT5 started their specialised teaching careers under the medical model of remedial teaching and up-skilled themselves through in-service training. Such self-development over time (chronosystemic) reminds one of Bronfenbrenner's (1979:7; 1992:227) high regard for human capability for constructive responses to ecological change, whether such changes may be due to external or internal motivations (cf. Chapter Two). According to Johnson (2008:3) and Herselman and Botha (2018), the chronosystem thus refers to both short- and long-term time changes of the LSTs and RCTs throughout their careers. Table 5.1 below provides more information regarding the qualifications of the LSTs and RCTs and is followed by figure 5.3 which provides a more visual display of their qualifications.

Table 5.1: Characteristics of learning support and Resource Class Teachers

Code	Age	Teaching experience	Special Ed Teaching	Itinerant/ Stationary	Initial Qualifications	SEN/ specialized qualification.
RCT1	48	16.5	10.5	S	3 Year Diploma (Senior Primary) 1 Year ACE – Life Orientation	10½ years' experience in a special school.
RCT2	60	34	29	S	HED (Post Graduate)	BA(Speech and Hearing) Therapy
LST1	33	6	2	S	BA-Human Resource Management PGCE - Intermediate & Senior Phase	BEd Honours in IE (SPEC in SNE).
LST2	58	35	20	I	HE Diploma with Remedial Teaching/ BA. Degree	B. HONS. Special Needs
LST3	37	12	6	S	BEd foundation phase. Major: Special Education	AHA Reading instruction Course/ CTLI B2L FP Maths/ CTLI B2L IP Maths /CTLI B2L FP -HL
LST4	32	9	3	I	BEd Foundation phase degree	Special Education subject specialization
LST5	50	28	28	S	BSc. Huishoudkunde Ed	AHA Reading Scholarship.
LST6	45	15	8	S	4 Yrs HOD DIPLOMA	Honours degree in Special education
LST7	36	10	8	I	4 Yrs Special Ed Degree	4 Yrs Special Ed Degree
LST8	51	24	3	S	Junior Primary Teachers Diploma, HDE (Specialised in Remedial) School Management and Leadership Certificate	(HDE) Remedial Education/ Reading Scholarship
RCT3	50	25	3	S	Higher Dip in Ed	BEd Hons. Spec Ed.
RCT4	49	17	12	S	Dip Ed/ Higher Dip Ed	BEd Hons. Spec Ed.
LST9	59	37	34	S	JPOS3/ OD 3	In Service Training
LST10	35	10	7	I	Bachelor of Social Sciences majoring-Psychology, Criminology/Sociology	BEd. Honours (Psychology of Education)
RCT5	64	15	10	S	JPTD (4Yrs)	In Service Training
LST11		12	10	S	BEd phase	Bed Honours. LS
LST12	52	28	4	S	JPTD (4Yrs)/Masters in Public Admin	Reading Scholarship.
LST13	49	29	28	S	PED Junior Primary with 4th year in remedial education	(Bed. Honours Educational Psychology with Inclusive Specialised Education
LST14	51	25	3	S	Teachers Diploma in Foundation phase/	Remedial teaching subjects

					Higher diploma in Education	
LST15	61	44	10	I	Lower Primary Teaching certificate/ NPED intermediate and senior phase	ACE Special needs & assessment Bed Hons LS and LS in the Community
LST16	64	34	6	S	LPOS11/OD111	In Service Training

Figure 5.3 below, visually displays that 43 percent of the support teachers are qualified with BEd. Honours degrees with specialization in psychology or educational psychology, inclusive education, learning support or special education.
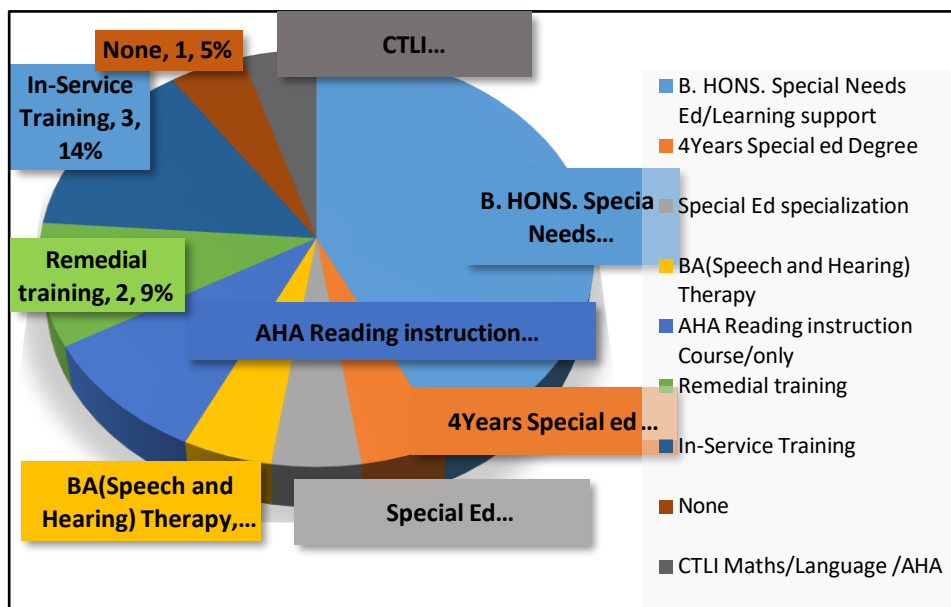
Figure 5.3: Qualifications of learning support and Resource Class Teachers

Two participants had different general 4 years BEd. degrees, with SNE specialization. One participant held a BA degree in Speech and hearing therapy. The rest of the participants have general education grades, diplomas or certificates, with years of experience in remedial teaching, and further upgrading through various in-service training courses. In-service training and development will further be explored in Section 5.3.4 below, on professional development. The next section will deal with the key themes that were identified from the data.

5.3   Key Themes from the Interviews

Analysis in this study employed a thematic framework according to Creswell's (2009:175) bottom-up approach. The process shortly entails the following steps, semi-structured email interviews and team focus group interviews were used to gather data from LSTs, RCTs and LSAs in the Eden and Central Karoo Education District. These data sources were scrutinized for broad themes. Data from broader themes were then reduced into smaller manageable and meaningful data segments and classified as codes. These codes were grouped into a number of clusters to form main themes or categories. Categories were coded and labelled depending on the level of importance. All the categories were lastly scrutinized to establish relationships to get a general sense of patterns in and meaning of data, after which integration and summarization should follow. (cf. Chapter Four).

To mediate and understanding of how the themes attempted to answer the research questions, Table 5.2 below organises the interview questions of the LSTs and RCTs against the research objectives that it attempted to address. The questions that were posed to the LSA component of the participants will be dealt with separately.

Table 5.2: Research questions with related themes and sub-themes

Research questions	Main themes	Sub-themes
What are the experiences, constraints and challenges to professional development of Learning Support and Resource Class Teachers regarding their Integrated Quality Management System?	5.3.1 Common Impressions, understanding of IQMS/CPTD	5.3.1.1 Performance Management systems 5.3.1.2 Professional development and training management tools 5.3.1.3 Training needs identification regulation/ tracking mechanisms 5.3.1.4 Overall performance management tools 5.3.1.5 Motivational/ Support Tools 5.3.1.6 Accountability tools 5.3.1.7 Points/ Merit /Remuneration system

		5.3.1.8 Negative connotation
		5.3.1.9 Link between IQMS and CPTD
How can the roles and functions of Learning Support and Resource Class Teachers be aligned to their key performance areas?	5.3.2 Perception of Challenges	5.3.2.1 Systemic issue
		5.3.2.2 Points/merits
		5.3.2.3 Misuse/abuse
		5.3.2.4 Training/Time issues/ Funding
		5.3.2.5 Goal attainment, resources, time and productivity
		5.3.2.6 Instrumentation
		5.3.2.7 Job description- role alignment
	5.3.3 Perception of appropriateness/ relevance of Measurement Instruments	5.3.3.1 IQMS Tool and job description alignment
		5.3.3.2 Instrument fairness/ relevance
What inclusive teaching and learning guidelines can be suggested to improve the professional growth of Learning Support and Resource Class Teachers in Eden Central Karoo?"	5.3.4 Professional Development	5.3.4.1 Awareness
		5.3.4.2 Best or most effective ways/ programmes to develop teaching skills and knowledge.
		5.3.4.3 Previous Development courses/in-service participation
		5.3.4.4 Further development Needs
How effective are the relevant education policies regarding professional development and Integrated Quality Management System of Learning Support and Resource Class Teachers?	5.3.5 Perceptions on Effectiveness / Contribution to professional development	5.3.5.1 Contribution to professional Development
		5.3.5.2 Effectiveness to promote professional development
		5.3.5.3 Benefits to participation
		5.3.6.1 Collaboration
		5.3.6.2 School level Leadership and management
	5.3.6 Perceptions of Support structures, including Macrosystemic policy issues)	5.3.6.3 District level L&M
		5.3.6.4 Provincial level
		5.3.6.5 National Level & Global
		5.3.6.6 Community and Other

The above themes will next be presented by firstly posing the questions from which a specific theme was deducted. This arrangement was however easier for the question-theme-relation applicable to the LSTs and RCTs. It was more complicated to follow the same process for the questions that were posed to the LSAs. In most cases, one response per LSA participant delivered several codes that could fit into various themes. Such a phenomenon is clear in the following example of one LSA participant:

> LSA1: "Uh. Yeah, because I do not think that the district is aware of Uh, the needs of the teachers. (role players/support structure) We (LSAs)(role players) know the needs because we see it in the IQMS(identification tool), but when do we discuss the needs of the teachers(supporting tool) ahm to the people that are arranging these workshops)(role players/support structure, collaboration) or are in possession of the money or whatever,(Challenge-funding) so it is all about again starting from that when we do the IQM is it is not listed what are the needs of the people(appropriateness/effectiveness) and nobody looks at that"(role-players).

For reasons explained above, all the questions in the LSA interview schedule are stated below at once, and not as per the theme. An exception will be made concerning questions 7, 8, 10 and 11, which will be stated later again for clarification purposes. The interview questions of the LSTs and RCTs will be presented as per a specific theme.

LSA interview schedule:

- What is your overall impression of the IQMS of LSTs and RCTs as it is designed and implemented in schools?
- How are you held accountable for implementing IQMS as a member of the DBST?
- Are there any aspects that you view as negative in the IQMS? Kindly elaborate.
- How do you understand Continuous Professional Teacher Development (CPTD) of LSTs and RCTs in schools?
- Explain the challenges (if any) that you encounter/d in achieving the demands of the IQMS as a vehicle for the continuous professional development of LSTs and RCTs?

- Do you think that continuous professional development of LSTs and RCTs can benefit them as it is currently implemented? Kindly elaborate.

- What role does the District play in the continuous professional development of LSTs and RCTs?

- Apart from the District, what other organizations or persons play a pivotal part in the continuous professional development of LSTs and RCTs?

- Are you aware of any other professional development opportunities/initiatives available for LSTs and RCTs? Please elaborate.

- What do you know about the National Policy Framework for Teacher Education and Development?

- What do you know about the Integrated Strategic Planning Framework for Teacher Education and Development in SA?

- Are there any other insights/comments you would like to add?

5.3.1 Theme 1: Common Impressions, understanding of the IQMS/CPTD

Theme 1 provides answers to research objective one: Experiences, constraints and challenges to professional development of Learning Support and Resource Class Teachers regarding their Integrated Quality Management System.

Theme 1 emerged from questions 1, 2, 4, 7 and 8, which were posed to LSTs, and RCTs as follows:

Question 1:   What do you understand by the concept of the Integrated Management System?

Question 2:   How does (has) the IQMS contributed to your development?

Question 4:   What is your overall perception of the effectiveness of IQMS to promote/contribute to professional development of LSTs and RCTs?

Question 7:   What do you understand by the concept of professional development or CPTD?

Question 8: In your experience, what (if any) is the link between IQMS and professional development or CPTD?

Sub-themes identified under Theme one entail, Performance Management systems; professional development or CPTD and training management tools; Training needs identification regulation/tracking mechanisms; Overall performance measurement tools; Motivational/Support Tools; Accountability tools; Points/ Merit /Remuneration systems; Negative connotation; Link between IQMS and CPTD.

5.3.1.1   *Performance Management systems: IQMS, CPTD, Professional bodies*

The IQMS, CPTD and professional bodies like the SACE and other unions serve as performance management systems that aim to enhance both individual teachers and the education system as a whole.

a) Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS)

IQMS is described as a quality control system, similar to whole-school evaluation, aimed at quality assurance through enhanced performance and increased productivity. The IQMS does not only improve the quality of education but also assures teacher accountability and empowerment through holistic development. Evidence for these views is found in the responses of LST1, LST3, LST5, LST6, LST9, LST12, LST14, LST15, RCT1, RCT3, RCT4 and RCT5. The LSTs and RCTs find support in the opinions of LSA1 and 4, as displayed below.

> RCT1: "a system similar to whole-school evaluation ……."
>
> LST1: "…. aimed at enhancing and monitoring performance of the education system…ensure optimal effectiveness…"
>
> LST3: "It is an internal quality control process that assures accountability of the teacher."
>
> LST5: "Daardeur word werkers se werksverrigting verbeter."
>
> LST6: "It's a system that promote you on your yearly performance."

RCT3, RCT4 and LST12: "It is a national policy that is aimed at increasing productivity amongst educators."

LST9: "It aims to enhance and monitor the performance of the Education system."

RCT5: "A System aimed at improving the quality of education."

LST14: "developing a person professionally, socially, and physically"

LST15: "IQMS is the professional development of teachers to enhance their teaching."

LSA4: "It helps as well for the teachers to improve the way that they are working with learners, the way that they are performing their lesson in their class."

LSA1: "to me the biggest value is the empowering of the educator through the process."

b) Continuing Professional Teacher Development (CPTD)

Teachers are obliged to participation in professional development or CPTD, which is part of the SACE's Code of Professional Ethics. The CPTD system assist teachers to upgrade themselves professionally, by improving their knowledge and strategies to fulfil their job description requirements. Self-upgrading is a lifelong process. The views of LST2, LST3, LST4, LST5, LST10, LST12, LST15 and RCT2 support this finding.

LST1: "Participation in professional development is mandatory. Professional development is part of SACE's Code of Professional Ethics for educators."

LST2: "System in which one upgrades oneself to be informed on new findings as well as strategies to be more effective…to be more effective and keep track with world-wide new developments."

LST4 and LST5: "Dis 'n manier vir opvoeders om hul kennis te verbreed in hul gebied / area en om op hoogte te bly van nuwe onderwysstrategieë. [It is a way for educators to widen their area and to stay informed about new teaching strategies]"

RCT2: "to help teachers keep up to date"

LST3: "ensure that you meet all the requirements of the job description"

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LST10: "to enhance themselves professionally"

LST12: "Lifelong process…set goals to realise and maximise the potential through courses"

LST15: "Promoting continuing professional development

c) Professional Bodies

The South African Council for Educators (SACE) in collaboration with the Education department manages the CPTD system as a whole and professional development through the accumulation of points. LST 1 explains professional development is part of SACE's Code of Professional Ethics for educators. Further evidence for these views is evident in the expressions of RCT2 and RCT4 as well as LST3, LST4 and LST5.

> RCT2: "SACE manages a system for teachers to earn target number of points every 3 years to help teachers keep up to date."

> LST1: "The system (CPTD) will be managed by SACE with the support of the education departments. Professional development is part of SACE's Code of Professional Ethics for educators. Teachers will largely use the SACE endorsed professional development activities/programmes to address the needs in their professional growth/development."

> RCT4: "Teachers earn professional development points from SACE Endorsed Professional Development activities/ programmes they participate in over a 3-year cycle."

> LST5: "Dit is beroepsrade of unies wat ten doel het dat werkers professioneel sal bly en ook op hoogte bly met nuwe tendense. [Its professional councils or unions that aim for workers to stay professional and also to stay informed of new trends]"

> LST3: "CPTD points are allocated …. This is done by logging on to the SACE website and logging these activities manually."

Discussion on the understanding of the IQMS, CPTD, Professional bodies as Performance Management systems

Participants display an overall integrated understanding of the IQMS, CPTD and professional bodies as systems of performance management. These systems aim to enhance teachers as well as the whole education system. Performance management

systems utilize teacher monitoring and evaluation, to enhance the performance of teachers and learner achievements for subsequently improved quality teaching (Sekgale 2016:10; Mahlaela 2012:11). According to Mestry *et al*. (2009:477), professional development strategies are features of the IQMS. LSTs and RCTs are essentially teachers and as such, they are also registered under SACE (cf.1.1). As part of its performance management mandate, the SACE's Code of Professional Ethics obligates teachers to commit to self-development and improvement. SACE, in collaboration with the education department, manages professional development and the CPTD system as a whole (cf.3.8.1). The CPTD management system recognises all useful teacher development activities through teacher-school, or externally initiated activities. All development should aim to assist teachers to upgrade their knowledge, skills and attitudes, intended to become better-equipped teachers (Rabichund 2011:13, citing Speck & Knipe, 2005:22).

5.3.1.2 *Professional development and training management tools*

Additional to being performance managing systems (cf. 5.3.1.1 above), the IQMS and the CPTD are also described as professional development and training tools (RCT1, RCT4 and LST1, LST7, LST8).

a) Integrated Quality Management System

The IQMS manages training through instruments such as a personal growth plan that identifies and documents the strengths and support needs of an individual. Such a plan is then utilized to inform the relevant authorities on the training and support needs of the individual. These views are offered by RCT1, LST1, LST7, and LST8 below.

> RCT1: "…a tool used to inform the relevant parties of further training and development…. A personal growth plan can also be put in motion to keep track of your progress."

> LST1: "…to determine areas of strength and weakness, and to draw up programme teachers organise their professional development to achieve maximum benefit."

> LST7: "…look at areas which educators need support and development."

LST8: "…develop and support teachers holistically in the workplace and to support each other."

b) Professional Development (CPTD)

Professional development is not a once-off effort but requires lifelong engagement in training. The CPTD system itself manages professional development through recognition of and endorsing quality, relevant and useful activities and programmes for holistic teacher development. This is consistent with the views noted by RCT1, RCT4, LST5, LST14 and is underscored by LSA3, who adds that the point system of the CPTD manages and ensures teacher development, through a prescribed or compulsory percentage for attendance.

RCT1: "It is lifelong training to improve your professional development"

LST5: "…dat werkers professioneel sal bly en ook op hoogte bly met nuwe tendense… myself verryk deur opleiding en navorsing [that worker stay professional and informed with new trends… To enrich myself through training and research]"RCT4: "…a system for recognising all useful teacher development. Endorsing relevant and good professional development quality activities and programmes."

LST14: "…is a system used of developing a person professionally, socially, and physically."

LSA3: "…the teachers are getting more training. Based on CPTD, because it has a certain percentage whereby the teacher has to attend this."

Discussion on the IQMS and CPTD as Professional development and training management tools

Participants describe the IQMS and the CPTD as professional development and training tools. Professional development is a lifelong and continuous engagement in training, rather than an event (Mahlaela 2012, citing Du Plessis et al. 2007). Although two separate systems, the IQMS and the CPTD system were meant to run alongside each other (cf. 3.12). Part of the IQMS tools is a form that is called the personal growth plan. The personal growth plan must be compiled annually after self-evaluation. The personal growth plan identifies and documents the strengths of a teacher, as well as the support needs. Such a

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plan is then utilized to inform the relevant authorities on the training and support needs of the individual. Thus, serving its purpose as a development and training tool.

5.3.1.3   Training needs identification, regulation and tracking mechanisms

The IQMS assists teachers to identify their own developmental needs (LST1, LST12 and RCT4). Such needs are documented in personal growth plans. According to LST2 and RCT1, the personal growth plan not only dictates what type of training should follow but also keeps track of their progress. Furthermore, documenting professional growth needs enables the relevant supervisors and authorities to identify further training and development needs as well as possible hampering contextual challenges.

LST1, LST3, LST4, LST5, LST11, LST12, LST13 and RCT4 concur that teachers are firstly responsible for their own development through self-effort, self-reflection and self-regulation. This view gets support from LSA3, who argues that although the IQMS does not pertinently state the necessity to attend a certain amount of training, it depends on whether an individual want to attend training or not. LSA 4 supports this view of self-motivation by stating that some LSTs and RCTs are even not interested in the free training, but rather let such opportunities pass them by. The CPTD system itself manages professional development through recognition of and endorsing quality, relevant and useful activities and programmes for holistic teacher development. The following participant expressions provide support for the aforementioned impressions.

> RCT1: "…inform the relevant parties of further training and development needs needed and contextual factors hindering your teaching" (IQMS).

> LST1: "It (IQMS) identify specific needs of educators and development."

> LST12: "During IQMS it's when you identify the areas you need to develop."

> RCT4: "Teachers identify professional development needs through IQMS and other related processes."

> RCT4: "Take responsibility for their own professional development."

> RCT1: "professional development is lifelong training."

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LST5: "self opleiding" (professional development)

LST1, LST3 and LST4: "…selfverbetering…"

LST5: "Werkgewer kan sien waar ek meer ondersteuning of opleiding nodig het [Employer can see where I need more support and training.]"

LST12: "self-development; development through school-based activities and lastly Departmental training." (professional development)

LST2: "The PGP of a teacher helps to dictate the types of training."

RCT1: "A personal growth plan can also be put in motion to keep track of your progress."

LSA1: "…taking these scores into consideration, supervisors and LSTs should have an action plan to develop the educator in the areas where he/ she's struggling in…"

LSA1: "We know the needs because we see it in the IQMS…"

LSA2: "It comes in their personal growth plan and also with the CPTD UhM."

LST11: "om jouself bewus te raak dat daar nog plek is vir verbetering" (IQMS) [to make yourself aware that are still space for improvement]"

LST13: "Self-assessment to addressing of gaps through development."

LST4: "geleentheid om bietjie dieper ondersoek in te stel op jouself en om te gaan kyk waar jy kan verbeter of ontwikkel.[opportunity to investigate a bit deeper in yourself and to see where you can do or develop better]"

LST5: "Dit is ook die spreekbuis aan werkgewer oor watter opleiding of ondersteuning ek nog nodig het. [It is a mouthpiece to the employer about what training and support I still need.]"

LSA4: "The challenge. I want to turn and say… but then you get those that aren't just not interested in developing, so I don't. They don't attend the courses that is for free available for them, they just let it go."

LSA3: "IQMS it's you that it depends on you that you wanted to attend the training or not… it goes with the teacher's willingness to do something."

LSA3: "… it's not compulsory for the teachers to go for the training if they are going to be evaluated in IQMS…IQMS it is not necessary to attend a certain amount of training…"

Discussion on the IQMS/CPTD as training needs identification, regulation and tracking mechanism

During the IQMS process, training needs are identified, training is regulated and the whole process is tracked. As already explained above in Section 5.3.1.2, the IQMS and CPTD are regarded as professional development and training management tools. The main source of evidence for performance measuring in the IQMS is the Lesson observation in practice, followed by performance standards that apply to activities that are performed outside the classroom (cf. Table 3.5).

Needs that are identified, get documented in the personal growth plan. The personal growth plan not only dictates what type of training should follow but also keeps track of progress during the whole development process. Self-tracking, as well as tracking by employers, are enabled. The personal growth plan prioritises areas for development by including targets as well as time frames for improvement (cf.3.10). Relevant supervisors and authorities can identify further training and development needs as well as possible contextual challenges that might be hampering development. Even though the IQMS does not pertinent state the necessity to attend a certain amount of training, teachers are firstly responsible for their own development through self-effort, self-reflection and self-regulation. The CPTD system itself manages professional development through recognition of and endorsing quality, relevant and useful activities and programmes for holistic teacher development. (cf. 3.9.2).

5.3.1.4   Overall Performance Measurement tools

As a national policy, the IQMS is aimed at increasing productivity amongst educators and comprises three concurrently running programmes namely, development appraisal, performance measurement and whole school evaluation (LST1, RCT4, LST12, and LST16). Terminology that participants (LST3, LST5, LST7, LST9, LST10, LST12, LST13 and RCT2, RCT4) apply to describe the performance measurement function, of both the IQMS and CPTD includes "assesses, assess, evaluating, measuring, "meet", appraisal,

monitoring, self-assessment, analyse". The evaluation function is shared by LSA4, which emphasises that evaluation should not be a once-off engagement, but should rather occur over a period of time. All these terminologies will be elaborated on further in the discussion that follows below. There are however doubts regarding the suitability of IQMS and CPTD as measurement tools, as raised by RCT2 and corroborated by LSA2. These doubts will be dealt with further below under the themes two (challenges) and three (appropriateness). The opinions that follow attest to the aforementioned views.

> LST1: "It is an integrated quality management system"… evaluate the "to evaluate individual teachers and overall effectiveness."

> LST3: "It is an internal quality control process that assesses the teacher in all aspects of teaching"

> LST12: "It (professional development) is a way for people to assess their skills and qualities."

> LST10: "…measuring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning."

> RCT1: "…similar to whole school evaluation…"

> RCT14/LST12: "Development Appraisal, Performance Measurement and Whole school evaluation"

> LST1/LST9: "…aimed at enhancing and monitoring performance of the education system."

> LST2: "…monitor and support educators in their everyday effectiveness as teachers…"

> LST13: "LST self-assessment"

> LST7: "…analyse performance to identify areas for support and development…"

> LST5: "Dit is 'n stelsel waarmee personeel hul kwaliteit van werk meet… aan die vasgestelde standard."

> RCT2: "I doubt the effectiveness of this system monitoring of the overall effectiveness of the school. In my experience, many non-functional teachers looked like super-heroes on their IQMS."

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LSA4: "IQMS For me, it's more than a evaluation over the a overtime. I don't see it as a evaluation that I'm only doing that one day."

LSA4: "Uhm, cause for me it is important that a teacher is working through the year. She's working the whole time."

LSA2: "Uhm, the IQ is process in my personal opinion, is not written with the LST or the Resource Class Teachers in mind. Their way of working differs from the mainstream."

Discussion on the perception of the IQMS/CPTD as overall performance management tools

As a national policy, the IQMS is aimed at increasing productivity amongst educators (cf. 5.3.4.1). Performance measurement occurs annually to assess performance and is but a part of the bigger process to link the management of individual performance and development with organisational goals (ELRC, 2003:82). Terminology as used by participants, aimed at examining the effectiveness and quality of the individual teachers and the teaching system, includes, "assesses, assess, evaluating, measuring, "meet", appraisal, monitoring, self-assessment, analyse". These terms align with lived experiences as identified by Van Wyk (2015:213, 281). Monitoring takes place continuously over time, the process is documented (self-assessment/peer-assessment/supervisor assessment) to provide information about performance (measurement), which informs on the effects of activities (evaluation). Monitoring and evaluation data are analysed to inform the effectiveness or efficiency of an individual or system as a whole (own interpretation, cf. 1.13.7). In totality, all of these terms describe different yet integrated phases of quality management systems. Enhancing and monitoring performance occurs through concurrently running programmes, including development appraisal, performance measurement and whole-school evaluation.

5.3.1.5   *Motivational/Support Tools*

The IQMS and CPTD are also described as motivational and supporting tools. The systems firstly identify development and support needs and then motivate and encourage individuals to enhance their skills through self-development and training. The positive feedback and recommendations of seniors and peers motivate LSTs and contribute to strategies and

development (LST15). Encouragement also happens through points or merits accumulation that will culminate into an annual one percent salary incentive, for reaching the required number of training. LSA4 support this view by stating that "…*training can benefit for them; they can build points then it will also motivate them to do more training.*"

The LSA even suggests that the motivation will be bigger when a full percentage increase is not a given but in accordance with the wilful training. Not all participants share this incentive-driven motivation and raise the opinion that such a system can also negatively support misuse (further elaboration in Theme 2). This is evident in the experience of RCT2 who frankly states that *"colleagues, in my experience, were not the best workers but those who could sell themselves, using their friends to support."* LST16 agrees that *"window dressing"* is encouraged. Evidence for all of these views is expressed below.

> LSA4: "Also do something to develop yourself and then if you don't do it, take the 5% off and say then you only get 1%.
>
> LST8: "IQMS is to develop and support teachers holistically in the workplace and to support each other in the working environment and the community at large."
>
> LST10: "…a mechanism (CPTD) to encourage individuals in the education department to enhance themselves professionally."
>
> LST1: "…and you will obtain points. Dit is hoe ons, ons 1 persentasie punt salarisverhoging jaarliks verdien. [That is how we earn our annual salary increase]."
>
> LST12/13: "Score points when your reach your set goals/ doing courses…"
>
> LST15: "Development to accumulate points and motivate to do one's best in education."
>
> LST2: "…goal is to support educators in their everyday effectiveness as teachers…"
>
> LST7: "…also look at areas which educators need support and development."

LST15: "...motivate to do ones best in education. The positive feedback and recommendations of senior and peer contribute to my strategies and development."

LSA4: "They can't get. Let's say that the 1% increase is there if there are. Uh, having the correct marks to get the 1.5%, but if they don't do professional development also for themselves."

LSA4: "Also do something to develop yourself and then if you don't do it, take the 5% off and say then you only get 1%."

LSA4: "… points then it will also motivate them to do more training.

LST16: "It is too little money rewarded for hardworking LSTs overall teaching efforts."

RCT2: "It's not about the money."

Discussion on the perception or understanding of the IQMS/CPTD as motivational and support tools

This section closely links to sub-theme 5.3.1.5 above, where self-effort, -reflection and -regulation are discussed. In this particular sub-theme, the IQMS and CPTD are also described as motivational and supporting tools. The systems firstly identify development and support needs and then motivate and encourage individuals to enhance their skills and effectiveness through self-development and training. Motivation is an internally energised state that moves individuals towards their goals (Mahlaela 2012:32). Mahlaela (2012:22) maintains that although extrinsic motivation, positive feedback as motivation and support is important. Specific feedback is valuable to professional growth and teacher improvement because appreciation for someone's work motivates them (Guskey 2000, cited in Rabichund 2011:49; Mahlaela 2012:22). According to Sekgale (2016:44), a lack of motivation can lead to IQMS ineffectiveness. Other than extrinsic motivators, RCT2 states that she would engage in personal development anyway, thus displaying intrinsic professional responsibility of (Hanson 2003, cited in Mahlaela 2012:32). Merits accumulation for a yearly one percent incentive is raised as encouragement for participation in the IQMS process. A focus on remuneration rather than on development was however discovered to be a difficulty (Mahlaela 2012:42; Rabichund 2011:243; Sekgale

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2016:81).The literature further underscores the sentiments of some participants that the IQMS may also support *"loopholes"* (Sekgale 2016:81), such as opportunity and reward for *"window dressing"* (Arendse 2010:64; Rabichund 2011:28; Van Wyk 2015; 217). Instead of honesty and objectiveness being encouraged, this incentive-driven motivation is observed as conducive to misuse (further elaboration in Theme 2, below).

5.3.1.6   Accountability tools

The IQMS and CPTD promote and assure accountability as teachers are vital to education and as such, they are responsible for their own professional development. Teachers firstly do introspection by self-examination, -judgement, -evaluation and -assessment of their skills and abilities so that any gaps can be addressed through training. Not all participants feel that they need a system to keep them accountable. This is evident from RCT2 who states that she would engage in personal development and accountability anyway because she believes in a lifestyle of self-development. This is the type of self-responsibility and accountability ethics that LSA3 also refer to in her view that LSTs and RCTs must *"own their classes"* and there should be a self-driven willingness for self-development. LSA4 concurs that support teachers must try to develop themselves out of their own motivation. They cannot wait for others to develop them, since they are themselves aware of their shortcomings.

> RCT4: "Teachers are the centre of the education system. Take responsibility for their own professional development."

> LST10: "The (CPTD) process taught me to be responsible."

> LST3: "This process serves as a system that assures accountability of the teacher and that quality education takes place."

> LST9/ RCT4: "…promotes accountability."

> LST2: "A system in which one upgrades oneself…"

> LST4: "dieper ondersoek in te stel op jouself. [to investigate deeper into yourself]"

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LST4: "een van die punte waarop jy jouself beoordeel wanneer jy geIQMS word, is persoonlike ontwikkeling. [one of the points whereby you can judge yourself when you are IQMS, is personal development]"

LST8: "Is to develop yourself in the changes of our curriculum and needs of the system."

LST11: "…om jouself in verskillende kategoriee te kan evalueer en training gee…[to evaluate and train yourself in various categories]"

LST13: "Self-assessment leads to addressing of gaps…"

RCT2: "It's not about the money…I would engage in personal development and accountability anyway. To me, it is a lifestyle."

LSA3: "…reminds them (LSTs and RCTs) of being owning the class.

LSA3: "…but for the IQMS it's you (The LST) that you would be It depends on you that you wanted to attend the training or not,…"

LSA3: "…with that one…with that one it goes with the teacher's willingness to do something that is for teachers' willingness to go to be trained."

LSA4: "The challenge. I want to turn and say… but then you get those that aren't just not interested in developing, so I don't. They don't attend the courses that is for free available for them, they just let it go."

LSA4: "If they are not busy, also trying from themselves to do professional development. Because if I think you can't just wait for someone else to develop, you develop you. You know where is your shortcomings and you must make a plan to do."

Discussion on the impression of the IQMS/CPTD as accountability tools

Policy interventions such as the IQMS serve to ensure accountability (Mahlo 2011:167; Rabichund 2011:55; Sekgale 2016, citing Strydom 1997:15). Self-motivation for self-development (cf. 5.3.1.5) links to an attitude of accountability or intrinsic professional responsibility which is a required skill for support teachers (cf. 3.5 & 5.3.1.5). The IQMS and CPTD promote and assure accountability as teachers are vital to education. As registered members of SACE, they are responsible for their own professional development (cf. 3.8.7). For gaps to be addressed through training, teachers firstly do introspection by self-

examination, -judgement, -evaluation and -assessment of their skills and abilities Not all participants feel that they need a system to keep them accountable but possess an intrinsic motivation of professional responsibility (Mahlaela 2012:32). RCT2 states that she would engage in personal development and accountability anyway because she believes in a lifestyle of self-development. This is the type of self-responsibility and accountability ethics that LSA3 also refer to in her view that LSTs and RCTs must "own their classes" and concurs with LSA4 that there should be a self-driven willingness for self-development (Van Wyk 2015:93)

5.3.1.7   Points/ Merit/ Remuneration system

The IQMS is a system of points allocation by a teacher, his/her peer and a supervisor. The IQMS produces a personal growth plan that indicates the types of training that will eventually lead to the points necessary for beneficial employment. There are a target number of CPTD points that must be reached within a 3-year timeframe. These points are allocated to self-development, and development through school-based activities and departmental training. Points are rewards for attending courses and reaching goals, thereby assisting an individual to maintain professionalism.

The points are also a means of teacher evaluation that determines the worthiness of merit, which will impact salary increase. Other than most participants whose viewpoint is accumulation as a means of motivation for self-motivation and improvement, RCT1, LST5 and LST11 depend on internal motivation for self-development. For these participants, self-expectations and self-enrichment are from a personal drive, and not for points. While LSA4 argues that points will motivate support teachers to participate in more training, LST16 notes that the monetary incentive that is to be gained from such points is too little for the hard work and overall teaching efforts of LSTs. The following participant expressions testify to the views above.

RCT1: "…whereby points are allocated by yourself, your peer and supervisor for the year."

RCT2: "…evaluating their performance, resulting in a general increment increase or not …evaluates a teacher to see whether they qualified for a Merit or not. It was one way of improving your income…"

LST1: "…and you will obtain points. Dit is hoe ons, ons 1 persentasie punt salarisverhoging jaarliks verdien.[It is how we earn our 1 anual percent slary increase]"

LST12/13: "Score points when your reach your set goals/ doing courses."

LST11: "Punte wat ontvang word om jou professionaliteit te behou.[Points that are recieved to keep your professionalism]"

LST5: "…en dit is nie net om CPTD punte te kry nie. Ek doen baie meer as wat verwag word maar dit is vir myself en nie omdat iemand dit verwag van my nie. [It is not only to get CPTD points. I do much more than what is expected from me but it is for myself not because someone expect it from me]"

RCT2: "teachers to earn a target number of points every 3 years"

RCT2: "Previously, the Inspector would evaluate a teacher to see whether they qualified for a Merit or not. It was one way of improving your income and was regarded seriously. When IQMS first started, selected colleagues were getting R20 000 once-off bonuses."

LST2: "Points are allocated in three sections: self-development; development through school-based activities and lastly departmental training."

LST2: The PGP dictate the types of training/ sessions …which will then at the end provide the points needed to be gainfully employed."

LST3: "CPTD points are allocated for certain tasks" "CPTD points are the reward for completing the personal development goals."

RCT4: "Teachers earn CPTD points from SACE Endorsed Professional Development activities/ programmes they participate in over a 3-year cycle."

LST10: "…education department to enhance themselves professionally, by means of a points system."

LST15: "Development to accumulate points and motivate to do ones best in education."

LST16: "It is too little money rewarded for hardworking LSTs overall teaching efforts."

RCT2: "It's not about the money"

LSA4: "… points then it will also motivate them to do more training.'

Discussion on the perception of the IQMS/CPTD systems as a points/merit/remuneration system

The IQMS is a system of points allocation. Specific themes by means of performance standards are contained in a 4-point scale (cf. 3.5). The product is a personal growth plan that indicates the types of training that will eventually lead to the points necessary for beneficial employment. There are a target number of CPTD points that must be reached within a 3-year timeframe (cf. 3.10). These points are allocated in self-development and development through school-based activities and departmental training.

Points are rewards for attending courses and reaching goals, thereby assisting an individual to maintain professionalism. The points are also a means of teacher evaluation that determines the worthiness of merit, Van Wyk (2015:77, citing Ball, 2004) which will impact salary increase. Sambumbu (2010, cited in Sekgale 2016:50), explains that the IQMS partly purposes teacher motivation through extrinsic incentives. Other than most participants who viewpoint accumulation as a means of motivation for self-motivation and improvement, RCT1, LST5 and LST11 depend on internal motivation for self-development. For these participants, self-expectations and self-enrichment are from a personal drive, and not for points, nor monetary rewards.

While LSA4 argues that points will motivate support teachers to participate in more training, LST16 notes that the monetary incentive that is to be gained from such points is too little for the hard work and overall teaching efforts of LSTs. Confirming the sentiment of LST16, Sekgale (2016:50) found that some teachers experienced monetary rewards as de-motivating and not worth the effort of fighting for it.

5.3.1.8   Negative connotation

IQMS and CPTD are mandatory systems. LST5 is of the opinion that everything compulsory, becomes a burden and of no enjoyment. Consequently, it is experienced as something negative that should be over and done with, then forgotten until the next year. LST6 accords that yearly, once a week, you will do what is necessary to save yourself from

failure". According to LST3, the IQMS has a negative impact in that it sometimes encourages window dressing. Although LSA2 does not regard the IQMS as negative, she believes that there are things worth changing. For LSA1, the negative connection lies in the fact that the LSAs as a group never have discussions regarding challenging issues that impact the process for support teachers, such as instrument accessibility. In additional comments, RCT2 is of the opinion that whatever format is chosen, minority groups such as LSTs/RCTs will always face the possibility of being side-lined." Support for these elaborations is found in the views below by LST5, LST1, LST6, LSA1, LSA2, LSA3 and RCT2.

> LST5: "…word negatief ervaar omdat so baie van werkers verwag word. Enige iets wat verplig word, is 'n las en nie vir die lekker nie." "Dit kan maklik net nog iets word wat gou gedoen moet word en as dit klaar is, vergeet daarvan tot volgende jaar.[...are experienced negatively because so much is expected from workers. Anything that is compulsory is a burden and not nice. It can easily become just something else that must be done in a hurry and when it is done, forget about it till next year]"

> LST1: "Op die ou einde van die dag, is dit 'n sisteem wat deur die WKOD geimplementeer is waarvan ons nie kan weghardloop nie.[At the end of the day, it is a system of the WCED implemented that one cannot run away from]"

> LST6: "once a year for a week you simply save yourself from failure and do what is needed."

> LSA3: It has a negative impact based on learning support educators because sometimes if you go and do the IQMS for teachers, they will window dressing"

> LSA2: "I don't think the IQMS is a negative process or system that we are busy using, but I think there are things that that could be changed….."

> LSA2: Uhm? I would say that it's not negative. ….but the parts that are negatively support on assessment and also that extra curriculum activities Uh"

> LSA1: because you have to think very carefully. To make it up accessible to the LSTs. And once again, that is. That is why it is so important to me that we as a group get on the same page with the IQMS and for me in this whole process, the fact that we as a group have never discussed this. This is for me the most negative aspect of it."

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RCT2: "Whatever format is decided on, a minority group like LSTs/RCTs will always face the possibility of being side-lined."

Discussion on the perceived negative connotation to the IQMS and CPTD

IQMS and CPTD are mandatory systems (3.9.1). According to Sekgale (2016:57), Rabichund (2011: 177,178) and Van Wyk (2015:178), compliance to the IQMS process in some cases merely occurred due to imposed policy mandated obedience. Rabichund further finds the IQMS as a controlling, menace that stripped educators from their job satisfaction. This type of sentiment is evident in LST5's opinion that everything compulsory, becomes a compliance exercise and a burden, and of no enjoyment. Consequently, job satisfaction is compromised as the whole IQMS process is experienced as something negative that should just get over and done with, then be forgotten until the next year. LST6 accords that yearly, once a week, you will do what is necessary to save yourself from failure. Doing what is necessary may encourage dishonest endeavours to accumulate the *"correct"* number of points (cf. 5.3.1.5). Thus, compliance may also encourage cheating (Van Wyk 2015:282, 283).

Rabichund (2011:181) exposes that the experience of the IQMS as a compliance monitoring scheme even provoked anger in many cases, which impacted heavily on the perception of the significance of the whole IQMS process. LST3, experienced the impact of the IQMS as negative in that it sometimes encourages window dressing. Although LSA2 does not regard the IQMS as negative, she believes that there are things worth changing. For LSA1, the negative connection lies in the fact that the LSAs as a group never have discussions regarding challenging issues that impact the process for support teachers, such as instrument accessibility. This sentiment is direct linking to LSA2's "things worth chancing". Supporting the need for collaboration and discussion on different levels is emphasised in Chapter Three, section 3.7.1.4. In additional comments, RCT2 is of the opinion that whatever format is chosen, minority groups such as LSTs/RCTs will always face the possibility of being side-lined."

5.3.1.9 Link between IQMS and CPTD

Table 5.3: The link between IQMS and professional development according to participants

IQMS	LINK	CPTD
IQMS identifies areas of need	Same purpose/common feature	CPTD Is what you accomplish
IQMS is the plan of action	Teacher Development	CPTD system provides the database of SACE approved providers' activities/menu of SACE endorsed programmes to address the needs identified from the IQMS process
IQMS appraise to draw up a personal growth plan	Focus on effectiveness of teacher knowledge, skill and competence.	CPTD is a motivational tool: to do your best/develop yourself to accumulate points
personal growth plan dictates training that will provide points	IQMS/CPTD word negatief ervaar:verpligtend	CPTD points are rewards for goal completion
		CPTD is proof of IQMS process- that professional development has taken place.
so IQMS it is not necessary to attend a certain amount of training (LSA3)	Promote /ensure accountability	on CPTD you have to have this amount of training that you require to qualify for their certificate
it's not compulsory for the teachers to go for the training if they are going to be evaluated in IQMS (LSA3)	Self-upgrading/ enrichment	

Table 5.3 above, summarizes the link between IQMS and professional development, as established from the participants' responses. The IQMS and CPTD share the common aspect/ purpose of teacher development. The focus is on promoting accountability and self-enhancement for effective teaching skills, knowledge and competence. The IQMS process is the action plan that identifies the areas of support needs, while the CPTD is the actual accomplishment/improvement of needs identified. Part of the IQMS documents is a personal growth plan. To accomplish the goals in the personal growth plan, the CPTD system provides a database of SACE approved providers and endorsed programmes/activities to address the needs identified. While the CPTD points are the rewards for personal growth plan goal completion, it also serves as proof of professional development. While the IQMS appraise draw up a personal growth plan, the CPTD intend to motivate one to do their best to develop themselves and accumulate points. According

to LST3, the IQMS itself does not prescribe a particular number of training sessions, but the CPTD requires that teachers must complete a specific number of training sessions to qualify for their certificate. Not all LSTs however see a link between the IQMS and the CPTD. Evidence for these views is found below in the following participants' opinions.

> LST1: "Both IQMS and the CPTD system have common features in terms of the developmental aspect. IQMS appraises … to determining areas of strength and weakness…to draw up programmes for individual development. The CPTD system provides … a database of SACE approved providers and menu of SACE endorsed professional development activities / programmes to address the needs identified from the IQMS process."

> LST2: "The PGP of a teacher helps to dictate the types of training/ sessions to be planned … which will then at the end provide the points needed to be gainfully employed."

> RCT3: "The link is the development of the teacher through workshops attended. It's about personal growth and forms part of development in the areas you needed help with."

> RCT1: "IQMS is your plan of action or what you would like to do to grow professionally, whereas CPTD is what you actually accomplish to develop professionally."

> LST4: "Daar is 'n defnitiewe skakel tussen IQMS en CPTD, want een van die punte waarop jy jouself beoordeel wanneer jy geIQMS word, is persoonlike ontwikkeling.[There is a definite link between IQMS and CPTD, because one of the points that judge yourself on when you are IQMSd, is personal development.]"

> LST5: "Dit het albei persoonlike of beroepsontwikkeling maar word negatief ervaar omdat so baie van werkers verwag word. Enige iets wat verplig word, is 'n las en nie vir die lekker nie.[It has both personal and professional development but are experiences negatively because much is expected from workers. Anything that is compulsory is not nice]"

> LST7: "Well they all about improving and developing teachers in their professional career. They focus on effectiveness of teacher knowledge, skill and competence."

> LST8: "This two serves the same purpose it's about individual teacher development."

LST10: "CPTD can be used as proof in the IQMS process, that professional development has taken place.

RCT4: "Teachers identify professional development needs through IQMS and other related processes. They… choose activities that will help them address the identified needs from the database of the SACE approved providers and endorsed professional development activities."

LST3: "IQMS identifies areas where personal development must take place and CPTD points are the reward for completing the personal development goals."

LST12: "During IQMS it's when you identify the areas you need to develop…you will get points for the training course you attend.

LST13: "Development needs gets addressed by attending courses which could lead to point."

RCT5: "CPTD is a motivatory tool for us to attend in-service training. By doing so we strive to excel in delivering quality education."

LST15: "Development to accumulate points and motivate to do ones best in education."

LSA2: "…, because if you do your PGP you put in you want to do this course or that course or you want to have some things."

LSA3: "… it's not compulsory for the teachers to go for the training if they are going to be evaluated in IQMS then the teachers will just perform their job with their understanding. But when it comes to CPTD, the teachers have to attend a certain amount of training for them for them to qualify."

LST6: "…yes, but once again it gets abused."

RCT2: "None in my experience. I am not on the official CPTD system yet."

LST3: "IQMS identifies areas where personal development must take place and CPTD points are the reward for completing the personal development goals. Yet the rewards are mythical… CPTD points seem to be this invisible thing that one must gather, but does not reflect anywhere."

Discussion on the perceived link between IQMS and CPTD

Participants' perception of the link between IQMS and professional development, is in line with figure 3.2 (cf. 3.10). The common purpose between the two systems is teacher development. Both processes aim to promote and ensure accountability, self-upgrading and self-enrichment. There is an understanding that the areas of support needs must first be identified in the IQMS process and accompanied personal growth plan before the actual accomplishment/improvement can occur through the CPTD system. The CPTD database provides SACE approved training providers and endorsed programmes/activities to address the needs identified (cf. 3.11). Points can only be collected from SACE approved service providers (cf. 3.9.2).

CPTD encourages self-development through points accumulation. LSA3 articulates that there is no prescribe for training from the IQMS itself. However, the CPTD requires that teachers must complete a specific number of trainings to qualify for their certificates. Not all participants observe any link, or a positive link between the two systems, for various reasons that will be further elaborated on in theme 2 below. LST5 raised a negative connotation between the processes because they are compulsory, while LST6 argues that they can be abused. RCT2 explains that she is not on the CPTD system yet and therefore she cannot acquire points, although she does partake in regular professional development. LST3 concurs about invisible CPTD points that do not reflect anywhere.

5.3.2   Theme 2: Perception of Challenges

Theme 2 provided answers to two different, though inter-related research objectives: Objective one, on the roles and functions alignment to the Current KPAs of LSTs and RCTs; Objective two on Experiences, constraints and challenges to professional development of LSTs and RCTs regarding their IQMS.

Theme 2 emerged from questions 3, 4, 5 and 9, which were posed to LSTs and RCTs as follows:

> Question 3: What do you perceive/experience as the greatest challenges facing the LSTs/RCTs with regard to IQMS?

Question 4.　What is your overall perception of the effectiveness of IQMS to promote/contribute to the professional development of LSTs/RCTs?

Question 5.　What assistance is received from your principal to understand and cope with the IQMS and the accompanying challenges?

Question 9:　What according to your experience are the greatest challenges of LSTs/RCTs with regards to CPD and CPTD?

Sub-themes identified under Theme two entail the following challenges namely, Systemic; Points/merits; Misuse; Training/Time/funding; Goal attainment (Resources, Time, and productivity); Instrumentation; Job description and role alignment. The researcher wishes to emphasize that all the challenges mentioned here, cascade directly from the participants' understanding and impression of the IQMS/CPTD as elaborated on in theme one above (cf. 5.3.1).

5.3.2.1　Systemic issue

The recording system is an online sign-up process. LST6, LST4, LST5 and RCT2 raise the concern that they are not on the official CPTD system or that their system is not working (LST4, LST5). This statement corroborates the view of LST3, of rewards appearing or disappearing with/for no reason. There are limited options for logging points while the website sometimes does not respond to entries or reflect information that is not correct. Problems with capturing or recording training eventually led to support teachers giving up on even trying to capture any training. LSA2 and LSA4 share the concerns of the LSTs and RCTs, which is that the IQMS and CPTD systems do not consider support teachers. Their training could not be loaded, with the implication that they forfeited their points. This systemic dilemma is the one aspect that LSA2 and LSA4 want to see changed because being registered on the CPTD system will enable the support teachers to benefit by building points. LSA4 argues that point accumulation will in turn motivate them to participate in more training. Although most participants elevate the systemic inaccessibility, one participant (LST10) indicates that he is indeed registered. The following sentiments attest to the views stated here.

RCT4: "Recording system. Online sign-up process"

RCT2: "I am not on the official CPTD system yet."

LST3: "CPTD points seem to be this invisible thing that one must gather, but does not reflect anywhere. Yet the rewards are mythical points that appear or disappear with no reason. Logging of points must be done manually and the options for logging seem to be limited. Sometimes the website does not respond to entries or reflect information that is not correct."

LST6: "CPTD points is not applicable on learner support teachers, not yet…as far as I know we are not activated on the system."

RCT3: "We are having lots problems capturing (recording) of the points so much so that we have given up on capturing anything."

LST3: "I have participated in many professional development training where it was compulsory to complete attendance records for CPTD purposes only to find it does not reflect on my records. "

LST3: "SACE is known for not returning calls or bad service. I have logged points but it did not reflect after logging in again. According to me, SACE does not have a good record when it comes to service."

RCT5: "We don't understand the ways to capture CPTD and there is a struggle in registering ourselves in SACE points."

LST10: "I am indeed registered, but the timely uploading of the training done is my biggest challenge. I may just forget to upload the training in the time due."

LSA2: "And that is why I feel that our Learning Support Teachers and our Resource Class Teachers are not considered when they write, all when they do these, or set up these systems."

LSA2: "I don't think the IQMS is a negative process or system that we are busy using, but I think there are things that could be changed."

LSA2: I still have an envelope with that I sent in to our district and I just came back. So their scores or all the all the things that they did, were not taken into consideration."

LSA4: "I definitely feel if I definitely feel if they are, uh. CPTD if they. If there are also on CPTD that they, uh, training can benefit for them, they can build it points then it will also motivate them to do more training."

Discussion on Systemic issues

The CPTD recording system is an online or manual sign-up process. Teachers must first sign-up on the CPTD Self-Service Portal before they can participate in their 1st CPTD Cycle (cf. 3.10). Many LSTs could not even make it to the second CPTD cycle (cf. 3.9), because they could not manage to sign up or upload their precious professional development activities. Some participants raised the concern that they are either not on the official system, or that their system does not work (LST6, LST4, LST5, RCT2). Accordingly, LST3 reported about rewards appearing or disappearing with/for no reason. Whilst there are limited options for logging points, the website sometimes does not respond to entries or reflect information that is not correct. Eventually, support teachers gave up on even trying to capture any training. Not being able to load training, caused LSTs and RCTs to miss out on their first CPTD Cycle from January 2015. LSTs and RCTs were supposed to sign-up for January 2016 to December 2016 sign-up phase, as part of the third cohort of PL1 teachers.

The support teachers could however not prepare for their first CPTD Cycle which was about to start from 2017 to 2019 and thereafter every three years (cf. 3.10). The IQMS and CPTD systems do not consider support teachers (LSA2, LSA4). Not being able to load their training, implies that they forfeited their points and not being able to commit to the SACE code of conduct (Emekako 2018:229). LSA2 and LSA4 want to see this systemic dilemma changed because they believe that by being registered on the CPTD system support teachers will benefit by building points. That way, they will be motivated to participate in more training. Despite most participants elevating systemic inaccessibility, one participant (LST10) indicates that he is indeed registered.

5.3.2.2   Points/merits

Directly linking to the systemic challenges in 5.3.2.1 above, the points that are supposed to serve as a reward for attaining personal development goals, seem to be mythical despite compulsory training registration. Points for CPTD do not apply to LSTS/RCTs yet, so most of the time they do not get credits for their training. With all the struggles to capture points, some LSTs/RCTs just gave up on trying to do so. LST6 argues that marks or points get

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allocated according to the perceptions of peers and advisors. The validity and relevance of such scores are questioned by LSA1 and 4, who maintain that all supervisors do have different opinions and interpretations. The sentiments of the following participant attest to the aforementioned views.

> LST 3: "CPTD points are the reward for completing the personal development goals. Yet the rewards are mythical points that appear or disappear with no reason."

> LST3: "CPTD points seem to be this invisible thing that one must gather, but does not reflect anywhere. It is almost mythical."

> LST3: "compulsory to complete attendance records for CPTD purposes only to find it does not reflect on my records" " It is almost mythical."

> LST6: "CPTD points is not applicable on learner support teachers, not yet."

> RCT5: "We have given up on capturing anything."

> LST8: "We don't get points for the development activities."

> LST12: "Most of the time we (LST) are not credited for the training we attend…"

> LST6: "Marks is decided by your peer that is grading you. Everything is a perception testing the perception of your advisor/peers of you as a teacher."

> LSA1: "Unfortunately, I do not see the scores as very valid as supervisors all do have different interpretations."

> LSA 2: "So there scores or all the things that they did, were not taken into consideration and I've I just felt that is not fair towards the Learning Support Teachers"

> LSA4: "…like LSA1 said, that the interpretation of each one differs and uh, so the marks is actually not very relevant 'cause it's the marks is seen from the person who interpret the marks so…"

Discussion on points and merit issues

The points or merits issue links directly with the systemic challenges in 5.3.2.1 above. Just as for MSTs, LSTs and RCTs are expected to have professional development points account with SACE and must earn 150 professional development points every three years (cf. 3.11). Teachers who do not achieve the minimum number of professional development points over two successive cycles of three years will be accountable to SACE (DoE 2007:20). The LSTs and RCTs fulfil their obligation of self-enhancement, but the inability to complete the last step of registering points to the CPTD system withholds them from completing their full professional developmental cycle (cf. 3.11). Since points for CPTD do not apply to some LSTS/RCTs yet, the implication is that they do not get credits for their training most of the time.

Additional to the "mythical" state of marks (LST3), another points dilemma is highlighted. LST6 argues that marks or points get allocated according to the perceptions of peers and advisors. Varied interpretations of the roles of LSTs and RCTs in relation to the performance standards in the IQMS, also caused disagreement between LSAs in different school districts and circuits. The validity and relevance of such scores are questioned by LSA1 and LSA4, who maintain that all supervisors do have different opinions and interpretations. The possibility of differences in interpretations of criteria is corroborated by Martin (2013:98), who predicts consequent IQMS ineffectiveness. Rabichund (2011:185, 187, 190), Sekgale (2016:75, 77) and Van Wyk (2015:283) underscore the sentiments of challenges with point allocation. Sekgale (2016:75, 77) maintains that the IQMS is not fool-proof and that as long as teachers evaluate one another, they will not disadvantage each other. Inconsistency and biasedness in the application of appraisal criteria diminish the credibility, accountability, and efficiency goal of the whole IQMS process (Rabichund 2011:185, 187, 190; Van Wyk 2015:283)

5.3.2.3   Misuse/abuse issues

Although there is a link between the IQMS and CPTD, it is open to abuse and misuse. LST6 uses capital letters in emphasising how strong she feels regarding this issue. Marks or points are awarded by peers, which leaves the system exposed to misuse. RCT2 is very

vocal in raising the concern that individuals can use friends to make them look good in their IQMS. Concurring with RCT2's "self-selling" impression, LST16 refers to the encouragement of window dressing and practices of "self-saving from failure." The opinions of these participants are supported by LSA3 who also reports observing efforts of window dressing to obtain higher marks. These views are founded on the following participant expressions.

> RCT2: "…colleagues, in my experience, were not the best workers but those who could sell themselves, using their friends to support, on the IQMS document."

> LST6: "It's yet another system that has potential to work wonders but is abused and misused."

> LST16: "It also encourage LSTs to window dress."

> LST6: "Teachers are quick to run to you to get a shortened version of a document or book that i read only to save themselves and earn some CPTD points. Once a year for a week you simply save yourself from failure and do what is needed. It gets abused"

> RCT2: "In my experience, many non-functional teachers looked like super-heroes on their IQMS documents."

> LSA3: "It has a negative impact based on learning support educators because sometimes if you go and do the IQMS for teachers, they will window dressing because they wanted their marks to be high only for that particular day and then the next day that the teachers work as they worked on their IQMS."

Discussion on misuse/abuse issues

Another IQMS misuse-loophole already touched on in 5.3.1.5 above, as highlighted by LST6, is that of opportunity and reward for "window dressing" (Arendse 2010:64; Rabichund 2011:28; Van Wyk 2015:217). Emphasising her resentment in capital letters, LST6 comments that marks or points are awarded by peers, which leaves the system exposed to misuse. RCT2 accords very vocally the concern that individuals can use their friends to make them look good in their IQMS. Concurring with RCT2's "self-selling" impression, LST16 refers to the encouragement of window dressing and practices of "self-saving from

failure." The opinions of these participants are supported by LSA3 who also reports observing efforts of window dressing to obtain higher marks. Rabichund (2011:188) and Van Wyk (2015:283) support the aforementioned views by stating that when observed for a short time, individuals frequently produce good showmanship.

5.3.2.4   Training/Time issues/Funding

A huge challenge raised by support teachers is the issue of training, with related time and funding challenges. There is a need for specific training for LSTs and RCTs, at appropriate timeslots that do not interfere with contact time. Itinerant teachers find it very challenging to attend training during school hours as it is difficult to make up for days lost at one of their schools. There is a lot of training aimed at mainstream schooling. Learning support specific training must be presented separately, and not together with the mainstream. RCT2 comments that it is difficult to find relevant free specialised training, whereas, on the other hand, general mainstream courses are usually free or paid for. She does however add that money for training is available in the Resource class budget. Thus, value is added to the IQMS exercise, in that it allows the RCT to identify her training needs.

LSA2 concurs that money is always a setback and that learning support struggles to get funds for the development of support teachers. The LSA refers to a few fortunate free trainings that was conducted. The only available platform for LSTs and RCTs is the Education for all courses accessible via the WCED e-Portal. On availability of training, LST2 and LSA3 agree about the general availability of development opportunities that the curriculum has, which makes them (learning support) feel left out all the time. According to LSA1, there was a lot of training, but no training that linked to the needs identified during the IQMS. In contrast with the unavailability of training that was raised by support teachers, LSA 2 mentioned that training at Cape Teaching and Leadership Institute (CTLI) was indeed available before the pandemic. CTLI training was usually scheduled for two weeks at a time. Other training that stretched over weekends would be in cities thus too far to attend for rural support teachers. Due to the pandemic, there has been very little development taking place in the learning support component. These views are supported by the following participant comments.

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LST2: "Appropriate training which does not take up contact time."

RCT1: "Regular Specific training for LSTs and RCTs, not mainstream."

RCT1: "Specific training should be allocated for LSTs and RCTs, not with mainstream and it should be done a regular basis taking time into consideration."

LST15: "Being and LST I sometimes find it difficult to attend certain workshops as it interferes with my schedule for the two schools."

LST13: "Lots of courses are designed just for mainstream teachers."

RCT2: "The greatest challenge for me, is to find relevant specialised training/courses (not paid). Generally, the paid courses/ finances are for general mainstream training."

RCT2: "Money for training, as part of the RCT budget, and allowing the teacher to identify what is needed, seems to add value to the exercise."

LSA1: "There, there were a lot of training this year. Uh. That was there, but I think if we connect it with, the IQMS."

LSA2: "…. and money in our case, is always a setback. We always struggle in learning support to get funds available for teacher's development for our Learning Support Teachers."

LSA2: "it's always about money, training and developing teachers is about money. We were lucky to have some training this year that they that people did for free."

LSA2: "OK, in these days we had our COVID-19 which has been challenging for us, especially with teacher development and setting up things. And there has been very few developments taking place in our component in learning support, I mean because of the pandemic that we are in."

LSA2: "…previously when we before we had the pandemic we could actually go and do CTLI courses or CTLI would have courses that foot like for two weeks. So we set that up,"

LSA2: "But these other training and like LST3 said, curriculum also always has something that's going on and we are left out always and that is part of teacher development as well at the end of the day."

LSA2: "But the challenge is that some courses, especially for learning support, would be over weekends and stuff. We don't stay in the cities. We are far out, and for our teachers to travel for a, you know, for a weekend thing. It's not always. Uhm, viable, because they also have families and we have to take that into consideration."

LSA3: "So it is a challenge as learning support you compare learning support with curriculum. Curriculum is always, they are always developed… unlike learning support because there are few training that are based on learning support…"

Discussion on challenges with training, time and funding issues

A huge challenge raised by support teachers is the issue of training, with related time and funding challenges. There is a need for specific training for LSTs and RCTs, at appropriate timeslots that do not interfere with contact time. Itinerant teachers find it especially challenging to attend training during school hours as it is difficult to make up for days lost at one of their schools. Roberts (2011:33) confirms that trainers and service providers should revise the timeslots of training, in terms of what time of the day it occurs (cf. 3.7.1.4). Accordingly, Rabichund (2011:241) argues that training should not impact teaching time and should thus be scheduled after school hours, during weekends and school holidays. This makes the dilemma of LSTs and RCTs even bigger, as LSA2 argues that there must be a consideration for the families of support teachers.

On availability of training, LST2 and LSA3 agree about the general availability of development opportunities that the curriculum has, which makes them (learning support) feel left out all the time. The overall sentiment is that curricula are prioritised over learning support when it comes to training and development opportunities. Martin (2013:96) concurs that most in-service training was based on curriculum (etc., curriculum training for the Curriculum Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS). There is an appeal that learning support specific training must be presented separately, and not together with the mainstream. Specific appropriate training can directly influence effective inclusive education implementation (Mahlo 2011:156). In contrast with the unavailability of training that was raised, LSA 2 mentioned that training at CTLI was indeed available before the pandemic. WCED offers in-service developmental programmes, mostly at the CTLI, based in Bellville.

Because of the pandemic, there has been very little development taking place in the learning support component. CTLI training was usually scheduled for two weeks at a time. Stofile (2008, cited in Donohue & Bornman 2014:9), confirm that training programmes for the accommodation of learners with disabilities generally stretch over two weeks and although helpful, such short-term training programmes are not enough. Teachers need longer-lasting training programmes that are more comprehensive, to acquire the vast range of skills they need. According to Martin (2013:96), inclusive teacher training with fundamental learner-centred teaching strategies, however, formed the least of in-service development programmes that were available to teachers.

Funding for training is a notable challenge. RCT2 notes that it is difficult to find relevant free specialised training, whereas, on the other hand, general mainstream courses are usually free or paid for. She does however add that money for training is available in the resource class budget. Thus, value is added to the IQMS exercise, in that it allows the RCT to identify her training needs. LSA2 concurs that money is always a setback and that learning support struggles to get funds for the development of support teachers. Reference is made to a few fortunate free training that was conducted.

According to LSA1, there was a lot of training, but no training that linked to the needs identified during the IQMS. There is also the Education for all courses that are accessible via the WCED e-Portal, however, there should be more opportunities for LSTs and RCTs. This may be due to a lack of understanding of developmental concerns, needs collation that is not prioritized or a lack of coordination between district and provincial offices (Martin 2013:99).

5.3.2.5 *Goal attainment, resources, time and productivity*

CPTD points are rewarded for reaching personal development goals. Realistic goal setting and goal attainment within specific self-determined time frames are however reported to be very challenging. Issues that impact goal achievement as well as productivity, include persistent learning barriers, unconducive working environments, contact time and other operational issues. The scope of work of LSTs is very wide, concerning extra-curricular expectations about activities that fall outside their core functions (LST2, LST3). Setting

development goals and attending related training is particularly challenging for itinerant support teachers. LST15 reports a sense of instability between her two schools, with special reference to workshop attendance that interferes with the schedule of both her schools. A lack of resources also hampers ideals to accommodate all learners with support needs and learner achievement per se. Evidence for these views is found in the comments of LST2, LST3, LST4, LST15 and RCT4.

> LST2: "The work sphere is different than that of a mainstream teacher. Therefore, the KRAs will not always be the same, e.g. extra-curricular activities that do not speak to the core functions of an LST."

> LST2: "Realistic goal setting is also a challenge. Learning barriers do not occur overnight which implies that it is rather a process than a quick fix. In some instances, our working environment is not always conducive and we have to make it work where ever space is available. Contact time, changes in timetables, as well as periods and planning for groups of learners, is a huge challenge which could impact goal-achieving as well as productivity?"

> RCT4: "To accommodate all learners with moderate special needs in class. Not enough resources to realise that ideal of accommodating all learners with special needs... learner achievement."

> LST4: "Jy stel vir jouself doelwitte en ook 'n tydperk waarin jy daardie doelwitte wil bereik en probeer tot die beste van jou vermoë om daardie doelwitte te bereik [You set goals for youself and also a timefrme for reaching the goal to the best of your ability to reach that goal.]"

> LST 3: "CPTD points are the reward for completing the personal development goals."

> LST3: "The IQMS does not address all the areas that Learning Support Teachers have to do. Our work is more specialized and not so much focussed on the curriculum."

> LST15: "Moving between the two schools feels like nor experiencing stability at neither of them. Being an LST I sometimes find it difficult to attend certain workshops as it interferes with my schedule for the two schools."

Discussion on the issues with regards to goal attainment, resources, time and productivity

CPTD points are rewarded when individuals reach their personal development goals (cf. 3.11). The personal growth plan links areas for development to a specific time frame. (Van Wyk 2015:14). Realistic goal setting and goal attainment within specific self-determined time frames are however reported to be very challenging. Martin (2013:98) concurs with Mahlaela (2012:21) that the time to implement the IQMS and personal growth plan goals is insufficient. The time issue is particularly relevant to itinerant LSTs, who sometimes find problems juggling workshop attendance and contact time at both their schools (cf.5.3.2.4). As such, LST15 reports feelings of instability at either school.

Other issues that impact goal achievement as well as productivity, include persistent learning barriers, unconducive working environments, contact time and other operational issues. According to Sekgale (2016:74), diverse learning barriers impact teacher performance and productivity. Learning barriers cannot be "cured" overnight. Therefore, sufficient time, enough resources and a conducive teaching environment is required. A lack of resources also hampers ideals to accommodate all learners with support needs and learner achievement per se. Conducive work environments encourage teacher development (Mahlaela 2012:21). On the other hand, Mahlaela (2012:21) further orates that unconducive work environments such as insufficient classroom space can negatively impact quality teaching and learning.

An overload of administrative paperwork reduces contact time with learners. In this regard, LST2 remarks that "*The Department itself can relook the amount of paperwork required at times*". Realistic goal setting is also a challenge because of the wide scope of work of support teachers. Particular reference to expectations about extra-curricular activities that do not speak to the core functions of an LST (LST2, 3). Core functioning areas must be performed to contribute to the overall performance and functioning to reach specific goals (cf.1.13.11).

5.3.2.6   Instrumentation

The IQMS instrument is experienced as a general document that is designed mostly for
The IQMS instrument is experienced as a general document that is designed mostly for
mainstream classes and as such, does not cater for specialist post teachers. As it is a fixed
document, it does not address all the learning support responsibility areas, nor does it cater
for 2021 classroom and school challenges. LST7 feels that the instrument does not identify
the specific support and development needs of LSTs. This view is supported by LSA1 and
LSA2 who argue that there are things that should be changed in the instrument to make it
more appropriate for and more accessible to LSTs. Special reference is made to PS6 and
PS7 (Human relations and contribution to school development; Extra-curricular and co-
curricular participation). The IQMS instrument should consider the work plan of the LSTs.
Additionally, the LSAs must be allowed to take chances with the instrument to allow LSTs
to accomplish more with the IQMS system. Regarding the four-point system of the
instrument, LST16 feel that it does not allow further exceeding, although it keeps her on
task for teaching and learning. LSA2 hints to" *the new way where we be moving away from
the IQMS to the QMS*". She opines that it would seem to be a better system in the sense
that the teachers will be given a framework on what they want to be assessed on and it's
not a given. These views find support in the following participant commentsRCT2: "It is a
general document, not really focusing on the specialised post…"

> RCT5: "It (IQMS) is mostly designed for mainstream classes and don't
> cater for RCT."

> LST3: "The IQMS does not address all the areas that Learning Support
> Teachers have to do."

> LST6: "it a fixed document which does not cater for 2021 challenges we
> face in our classrooms and school environment."

> LST7: "It does not identify specific needs of LST for support and
> developments."

> LSA1: "To make it up accessible to the LSTs."

> LST7: "…Colleagues don't know what we do in learning support."

LST16: "As a veteran Mainstream LST, I feel that the system does not allow me to exceed the 4-point support system. On the other hand, it keeps one on-task for teaching and learning."

LSA2: "It's for me. It is really positive, but the parts that are negatively support on assessment and also that extra curriculum activities Uh,"

LSA2: "…I Think there are things that that could be changed…especially when it comes to UhM, #5 and #6, more six and seven UhM. I feel they must make it appropriate for all teachers if I might say so and consider the learning support work plan …and allow us to make more changes so that our LSTs can do so much more with the IQMS system."

LSA2: "And that is why I feel that our Learning Support Teachers and our Resource Class Teachers are not considered when they write, all when they do these, or set up these systems."

LSA2: "think with the new way where we be moving away from the IQMS to the QMS. It would seem to be like a better system. In the sense where the teachers can decide, or you know, given a framework on what they want to be assessed on and it's not a given, this is what we're going to assess on. They have a say in what they want to be assessed on."

Discussion on the challenges with regards to Instrumentation

This discussion on IQMS instrumentation actually lays the foundation for Theme 3 below, where appropriateness and relevance will be elaborated on. Participants regard the IQMS instrument as a general document that is mostly designed for mainstream classes. Arendse (2010:101) concludes that the criteria in the IQMS do not reflect the role of support teachers. One performance measurement instrument is used for two different jobs with significantly different key performance areas (cf. 1.5). Therefore, the instrument does not cater for specialist post teachers but rather judges the support teachers according to the performance standards applicable to Post level one educators (Arendse 2010:90). Mainstream teachers also have no or very little knowledge of the specific job description and key responsibility areas of the support teachers (cf. 3.8.4.1), which according to Arendse (2010:71) leads to LSTs' sentiments that they were not "measured uniquely" to their job description, and thus gets underscored.

The fixed document does not address all the learning support responsibility areas, nor does it cater for 2021 classroom and school challenges (reference to transformed roles, cf. 3.4.2). This view is supported by LSA1 and LSA2 who argue that there are things that should be changed in the instrument to make it more appropriate for and more accessible to LSTs. Special reference is made to PS 6 and PS7: Human relations and contribution to school development; Extra-curricular and Co-curricular participation (cf. 3.8.4.1). As highlighted above in 5.3.2.5, the work scope of LSTs and RCTs is much wider and more specialised than that of mainstream teachers (cf.1.5). The IQMS instrument should consider the work plan of the LSTs. Additionally, the LSAs must be allowed to take chances with the instrument to allow LSTs to accomplish more with the IQMS system.

Making changes to a policy may be problematic, however, for policy aims to influence transformation, the needs, and social realities of its primary clients (in this case that of the LSTs and RCTs) should somehow be reflected in such policy's design and implementation (cf. 3.8.6). On the question about the benefits of participating in the IQMS/CPTD, one participant remarked that "we are all educators, we all need to go through the same measuring tool…on whatever appropriate level." However, LST16 feels that the four-point system of the instrument does not allow further exceeding, although it keeps her on task for teaching and learning.

With special reference to the concern from LSTs of IQMS inability to address all the learning support key responsibility areas, and by LSA1 and LSA2 who also query appropriateness and accessible for LSTs, there is mention about *"the new way of moving away from the IQMS to the QMS"*. According to LSA2, it would seem to be a better system in that the teachers will be given a framework on what they want to be assessed on and it's not a given. LSA2 also explains that teachers will *"have a say in what they want to be assessed on."* Chapter Three, section 8 introduced the intended policy changes from the IQMS to the QMS. By the time when the literature review was done, the new proposed system was not effective in public schools already. As such, the new QMS is not the focus of this particular study. It is however worth a brief introduction, since the participants mentioned it as a possibility, meaning that the new system is already known to them.

As mentioned in 3.9.1, the new QMS system (CDE 2015:8) was an effort to rebrand the IQMS that lead to the development of the new Quality Management System (QMS). The new QMS was to replace the current IQMS. The QMS would measure educator performance as aligned to their particular roles and responsibilities, one of the features of particular interest to the purpose under investigation in this study. In November 2014, the ELRC approved the QMS and stakeholder interviewees (CDE 2015), applauded the QMS as an improvement over the IQMS as it is a simpler process with more credible appraisal criteria. By that time, the QMS could not be implemented because of teacher union bargaining issues (CDE 2015:8). The New QMS was eventually introduced to schools in Term 3, 2021 and a series of virtual training webinars followed with the principals, and deputy principals, trailed by SMTs. Lastly, Post level 1 teachers were trained, with LSTs and RCTs included. All the training was compulsory as the new QMS was to replace the IQMS from 01 January 2022 (Y. Damons, personal communication, September 14, 2021). A signed individual attendance register would allow participants to attain 5 CPTD points. The 5-point attainment already raises an alarm for LSTs and RCTs because of systemic challenges as discussed earlier (cf. 5.3.2.1 and cf. 5.3.2.2). Since the new QMS are to replace the current IQMS, its features and impact are worthy of further research (to be elaborated on in Chapter Six).

5.3.2.7 *Job description and role alignment*

The job description of the LSTs/RCTs differs from that of MSTs. LSTs explain that their key responsibility areas differ (LST2, LST3, LST5, and LST12). Instead of purely focussing on curriculum, they perform more specialised functions that fall outside the mainstream scope. When it comes to the roles of support teachers, there are expectations that do not align with their core functions. Particular reference is made to extra-curricular activity expectations. LSA 2, LSA3 and LSA4 support the sentiments of the LSTs that they are working differently from the mainstream. LSA3 refers to the performance standards in the IQMS-QA3 form that are general and sometimes it does not accommodate the exact activities that LSTs are doing or expected to perform. LST2 is of the opinion that their key responsibility areas must be aligned to their core functions, thus strengthening the concern of LST5 that she performs tasks that she does not acquire points for.

Principals and Heads of Departments (HODs), newly referred to as Departmental Heads, do not understand the scope of extra-curricular activities that the LSTs must be performing. Extra-mural activities never only referred to sport, but included extra classes and library assistance. After school SBT sessions are also extra-mural. Even organizing parts of the prize-giving functions serves as extra-mural activities. Support teachers after school activities are being queried or misunderstood because of certain expectations from mainstream their colleagues. These views find support in the following opinions of participants.

> LST1: "Die prestasie standaarde is dieselfde vir hoofstroom en leerondersteuningsopvoeders. Die Prinsipaal dra kennis van die inhoud van hierdie prestasie standaarde, maar nie oor die daaglikse posbeskrywing van 'n leerondersteuningsopvoeder nie.[The performance standards is the same for mainstream and learning support. The Principal is aware about the content of the performance Standards, but not about the daily job description of the learning support teacher]"

> LST2: "The work sphere is different than of a mainstream teacher…the KRAs will not always be the same, e.g. extra-curricular activities that do not speak to the core functions of an LST.

> LSA2: "Their way of working differs from the mainstream."

> LSA1: "… support on assessment and also that extra curriculum activities Uh, because you have to think very carefully. To make it up accessible to the LSTs and once again, that is…"

> LSA3: "Another thing that I will be based on the Performance Standards. The Performance Standards is so general. Sometimes there are things that were supposed to be on their Performance Standards and the criterions, which doesn't, which doesn't accommodate learning support educators like for instance if we take performance standards 6-7 we have something that says. Ah, the extramural…"

> LST3: "The IQMS does not address all the areas that Learning Support Teachers have to do. Our work is more specialized and not so much focused on the curriculum. There are areas of our job description that fall outside the scope of mainstream teaching. Learning Support's scope is very wide."

> LST2: "…the KRAs should be more aligned to our actual core functions."

LST5: "SCOPE: ek doen baie dinge waarvoor ek nie noodwendig die punte kry nie. [I do more things that I do not necessarily get points]"

LSA2: "…when it comes to the DBST our Learning Support Teachers plays a role there. When we have to, you know they are the people that we would go to ask about referrals that was made but it doesn't have."

LST12: "Extra Curriculum, our colleagues (HOD/Principal) don't understand."

LSA2: Uh, so I think that I have a better idea of what is what is expected of the Learning Support Teacher there and the other members of the DBST because sometimes they would ask the LST to do that and it would not be part of what they must do. You get what I'm saying."

LST12: "Extra-Mural activities, Colleagues don't understand that afternoon intervention is extra-mural activities. Visiting home and having meetings with parents.

LSA3: "…then the schools are failing to understand that that extra time that the teachers are doing to let their learners to be able to read and write either extramural. So they want teachers to be involved in the in athletics, music and other stuff that they are offering at the school."

LST1: "Elke skool se uniek omstandighede dra by tot hoe die LO opvoeder haar werksbeskrywing toepas.[Every school has unique circumstances that contributes to how the LST applies her job description]"

LST1: "Ten spyte van Kontekstuele faktore wat vordering strem, bied die prestasie aanduiders die LO opvoeder die geleentheid om binne 'n bepaalde tydsraamwerk sy / haar doelwitte te bereik wat sal pas binne die werksbeskrywing en die unieke omstandighede van 'n skool.[Despite the contextual factors that hampers progress. The performance standards of the LST the opportunity to reach his/her goal within a that will fit within the job description and the unique circumstances ot the school]"

LSA4: "And from the days when I was Learning Support Teacher, Uh, extramural activities was never only sport, and it was extra classes. It was library assistance. It was so for me, If the teachers are having their SBTs after school, it's extramural. For me, all of that, I'm counting as extramural 'cause that was for me in in the school where I was giving learning support, that was seen as extra-mural, even if you are organizing their part of the prize-giving function. It is extramural."

Discussion on the issues with regards to the job description and role alignment

The job description of the LSTs/RCTs differs from that of MSTs. LSTs explain that their key responsibility areas differ (LST2, LST3, LST5, and LST12). LSA 2, LSA3 and LSA4 support the sentiments of the LSTs that they are working differently from the mainstream. Instead of purely focussing on curriculum, they perform more specialised functions that fall outside the mainstream scope. In essence, it means that support teachers have a broader professional dimension or different "job design" than MSTs (Mahlaela 2012:25; Rabichund 2011:22).

When it comes to the roles of support teachers, there are expectations that do not align with their core functions. A comparison with the roles and responsibilities in the job description of support teachers reveals that support teachers perform duties that spread over the whole spectrum of Post levels one to four (cf. 3.4.2.2, 3.8.4.1), therefore implying increased accountability (Rabichund 2011:22). Even though LSTs and RCTs are Post level 1 teachers, the SIAS document explains their roles as part of the DBST, which comprises Post level 2 to Post level 5 positions. Particular reference is made to the extra-curricular activity expectations, which strongly align with the transformed and expanded roles of support teachers within the SIAS (inclusive education) framework (cf. 3.3.3). Performance standards 6 and 7 comprise the crux of the difference between the job descriptions of MSTs and that of support teachers. These duties range over the categories of supervision, management, training, liaising, and communication.

These discoveries are a strong validation of the sentiment of LSA3 that the performance standards in the IQMS-QA3 form are general and every so often it does not accommodate the exact activities that LSTs are doing or expected to perform. LST2 is of the opinion that their key responsibility areas must be aligned to their core functions, thus strengthening the concern of LST5 that she performs tasks that she does not acquire points for.

The need for the explicit stipulation of exact criteria content per key performance areas of the LSTs and RCTs (cf.3.8.4.1), is further emphasised through concerns of participants that principals and HODs do not understand the scope of extra-curricular activities that the LSTs must be performing. As such the after-school activities that LSTs perform are queried or

misunderstood because of certain expectations from their mainstream colleagues. According to Barratt (2016:11), Dreyer (2008:235; 2013:55, 62,71), Arendse (2010:84) and Mahlo (2011:22:130), a well-written job description with a comprehensive definition of learning support includes all activities, practices, roles and responsibilities that will provide clear guidelines and support structures for support specialists, to curb many of the challenges they have to face in their respective contexts.

5.3.3 Theme 3: Perception of appropriateness/relevance of Measurement Instruments

Theme 3, together with Theme 2 above (cf.5.3.2) attribute to the research objective two: aligning roles and functions of Learning Support and Resource Class Teachers with their key performance areas.

Theme 3 emerged from questions 1, 3, 7, 8 and 9, which were posed to LSTs and RCTs as follows:

Question 1: What do you understand by the concept of the Integrated Management System (IQMS)?

Question 3: What do you perceive/experience as the greatest challenges facing the LSTs/RCTs with regard to IQMS?

Question 7: What do you understand by the concept of professional development or CPTD?

Question 8: In your experience, what (if any) is the link between IQMS and professional development or CPTD?

Question 9: What according to your experience are the greatest challenges of LSTs/RCTs with regards to Continuous professional development and CPTD?

Sub-themes identified under theme three entail include IQMS Tool and job description alignment; Instrument fairness/ Relevance

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5.3.3.1   IQMS Tool and job description alignment

This sub-theme links very closely to theme two, sub-themes 5.3.2.6 on instrumentation and 5.3.2.7, which describe the challenge of LSTs with regards to their job description-role alignment. The performance standards are not formulated or stated according to the job description of the support teachers. LST1 explains that every school has unique circumstances that influence the way that LSTs apply their job descriptions. As such, there needs to be scrutiny of performance standards to make them applicable to her personal growth plan. LST3 concurs on the generalness of the performance standards and that it does not accommodate all the activities that they must perform. Special reference is made to Performance Standards 6 (Human relations and contribution to school development) and 7 (Extra-curricular and Co-curricular participation). The views below provide the support for this sub-theme.

> LST1: "Prestasie standaarde/aanduiders van LO is nie bewoord volgens hul Posbeskrywing nie. Die areas binne elke prestasie standaard moet so noukeurig gekies word om sodoende dit uniek tot 'n LO opvoeder se PGP te maak omrede die prestasie standaarde nie bewoord is volgens die posbeskrywing van 'n LO opvoeder nie. Elke skool se uniek omstandighede dra by tot hoe die LO opvoeder haar werksbeskrywing toepas.[The performance standards/indicators of LS is not worded according to their job description. The areas within the performance standard must be chosen so carefully as to make it unique to a LSTs PGP because the performance standards are not worded according to the job description of the LST / Every school's unique context is contributes to how the LST applies her job description.

> LST1: "Die prestasie standaarde is dieselfde vir hoofstroom en leerondersteuningsopvoeders. Die Prinsipaal dra kennis van die inhoud van hierdie prestasie standaarde, maar nie oor die daaglikse posbeskrywing van 'n leerondersteuningsopvoeder nie. [The performance standards is the same for mainstream and learning support. The Principal is aware about the content of the performance Standards, but not about the daily job description of the learning support teacher]"

> LST1: "Ten spyte van Kontekstuele faktore wat vordering strem, bied die prestasie aanduiders die LO opvoeder die geleentheid om binne 'n bepaalde tydsraamwerk sy / haar doelwitte te bereik wat sal pas binne die werksbeskrywing en die unieke omstandighede van 'n skool. [Despite the contextual factors that hampers progress. The performance standards of

the LST the opportunity to reach his/her goal within a that will fit within the job description and the unique circumstances ot the school]"

LST3: "The performance standards are so general. Sometimes there are things that were supposed to be on their performance standards and the criterions, which doesn't, which doesn't accommodate learning support educators like for instance if we take performance standards 6-7 we have something that says."

LSA2: "When we have to, you know they are the people that we would go to ask about referrals that was made but it doesn't have" (roles and responsibilities).

LST3: "The IQMS does not address all the areas that Learning Support Teachers have to do. Our work is more specialized and not so much focused on the curriculum. There are areas of our job description that fall outside the scope of mainstream teaching. Learning Support's scope is very wide."

LSA1: "… but the parts that are negatively support on assessment and also that extra curriculum activities Uh, because you have to think very carefully. To make it up accessible to the LSTs… "

Discussion about appropriateness, IQMS Tool and job description alignment

As highlighted above, this sub-theme on IQMS Tool and job description alignment links closely to the subtheme of Instrumentation (cf. 5.3.2.6) and that of the Job description and role alignment (cf. 5.3.2.7). Discussion 16 thus lays a foundation for IQMS Tool - job description alignment. It is worth exploring to secure substance for sub-theme 5.3.3.2, on IQMS instrument fairness and relevance. Sekgale (2016:53) found that the IQMS is not specific and quite multi-dimensional. This confirms the remark of LST3 that "*the Performance standards is so general*". Contextual imbalances that include resource allocation and other environmental and contextual circumstances of a school should be taken into account, to reflect educators' difficult school contexts and work constraints (ELRC 2003).

Every support teacher has to decide on how best to apply themselves according to the needs and circumstances within their particular schools. It can even happen that itinerant support teachers operate differently within the number of schools that they have to serve.

LST1 testifies that *"Elke skool se uniek omstandighede dra by tot hoe die LO opvoeder haar werksbeskrywing toepas"* (Every school's unique circumstances contribute to the way that the Learning Support Teacher applies her job description).

Arendse (2010:84) attests that the roles of support teachers differed from context to context. However, the performance standards in the IQMS are not formulated or stated according to the job description of the support teachers. Therefore, the support teachers have to think very hard to link their unique needs with specific performance standards. This sentiment is validated by LSA1 in her statement that *"the parts that are … on assessment and also that extra curriculum activities Uh, because you have to think very carefully. To make it up accessible to the LSTs… "*Consequently, there is a need to carefully scrutinize the performance standards to make them applicable to personal growth plans.

The roles and responsibilities document provides the finer explanatory detail on how and where every role fits into the job description of support teachers. It also provides clear guidance on minimum targets for performance standards to be achieved per term (cf. 3.4.2.1). Common roles and responsibilities are condensed into 4 core functionality areas (cf. 3.4, 2.1, 3.4.2.2). With special reference being made to PS6 (Human relations and contribution to school development) and PS 7 (Extra-curricular and Co-curricular participation), Arendse (2010:84), argues that a job description would provide guidelines on what kind of support services should be provided, who should provide it, and where and how it should be provided. In addition, it would provide clarity on roles and responsibilities. Highlighting the current generalness of the performance standards and the fact that it does not accommodate all the activities that support teachers must perform, implies that there can be no alignment between their performance measurement and their particular roles and responsibilities.

5.3.3.2   *Instrument fairness/ Relevance*

Despite the specialised duties of LSTs that differ from that of MSTs, the same instrument with the same performance standards is used for both groups. LST 1 argues that to maintain a fair system, there must be alignment between the performance standards in the IQMS, the job description and the training that LSTs must record within the SACE

framework. This will in turn allow them to earn points for professional development. There are a lot of duties that LSTs perform that they cannot be scored for, as it is not stipulated in the scoring instrument. Referring back to 5.4.2 above, LST1 mentions that their colleagues do not understand what their after-school activities should entail. This concern is shared by LSA3 who found that the schools are failing to understand that the extra activities that LSTs are doing to teach learners to read and write are indeed their extra-murals. Linking to the "fairness" issue raised by LST1, LST6 also query fairness towards LSTs, because their colleagues don't know what they do in learning support. Although the principals are aware of the content of the performance standards, they do not know the daily job description of the LSTs.

LST5 accords with LST1 and LST6 in querying IQMS instrument fairness, arguing that because other teachers do not always have the knowledge about the duties of an LST, they cannot provide justified critique regarding their work. For this reason, LSTs utilize other LSTs of neighbouring schools as their peers in the IQMS process. Sentiments that imply challenges with regard to instrument fairness and relevance are raised by the participants below.

> LST1: "Die prestasie standaarde is dieselfde vir hoofstroom en leerondersteuningsopvoeders. Die Prinsipaal dra kennis van die inhoud van hierdie prestasie standaarde, maar nie oor die daaglikse posbeskrywing van 'n leerondersteuningsopvoeder nie." [The performance standards of the the LST the opportunity to reach his/her goal within a that will fit within the job description and the unique circumstances ot the school]"

> LST5: "SCOPE: ek doen baie dinge waarvoor ek nie noodwendig die punte kry nie." [I do many things that I do not necessarily get points for.]"

> LST12: "Extra-Mural activities: Colleagues don't understand that afternoon intervention is extra-mural activities. Visiting home and having meetings with parents".

> LST1: "Die prestasie aanduiders binne GGBS moet aansluit by die posbeskrywing en die opleiding wat 'n LO opvoeder binne die Suid Afrikaanse raad vir opvoeders moet rekordeer sodat punte vir professionele ontwikkeling verdien kan word ten einde 'n regverdige stelsel the handhaaf. [The performance standards within the IQMS must

link to the job description and the training that the LO teacher must record in the South African Council of Educators so that the points for professional development can be earned to maintain a fair process in the end]"

LSA3: "…then the schools are failing to understand that that extra time that the teachers are doing to let their learners to be able to read and write either extramural. So they want teachers to be involved in the in athletics, music and other stuff that they are offering at the school."

LST3: There are areas of our job description that fall outside the scope of mainstream teaching. Learning Support's scope is very wide."

LST3: "The IQMS does not address all the areas that Learning Support Teachers have to do. Our work is more specialized and not so much focussed on the curriculum."

LST6: "Fairness. Colleagues don't know what we do in learning support."

LST5: "Regverdige Instrument? Ander onderwysers het nie altyd kennis van wat ons doen nie en kan nie oordeelkundige kritiek lewer nie. Daarom word LOO's mekaar se gelyke al is dit van buurskole. [Fair Instrument? Other teachers do not always have the knowledge about we do and cannot deliver judicious critic. Therefore, LSTs becomes each other's peers in neighboring schools]"

LST4: "IQMS voorbereiding: Niemand op selfde vakgebied om te help nie. Geen ondersteuning van skool.[IQMS preparation: No one on the same subject areato support. No support from school]"

LST3: "There are areas of our job description that fall outside the scope of mainstream teaching. Learning Support's scope is very wide."

LSA2: "Uh, so I think that I have a better idea of what is what is expected of the Learning Support Teacher there and the other members of the DBST because sometimes they would ask the LST to do that and it would not be part of what they must do. You get what I'm saying."

LSA2: "It's for me. It is really positive, but the parts that are negatively support on assessment and also that extra curriculum activities…Uh,"

LSA2: "…sometimes it does not take Learning Support Teachers into consideration. If you look at it in written form. I think there are things that could be changed…especially when it comes to UhM, # 5 and # 6, more six and seven UhM. I feel they must make it appropriate for all teachers if I might say so and consider the learning support work plan …and allow

us to make more changes so that our LSTs can do so much more with the IQMS system."

LSA1: "To make it up accessible to the LSTs."

LSA1: "We know the needs because we see it in the IQMS, so it is all about again starting from that when we do the IQMS it is not listed what are the needs of the people and nobody looks at that."

LSA2: Uhm, the IQMS process in my personal opinion, is not written with the LST or the Resource Class Teachers in mind. Their way of working differs from the mainstream. Uhm, We use the pre-evaluation form, but when it comes to the QA 3 forms there are things that could have been that I feel should be changed for the Learning Support Teachers…"

Discussion on instrument fairness/ relevance

The question regarding instrument fairness and relevance finds a strong foundation in the above sub-theme on IQMS Tool and job description alignment (cf.5.3.3.1). According to Mestry *et al.* (2009:483), prioritising developmental needs can only happen through a fair and transparent teacher appraisal system that allows effective analysis of teacher performance. The IQMS as a national appraisal system is only fair and transparent if it can provide meaningful development opportunities, and also embraces and reflects appropriate adaptations to include all educational staff, including LSTs and RCTs (cf. 3.8.2, 3.8.6).

The IQMS is not written with the LST or the Resource Class Teachers in mind because their way of working differs from the mainstream (LSA2). Although learning support uses the pre-evaluation form (QA1), LSA2 contends that there are things in the QA 3 (Lesson observation instrument) that should be changed for the Learning Support Teacher. Despite the specialised duties of LSTs that differ from that of MSTs, the same instrument with the exact performance standards is used for both groups. This is in stark contradiction to the argument of Spreen and Vally (2010, cited in Martin 2013:100), that the needs, understandings and social realities of its primary clients (LSTs and RCTs) should reflect in the design and implementation of a policy if such a policy aims to influence transformation (cf. 3.7.1). LST 1 argues that to maintain a fair system, there must be alignment between the performance standards in the IQMS, the job description and the training that LSTs must record within the SACE framework.

Professional development and training must be in line with the needs that were identified in a personal growth plan. The information from the personal growth plans will be collated into the school improvement plans (Martin 2013:100; Rabichund 2011:158). Sekgale (2016:11) clarifies that the school improvement plan must guide the school and district regarding the required support need areas and targets as identified by teachers and their development teams.

If incorrect information is to be filtered through by the Staff Development Teams (SDTs), the concern is that training and development programmes will not reflect the needs in the personal growth plans or school improvement plans (Martin 2013:98). This will in turn hamper LSTs and RCTs from earning points for professional development. Because there are areas of the job description of support teachers that fall outside the scope of mainstream teaching, LST3 opines that the IQMS does not address all the areas that support teachers have to fulfil, especially since their specialized work does not so only focus on the curriculum. There are thus a lot of duties that LSTs perform that they cannot be scored for, as it is not stipulated in the scoring instrument.

Linking to the "fairness" issue raised by LST1, LST6 also query fairness towards LSTs, because their colleagues don't know what they do in learning support. Referring back to Section 5.4.2 above, LST1 mentions that their colleagues do not understand what their after-school activities should entail. This concern is shared by LSA3 who found that the schools are failing to understand that the extra activities that LSTs are doing to teach learners to read and write are indeed their extra-murals. Even though the principals are aware of the content of the performance standards they do not know the daily job description of the LSTs. Furthermore, LST5 accords with LST1 and LST6 in querying IQMS instrument fairness, arguing that because other teachers do not always know the duties of an LST, they cannot provide justified criticism regarding their work. For this reason, LSTs utilize other LSTs of neighbouring schools as their peers in the IQMS process.

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5.3.4   Theme 4: Professional Development

Theme 4 contributed to answering the research objective three: regarding inclusive teaching and learning guidelines that can be suggested to improve the professional growth of Learning Support and Resource Class Teachers in Eden Central Karoo.

Theme 4 emerged from questions 13, 16, 17, 15, 11, and 12, which were posed to LSTs and RCTs as follows:

Question 13: What in-service/professional development programmes/courses are you aware of in the area of Learning Support /SEN?

Question 16: In your opinion, what type of in-service/professional development programmes /courses can best provide the requisite skill and knowledge areas of LSTs and RCTs?

Question 17: What (further) Professional Development do you need to carry out your roles and responsibilities as LSTs and RCTs effectively?

Question15: What have you experienced or found to be the best/most effective way for LSTs and RCTs to develop their teaching skills?

Question 11: In what professional development courses have you participated previously?

Question 12:   What previous in-service/professional development do you have?

The following questions 9, 10 and 11 were posed to the LSAs only:

Question 9: Are you aware of any other professional development opportunities/initiatives available for LSTs and RCTs?

Question 10: What do you know about the National Policy Framework for Teacher Education and Development?

Question 11: What do you know about the Integrated Strategic Planning Framework for Teacher Education and Development in South Africa?

Sub-themes identified under theme four entail the following, Awareness; Best/most effective ways/programmes to develop their teaching skills and knowledge; Previous development courses; Previous in-service participation; Further development Needs

5.3.4.1   Awareness

Table 5.4 below, indicates the responses of participants on awareness about in-service/professional development programmes. Thus, the table provides the detail and a variety of awareness, to the benefit of the reader. The participant responses are also displayed in Figure 5.4 further below, to indicate the collective views percentage-wise. Table 5.4 and Figure 5.4 thus go hand in hand and should be interpreted as complimentary.

Table 5.4: Awareness of in-service/ professional development programmes/courses

	What in-service/professional development programmes/courses are you aware of in the area of Learning Support /SEN?
RCT1	Google Calendar Training. Most training aimed at mainstream which we also attend
RCT2	During Lockdown - online course on Inclusive Education.
LST1	WCED / SLES provided; CTLI; KILT.
LST2	Reading Scholarship, LitPro, UNISA short courses UNISA degree options
LST3	WCED online course for Inclusive education; The AHA reading course; The trauma bereavement course; WCED workshops to promote teaching strategies
LST4	AHA Reading Scholarship; CTLI courses in both Home Language and Math
LST5	FAMSA Trauma berading; Cas Olivier se Thinking Tools webinar; Melody de Jager se Mind Maps. Leesgereedmakings kursus (33 e-videos en handleiding.)
LST6	Advisors inform us of courses that we can benefit from.
LST7	It's the Stellenbosch reading course
LST8	Autism and ADHD Training; Do AND Learn; Reading Course; WCED/SLES provided; part-time daylong;
RCT3	**SAOU Webinars:** Practical implementation of SIAS in the inclusive classroom; Assessment accommodations and concessions. Dyslexia; Dysgraphia; Dyscalculia; Auditory processing disorder; ADHD, including the role and administering of medication in the treatment of these learners; Dyspraxia; Fetal alcohol syndrome; Differentiation in the inclusive classroom Sensory intelligence; Differentiation of assessment; Autism Spectrum Disorder.

RCT4	Attending half/ full-day workshops of online courses. -Workshops/ short courses- Maths (Greenshoot).
LST9	IE-online; E-Learning; Scholarship; LITPRO; Maths Greenshoot.
LST10	Not aware of any.
RCT5	/
LST11	CTLI / SAOU
LST12	Create well-being; Read training, Alternative assessment; SBST training; e-learning training, Virtual training; Google calendar
LST13	Teachers unions courses; WCED courses
LST14	/
LST15	WCED On-line webinar; CPTD; SACE; Day-long Sounds
LST16	/
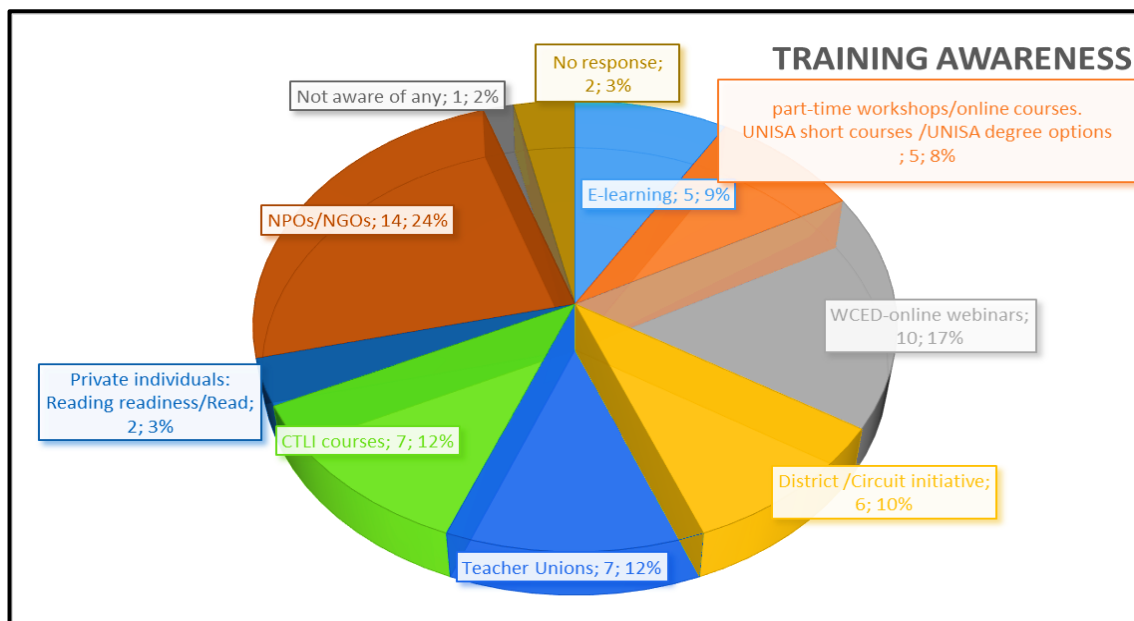
Figure 5.4: Training awareness of learning support and Resource Class Teachers

a) Awareness by LSTs and RCTs

Awareness about development initiatives that are available from non-profit and non-government organizations constitutes the largest percentage. Further, Figure 5.4 displays that 24 percent of the participants (14) are aware of Non-Profit Organisations (NPOs) and NGOs delivering professional development programmes. Seventeen percent (10) of the

participants know about WCED online webinars, while there is a 12 percent awareness about both CTLI and teacher union presented courses. District and circuit training initiatives account for 10 percent awareness, followed by a nine percent awareness about e-learning opportunities. Awareness about part-time online workshops, online courses, UNISA short courses and degree options represents eight percent followed by a three percent awareness about reading and readiness programmes, as well as private individuals who provide development opportunities. One participant indicated no awareness about in-service/professional development programmes, while two participants did not answer the question at all.

b) Awareness by Learning Support Advisors

Just like the 12 percent of LSTs and RCTs who are aware of CTLI training courses, LSA2 and LST4 explain their awareness of CPTD programmes that are presented by the CTLI. The Inclusive education department of CTLI provides free courses and seminars, for learning support or for any educator who would like to know more about barriers to learning. This is contrary to the opinion of LSA3, that there is limited structured training that is based on learning support. In addition, LSAs mention the informative courses offered by the South African Teacher's Union (SAOU) and the Education for all online courses that are available on the official WCED ePortal. There are however queries on whether the e-Portal is beneficial to the support teachers (LSA2). Lastly, LSAs share with the LSTs an awareness of district and circuit training initiatives (Reading readiness by Dr Melani de Jager and the spelling/sound course by the district therapists). The following comments testify about LSA awareness.

> LSA2: "…but if you take that CPTD programme that is also run out of CTLI, and I mean you're supposed to do reading you can, you can do seminars or whatever, even if they go into that programme…"

> LSA2: "I think what LSA4 said with the CTLI that has nice courses? Uh, it is linked to 8 as well. And like LSA1 also said, the SAOU had some fantastic courses that that was very, very informative."

> LSA2: "I mean there's some nice, previously when we before we had the pandemic we could actually go and do CTLI courses or CTLI would have courses that foot like for two weeks. So we set that up…"

LSA2 & LST 4: "So those were the things that and you know what, it was free so they could just attend those courses."

LSA3: "So it is a challenge as learning support you compare learning support with curriculum. Curriculum is always, they are always developed. For the CPTD they can get more, maybe scores unlike learning support because there are few training that are based on learning support that is a challenge with regard to their CPTD or learning support…"

LSA3: "If maybe there's any structured training that will be based only on inclusive education needs. Then Teachers will benefit their training. It must not be general. It must be. It must be based only on inclusive education. If maybe you are coming across with a certain challenge based on learners. "

LSA2: "…and I mean with the CTLI, they have an inclusive education department that gives out of the courses for learning support or for any educator that would like to know more about barriers to learning."

LSA2: "Uhm, I also tend to say no, because it should be. You know this education for all and the online courses that is available on the E portal. Uhm it, it looks as if that's the only thing that the Learning Support Teacher can use to come to get the teacher development, even though there is so much more, but. Uh, I don't think that it benefits them now. Currently, I don't think so."

LSA4: "when you get there and you see all these things 'cause they was attending the training of CTLI the attending the training of that reading readiness or learning readiness of the doctor. Melani de Jager that we and they also. And they also they also attended some of the SAOU courses is and then. Also the spelling /the sound courses off of the…..What is that therapist? The audiologist and…"

Discussion: Awareness of Professional development initiatives

The third step in the IQMS process is for a teacher to develop a personal growth plan that will assist them to address their identified needs by making use of SACE approved database. LSTs and RCTs must participate in all three types of SACE recognised activities or programmes, including teacher-initiated activities, school-initiated activities, and externally-initiated activities by providers (cf. 3.11). Awareness about development opportunities in all of these categories is thus essential.

The most awareness is about development initiatives available from non-profit and non-government organizations. WCED online webinars constitute 17 percent, with 12 percent awareness about both CTLI and teacher union presented courses. There is 10 percent awareness about district and circuit training initiatives, followed by a nine percent awareness about e-learning opportunities. Awareness about part-time online workshops, online courses, UNISA short courses and degree options is eight percent followed by a three percent awareness about reading and readiness programmes, as well as private individuals who provide development opportunities. One participant indicated no awareness about in-service/professional development programmes.

Although the support teachers are responsible for their own professional development, awareness of available development opportunities over all three types of activity programmes varies amongst both groups of participants. Although LSAs share or inform LSTs on available district and circuit training initiatives that they can benefit from, it stays the responsibility of the LSTs to stay aware. The question is thus, whether the levels of awareness about initiatives are due to a lack thereof, or because of ignorance on the part of the participants. As already mentioned, the LSAs update their LSTs regarding initiatives. There is however variation in the levels of awareness of the LSAs as well.

LSAs mentioned the informative courses offered by the South African Teacher's Union (SAOU) and awareness of district and circuit training initiatives (Reading readiness by Dr Melani de Jager and the spelling/sound course by the district therapists). On the one side, there is a request for inclusive needs structured training that is not general. On the other hand, there are references to the CTLI - inclusive education department that presents courses for learning support and the WCED-e-Portal online courses. Awareness of development and training opportunities is crucial for both support teachers and their supervisors.

Two specific awareness questions regarding reform initiatives were posed to the LSAs exclusively. On the question about the awareness regarding the National Policy Framework Teacher Development in South Africa (DoE 2007) (cf. 3.11; Martin 2013:87), responses

indicate that 50 percent of the LSA had some knowledge or awareness according to the following sentiments.

> LSA1: "I'm OK, I'll go. All I know, all I know is that it is there and then it guides the teacher education and development and that SACE is like an overseeing body. But I never read through it."

> LSA4: "I don't know anything of it and I'm turning 65 and I'm retiring. I still don't know anything of that."

> LSA2: "I also don't know much about it, but I know that the national and provincial Education Department must provide an environment for teacher development to take place and then the teachers are supposed to develop themselves and that the department must make courses available."

On the question regarding The Integrated Strategic Planning Framework for Teacher Education and Development in South Africa, 2011- 2025 (DoE 2011; Martin 2013:87), only one LSA could provide more information. The following responses provide support.

> LSA3: "Yeah, I'm not sure of this one."

> LSA4: "I also don't know I. I also don't know."

> LSA1: "I know nothing."

> LSA2: "It is to improve. It is to improve the quality of our learning and the teaching in the schools so. It has to do with a teacher development and where opportunities must be given for teacher development and it was implemented from or given a time frame from 2011 to 2025. For this to be implemented. Uh, integrated strategic planning framework?"

Professional development of support teachers is obligatory according to WP6 (DoE 2005:18), while the NPFTED (DoE 2007) and the ISPFTED (DoE 2011), are intended to enable teacher efficiency for improved professional ability (cf. 2.6, 3.7.2). The aforementioned legislative frameworks are vehicles of continuous professional development as implicated in the Norms and Standards for Educators (DoE 2000) (cf. 3.7.2). As part of their supervisory duties, LSAs are information and training resources for the support teachers and as such, should be knowledgeable and informed about existing and new development frameworks. Creating awareness of available training programmes is thus crucial on and across all support levels.

5.3.4.2   Best/most effective programmes to develop their teaching skills and knowledge

The preferred ways of acquiring skills and knowledge are summarised and displayed below using Table 5.5. Displaying the responses in this table format makes it easier to observe common threads in participant opinions. The identified strategies are own initiative, peer teaching, workshops/clusters, specialised training and development, practical, in-service/job shadowing, online and e-learning, planning and resources, and collaboration.

Table 5.5: Best/most effective programmes to develop teaching skills and knowledge

Respondants	Own initiative	Peer teaching	Practical, in-service/job shadowing	Workshops/ Clusters	Specialised training & development	Online/tech nology/ e-learning	Planning & Resources	Collabo-ration
RCT1	1	1		1	1		1	
RCT2		1	1				1	1
LST1	1	1		1		1	1	
LST2	1	1	1		1	1	1	
LST3		1	1	1	1			
LST4		1		1	1			
LST5	1	1	1	1	1	1		
LST6	1				1			
LST7		1		1				
LST8	1	1		1		1		
RCT3	1	1	1		1			
RCT4	1	1	1		1	1	1	
LST9	1		1			1		
RCT5				1				
LST10	1	1	1			1		
LST11	1	1	1		1			
LST12	1		1					
LST13		1		1				
LST14	1	1	1	1				
LST15	1	1			1			
LST16								
Totals	14	16	11	10	10	7	5	1

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The table above revealed preferences are exhibited explicitly below using Figure 5.5
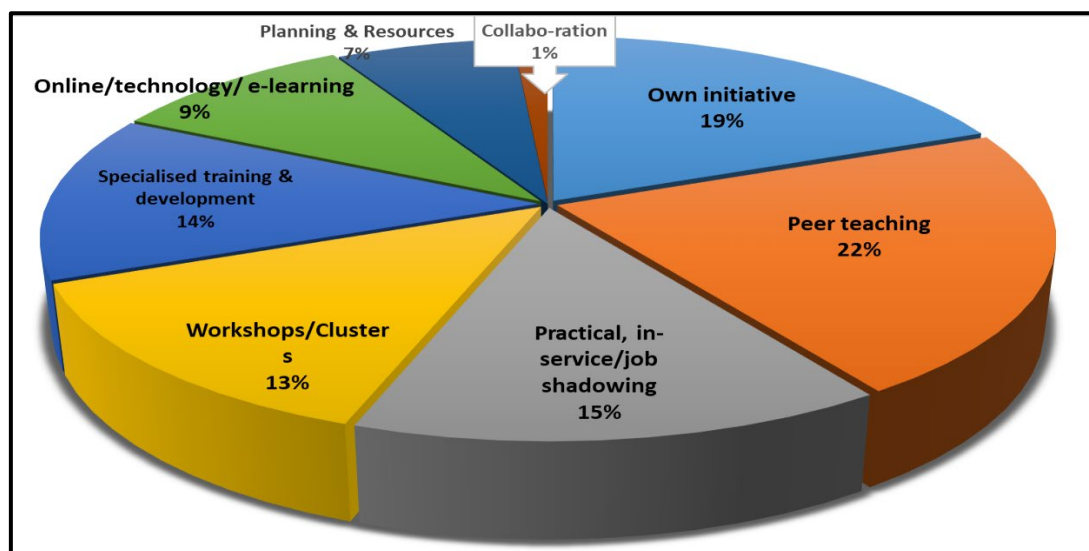
Figure 5.5: Best/most effective programmes to develop teaching skills and knowledge

a) Preferences of LSTs / RCTs

Peer teaching appears to be the most preferred way (22 percent) of acquiring skills and knowledge. The second most favoured strategy is taking initiative for own development (19 percent). This is followed by practical, in-service/job shadowing which accounts for 15 percent of the participant votes. Specialised training and development programmes follow with 14 percent preference, while workshops and clusters enjoy 13 percent favour. Nine percent of the participants prefer online, technology and e-learning, while planning and resources as a means of skills development account for 7 percent.

Only one participant (1 percent) indicated collaboration as a skills and knowledge development strategy. Following, are some of the responses from participants that provide the foundation for the findings on preferences stated here.

> RCT1: "by using their own initiative and not waiting around for things to happen. Regular gatherings with other RCT/LCTs to share ideas. Specific workshops for RCT/LSTs."

> RCT2: "NGO's or private persons who present Skill courses. job shadowing programme."

LST1: "Working with experienced colleagues. New ideas from online sources. Attending self-selected courses. Attending in-service training with regards to the LST's needs."

LST2: "Classroom observations. The use of concrete resources and how it would tie in with the actual lesson presentation. Postgraduate qualifications in teaching; Self-selected courses in education centres; new ideas from online sources."

LST3: "I feel more comfortable learning from fellow LSTs as I feel more comfortable asking questions. Hands-on workshops is also pivotal to maximum development. Makes it more easy to access knowledge. I find it incredibly boring when someone just talk and talk and talk."

LST4: "Deur te werk / mede kollegas met ondervinding in die gebied sodat idees en hulpmiddels wat werk uitgeruil kan word. [Through working/ colleagues with experience in the same area so that ideas and resources that work can be shared.]"

LST5: "Praktiese demonstrasies opleiding (Doen en Leer opleiding.) Idees en hulpbronne uitruil. Waardevolle raad en bronne van ander LSTs gekry en gedeel.[Practical demonstrations training (Do and Learn). Ideas and resources sharing. Get and share valuable advice and resources from other LSTs]"

LST6: "Self-development and study. Specialise in learning support post-grad qualifications."

LST7: "seminars, workshops and developmental programmes"

RCT3: "Mirroring / shadowing/ demonstrations"

RCT4: "Professional development, differentiation, visualization, cooperative learning, behaviour management, technology in the classroom. Engaging in electronic media educational activities…new ideas from online sources."

LST10: "On-the-job training is more effective. Practical training nature. Continuous practical classroom teaching is always more effective. Experienced educators are always a huge asset, as they know where what is needed for support in a specific area a child is experiencing a barrier."

LST12: "To be exposed to the skills not only curriculum."

LST15: "Communicating with peers/ sharing ideas and experiences. Facilitating workshops for teachers. Research in specific areas to promote development in learning support as well as to be able to give positive guidance."

b) The preferences as indicated by the LSAs:

LSAs prefer training that is not general, thus directing specialised training and development programmes. CTLI courses and reading readiness programmes enable noticeable growth and development in LSTs and RCTs. Online platforms specifically for support teachers, like the Teams platform or Zoom platform, would be beneficial. LSA 1 argues that allowing LSTs to train their peers can play a big role. This claim aligns with the 22 percent support teacher preference for peer teaching as the most preferred way to acquire skills and knowledge. These views are substantiated by the following LSA comments.

> LSA3: "If maybe there's any structured training that will be based only on inclusive education needs. Then Teachers will benefit their training. It must not be general. It must be. It must be based only on inclusive education. If maybe you are coming across with a certain challenge based on learners. Maybe with MID with mild intellectual difficulties then you let the teachers be trained on that. How to support learners with MID or how to support learners with severe to profound intellectual disabled that is, that is the challenge that we are we are we are facing. Then if maybe this CPTD can be only be specific to an extent that the training must be direct."

> LSA4: There's some of my teachers, this year was developing so much that I can't believe it when you get there and you see all these things 'cause they was attending the training of CTLI the attending the training of that reading readiness or learning readiness of the doctor Melani de Jager that we and they also. And they also attended some of the SAOU courses is and then. Also the spelling /the sound courses off of the…..What is that therapist? The audiologist and, that is remarkable how they develop,…"

> LSA2: "And if we could just get and even though it's a Teams platform or Zoom platform …"

> LSA2: "I think what LSA4 said with the CTLI that has nice courses? Uh, it is linked to 8 as well. And like LSA1 also said, the SAOU had some fantastic courses that that was very, very informative."

> LSA1: "Right? Uhm? If I look at what the SAOU has done this year. All that causes the teachers that attended to them was really very impressed

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and they are using that information and that was well done. And then also the Uh, IE teams. The training that they gave us very valuable."

LSA4: "I just want to say there's also CTLI had specially this year, they had courses specially for their learning disabilities and all of that. That was very, very good. So yeah. Also CTLI."

LSA1: "If I just got added, also the other LSTs to train their peers can play a big role."

LSA3: "OK. What I will say is the multi-functional team from the district that will play a major role to capacitate the teachers Uh, needs."

Discussion on best/most effective programmes to develop teaching skills and knowledge.

The ability of support teachers to respond to ecological changes such as demanding transformed roles, therefore impacting their accomplishments, should not be underestimated (Bronfenbrenner 1979:7; 1992:227; Christensen 2016:25). A large percentage of participants in this study opined that they should take initiative in their development. This displays a resilience that will assist them to adapt successfully to workplace challenges. Even though only one participant indicated collaboration as a skills and knowledge development strategy, the largest percentage of participants hinted at collaborative foundations of learning. According to O'Gorman and Drudy (2011) and Webster-Wright (2009:1, 4, 6), the focus of development efforts should be on authentic professional learning that is holistic, collaborative and interactive (cf. 3.7.1). Furthermore, emphasis should not be on a specific programme of training, but rather on CPL (Webster-Wright 2009:2, 5, 11).

CPL entails different combinations of professional development programmes, work-colleague interactions, or outside work experiences (Webster-Wright 2009:4). The largest percentage of LSTs and RCTs preferred peer teachings to acquire skills and knowledge. The preference is also corroborated by a support supervisor who argues that peers can play a big role in one another's development. Peer teaching bases PL within an active, socially related work-based context.

Bronfenbrenner's (1979:3) ecological theory of interconnected relations is critical for development, locating peer teaching in particular practical settings that according to Mahlangu (2014:1378) can encourage holistic, collaborative relational learning and reflective practice (cf. 3.7.1.2). Like active, socially related peer teaching, practical, in-service/job shadowing (15 percent preference) allows for real-life authentic activities that encourage dynamic, everyday interactions and inter-relations. This provides practical experiences for learning and development that are embedded in genuine everyday professional practice (cf. 3.7.1.3).

Specialist training and development programmes should then preferably adhere to characteristics of authentic learning that enable a focus away from knowledge transfer towards the notion that students are partners in the co-construction of knowledge (cf. 3.7.1.4). Hands-on practical learning in the form of workshops and clusters can foster more in-depth, ongoing supportive engagements on the level where it is needed the most. Whether initial or in-service training, support teachers should be provided with opportunities to discuss their learning and connect new strategies and concepts to their unique situations. According to Barrat (2016:27), such bi-directional influences have a meaningful impact on individual growth.

Whatever the method of training or development, initial, pre-service, in-service, in-career on-the-job or workplace, it must address the professional growth needs of support teachers in such a way as to equip them to cope with constantly changing special needs challenges (cf. 3.7.1.4). In stating that *"if we could just get and even though it's a Teams platform or Zoom platform"*, LSA2 acknowledges the importance of online, technology and e-learning in keeping up with constantly changing 21st century demands. Hence, instead of development initiatives just for topping up new information, knowledge and skills, opportunities for PL should be well planned to also consider and foster positive attitudes towards establishing and maintaining inclusive education (Lebona, 2013:26; Mbelu 2011:71; O'Gorman & Drudy 2011:9).

5.3.4.3   Previous Development courses and previous in-service participation

Questions 12 and 13, (Table 5.6 below), are similar and intended to elicit as much as possible elaboration from the participants. From the responses, it is clear that some participants also regarded the two questions as the same and thus duplicated their answers for both questions or only answered question 12. On the other hand, LST1, LST4, LST7, LST8, RCT4, LST9, LST11, LST12, LST13 and LST15, provided different responses or some more elaboration in question 13, than in the previous question. The data are reflected verbatim as per individual participant responses. Thus, the two questions provided an opportunity for more in-depth data stimulation.

Table 5.6: Previous Development courses and previous in-service participation

	12. In what professional development courses have you participated previously?	13. What previous in-service/professional development do you have?
RCT1	E-Learning	All the LSTs and RCTs got together to share ideas and display the learners' hard work and efforts at a special workshop. I also attended a workshop at the beginning of the year that addressed administration issues and how to handle them.
RCT2	Many in my years of working. When I worked as a Subject Adviser, we received training from National to cascade to our teachers, to mention a few: NECT (National Education Collaboration Trust) CIPELT, CISELT (British Council) READ Educational Trust, HIV-AIDS, Sexuality Education, Emergent Literacy, ECD/Grade R, Multigrade Teaching, Child-Centred Learning, Inclusive Education, SIAS; and from the NW University: Teaching Literature, Phonics, A-Z Reading, Comprehension Skills, Teaching English as a second language, DIBBELS. Other courses include, amongst others, Developing Material, Coaching and Mentoring, Facilitation, Computers, EGRA, RNCS, NCS, CAPS, Assessment	Many in my years of working. When I worked as a Subject Adviser, we received training from National to cascade to our teachers, to mention a few:NECT (National Education Collaboration Trust) CIPELT, CISELT (British Council) READ Educational Trust, HIV-AIDS, Sexuality Education, Emergent Literacy, ECD/Grade R, Multigrade Teaching, Child-Centred Learning, Inclusive Education, SIAS; and from the **North West University:** Teaching Literature, Phonics, A-Z Reading, Comprehension Skills, Teaching English as a second language, DIBBELS. Other courses include, amongst others, Developing Material, Coaching and Mentoring, Facilitation, Computers, EGRA, RNCS, NCS, CAPS, Assessment etc.
LST1	**Fundamentals of Coaching Workshop'** presented by Mr AJ Olivier, who has more than 30 years of working experience as a Human Resource Manager at Sasol, Sasolburg - (held November 2011)	CAPS Training (Intermediate and Senior Phases completed) / CPTD Creating a positive learning environment through an effective classroom management course

	EDN2063CE – **Facilitation skills** for ECD and FP Teachers (UCT) held in October 2018 at Heatherlands High from 08:00 – 16:00. The workshop was presented by Dianne Hendricks.	SIAS in-service training course (School Psychologist Handle programme - (School Psychologist, Inclusive Education: Differentiation in the classroom and the practical implementation of the SIAS policy. SAOU Lego Bricks Training: ORT SA Cape | KILT. IIAL training (isiXhosa) 'Doen en Leer' reading workshop held - Fonix literacy programme **2019 as LST:** SBST training Phonological awareness, Gross Motor Workshop, Maths Workshop, Readers and Motivational, Autism Spectrum Disorder Woede kalmte intervensie KILT – Parent / Child interview **2020 as LST:** WKOD Intellectual Space: Differentiation LSA presentation Spatial orientation training workshop Microsoft Teams: Psycho-social meeting Microsoft Office 365. ECKED **MST ECKED** Webinar Video Teaching; Webinar PPT Screen Voice Over; Webinar Video Teaching: Video Editing CTLI Reading Building Blocks: Developing the reading brain **ECKED MST** Google Calendar Training for Collaboration; Google Fundamentals 1:Account and Chrome; Google Fundamentals 2:Google Drive; Google Fundamentals 3:Google Docs and Collaboration; Google Fundamentals 4:Google Sheets and Slides
LST2	Time management Mentoring new teachers Management for Heads of Department Whole-School Evaluation Supervisor Balanced Language Approach Amanuensis SIA FAMSA Counselling courses and for Trauma, Mind Moves:5 in 1 Mind Moves Advanced Course Google Planning and sharing of info Dyslexia workshop, Autism and sexuality LITNUM Strategies, Conflict Management IQ Testing, Writing Skills Growth Mindset for Learning Reading with understanding	Time management Mentoring new teachers Management for Heads of Department Whole-School Evaluation Supervisor Balanced Language Approach Amanuensis SIA FAMSA Counselling courses and for Trauma, Mind Moves:5 in 1 Mind Moves Advanced Course Google Planning and sharing of info Dyslexia workshop, Autism and sexuality LITNUM Strategies, Conflict Management IQ Testing, Writing Skills Growth Mindset for Learning Reading with understanding

	Nali Bali Language Development Workshop Maths Workshop - District Doen en Leer Wiskunde en Wiskunde SAOU sessie oor leerhindernisse	Nali Bali Language Development Workshop Maths Workshop - District Doen en Leer Wiskunde en Taal SAOU sessie oor leerhindernisse
LST3	Alternative assessment Barriers to learning Mathematics foundation phase Barriers to learning Home language Foundation phase Barriers to learning Mathematics intermediate phase AHA reading instruction, Jolly phonics WCED curriculum courses Autism awareness workshops	Alternative assessment Barriers to learning Mathematics foundation phase Barriers to learning Home language Foundation phase Barriers to learning Mathematics intermediate phase AHA reading instruction, Jolly phonics WCED curriculum courses Autism awareness workshops
LST4	Doen en Leer Lees Doen en Leer Wiskunde programme Outisme Jolly Phonics	Gereelde "Cluster meetings" waar daar presies vir ons gesê word wat word van ons verwag en dis ook 'n geleentheid waar jy met jou mede kollegas kan kommunikeer en idees uitruil van wat werk en wat werk nie.
LST5	Doen en Leer. Outisme opleiding sessie. SAOU se Inklusiewe opleiding sessies	Doen en Leer. Outisme opleiding sessie. SAOU se Inklusiewe opleiding sessies
LST6	2020 I did 11 online courses with ctli Video in The Classroom Level1 Video in The Classroom Level2 Digital Tools for Teachers Digital Collaboration Tools for The Classroom Video in The Classroom-Level 3 Digital Storytelling in The Classroom Teaching Online Using WhatsApp – Level 1 /'Digital Assessment Tools	
LST7	It's been a while but the last one I went to was in CTLI, supporting and interventions for the InterSen phase.	Do and learn, Reading course conducted by the University of Stellenbosch, How to deal with Autistic and ADHD learners.
LST8	School Leadership and Management. Stellenbosch Reading Course.	Do and learn, / Reading course conducted by University of Stellenbosch, How to deal with Autistic and ADHD learners.
RCT3	**SAOU Webinars:** Practical implementation of SIAS in the inclusive classroom, Assessment accommodations and concessions, Dyslexia, Dysgraphia, Dyscalculia. **SAOU Webinars**: Auditory processing disorder, ADHD, including the roleand administering of medication in the	Counselling workshop at FAMSA (2020)

	treatment of these learners/ Dyspraxia, Fetal alcohol syndrome/ Sensory intelligence Differentiation in the inclusive classroom Differentiation of assessment Autism Spectrum Disorder.	
RCT4	3kinds of SACE Endorsed Professional Development activities namely, -Teacher Initiated -School Initiated -Externally Initiated	**Type 1:** -Participating in a PLC outside the school. -Engaging in electronic media educational activities, viewing/ listening to educational programmes and webinars. -Attending educational conferences, seminars, workshop sessions & meetings. -Mentoring and coaching other teachers. -Developing learning/ workshop material and or other related resources. -Discussions with colleagues. -Visiting and learning from other schools, reporting back and implementing what I have learned. Peer review and feedback. **Type 2:** -Attending school workshops/ development and support sessions. -School meetings and school projects. -Participating in school-based professional development activity programmes, teaching children how to read, mathematics, SID curriculum, ICT and languages. **Type 3:** -Attending conferences/ seminars- half-day (2-5 hours), 2 days and more. Addressing barriers to learning, Reader scholarship.
LST9	JIKA Communication and Training- Millennials vs Gen Z. JIKA Communication and Training- Time Management for teachers.	Barriers to learning Maths. • Reading Scholarship • Transform to Perform-Growth Mindset
LST10	Annatjie Hanekom: Literacy Geletterdheid (Reading Scholarship) Alternative Assessment – Jan Kriel – Christa Kotze READ Training, CAPS Training Gr R Stimulation Programme – E. Fourie Gr R/1 Language and Auditory training (Gogga) Training on different inclusive policies SBST training Fine motor training – Buntey McDougal IF CAPS training – Do and Learn / Doen en Leer	

	Readers and scribes SGB Roles and Responsibility **CTLI Barriers** to IF Mathematics;FB Mathematic /Barriers to teaching reading, IF Languages, FP Languages Leesgereedmakinsprogramme:Afrikaanse Onderwys Netwerk	
RCT5	SBST training (Virtual) SIAS training	SIAS training/ Do and Learn
LST11	SAOU opleidings/CTLI online course	SAOU / CTLI / Mind Moves
LST12	E-Learning Virtual training, Google calendar, Alternative assessment.	Junior primary teacher diploma BA degree Reading training, isiXhosa for learning Barriers Training on different inclusive policies / Language and Auditory training Reading Scholarship
LST13	CTLI reading and maths, Do-and-learn etc	Reading Scholarship, countless training and WS
LST14	Readers and scribes	
LST15	ADHD, SIAS Assessment Accommodations Auditory skills processing Deviation FAS, Autism	CTLI training on barriers in Maths and Language-Foundation, Intermediate and senior phase.

Discussion on previous development courses and previous in-service participation

As evident from the table above, the types and number of previous development courses and in-service participation differ significantly amongst the participants. One LST (28 years LST experience) remarks that she attended countless training. Although 3 participants started their teacher training in the special needs education field (cf. Table 5.1), O'Gorman and Drudy (2011:29) remind us that successful completion of a teacher education programme is but the first step to becoming an effective teacher and as in the case of this study, an effective support teacher. A significant developmental role has to be played by continuous professional development and in-service programmes. LSTs and RCTs need to build self-confidence and proficiency and resilience in their area of expertise, inclusive educational support. O'Gorman and Drudy (2011:29) even highlight the importance of an induction period, where teachers can familiarise themselves with policies and applications.

With the increased demands over time (educational and policy changes, role transformations), continuous professional development became crucial in the career path of support teachers (cf. 3.4.2). Changing roles imposed on LSTs and RCTs, force them to develop their skills and learn new approaches. According to Bronfenbrenner's systems

theory (Chapter Two), human life does not happen randomly (Watson 2017:5, 6). Comparing Table 5.6 (Previous development courses and previous in-service participation) with Table 5.1 (Characteristics of learning support and Resource Class Teachers), the following points are noteworthy. The aim is to elucidate on probable locus of control of their professional growth.

LST1 spent most of her relatively short educational experience (six years at the time of this analysis) in special needs education. Since she started teaching, as well as for two years as an LST, she engaged in a plethora of self-development activities. Thus, displaying the character of a true lifelong learner. RCT3 has three years of special education teaching. She was a mainstream teacher for 25 years at the time of the analysis. She completed her BEd. Honours degree in Special Education about 20 years after her initial training and started in special education at a late stage in her career.

As for LST1, RCT3 also endeavoured in numerous in-service training to up-skill and capacitate herself for her new area of expertise. On the other hand, LST8 with similar experience as RCT3 held a Remedial education diploma and participated in a view basic specialised training courses. RCT2 and LST2, both with more than 20 years in special education, possess special education degrees, yet they also endeavoured in an abundance of self-development activities. Although RCT 1 has no specialised qualifications, she has the experience of working in a specialised school of skills for 10.5 years, where she participated in in-service development (cf. 5.2.2). Three participants started their specialised teaching career under the medical model of remedial teaching and up skilled themselves through in-service training (cf. 5.2.2).

The exposition above clearly illustrates that every individual is in control of their own professional growth and has their own motivations for altering their career paths in whatever way and whenever they choose to do so (cf. 3.4.2). From Table 5.6 above, the types of in-service activities that participants engaged in, range vastly. The description below does not take into account certified professional special education development. In-service training as a collaborative-based developmental strategy is ongoing, and interactive and adds up to more than just workshops (cf. 3.7.1.4). The modes of in-service training reflected in Table

5.6 include clusters, conferences, seminars, workshops and webinars presented by private and departmental service providers.

To create a clear depiction of the development overview, the in-service training is grouped into four focus groups or categories. That is, Client-orientated-and-customer focused; Collaborative-focussed; Curriculum-focussed; Administrative skills and managerial skills, as described next.

Client-Orientated-and-Customer focused

- **Learning difficulty and their characteristics:** Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Dyslexia, Dysgraphia, Dyspraxia, Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS), Dyscalculia, Auditory processing disorder.
- **Psycho-social:** Behaviour intervention – Positive learning environment, conflict management, Woede en kalmte intervensie, Transform to Perform Growth Mindset for Learning, Trauma / Counselling.
- **Assessment:** Readers and scribes, Amanuensis, Assessment accommodations and concessions, Intelligence Quotient (IQ) Testing, CAPS / Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) assessment

Collaborative (Policies/laws, skills development)

- CAPS training, SID training
- Inclusive different inclusive policies, SIAS-practical implementation, SBST training Inclusive education classrooms
- Creating a positive learning environment through effective classroom management
- Mentoring new teachers (Coaching and Mentoring)
- Facilitation skills for Early Childhood Development (ECD) and Foundation Phase (FP) Teachers
- Literacy and Numeracy (LITNUM) strategies
- Life skills: Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV)/Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS), Sexuality Education
- JIKA Communication and Training- Millennials vs. Gen Z. (NGO)

- **Curriculum-Focused**
- Severe Intellectual Disability (SID) curriculum/CAPS
- **Stellenbosch Reading scholarship:** Provincial compulsory for all LSTs, paid for. AG Acknowledged special needs qualification.
- **Developmental:** Perceptual training (Including Handle programme), Phonological awareness, Gross Motor Workshop, Sensory intelligence, spatial orientation, Child-centred learning, Mind Moves: 5 in 1 Language and literacy: Lego brix, Jolly phonix, Reading building blocks, Reading with understanding, READ training, Emergent literacy, Grade R Stimulation Programme, Grade R/1 Language and Auditory training, Leesgereedmakingsprogramme, Nali Bali Language development, IIAL training (isiXhosa)
- **Mathematics:** Doen en Leer Wiskunde/ Do and learn Mathematics, Maths Workshop Strategies: Differentiation, Balanced Language approach, Multigrade teaching, CTLI Barriers to teaching reading, CTLI Barriers to Languages, Doen en Leer Taal/ Do and Learn Languages

Administrative Skills and Managerial Skills

- ICT: E-learning, Google calendar, Microsoft online / Digital learning and teaching
- Writing Skills/ Computer literacy
- SGB Roles and Responsibilities
- School Leadership and Management
- Time Management

These in-service training initiatives by participants align positively with the required developmental need areas or skills as identified through prior literature and learning support documents that are currently in use (cf. 3.6.1); i.e., collaboration skills set, administration and managerial skills set, inclusive agents, resilience.

5.3.4.4   Further development Needs

Table 5.7 below, indicates the developmental needs as indicated per support teacher. From Table 5.6 above, it is apparent that a vast number of support teacher in-service

development focused on knowledge of specific disabilities, and methodologies. This is not the case for required development. Table 5. 7 below, displays a shift away from specific disability knowledge and methodologies to more innovation, people skills, collaboration and further formal qualifications.

Table 5.7: Further development Needs

Code	What (further) Professional Development do you need to carry out your roles and responsibilities as LSTs and RCTs effectively?
RCT1	Training especially e-learning and
RCT2	Smarter ways to teach the Skills subjects. The SID Curriculum is new.
LST1	Attending in-service training with regards to the LST's needs. Human Resource Management skills are a prerequisite.
LST2	LST/ RCT could perhaps be on Post level 2 to ensure that their support and inputs carry weight due to the fact that they work with SMTs and may not always be regarded as important.
LST3	I would like to part take in training that would reach the community. Training that would affect and empower the parent. This will help with the parent and also the child.
LST4	Ek wil graag die AHA Reading Scholarship kursus voltooi. Ek is nog vars in Leerderondersteuning en deur leiding van mede kollegas en opleiding wil ek nog baie groei. Mens is nooit te oud om te leer nie en ek persoonlik leer nog elke dag.
LST5	Alle kursusse, nalees of studie moontlik te doen om my beter toe te rus vir my werk. Ook om onderwysers met meer LO ondervinding ons werk te sien doen. Dit is ook goed as ek dit wat ek leer weer te gaan deel met ander onderwysers en by hulle te leer.
LST6	I still want to do my master's, but financially is not able.
LST7	I would like to do my post-graduate qualifications in special education.
LST8	To Register for an Honours Degree in Special needs, New ideas from online sources.
RCT3	Enough support from the relevant departments from the District office. 21st century technology resources.
RCT4	Training (IE-Learning) -Trying out new practices in the classroom and joining professional organizations
LST9	E-Learning
LST10	There is a huge need for more clinically recognised training courses. The waiting list for learners to be psychologically assessed are very long, and the schooling system are under pressure, as learners stay in the system, struggling and progress on an unacceptable level When mentioning clinically recognised training courses, courses from where registration to a professional body can take place. Even though such professional development must take place from the educator him/herself, the Department of Basic Education are in a much better position to recognise where the need is for development and so select specific courses for development and training. For example, basic psychometric assessment that need to be done for the system to efficiently identify specific barriers in learners.
RCT5	More handwork training
LST11	/

LST12	I think I still need to upgrade myself.
LST13	Training on how to deal with difficult colleagues and parents
LST14	/
LST15	Pastoral counselling to empower myself to be able to boost the self-esteem of learners. To help them to feel safe and cope in these challenging times.
LST16	/

The first group of training requests fits into the curriculum focus in-service training category in Discussion 21 (cf. 5.3.4.2). The first focus area for development is on innovation and presentation in the classroom. Most requested are e-learning and a need for new ideas and smarter ways to teach skills, new practices and ideas in the classroom. Reference is made to 21st century technology resources and associated skills.

Furthermore, the SID curriculum that was recently introduced to inclusive resource classes contains skills subjects. The requests for more handwork training and smarter ways to present the skills subjects, accompany the wish to try out new practices. These concomitant desires came from inclusive Resource Class Teachers. So does the request for e-learning and 21st-century skills. Innovation is a valuable prerequisite for RCTs who has learners with various barriers to learning on different ability levels. E-learning and 21st-century skills are however beneficial to all support teachers. The Stellenbosch Reading scholarship course was a funded, compulsory provincial initiative for all LSTs and is acknowledged by the Auditor General as a special needs qualification. The course was a collaboration between the WCED and Stellenbosch University and aimed to equip support teachers with effective reading instruction in different phases.

The second cluster of development requirements has a collaborative-people skill focus. These include Human resource management, the ability to deal with difficult colleagues and parents, community outreach, parent empowerment and learner counselling. Collaborative skills are one of the most critical skills for special education teachers (cf. 3.5.1.2). Collaborative skills include amongst others, good communication skills for trust-building, networking, liaising and consultation skills, good interpersonal skills, good team players, and good team leaders (cf. 3.6.1).

Thirdly, also on the collaborative scale, is peer support/learning strategies. (cf. 3.6.1, 5.3.4.1). Peer teaching also appears to be the most preferred way (22 percent) of acquiring

skills and knowledge for support teachers. Working close together with more experienced peers, sharing own knowledge with peers. Also working together and getting more support from the DBST (Multifunctional teams). Peer support is part of being an inclusive agent (cf. 3.6.1), as active, socially related peer teaching allows for real-life authentic activities that encourage dynamic, everyday interactions and inter-relations (Bronfenbrenner 1979:3; Mahlangu 2014:1378).

A fourth evident development category entails self-study and empowerment through courses, reading and general up-skilling. Specific self-study involves professional post-graduate Honours special needs and Master's degree qualifications. Personal capacitation displays resilience, a crucial developmental need area or skill set identified through research (cf. 3.6.1). Resilience encompasses personal qualities that include being inclusive value-driven and goal-orientated with self-confidence, self-motivation, self-reliance, innovation and creativity that will assist support teachers to adapt successfully to challenges in their work environment.

Fifthly, one participant regards psychometric and/or psychological assessment to be a necessity to accommodate struggling learners and ease the pressure of assessment backlogs. A major concern raised is that some training courses that support teachers' endeavours are not recognised by professional bodies (like SACE). The motivation is that, if the requested training can be recognised, the DoE would be in the best position to determine and select appropriate development courses and training. Being part of professional bodies otherwise, is one of the PSs in the IQMS, PS5: Professional development in the field of work/career and participation in professional bodies. Joining a professional organisation (RCT4), is a good aspiration, as it will open up development opportunities that will allow her to carry out her roles and responsibilities effectively. Opportunities from professional bodies are displayed in Table 5.6 above, on previous development courses and previous in-service participation.

Last, but not least, LST2 proposes a major developmental shift. Namely, LST/ RCT could perhaps be on Post level 2 to ensure that their support and inputs carry weight, due to the fact that they work with SMTs and may not always be regarded as important. Mahlo (2011)

and O'Gorman & Drudy, (2011) already uncovered deep unhappiness concerning the salary category level of support teachers (Mahlo 2011:166; O'Gorman & Drudy 2011:179). Despite the managerial and authoritative roles that they perform, they fall in the lowest category, on par with newly employed teachers.

Mahlo's findings support the sentiment of LST2 that it is not easy to command authority and that there is no weight to commands/requests, especially to higher-ranked or senior colleagues. Great emphasis has internationally been placed on the incorporation of the learning support (co-ordinating) role into the senior management teams of schools (O'Gorman & Drudy 2011:109). Barratt (2016:97) accords with O'Gorman and Drudy (2011:156) in underscoring that the elevated post-level issue concerns job dissatisfaction, recognition, respect and communication, rather than money. An important consideration taken from Mahlo (2011:168) is the effect that job dissatisfaction can have on the effectiveness of the expected roles of support teachers.

It is worth concluding this discussion on further development needs with the following quote by Mockler (2005, as cited in O'Gorman & Drudy 2011:31).

> Professional learning can support the development of a transformative teaching profession…The development of a transformative teaching profession requires reinstatement of trust, at both a local and a global level, allowing teachers to act with autonomy, openly acknowledge their learning needs and work collaboratively with other teachers to constantly develop their understanding and expertise…Transformative teacher professionalism seeks to develop teachers who are creative developers of curriculum and innovative pedagogies (Mockler, 2005:733, 742).

This exercise allowed the participants to acknowledge their learning needs openly. Hopefully, it raised an understanding that constantly working collaboratively with other support teachers and other stakeholders can assist in deeper understanding and expertise. As such, their craft can be transformed into becoming creative, innovative developers of inclusive specialised support services.

5.3.5 Theme 5: Perceptions of effectiveness/Contribution to Professional Development

Theme 5 further contributes to answer research objective 4: Effectiveness and relevant of education policies regarding professional development and Integrated Quality Management System of Learning Support and Resource Class Teachers?

Theme 5 emerged from questions 2, 4, and 10, which were posed to LSTs and RCTs as follows:

Question 2: How does (has) the IQMS contributed to your development?

Question 4: What is your overall perception of the effectiveness of IQMS to promote/contribute to the professional development of LSTs/RCTs?

Question 10: What benefits do you see for LSTs/RCTs participating in IQMS/CPTD?

Sub-themes identified under Theme 5 entail the following, Contribution of IQMS to professional development, IQMS effectiveness to promote professional development, and Benefits to participation.

5.3.5.1   *Contribution of IQMS to professional development*

The IQMS highlights areas for development and improvement. It also provides a framework for goal setting that can assist with continuous development and as such prevents stagnation. The whole process assists employers to become aware of the support needs of the employees. Furthermore, it monitors performance and effectiveness that promotes accountability. RCT2 however argues that she would have engaged in self-development and accountability without the IQMS system anyway, because she perceives personal development as a lifestyle. For LST5, it is important to get some recognition for her hard work, in that the IQMS system allows her employer to acknowledge what she does well. LST6 does not see any contribution to her development. She regards the IQMS process merely as a test of how her peers and advisor perceive her as a teacher. The following sentiments support the previous views.

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RCT2: "Not at all. I would engage in personal development and accountability anyway."

LST6: "Not at all… it's a once a year exercise that is of no importance. as long as you get above the minimum mark. that is decided by your peer that is grading you. It is actually testing the perception of your advisor/peers of you as a teacher."

LST1: "Dit voorsien my van 'n raamwerk waarbinne ek spesifiek kan aandui waarin ek myself wil verbeter…[It provides a framework to indicate specifically what I want to improve myself in]"

LST2: "Have been followed up by the management team and addressed with relevant training…"

LST3: "It highlights the areas where I have to improve and develop. The LSA in our circuit takes areas where development is needed to use as an indicator as what training should be done."

LST4: "Jy sien waar daar tekorte is en waarop jy jouself kan verbeter. Jy stel vir jouself doelwitte en probeer om daarop te verbeter. Dit help dat daar deurgans ontwikkeling is, sodat jy as opvoeder nie stagneer.[You see where there are deficits and on what to improve yourself. It assist that continuous development as not to stagnate.]"

LST5: "Ek kan sien waaraan moet ek meer aandag gee en bietjie erkenning kry vir wat ek reg doen… Werkgewer kan sien waar ek meer ondersteuning of opleiding nodig het.[I can see what I must give more attention to and can get a bit more recognition for what I do correct… Employer can see where I need more support and training]"

LST7: "IQMS has done its purpose for last 5years, but as years go by it has not been effective for me towards my development lately because it is a fixed document which does not cater for 2021 challenges we face in our classrooms and school environment.

LST8: "…also develop the way of doing my roles in the workplace."

LST9: "It identifies specific need, support and development, continued growth and promotes accountability."

RCT4: "It monitors the effectiveness of teaching and learning, evaluates the performance of the educator and promotes accountability…

LST10: "Important factors such as assessment of teaching and learning, as well as the professional development of educators."

RCT5: "Developmental needs are early identified."

LST12: "It is very important because after knowing areas that needs to develop the school, district and NGO are able to develop you and you will obtain points."

LST13: "It does make you aware of your needs for development."

LST14: "Professionally it has made me a better lesson planner, working as a team, understanding my learners better."

Discussion on the contribution of IQMS to professional development

Participants display mixed opinions and experiences regarding IQMS Contribution to professional Development. Perceptions regarding professional development contribution as experienced by participants, align with their perception thereof as a professional development and training management tool (cf. 5.3.1.2) as well as a training needs identification, regulation, and tracking mechanism (cf. 5.3.1.3). While the areas for development and improvement are highlighted, it also provides a framework for goal setting (personal growth plan) that can assist with continuous development to prevent stagnation. The whole process enables employers to become aware of the support needs of the employees. Recognition by employers contributes to the validation of hard work and accomplishments.

The IQMS also monitor performance and effectiveness to promote accountability. However, with accountability and self-development as an inherently ideal lifestyle (RCT2), there would be no need for a management system like the IQMS. Not so positive, the IQMS as being experienced as a once-off, a fixed document that merely tests the perception of peers and advisors about a teacher, with no contribution to 2021 classroom and school environment challenges (LST6, LST7). Sekgale (2016:62) found a once-off timeframe to be ineffective. From the mixed sentiments of participants, it is clear that needs identification of the LSTs and RCTs as clients in this study is only the first step in this interconnected IQMS-CPTD alliance. However, the CPTD and IQMS differ, the two systems were meant to run alongside each other (cf. 3.9.2). It requires stronger, more open and effective channels for effective development opportunities.

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5.3.5.2   IQMS effectiveness to promote professional development

The IQMS has the potential to work if taken seriously and not being abused or misused. RCT2 supports the abuse sentiment of LST6, arguing that *"non-functional teachers looked like super-heroes on their IQMS."* The IQMS can work as both an effective monitoring tool, as well as a supporting tool for the development of creativity and efficiency. This is subject to proper time management and assistance from supervisors. Training needs are easily identified and set goals are set for improvement. IQMS effectiveness also differs from school to school and from teacher to teacher. Some of the participants regard it worthwhile to identify their own development needs. For others, the IQMS process might only be a way to acquire the one percent pay increase. Needs identification and goal setting are good practices, but the overall effectiveness of the IQMS and CPTD as monitoring tools is queried. The IQMS is described as a fixed document that does not cater for 2021 classroom and school challenges.

IQMS ineffectiveness is also raised regarding addressing all the aspects of learning support since the support service scope of Learning Support Teachers is specialised and very wide. The sentiment raised is that key responsibility areas should be more aligned to the actual core functions of LSTs. Perceptions of ineffectiveness are also shared by LSAs. LSA2, argues that certain IQMS forms are not written for LSTs and RCTs and should be changed since their way of working differs from the mainstream. The impact of IQMS can be better if the available training can be connected directly to IQMS related needs. Although LST16 raises concern about the 4-point system, she acknowledges that it keeps LSTs on-task for teaching and learning.

> RCT1: "Personal Development can be achieved if you use your time correctly and if get the necessary assistance from superiors."
>
> RCT1: "To Assist realise where I still need improvement."
>
> RCT2: "It is always good practice to identify needs and to set goals for improvement."
>
> RCT2: "I doubt the effectiveness "of this system monitoring of the overall effectiveness of the school."

LST1: "Dit hang af van skool tot skool en van opvoeder tot opvoeder…'n 'eie wil'…Dit is hoe ons, ons 1 persentasie punt salarisverhoging jaarliks verdien.[It depends on school to school and from educator to educator...an "own will"… It is how we earn our 1 percent point anual salary increase]"

LST5: "Dit hang alles af wat jy daarvan maak. Dit kan net nog 'n opdrag wees om te doen sodat jy die 1 persent verhoging te kan kry. Vir my persoonlik het dit waarde omdat ek daarvan hou om te kyk waar kan ek my werk verbeter.[It all depend on what you make of it. Ek can turn into just one more assignment to do to get the 1 percent increase. For me personally it has more value because I like to see where I ca better myself]"

LST2: "It is good to have a monitoring tool; however, the KRAs should be more aligned to our actual core functions."

LST3: "I consider it effective in respect to development. Training needed are easily identified. It is however not effective in addressing all the aspects of Learning Support. Learning Support's scope is very wide. Our work is more specialized and not so much focused on the curriculum. There are areas of our job description that fall outside the scope of mainstream teaching. Learning Support's scope is very wide."

LST4: "IQMS dra defnitief by tot Profesionele Ontwikkeling. Jy stel vir jouself doelwitte en ook 'n tydperk waarin jy daardie doelwitte wil bereik…[IQMS definitely contributes to Professional Development. Youe set goals for yourself and alo a timeframe for reaching your goals]"

LST6: "It's yet another system that is has potential to work wonders but is abused and misused."

RCT2: "I doubt the effectiveness of this system monitoring of the overall effectiveness of the school. In my experience, many non-functional teachers looked like super-heroes on their IQMS."

LST7: "My overall perception is a supporting tool for the LST in developing effective creative ways to face challenges and work effectively in class."

LST8: "IQMS makes me to realise where I still need improvement"

RCT3: "It's not really effective."

LST6: "It can be useful if it is taken seriously. If IQMS is a goal to work for and if you as a teacher can see benefits to develop yourself as a teacher but also as a individual."

RCT4: "My overall perception is a supporting tool for the LST in developing effective creative ways to face challenges and work effectively in class."

LST9: "To be a lifelong learner."

LST7: "it has NOT been effective for me towards my development lately because it is a fixed document" which does not cater for 2021 challenges we face in our classrooms and school environment"

LST8: "IQMS makes me to realise where I still need improvement"

RCT4: "…pushing myself to learn new things… to expand my knowledge and understanding."

RCT4: "To improve quality of teaching, learning and assessment."

LST15: "Allows me to grow in my specific department".

LSA2: Uhm, the IQ is process in my personal opinion, is not written with the LST or the Resource Class Teachers in mind. Their way of working differs from the mainstream. Uhm, we use the pre-evaluation form, but when it comes to the QA 3 forms there are things that could have been that I feel should be changed for the Learning Support Teachers"

LSA1: "I don't. I don't think the impact is really what it is supposed to be. There, there were a lot of training this year. Uh. That was there, but I think if we connect it with, the IQMS. No, I think that the impact is too little.

Discussion on IQMS effectiveness to promote professional development

IQMS effectiveness links closely and is consequential from the contributions discussed above in Section 5.3.5.2. The views regarding IQMS effectiveness vary amongst participants. If taken seriously, not abused or misused, the IQMS has the potential to be effective (LST6). Likewise, RCT2 raises concern about abuse because, as experienced, the IQMS only made some non-functional teachers look good, although they were not. The misuse sub-theme in Discussion 12 (cf. 5.3.2.3 above), elaborated on challenges of abuse and misuse that are corroborated by various researchers (Arendse 2010:64; Rabichund 2011:28; Van Wyk 2015; 217). The IQMS have the potential to work not only as an effective

monitoring tool but also as a supporting tool for the development of creativity and efficiency. This is subject to proper time management and assistance from supervisors.

As already established, the IQMS is effective in that training needs are easily identified, and improvement goals are set. However, the degree of IQMS effectiveness differs from school to school and from teacher to teacher. Where some participants regard it worthwhile to identify their own development needs, the IQMS process might only be a way to acquire the one percent pay increase for others. Even though needs identification and goal setting is good practice, the overall effectiveness of the IQMS and CPTD as monitoring tools are queried. The IQMS is ineffective in addressing all the aspects of learning support since the support service scope of Learning Support Teachers is specialised and very wide. To be an effective monitoring tool for learning support, the key responsibility areas should be more aligned to the actual core functions of LSTs. Sentiments of ineffectiveness are shared by LSAs. In the opinion of LSA2, certain IQMS forms are not written for LSTs and RCTs and should be changed since their way of working differs from the mainstream. Mahlo (2011:196) and Arendse (2010:97) appeal for an IQMS specific to the job description of LSEs (cf. 1.2).

The greater IQMS purpose of capacitating LSTs and RCTs of addressing the new challenges that accompany role transformations over the years, and as such enhancing self-growth, is only possible if the available training can be connected directly to IQMS related needs. One participant describes the IQMS as a fixed document, therefore it does not cater for 2021 classroom and school challenges. Although LST16 raises concern about the 4-point system, she acknowledges that it keeps LSTs on-task for teaching and learning, aligning with the finding of Rabichund (2011:192) that the IQMS can act as a valuable "checks and balances" for educators.

5.3.5.3   Benefits to participation

The IQMS is still great for personal development, although it does not cover the whole scope of learning support. Participating in the IQMS provides a platform for discussions regarding challenges. A framework for development, assures that development can be achieved with time and assistance. Whilst the IQMS enhances the self-knowledge of the

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support teachers, the process also enables the employer to become aware of such needs for common development purposes. A Personal growth plan does not only highlight challenges but also identifies and indicates strategies to address such challenges.

Goal setting for continuous self-enhancement leads to growth that prevents stagnation. Critical skills and attributes such as self-motivation, self-confidence, leadership, problem-solving, agility and flexibility are fostered in the process. Engagement in the IQMS ensures that the LST is adequately equipped to perform effective learning support. The IQMS does not only benefit the individual who participates in the process but may also make authorities aware of systemic needs (etc., the need for more schools of skills, as raised by RCT1) and other resource requirements. Notwithstanding the benefits to participation as elaborated on here, some participants doubt that IQMS contributes to development. Concerns are raised about a lack of availability of specialised capacity building opportunities, as evident in the following sentiments.

> LST1: "An aptitude for problem-solving. The drive for continued growth and personal development. Agility and flexibility to meet new challenges. Enjoy working in a growing and dynamic environment. The ability to think 'outside of the box. Self-motivation. Leadership skills."

> LST2: "It provides a platform for discussions regarding challenges and it also acknowledges the positive contributions made towards learning support. Engaging in development ensures that the LST is adequately equipped for learning support to be effective."

> LST3: "For personal development it is great. The quality assurance is an integral part of teaching. Areas can be identified for development with the necessary proof. The scope that we as Learning Support Teachers cover are not covered by the IQMS process. We are limited by the IQMS process."

> LST4: "Om jaarliks te groei en vir jouself doelwitte te stel.[To grow annually and set goals for yourself]"

> RCT2: "Urgent Needs identification: more resources and Special schools."

> LST5: "Ons het ook nodig om op hoogte te bly en onsself te verbeter en dit is die stelsels wat daarvoor in plek is. Evalueer jou werksprestasie en persoonlike ontwikkeling in die jaar. Waaraan jy meer aandag moet gee.

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Watter opleiding jy voer moet kyk en probeer doen. My werkgewer kan sien waar ek meer ondersteuning of opleiding nodig het. So hul kan hul personeel se ontwikkeling beplan vir die volgende jaar.[We also need to get on stay informed and to improve ourself and it is the system that is in place for that. Evaluate your work performance and personal development in the year. To what you must pay more attention. Hat training you have to look out for and must try to do. My employer can see where I need more support and training. That way they can plan staff development for the next year.]"

LST6: "NONE"

LST7: "The benefits I would get is to improve develop skills and knowledge in my career and to tackle challenges we face in our classroom environment."

LST8: "To develop myself academically, teamwork, curriculum wise and leadership skills."

RCT3: "Personal growth. Evidence of the growth in the areas that needed to take place."

RCT4: "It keeps me updated, guides me and keeps me from losing my touch, exposes me to new ideas and I become more confident when I perform my job effectively."

LST10: "It builds my confidence and credibility and developed my skills and offers me the opportunities to learn something new."

LST12: "This makes me know what I know and don't know and helps the learning advisor to know what development is needed."

LST15: "Gathering info to develop and grow in our specific field."

LSA1: "We know the needs because we see it in the IQMS…"

LSA4: "… we are getting the Personal growth plan in the SLES, in our learning support component to see, but this is the common development that's needed…"

LSA3: "since the learning support, educator (advisor) is visiting schools each and every time and again, and you see how teachers are performing in their classes. "

LSA2: "Uhm, I also tend to say no, because it should be. You know this education for all and the online courses that is available on the E-portal.

Uhm it, it looks as if that's the only thing that the Learning Support Teacher can use to come to get the teacher development, even though there is so much more, but. Uh, I don't think that it benefits them now. Currently, I don't think so."

LSA1: "Uhm? To me it is. I'm very helpful in the sense that I spent the whole day in the class with the educator."

Discussion on the benefits of participation in the IQMS

Despite the limitation that the IQMS does not cover the whole scope of learning support, it is still perceived as great for personal development. IQMS participation provides a platform for discussions regarding challenges. Mestry *et al.* (2009:483) refer to "effective analysis of teacher performance" to allow for prioritising of their developmental goals and needs (cf. 3.8.6). Even though goal attainment vs. favourable time frames was raised as a challenge before (cf. 5.3.2.5), the IQMS process still provides a framework for development to assure that development can be achieved with time and assistance.

While enhancing the self-knowledge of the support teachers, the IQMS also enables more employer awareness of support needs for shared development purposes. By highlighting challenges, the personal growth plan also identifies and indicates support strategies for addressing such challenges. Continuous self-enhancement goals produce growth that prevents stagnation. In this process, critical skills and attributes such as self-motivation, self-confidence, leadership, problem-solving, agility and flexibility are fostered. These are important skill requirements as identified in the current job description (WCED 2017) of support teachers (cf. 3.5.1), as well as in previous research (cf. 3.5.2). IQMS engagement can thus enable LSTs/RCTs who are adequately equipped to perform effective learning support, provided that all the systemic challenges (cf. 5.3.2.1 above) are attended to.

The IQMS does not only benefit the individual who participates in the process but may also make authorities aware of systemic needs (etc., the need for more schools of skills as raised by RCT1) and other resource requirements. Despite IQMS participation benefits, there are still some doubting any current contribution to development, partly due to the lack of specialised capacity building opportunities and availability. Aiming to measure teacher performance to recognise, develop and provide support needs in the form of a national

CPTD system, implies that such a system must enable every SACE registered teacher to attain their professional development points (cf. 3.10).

5.3.6   Theme 6: Perceptions of Support structures

Theme 6 together with Theme 5 (cf. 5.3.5) provides answers to determine the relevance education policies regarding professional development and Integrated Quality Management System of Learning Support and Resource Class Teachers?

Theme 6 emerged from questions 5, 6 and 14, which were posed to LSTs and RCTs as follows:

> Question 5:   What assistance is received from your principal to understand and cope with the IQMS and the accompanying challenges?
>
> Question 6: What support has been received from department/ district/Learning support advisers to address areas that require improvement?
>
> Question 14: Apart from the District, what other organizations or persons play a pivotal part in the Continuous Professional Development of LSTS/RCTs?

The following questions 7 and 8 were posed to LSAs:

> Question 7: What role does the district play in the CPTDs continuous professional development of Learning Support Teachers? The district?
>
> Question 8: Apartment from the district. What other organisations or persons play a pivotal/ crucial part in the continuous professional development of Learning Support Teachers. What other organizations or persons.

Sub-themes identified under Theme 6 entail the following: Collaboration, School level Leadership and management.

The issue of collaboration was strongly emphasized by the LSA component of the participants. When discussing teacher needs, workshop organisers and funders of such training must be present and involved. All parties must confer about the personal growth plans of the teachers so that proposed or planned training can relate directly to the growth plans. It is crucial the LSAs themselves engage in regular discussions concerning work activities as it relates to the IQMS instruments so that such instruments can be more accessible to support teachers. As the IQMS documents and personal growth plans are processed at the school level, there should be deliberations between the schools and the SLES component. LSA4 argues that "development is falling through the cracks" because of this lack of collaboration. The following opinions attest to the stated views.

> LSA1: "… but when do we discuss the needs of the teachers, ahm to the people that are arranging these workshops or are in possession of the money or whatever…"

> LSA3: "It's another thing that is frustrating because the people that are going to train people that are giving out training. It's so unfortunate that they don't sit with Learning Support Advisors to discuss their PGP, which is the personal growth plan of a teacher so that any training that is going to be conducted. It's through the PGP of a teacher because sometimes you get the training that where sometimes it doesn't Uh, accommodate that PGP of the learners (teachers). They are just getting training outside."

> LSA1: "…assessment and also that extra curriculum activities Uh, because you have to think very carefully. To make it up accessible to the LSTs… That is why it is so important to me that we as a group get on the same page with the IQMS and for me in this whole process, the fact that we as a group have never discussed this."

> LSA4: "Uh, but the teacher development is falling between the cracks because the IQMS is going through the school, but we, it's not I don't think it is even getting at the stage where we are getting the Personal growth plan in the SLES…"

Discussion on support structures collaboration

The issue of collaboration was strongly emphasized by the LSA component of the participants. Researchers accentuate collaboration between stakeholders for effective

professional development (Flores 2012; Hirsh, Killion & Pollard 2016; Ladbrook 2009; Mahlo 2011; Mavuso & Moyo 2014; Roberts 2011; Webster-Wright 2009; Wentzel 2016). Bronfenbrenners' eco-systemic approach prescribes constant dynamic interaction among different layers in the education systems (cf. 2.2). On the mesosystemic level, the district (LSA-level) is the centre of education support services, thus providing the inter-connections between the different structures in the micro-system (school level) of the support teachers (cf. 2.2.1). LSAs are knowledgeable about outcomes and expectations regarding learning support. They are also aware of general existing attitudes towards learning support. It is therefore crucial for the LSAs themselves to engage in regular discussions concerning work activities as it relates to the IQMS instruments so that such instruments can be more accessible to support teachers.

Coordinated collaboration is based on amongst others, constant dynamic interaction among different layers in the education systems and collective problem-solving. Therefore, all parties, on all levels, must confer about the personal growth plans of the teachers so that proposed or planned training can relate directly to the growth plans. As the IQMS documents and personal growth plans are processed at the school level (micro-systemic), there should be deliberations between the schools and the SLES component. Otherwise, as LSA4 argues, *"development will fall through the cracks"* because of this lack of collaboration.

On the exosystemic level (cf. 2.2.3), external networks can exert ripple effects on support teacher development (Mahlaela 2008:17). Any events that occur in the non-containing setting within the larger Western Cape Education Department (Provincial level), indirectly affect the developmental processes of support teachers. Other role players on the exosystemic level include amongst others, Integrated Health Services, Government and non-government organisations, community organisations, special schools/Resource centres and parents. If support systems like human resources, finances and regulations on provincial level are not in place, specialist support teachers may experience challenges regarding development opportunities. Systemic collaboration is also dependent on inter-sectoral partnerships, teamwork and networking (cf. 1.8), which makes it of utmost

importance that when discussing teacher needs, all role players including workshop organisers and funders of such training must be present and involved.

5.3.6.2   *School level Leadership and management*

Principals are important role players at the micro-system school level which is the immediate environment of the LSTs. The degree of principals' involvement in the IQMS process differs from school to school. No involvement from principals is reported by some participants (RCT2, LST3, LST4, LST6, and LST14). Where the principal is not directly involved, the deputies and other school management team members assist. Support ranges from IQMS advocacy, completion of forms, encouraging development, availing themselves for discussion meetings, provision of resources and internal logistics. There is an impression that some principals are not aware that there is no direct or obvious correlation between the performance standards in the IQMS document and the job description of the LSTs and RCTs. However, in such cases, a principal can refer the teacher to a member of the school management team who possesses the necessary IQMS knowledge.

Support from the school development team and the school governing bodies is also reported. Although SMTs support is flagged by some participants (LST1, LST8), others beg to differ. RCT3 opines that the SMTs are not equipped to attend to every personal growth plan or to see that such plans are completed. This view is corroborated by LSA 4 which argues that personal growth plans are neglected at school level, therefore development is "falling between the cracks". As an itinerant support teacher, LST7 reports that there is a hesitancy by SMTs to be involved in the IQMS proses. There is also an opinion that SMTs are not open to new ideas, thus being obstacles to innovation. This view gets support for LST2's suggestion that "LST and RCT could perhaps be on Post level 2 since they are already working closely with SMTs. Their work is however not always regarded as important. Being on Post level 2 may ensure weight to their inputs and support. These interpretations are founded on the following participant opinions.

> RCT2: "The principal is not involved at all. The Deputy distributes documents and sets up the schedules for the school."

LST1" As ek die inhoud van 'n spesifieke vorm nie verstaan nie, sal my senior personeel die inhoud aan my verduidelik. My senior personeel spoor my ook aan om verder te studeer en werkswinkels by te woon. Die indruk word geskep dat prinsipale nie eers bewus is dat die prestasie standaarde nie ooreenstem met die posbeskrywing van 'n leerondersteuningsopvoeder nie omrede die prinsipaal nie direk hiermee werk nie… kan hy jou verwys na die Adjunkhoof en Departementshoofde wat oor die nodige kennis van GGBS moet beskik [When I do not understand a specific form, then my senior staff member will explain the content to me. my senior staff member encourage me to study further and to attend workshops. The impression is created that the principal is not aware that the performance standards standards does not correlate with the job description of the learning support teacher because the principal does not directly work with it…can he refer you to the deputy and departmental head that has the necessary knowledge about the QMS]"

RCT5: "Register in training and in workshops as well. IQMS advocacy every year."

LST11: "Ons word gedurig aangemoedig om ons areas van ondervinding te vergroot.[We are constantly being encouraged the widen our areas of experience]"

LST12: "Principal always encourage educators to attend training sessions to develop themselves and also invite the district and NGO when it is necessary."

LST13: "At least he responds to my request for being present when I meet with the other teachers."

LST2: "We work on trust… School amenities, such as photocopiers, telephone usage, scanning equipment and flexibility regarding training and scheduled meetings at Circuit offices are available to the LST. Stationery is also provided. Principals agree with timetables and open-door policies are maintained."

LST15: "The fact that they handle an open door policy, which encourages me to feel free to address them should the need arise."

LST3: "The Principle was not very involved with any of my IQMS processes thus far… ensuring that all the teachers have the necessary documents in their files."

LST4: "Daar is / was geen hulp vanaf die Skoolhoof rondom IQMS nie.[There is /was no support from the Principal about the IQMS]"

LST6: "None"

LST14: "No assistance yet"

LST16: "the principal has no idea what my role as an LST entails"

LST8: "I got assistance from the Foundation HOD and my LSA."

LST9: "The SDT and SGB "

RCT3: "Development and mentorship in areas to improve."

RCT4: "Make time for discussions during the time I give feedback …Provide me with necessary stationery and learner workbooks and allow me to make copies within limits. Include the learners and parents in creating an authentic inclusive school. She pays particular attention to social inclusion by creating specific opportunities for all learners to develop friends and sense of belonging through shared activities."

LST9: "Staff development programmes."

LST10: "The whole process is done in a way which all parties involved have are free to state their views regarding the output of the process"

RCT3: "The SMT are not geared to see to it that every educators PGP get the necessary attention or get it done."

LST6: "the new ideas and theories becomes an obstacle for SMT that is not keen on change or to new ideas"

LST7: "Itinerant: reluctance of the SMT to be involved in contribution of support of LST, lack of participation"

LST2: "LST/ RCT could perhaps be on Post level 2 to ensure that their support and inputs carry weight due to the fact that they work with SMTs and may not always be regarded as Important."

LSA4: "Uh, but the teacher development is falling between the cracks because the IQMS is going through the school, but we, it's not I don't think it is even getting at the stage where we are getting the Personal growth plan in the SLES…"

LSA4: "Yes, I just want to say that. As I said in the beginning, we set up a PGP, but the PGP is going to the school and nobody is looking at it again. So that the PGP is playing no role and that is a thing we must address."

Discussion on support structures, School level Leadership and Management

Rabichund (2011:199) describe principals and SMTs as "Powerhouses of schools". Corroboration of this perception is found in Mahlangu (2014:1379) describing the school leadership as crucial to continued educational improvement. Every member in this "powerhouse must contribute to a teacher improvement plan as well as an action plan for school improvement. (Van Wyk 2015:16). The professional development activities that should address school improvement plans are Type 2 SACE recognised and mandated. Collective problem solving with core values and common goals is key to systemic collaboration and coordination (cf. 1.8). Therefore, principals with no interest in the IQMS policy will inevitably impact teacher development and the school as a whole (Mahlaela 2012:61, 62).

Principals are important role players at the micro-system school level which is the immediate environment of the LSTs. Evident from this study, is that the degree of principals' involvement in the IQMS process differs from school to school. Five participants reported no involvement from principals in their IQMS processes (RCT2, LST3, LST4, LST6, and LST14). Others remarked that where the principal is not directly involved, the deputies and other school management team members usually assist. Support ranges from form document completion, IQMS advocacy, development encouragement, availing themselves for discussion meetings, provisioning of resources and internal logistics. Support from the SDT and the SGB is also reported.

An impression is that some principals are not aware that there is no direct or obvious correlation between the performance standards in the IQMS document and the job description of the LSTs and RCTs. This dilemma is compounded by a lack of understanding of what the actual key performance areas of support teachers entail (cf. 1.5, 3.8.4.1a, 3.8.4.1b). Although a principal can refer a teacher to a member of the school management team who possesses the necessary IQMS knowledge, the type of support would not be LSTs and RCTs role content related. Referring to Section 3.8.4.1b, the contentious PS 6 and PS7 that encompasses the essence of the difference between the job descriptions of

support teachers and MSTs do not only hold implications for the professional development of LSTs and RCTs, but also the practicality of their IQMS.

Furthermore, it caused uncertainty and tension between LSTs and RCTs and their SMTs as well as controversy with regard to the mark allocation of the LSTs and RCTs (cf. 1.5). While school management team support is flagged by some participants (LST1, LST8), others beg to differ. RCT3 opines that the school management team is not equipped to attend to every personal growth plan or to see that it gets completed. This view is corroborated by LSA 4 which argues that personal growth plans are neglected at school level, therefore development is "falling between the cracks".

As an itinerant support teacher, LST7 reports that there is a hesitancy by SMTs to be involved in the IQMS proses. There is also an opinion that SMTs are not open to new ideas, thus being obstacles to innovation. Although Post level 1 teachers, LSTs and RCTs do not form part of the staff establishments of their base schools because their posts are District-designated (cf. 3.10). They have to perform duties spreading over the whole spectrum of the different ranks as described in the PAM document (DBE 2016) – Post level 1 educators (Teacher, Senior Teacher, Master Teacher), Post level 2 educators (Departmental heads) and Post level 3 educators (Deputy Principals). Specific reference is made to categories of supervision, management, training, liaising, and communication (cf. 3.8.4.1a). As such, support teachers already play an authoritative role (Dreyer 2008:233), but their work is not always regarded as important. For this reason, LST2 suggests that being on Post level 2 may ensure weight to their inputs and support.

5.3.6.3   District level L&M (SLES)

In terms of district support, particular reference is made to the role of Learning Support Advisors. There is an emphasis on the capacity building role and the provision of development opportunities on different levels and in different modes. LSAs provide good leadership and support in both primary and high schools, but the feeling is that lower grades are sometimes neglected because Grade 12s enjoy priority attention. While most participants acknowledge the supportive efforts of LSAs, there are also some concerns that are raised. LST16 feels that the learning support facilitator (coordinator) and the LSA do not

connect with LSTs regular enough and therefore they cannot make trustworthy judgements about the overall work and worthiness of LSTs. RCT2 remarks that her LSA tried to be supportive by acknowledging certain needs and by supporting solutions. However, RCT2 is of the opinion that the district or department self has not addressed any areas that required improvement, but has rather only monitored her plans and solutions.

The department and District also require a lot of paperwork from schools and LSTs, while support processes and feedback can take very long. This perceived lack in addressing support needs is strengthened by LSA1 who doubts district awareness of teacher needs since there is no budgeting for them as well as in implementing their CPTD. Other role players at district level whose supporting roles are mentioned include the therapists of the inclusive outreach teams. These views are supported by the discussions on such needs. LSA2 and LSA4 accord that the district, especially the DBST, can play a bigger role in the IQMS process of LSTs, making more courses available and following participants' comments.

> LST1: "Opleidings….Opleiding in aanlyn tegnologie bv. Virtuele clusters …CTLI [Trainings…Trainings in online technology etc. Virtual clusters…CTLI]"

> LST2: "They provide good leadership and give sound advice. They do what they can given the number of schools that they have to support. The Department itself can relook the amount of paperwork required at times; the time it takes to give feedback on referrals from District level is sometimes a challenge because processes are very lengthy."

> LST2: "The LSAs. They have to support all grades and all phases in all the schools in the circuit. It could perhaps be looked into if Primary Schools and Secondary Schools could each have an LSA to support them with their special needs. At times grade 12 take priority over lower grades even if those lower grades are the cornerstone of higher grades."

> LST7: "Distrik, IO-span en LSAs, baie hulp en ondersteun gekry.[District IE Team and LSAs, got much help and support.]"

> LST13: "interactions with IE teams."

> LST16: "The LS facilitator and LSA do not connect with the support teachers regularly enough to make a trustworthy judgement of the LST's overall work & worthiness."

RCT1: "LSA organised training"

RCT2: "LSA has tried to be supportive by acknowledging certain needs and by supporting solutions."

RCT3: "The LSA's really go the extra mile to help us in whatever we may need. They organize workshops, help us with planning and try to supply us with all the resources we may need."

RCT4: "Implementing learning support capacity building programmes… Giving guidance and support if I struggle with anything…"

LST3: "The LSA took the most frequent experienced challenges of the circuit as focus of areas of development. The process is overseen by the LSA."

LST4: "LOA altyd bereid om ondersteuning te bied.[LSA always willing to support]"

LST5: "Hul help en ondersteun baie goed, selfs meer as wat van hul verwag word.[They assist and support with a lot of things, even more than what is expected from them]"

LST6: "LSA: discussions and guidance towards personal development."

LST7: "Workshops cluster and advisers visit the school and address that particular challenge."

LST9: "Short courses, clusters, workshops and development programmes."

LST12: "They conduct training sessions and always avail themselves for any assistance, also invite stakeholders to equip LST."

LST14: "Training, clusters and workshops has been organised to discuss the problems we encounter in class."

LST15: "Virtual meetings and appropriate training on a regular basis. Regular visits in their busy schedule."

RCT1, LST1, LST2, LST5, LST13: "My LSA, as she keeps us up to date about training courses to attend, and other LSAs."

RCT2: "The District or Department has not addressed areas that require improvement. In my opinion, it has basically just been a monitoring of my own plan and solutions."

LSA3: "Since the LSA is visiting schools each and every time and again, and you see how teachers are performing in their classes. So my role is…… Ah…. It helps as well for the teachers to improve the way that they are working with learners, the way that they are performing their lesson in their class."

LSA1: "…Uh. Yeah, because I do not think that the district is aware of Uh, the needs of the teachers. We know the needs because we see it in the IQMS but when do we discuss the needs of the teachers … how I'm I held accountable, I would say no as there's no discussions around the issue, really. You do it and you give the marks actually and that is the end of it."

LSA2: "Umm? Uh-huh look I am. I'm the Learning Support Advisor, of the LST and I have to assist them, the teacher with the process and I only have to make sure that the process is done correctly."

LSA4: "…there's so many Inter, or there's a lot of interaction between the DBST and the LST, the other members of the DBST and the LST, and that they actually playing no role in the in the part of the IQMS and they are actually having a lot of interaction with it, and that the IQMS the giving marks and the everything is only my responsibility so that that will be interesting to see it more from if you can also get the input from the of the other DBST members."

LSA2: "But I think that the District could play a bigger role, Uh, make more courses available for Learning Support Teachers and budget for them as well….So I think they could actually play a much bigger role in implementing the CPTD for our Learning Support Teachers."

LSA2: "… if we're going to use it (DBST) as the impact in the IQMS it would be that I will use it as a holistic approach to doing things in the school, where we look at the whole learner as such."

Discussion on Support structures, District level Leadership and Management (SLES)

The collaboration sub-theme in Section 5.3.6.1 above, relates directly to district level support. District support reflects mostly mesosystemic level support from the Learning Support Advisors (cf. 3.3.2, 5.3.6.1). Capacity building and development opportunity provision on different levels and in different modes are emphasised. Being knowledgeable about outcomes and expectations regarding learning support, LSAs provide good

leadership and support in both primary and high schools. Although, some LSTs observe that lower grades are sometimes neglected because grade 12's enjoys priority attention. Mahlo (2011:7) confirms that in some provinces, Education specialists like LSAs are expected to prioritise and take responsibility for functions such as grade 12 motivations, especially in underperforming schools.

While most participants acknowledge the supportive efforts of LSAs, there are also some concerns that are raised. LST16 feels that the learning support facilitator (coordinator) and the LSA do not connect with LSTs regular enough and therefore they cannot make trustworthy judgements about the overall work and worthiness of LSTs. These workplace relations (or lack thereof) between support teachers and their surrounding social agents, can impact favourably or unfavourably on the daily functioning and further development. RCT2 remarks that her LSA tried to be supportive by acknowledging certain needs and by supporting solutions.

LSAs however are part of a bigger team (district- or circuit based) of support providers that must integrate different types of support (Dreyer 2008:89). The ISLES component composes of a school psychologist, a social worker and the earning LSA. Continuous connections and processes between specialist teachers and DBSTs, SBSTs, and other mesosystemic level agents as explained, can have conflicting or encouraging effects on support teachers (cf. 3.3.2). The department and district are experienced in overloading schools and LSTs with lots of paperwork, while support processes and feedback can take very long. These are factors that can discourage support teachers in their efforts to render effective micro-level support as part of SBST roles (cf. 2.2.1). Although RCT2 acknowledge the support efforts of her LSA, she claims that the district or department self has not addressed any areas that required improvement but has rather only monitored her plans and solutions.

LSA participants underscore their own supporting roles as well as the crucial role that support teachers fulfil on micro and mesosystemic levels. However, they also acknowledge the perceived lack in addressing the support needs of LSTs/RCTs. LSA1 has reservations about district awareness of support teacher needs since there are no discussions around

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such needs. Consequently, the LSA questions her accountability for the IQMS process and subsequent development of support teachers. LSAs perform the IQMS process of supporting teachers, placing them in the best position to inform the principals as well as the district about the specific development needs. However, there seems to be a lack of consultative processes between LSAs and the district.

Researchers guard against fragmented and uncoordinated systems and initiatives (Roberts 2011:36; Webster-Wright 2009:12; Mestry *et al.* 2009:482). They rather emphasise that programme designers and implementers, as well as programme recipients, should collaborate closer to prevent competing initiatives that can drain and dilute their resources and efforts (cf. 3.7.1.4). LSA2 and LSA4 accord that the district and especially the DBST, can play a bigger role in the IQMS process of LSTs, by making more courses available, budgeting for them as well as in implementing their CPTD. Intra- and interdisciplinary collaboration is crucial to systemic coordination (cf. 1.8). Continuous support for the growth and development of support teachers thus requires collaboration and or coordination on all levels of their ecological working context.

5.3.6.4   *Provincial*

The LSTs and RCTs highlight the provincial Cape Teaching and Learning Institute. The CTLI has an inclusive education department that presents courses for learning support and any educator who is interested in barriers to learning. The WCED e-Portal provides resources and training with funding in various areas. The WCED-ISLES department, in collaboration with Stellenbosch University, offered a reading course specifically for LSTs. Although the training was provided by the provincial department, there is also a concern that such training was not on a professional level to be registered with a professional body, nor could it award credits to LSTs (LST10). More training is also available in the Metros than in rural areas. Another concern for learning support is, however, that the ISLES component does not have any budget for training to support the details of the needs of the support teachers (LST3). The provincial department (together with National) must make more training available not just for curriculum in general, but also for LSTs and RCTs. These sentiments are shared in the responses of the following participants.

LST10: "Thus far, no true professional training has been provided from the department's side. Training are given, but not on a professional level where credits are awarded, or for registration with a professional body."

LST5: "Die beskikbaarheid van die e-portal hulpbronne, opleiding in verskeie areas waarvoor die Departement fondse voorsien, [The availability of e-portal resources, training in various areas that the Department provide funds for]"

LST1 and LST6: "CTLI / WCED / SLES provided."

LST3: "All training received has been done through the WCED."

LST8: "Reading course from University of Stellenbosch."

LSA2: "I think what LSA4 said with the CTLI that has nice courses? Uh, it is linked to 8 as well. Uhm, this over the time, and I mean with the CTLI, they have any inclusive education department that gives out of the courses for learning support or for any educator that would like to know more about barriers to learning."

LSA4: "I just want to say there's also CTLI had specially this year, they had courses specially for learning disabilities and all of that. That was very, very good. So yeah. Also CTLI."

LST3: "(And then at the end of the day), you discover that SLES doesn't have any budget for, for the training you have to struggle. Getting a budget so that you support the details on their own needs."

LSA2: "… and money in our case, is always a setback. We always struggle in learning support to get funds available for teacher's development for our Learning Support Teachers."

LSA2: "It's always about money, training and developing teachers is about money. We were lucky to have some training this year that they that people did for free."

LSA2: "But these other training and like LST3 said, curriculum also always has something that's going on and we are left out always…"

LST2: "…national and provincial Education Department must provide an environment for teacher development to take place and then the teachers are supposed to develop themselves and that the department must make courses available…"

LSA2: "But the challenge is that some courses, especially for learning support, would be over weekends and stuff. We don't stay in the cities. We are far out, and for our teachers to travel for a, you know, for a weekend thing. It's not always. Uhm, viable, because they also have families and we have to take that into consideration."

Discussion on Provincial Support structures

The Western Cape Education Department, at the exosystem, are responsible for implementing learning support in accordance with their provincial needs. Type 3 professional development activities are used by Districts and Provinces for addressing District and Province Improvement Plans. District support for development has been touched on above in Discussion 28 (cf. 5.3.6.3). Funded initiatives highlighted by participants include the WCED e-Portal which provides resources and training with funding in various areas. In addition, a reading course specifically for LSTs, funded by the WCED-ISLES department, in collaboration with Stellenbosch University. WCED also offers in-service developmental programmes at the Bellville-based CTLI, with the main focus being on curriculum interventions with mathematical literacy and science (cf. 5.3.2.4). The CTLI, as highlighted by both LSTs and RCTs, has an inclusive education department that presents courses for learning support. These courses are also available for any educators who are interested in barriers to learning.

Although resource and training funding is a provincial obligation, there are still disparities in the availability of resources and human capital within provinces and are therefore not on the same level of implementation. This is evident in the comment of one of the LSAs who implies that some learning support courses are only available in cities: "*We don't stay in the cities. We are far out, and for our teachers to travel for a, you know, for a weekend thing… It's not always. Uhm, viable… they also have families and we have to take that into consideration.*"

As established by Dreyer (2008:218) and Barratt (2016:55), the current reality is that inclusive education (the heart of supporting teachers' work) is still the responsibility of a separate directorate in the national and provincial education departments, as displayed in Figure 5.6 on the next page.
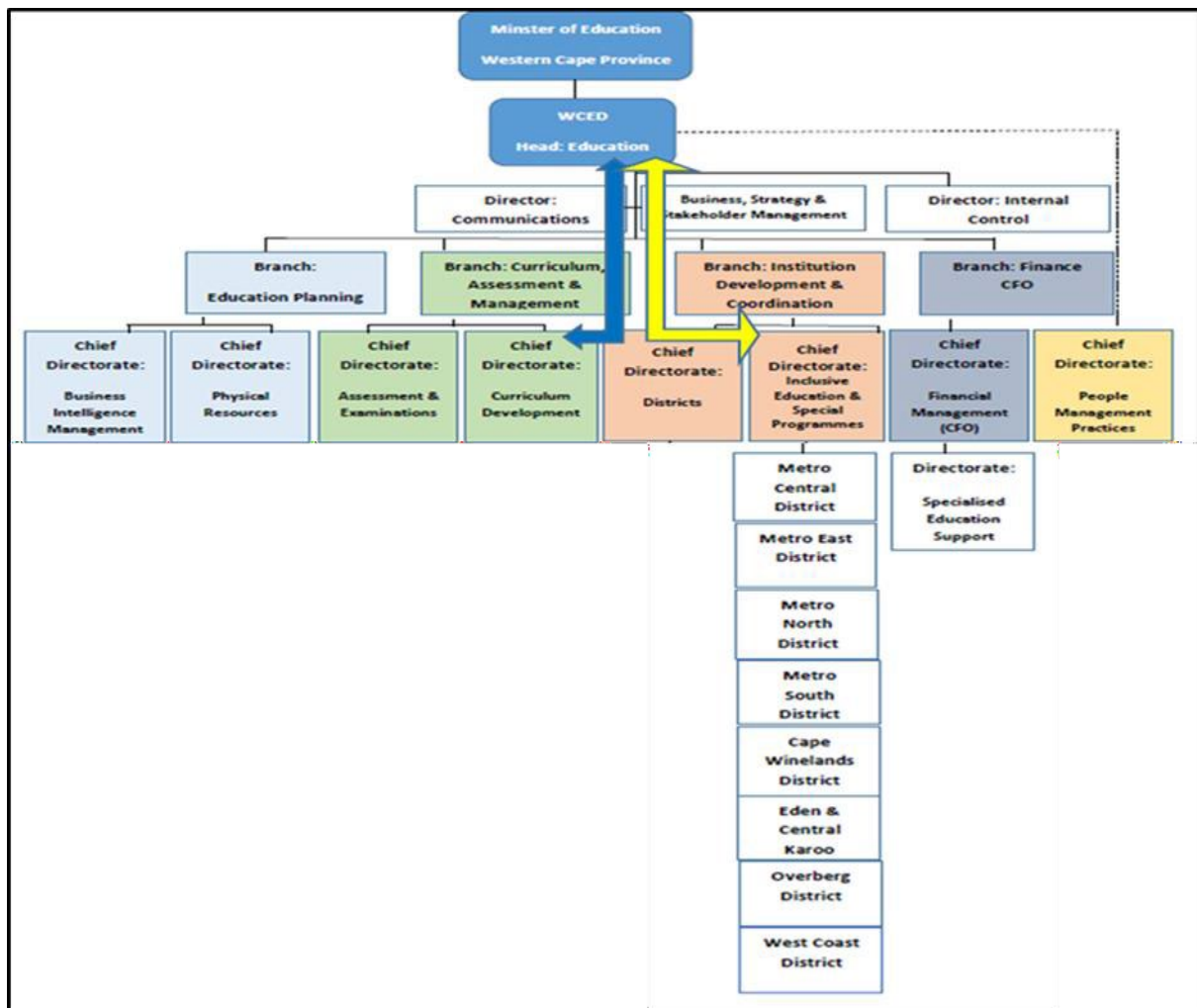
Figure 5.6 WCED directorates (Adapted, Barratt 2016:55)

Figure 5.6 above illustrates the different directorates. This is counter-productive to the systemic collaboration principle of holistic, whole-emphasis and interdependence of all parts (cf. 1.8). Separate mainstream education and inclusive education directorates are still being perpetuated at both provincial and national levels in the form of district-level Curriculum Services and Specialised Learner and Educator Support (SLES), or as currently known, ISLES. A major concern raised by participants is that the ISLES component doesn't have any budget for training to support the detailed needs of the support teachers (LST3). The cumbersome processes and procedures (Barrat 2016:112) refers to the struggle to require access to support and resources that were elaborated on earlier in the sub-theme on Training/Time issues/Funding (cf. 5.3.2.4). Although training is being provided by the

provincial department, there is also a concern that such training was not on a professional level to be registered with a professional body, nor could it award credits to LSTs (LST10). Martin (2013:78,80) explains that programme directors decided upon content for CTLI courses, based on the information channelled from the circuit to the district, mainly as a result of the IQMS process and school improvement plans.

5.3.6.5   National level and Global level

The sub-theme on training awareness (cf. 5.3.4.1) explored the knowledge and perceptions of LSA participants concerning the NPFTED (DoE 2007) and the ISPFTED (2011- 2025) in South Africa (DoE 2011). The researcher wishes to relate those findings to explore support from a National level. The NPFTED (DoE 2007) guides teacher education and development, with SACE as the overseeing body. The NPFTED must provide an environment so that teacher development takes place. The department must make courses available so that teachers must develop themselves. The ISPFTED (DoE 2011) serves to improve the quality of our learning and the teaching in the schools. It entails teacher development and must provide opportunities for teacher development. It was implemented or given a time frame from 2011 to 2025. The CPTD that is administered from the CTLI, is where teachers must load their development. There is no space for some support teachers on the CPTD platform. They are not taken into consideration. The following sentiments from participants are applicable.

> LSA1: "All I know, I all I know is that it (the NPFTED) is there and then it guides the teacher education and development and that SACE is like an overseeing body."

> LSA2: "… I know that the national and provincial Education Department must provide an environment for teacher development to take place and then the teachers are supposed to develop themselves and that the department must make courses available."

> LSA2: "It (the ISPFTED) is to improve the quality of our learning and the teaching in the schools so. It has to do with a teacher development and where opportunities must be given for teacher development and it was implemented from or given a time frame from 2011 to 2025. For this to be implemented. Uh, integrated strategic planning framework?"

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LSA2: "LSTs and RCTs that they're supposed to do their own development, but if you take that CPTD programme that is also run out of CTLI, and I mean you're supposed to do reading you can, you can do seminars or whatever, even if they go into that programme that they supposed to load their teacher development. Uhm, for our Learning Support Teachers they, there's no space for them in that platform, so it's as if they were not taken into consideration."

Discussion about National level and Global level support structures

In Section 5.3.6.4 above, it was emphasised that both national and provincial education departments must provide an environment for teacher development. The National Education Department constitutes Bronfenbrenner's macro-systemic level, comprising national trends, policies and initiatives that have bearings on learning support (cf. 2.6.1). Directives imparted from this level include Provincial guidelines for implementation of particular policies such as Inclusive Education, underlying belief systems and aspects such as Government educational policies, including SLES policies. As already established in Section 5.3.6.4 above, these types of interactions necessitate systemic coordination with interrelatedness and interdependence on all the different levels (cf. 1.8). Ladbrook (2009:37) encapsulates the intention of Education White Paper 6 (DoE 2005:18), as a macrosystemic function. The Education White Paper 6 considered the country's fiscal capacity and acknowledges the need to develop human and financial resources and institutional capacities. The need for sourcing funding from provincial budgets and local and international donor funding is recognised.

The new QMS (not a focus in this study) developed as such a macrosystemic development, from the new quality management programmes. The development was resultant of South Africa's 1994 political transformations (CDE 2015:5, Van Wyk 2015:25) (cf. 3.8), while the NPFTED (DoE 2007) and the ISPFTED (DoE 2011), intended to enable teacher efficiency for improved professional ability (cf. 2.5, 3.8.7). The SACE Code of Professional Ethics (cf. 1.2, 5.3.1.1) is a national teachers' body that manages the CPTD system, administered from the CTLI (on a provincial level). The aforementioned legislative frameworks are vehicles of CPTD as implicated in the Norms and Standards for Educators (DoE 2000) (cf. 3.7.2). According to the Education White Paper 6 (DoE 2005:18), the professional

development of support teachers is mandatory. Yet, the Learning Support Teachers struggle to secure their space on the CPTD platform, experiencing systemic inaccessibility (cf. 5.3.2.1, 5.3.2.2).

Implications entailed by the IQMS-CPTD and SACE/CPTD connection were discussed broadly in Section 3.9 and this particular chapter. The whole of Theme 6 (cf. 5.3.6) entails the crux of the interconnected multi-layer systemic challenges of supporting teacher development.

5.3.6.6   Community and Other

LSTs and RCTS draw a lot of capacity building and resource support from NPOs, NGOs and other government organisations. Furthermore, the supporting, developmental role of Teacher unions is highlighted. LST peer support gets extra emphasis. The following participant feedback supports these views.

> RCT1: "also in my case there is an organisation called KILT in Knysna. They made an exceptional contribution to my newly started class in more ways than one."

> RCT2: "NGO's or private persons who present Skill courses. Labour Department (Sheltered employment). "Carpe Diem E.g. Hospitality Studies."

> LST1: "LSTs and LSAs from various districts. Social development, parents….parent-teacher relationships. LSTs in collaboration with Social development. NGOs like KILT and KADC (Knysna). Churches, clinics, government delegates within the community; mentors."

> LST2: "CEF-Social Workers, Therapists – Occupational, Speech, Play, Educational Psychologists, Universities, Special Schools, LSA's, Departments: Health; Social Welfare; Clinics, Private doctors and paediatricians, Private businesses for skills development programmes"

> LST4: "Jou mede-kollegas"[Your colleagues]"

> LST5: "SAOU se opleidings / kursusse. LSTS en RCT onder mekaar en deur hul adviseurs. Carpe Diem se span en hul onderwysers help ook waar hul kan.[SATU" trainings/ courses. LSTand RCT amongst each other and their advisors. Carpe Diem team and their teachers also assist where they can]"

LST7: "In the community and parents which needs helps or assistance. I would reach out to local social workers for assistance in family crises if I may put it so."

LST10: "Other government departments, for example, Department of Social Development."

LST12: "NGO (KILT)/ Health department and Social development."

LSA1: "Right? Uhm? If I look at what the SAOU has done this year. All that causes the teachers that attended to them was really very impressed and they are using that information and that was well done. And then also the Uh, IE teams. The training that they gave us very valuable."

LSA3: "OK. What I will say is the multi-functional team from the district that will play a major role to capacitate the teachers Uh, needs. As well as not forgetting the community, we've got Pastors that are coming to schools to speak with Learners. And then we've got also the social workers from social development that they do visit schools every time, and again to assist the teachers."

LSA1: "If I just got added, also the other LSTs to train their peers can play a big role."

Discussion about Community and Other support structures

The collaboration sub-theme (cf. 5.3.6.1) relates strongly and explains the crucial role of the community and other role players. Ongoing, active experience and engagement over time are key to systemic collaboration (cf.1.8). That way, support teachers can gain access to much needed human resources and finances that are not available from, or not in place at district, provincial or national levels. All the partnerships mentioned by the support teachers are micro level role players that assist in their everyday functioning and their development in the long run. This includes parent partnership and community involvement. These relations form the close-to-person network system of the support teacher (cf. 2.2.1). The multi-functional teams from the district that play a major role in capacitating the teachers (LSA3) form a micro-system on a different level in the ecological environment of the support teachers, which is the mesosystemic level (cf. 2.2.2).

On the exosystemic level, other microsystems in which the support teachers are involved consist of amongst others, Integrated Health Services, Government and non-government organisations, community organisations, special schools / Resource centres and parents, although they are not directly embedded in that mentioned microsystems (cf. 2.2.3). Ladbrook (2009:33) argues that all the partnerships mentioned by the participants (NPOs, NGOs and other government organisations) form part of the macro level relations of support teachers, thus forming the wider socio-cultural environment that includes the interconnected micro, meso, and exosystem characteristics of the given culture or subculture (Ferriera 2019:71; Anam 2017:58; Nand 2017:57; Bronfenbrenner 1977:515) (cf. 2.2.4). Support teacher peers can play a big role in one another's development (cf. 5.3.4.1), sharing best practices, and encouraging holistic, collaborative relational learning and reflective practice (cf. 2.7.1.2).

5.4   Synthesis of the Results

The results of the qualitative semi-structured online individual email interviews and that from the Microsoft Teams focus group interview are synthesised below, under the following key themes/categories: Common impressions, understanding of IQMS/CPTD; Perception of Challenges; Perception of appropriateness/ relevance of Measurement Instruments; Professional Development; Perceptions on effectiveness/Contribution to professional Development; Perceptions on Support structures. Additionally, personal and other official documents were analysed and integrated with the findings for data verification or triangulation but also provides supplementary data to enhance understanding of a phenomenon within context.

5.4.1   Common impressions, understanding of IQMS/CPTD

The following sub-themes were uncovered: Performance Management systems; professional development and training management tools; Training needs identification regulation/tracking mechanisms; Overall Performance measurement tools; Motivational/Support Tools; Negative connotation; Link between IQMS and CPTD.

The results revealed that the IQMS, CPTD and professional bodies like the SACE and other unions are perceived as performance management systems that aim to enhance both individual teachers and the education system as a whole. Additionally, the IQMS and CPTD serve as professional development tools that identify, regulate and track the training process. The aim is to measure overall annual performance. Engagement should occur over a period of time if the systems intend to motivate, support and encourage individuals to self-enhancement. The systems intend to promote and assure accountability however, accountability should be an intrinsic motivating professional responsibility. The IQMS is also described as a points, merit or remuneration system, of which there are advocates for, and those against.

Some perceived the IQMS and related CPTD system as negative, because of its obligatory nature, openness to dishonesty and lack of transparency. The common perceived link between the IQMS and CPTD is teacher development, ensuring accountability, self-upgrading and self-enrichment. The IQMS process identifies growth needs as well as strengths and provides the action plan, while the CPTD provide the database of SACE approved training providers and endorsed programmes/activities that will reward goal completion with points. The study points out that not all participants observe any link, or a positive link between the two systems, for reasons already mentioned, such as compulsory nature, openness to abuse, and problems to load and acquire points.

5.4.2   Perception of Challenges

Challenges, as disclosed by participants in this study, include Systemic; Points/merits; Misuse; Training/Time/funding; Goal attainment (Resources, Time, and productivity); Instrumentation; Job description and role alignment.

The study revealed systemic challenges with rippling effects. Most support teachers cannot access the online sign-in process. Even if they would try the manual sign-up, most of them are not registered on the CPTD system yet. Only one participant indicated secured registration. Inability to load their previous professional development activities, demotivated them to even try loading their development. Together with limited options for points logging,

the website sometimes does not respond to entries or none or incorrect information is reflected.

The complications with these systemic challenges imply that support teachers will forfeit their points, cannot commit to the SACE code of conduct and not be able to benefit from the IQMS-CPTD process as a whole. In addition, the study pointed out that points' allocation, different perceptions in scoring and varied roles vs. appraisal criteria interpretations uncovered possible inconsistencies and biasedness that diminish the credibility, accountability and efficiency goal of the whole IQMS process. The study further revealed a growing resentment towards the IQMS process ascribed to its openness to exploitation, possible loopholes of 'window-dressing, showmanship, self-selling, and self-saving" to obtain high scores add to questionable IQMS-CPTD credibility. Negativity brought about by this, focusses attention on the bi-directional as well as cross-directional ripple effects (cf.2.2.2) that effect the individuals on all their levels of engagement.

Other challenges as identified entail training, related time, funding and resource issues. The study uncovered a need for more effectively and appropriately timed, sufficiently funded, relevant specialised training. Discrepancies in prioritising training and related funding between Curriculum and Specialised learner support are revealed. Available free development opportunities were however pointed out as well, albeit some not specifically linked to needs as identified per IQMS personal growth plan. Availability of funding and time are also revealed to affect resources and other operational issues that cause unconducive working environments. Compounding with a wide-scoped workload, extra-curricular expectations, administrative overload and persistent learning barriers, all the pointed-out concerns were established to impact negatively on goal attainment and eventually on quality teaching and learning.

The results further pointed the IQMS instrument out to be a pro-mainstream designed document that does not accommodate the wide, specialised work sphere and developmental needs of specialist post teachers. It was identified that the perceived fixed-document measures two jobs (that of mainstream and specialised support teachers) with significantly different key performance areas. Therefore, support teachers feel that they are

not being judged or measured uniquely to their specialised job description. As a general instrument, the IQMS-QA3 form in some cases does not accommodate the exact activities that LSTs have to perform. PS 6 and 7 are revealed as comprising the crux of the difference between the job descriptions of MSTs that of LSTs and RCTs. The big concern is extra-curricular activity expectations that do not align with their core functions, causing principals and HODs to not understand the scope of extra-curricular activities that the LSTs must perform. This bears direct impact positively scoring points or not. These duties array over supervision, management, training, liaising, and communication categories, strongly aligning with the transformed and expanded roles of support teachers within the SIAS (inclusive education) framework. The perceived broken link between policy guidelines and appropriate performance management instruments harbours implications for harmonious LST and RCT development on all bio-ecological systemic levels.

An opinion was raised that the key responsibility areas of LSTs and RCTs must be aligned to their core functions and should further be explicitly stipulated in the performance standards or per exact criteria content. The suggestion is that the IQMS instrument should be open to adaptations, thus consider the work plan of the LSTs to make it more accessible to them. The new QMS system (CDE 2015:8) that is to replace the hitherto IQMS is mentioned as it is perceived to contain features that are more job-description friendly (particular reference to LSTs and RCTs) (cf. 5.3.2.1). The impact and possibilities thereof still need to transpire in practice, therefore recommendations for further study as in Chapter Six will follow.

5.4.3   Perception of Appropriateness/ Relevance of Measurement Instruments

Sub-themes identified under Theme 3 entail: IQMS Tool and job description alignment; Instrument fairness/ Relevance.

The results revealed that the measurement instruments are inappropriate and in their current state, not relevant to the developmental needs of support teachers. The results further pointed out that every school has unique contextual circumstances, influencing the way that LSTs apply their job descriptions. With every support teacher having to decide on the best ways to apply themselves according to their particular school setting, itinerant

support teachers may even operate differently in their respective schools. Linking to the challenge of job description-role alignment (5.4.2), general performance standards require careful scrutinizing to make them applicable to personal growth plans. The study uncovered that contextual imbalances and consequent role variations, complicate the application of the performance standards in the IQMS to the personal growth plans, as to indicate the unique needs of support teachers.

The results identified unfairness in that one instrument with the same performance standers is utilised for two groups with different. The study pointed out that there are a lot of LST duties being performed, but they cannot be scored for, as it is not stipulated in the scoring instrument. Fairness is compromised since there is no alignment in the job descriptions and the performance standards in the IQMS, and the job description and training that LSTs must record within the SACE framework. With no alignment, earning of job description points is compromised. It is evident that the issue of non-alignment comprises of more than just missing out on points. Bronfenbrenner highlights that an individual gets affected by any event and/or non-event on all eco systemic levels

It is pointed out that principals and staff do not know the detail of the daily job description of the LSTs, fail to understand extra-curricular activities, and therefore cannot provide justified criticism regarding their work. In terms of relevance, the study uncovered that the IQMS instrument does not understand the social realities of LSTs and RCTs, therefore it is not reflected in the design and implementation of the policy. The study proposes changes in the QA 3 (Lesson observation instrument) so that professional development and training can be aligned with the needs as identified in personal growth plans.

5.4.4 Professional Development

Sub-themes identified under Theme 4 entail the following: Awareness; Best/most effective ways/programmes to develop their teaching skills and knowledge; Previous development courses; Previous in-service participation; Further development Needs

The results revealed that awareness regarding available development opportunities over all three types of activity programmes varies amongst all the participants. The results

showed that although LSAs are partly responsible to update LSTs of possible training initiatives, there is a variation in the levels of awareness of the LSAs. With requests for specialised inclusive structured training, there are also references to the CTLI - inclusive education training opportunities and WCED e-Portal online courses. The study eluded to a lack of learning support for supervisors' awareness of national development legislative frameworks such as the NPFTED (DoE 2007) and the ISPFTED (DoE 2011). The results further identified a crucial need to create awareness about available training programmes on and across all support levels. The results thus emphasise the crucial role of integrated ecosystemic awareness for effective professional development of LSTs and RCTs.

The results indicated the following strategies as the best or most effective for teaching skills and knowledge development: Own initiative, peer teaching, workshops/clusters, specialised training and development, practical, in-service/job shadowing, online and e-learning, Planning and resources, collaboration.

The results showed that the biggest percentage of participants prefer strategies based on collaborative foundations of learning, like peer teaching. The results revealed that most participants (19 percent) believe that they should take initiative in their development. This is followed by a preference for hands-on, practical, in-service/job shadowing (15 percent) that allow for real-life authentic activities that encourage dynamic, everyday interactions and inter-relations.

At least 14 percent of preference goes to specialised training and development programmes, while workshops and clusters enjoy 13 percent favour. A further 9 percent of the participants prefer online, technology and e-learning. Planning and resources as a means of skills development account for 7 percent. Only one participant (1 percent) indicated collaboration as a skills and knowledge development strategy.

The results identified that LSAs support peer teaching in stating that peers can play a big role in one another's development, thus accentuating Bronfenbrenner's day-to-day social role player importance (cf. 2.2.1). LSAs also preferred direct specialised training and development programmes. Online platforms like Teams platform or Zoom platform are indicated to be beneficial to support teachers.

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The study uncovered a significant variety and a number of previous development courses and in-service participation amongst the participants. The modes of in-service training revealed include clusters, conferences, seminars, workshops and webinars presented by private and departmental service providers. The identified in-service training can be grouped into four focus groups: Client-orientated-and-customer focused; Collaborative-focussed; Curriculum-focussed; Administrative skills and managerial skills. The study further showed a positive alignment between the above in-service training initiatives and the required developmental need areas or skills that were identified through prior literature and learning support documents that are currently in use (cf. 3.6.1); i.e., collaboration skills set, administration and managerial skills set, inclusive agents, resilience.

In terms of further development needs, the results revealed a shift away from the knowledge of specific disabilities, and methodologies to more innovation, people skills, collaboration and further formal qualifications. The first cluster of training requests fits into a curriculum focus in-service training category. Most Resource Class Teachers desire e-learning, innovation, new ideas and smarter ways and practices to teach skills in the classroom. Secondly, requests with a collaborative people-skill focus that include Human resource management, the ability to deal with difficult colleagues and parents, community outreach, parent empowerment and learner counselling. The collaborative focus grounds this finding in Bronfenbrenner's emphasis on bi-directional continual interaction between different ecological systems (cf.2.2.2).

Thirdly, there are requests for peer support/learning strategies, also falling on the collaborative scale. Peer teaching, collaboration with peers and the DBST multidisciplinary teams are preferred. The fourth development category identified, entails self-study and empowerment through courses, reading and general up-skilling. Specific self-study intended, involves professional post-graduate Honours special needs and Masters' degree qualifications. Fifthly, there is a request that regards psychometric and/or psychological assessment. A special request is made for training needs to be identified by the DoE and recognised, by professional bodies like SACE. Joining a professional organisation is an aspiration. Lastly, a major developmental shift is a request that LST/ RCT should be

elevated from Post level 1, to Post level 2 to ensure that their support and inputs carry weight.

5.4.5   Perceptions on effectiveness/Contribution to professional Development

Sub-themes identified under Theme 5 entail the following: Contribution of IQMS to professional development, IQMS effectiveness to promote professional development, and Benefits to participation.

The results reveal mixed opinions and experiences regarding IQMS Contribution to professional Development. Perceptions regarding professional development contribution, align with perception thereof as a professional development and training management tool, as well as a training needs identification, regulation, tracking goal-setting framework (personal growth plan) to assist continuous development and prevent stagnation. According to the results, the whole process is perceived to enable employers' awareness of the support needs of their employees. On the other hand, the results identified the IQMS as a once-off, fixed document that only test the perception of peers and advisor about a teacher, with no contribution to 2021 classroom and school environment challenges.

The results displayed a variation in opinions on IQMS effectiveness amongst both groups of participants. The study pointed out that IQMS effectiveness differs from school to school and from teacher to teacher. The IQMS has the potential for abuse and can either be a needs identification and goal setting practice, or only a way of acquiring the one percent pay increase. The IQMS is regarded to have the potential to work as effective monitoring and supporting tool for development, however, such consideration is subject to certain conditions if taken seriously; not abused or misused; time management; assistance from supervisors; availability of training that is directly aligned to directly to IQMS related needs; key responsibility areas aligned to the actual LST and RCT core functions.

The results reveal that the IQMS still holds great benefits for professional development, despite limitations, provided that all the pointed out systemic challenges are attended to. The IQMS still provides for discussions regarding challenges, allows for prioritising of developmental goals and needs, provides a development framework, enhances self-

knowledge, enables more employer awareness and fostering of critical skills. The results however further indicated that there are still some doubts regarding any current contribution to development, partly due to a lack of available specialised capacity building opportunities and the issue that every SACE registered teacher is not yet enabled to attain their professional development points.

5.4.6 Perceptions of Support Structures

Sub-themes identified under Theme 6 entail the following: Collaboration, School level Leadership and management, District level Leadership and management, Provincial, National Level, Community and Others.

The results identify a strong emphasis on collaboration between all role players and on all levels of education support services. Eco-systemic collaboration and coordination principles underscore this perception of support structures.

The results pointed out that LSAs with their knowledge about learning support outcomes and expectations, combined with an awareness of general existing attitudes towards learning support, are crucial enablers in IQMS accessibility for support teachers. The study identified that it is of utmost importance that when discussing teacher needs, all role players including workshop organisers and funders of such training must be present and involved. These types of continuous cross-directional interactions find favour in Bronfenbrenner's bio-ecological theory (cf. 2.2.2).

The results divulged that principals are important role players in the immediate environment of the LSTs, but that the degree of principals' involvement in the IQMS process differs from school to school. Furthermore, the results identified that some principals are not aware of the obvious lack of correlation between the IQMS performance standards and the job description of the LSTs and RCTs, a dilemma that is aggravated by a lack of understanding of what the actual key performance areas of support teachers entail. School management teams are firstly pointed out as not being equipped to attend to the completion and support of every personal growth plan and secondly, as obstacles to innovation. The results

identified the current Post level of LSTs to be counter-productive to the managerial and authoritative role that support teachers have to perform.

The results identified good support from LSAs, at the district leadership level. Although, their supportability is perceived to be split over the whole grade spectrum and otherwise by district and/or circuit prioritized responsibilities. The results divulged deficiencies in district support, as raised by both support teachers and advisors. That includes paperwork overload, improperly timed feedback and support processes, and a lack of awareness of and addressing support needs of LSTs and RCTs. The results also revealed a lack of consultative processes between LSAs and the districts. The results suggest that District can play a bigger role in the LST and RCT -IQMS process, by availing more courses available, budgeting and CPTD implementation. Bronfenbrenner ecological theory places the district at the centre of mesosystemic support structures for LSTs and RCTs.

The results identified the availability of funded, provincial professional development initiatives and opportunities. However, it was revealed that there is an uneven distribution of capital, resources and opportunities between Metros and rural areas. The results pointed out that the ISLES component doesn't have any budget for training to support the details needs of the support teachers, or that acquiring funding entails very cumbersome processes and procedures. A need for specialised professional body accredited courses is further indicated. Both national and provincial education departments are identified as being responsible for providing an environment for teacher development. Even so, the LSTs/RCTs experience systemic inaccessibility and struggle to secure their space on the CPTD platform. Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory supports this finding to be problematic since systemic coordination on macro level is crucial for effective functioning and support.

The results indicated that NPOs, NGOs and other government organisations and teacher unions provide a lot of mesosystemic level support to LSTs and RCTs in terms of capacity building and resource support. The support teachers gain access to much needed human resources and finances that are not available from, or not in place at district, provincial or national levels. The results particularly pointed to peer support in collegial development, with the multi-functional teams from the district that play a capacitating role.

5.5 Chapter Summary

The main aim of this research was to generate data that can be applied to enhance the IQMS as a framework to support the professional growth of LSTs and RCTs in the Eden and Central Karoo Education District. For achieving this objective, the research questions allowed the participants to express their experiences, constraints and challenges regarding their IQMS. This in turn allowed the researcher to examine how the roles and functions of LSTs and RCTs can be aligned in relation to their current key performance areas and to evaluate the effectiveness of education policies regarding professional development and IQMS of LSTs and RCTs.

This chapter started with a description of the characteristics and background of the participants. The key themes from qualitative online, asynchronous, in-depth interviews, combined with a Microsoft Teams focus group interview were presented and discussed in relation to the research questions that guided this investigation. This investigation was guided by 20 open-ended research questions for LSTs and RCTs and 6 online focus group questions for the LSAs. This chapter further delineated, analysed and presented findings based on the gathered data. Findings from document analysis and literature (cf. Chapter Three) were also integrated into ground results obtained from the gathered data. Lastly, the findings from the results were synthesised according to the main themes to culminate in this chapter summary.

The next and final Chapter Six will present conclusions and recommendations that could assist with a framework and conceptual understanding of a coordinated support framework which can contribute to the productive professional development of LSTs and RCTs. Finally, an outline of limitations and strengths, with suggestions of possibilities for further research will be presented.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1   Introduction

This study aimed to explore possibilities for an enhanced developmental framework to support the professional growth of LSTs and RCTs in the Eden and Central Karoo Education District. In the previous chapter (Chapter Five), the data gathered from online email interviews, backed by one online focus group interview were presented and the findings were discussed. The first part of Chapter Six will provide a summary of the preceding chapters to enable a comprehensive and contextualized foundation for the second phase where conclusions and recommendations will be offered. Contextualizing the conclusions about the assembled experiences and views of participants also endeavours to provide substance to recommendations for professional development of LSTs and RCTs, within an adapted IQMS framework. Furthermore, the limitations of this study will be presented and applied to justify possible further research.

6.2   Summary of Chapters

6.2.1   Chapter One

Chapter One motivated and contextualised the study within the field of inclusive education and explained the researcher's interest in the development of a framework for LSTs and RCTs. Issues of LST and RCTs regarding their IQMS and professional development in relation to their job description and key performance areas were highlighted and enlightened by literature. Furthermore, theoretical underpinnings provide depth to the experiences of participants. The underlying philosophical paradigm for this research was deliberated on with an outline of the design and methodology applied in the study. Issues of trustworthiness, credibility and reliability, dependability and conformability were discussed. A description of the anticipated ethical guidelines for this study ensued in the methodology. The role of the researcher was reflected and limitations were explained. Lastly, the concepts that were used in the study were clarified, followed by chapter divisions and a description of the research plan and timeline.

6.2.2 Chapter Two

This chapter laid the theoretical foundation for the exploration of an efficiency improvement framework for support teachers within the Eden and Central Karoo Education District. The multi-level role transformation of support teachers with its accompanying effects was put into perspective using Bronfenbrenner's bio-ecological systems theory. The global impact of specialised learning support education and the forced values, attitudes and beliefs metamorphosis towards diverse learning needs were deliberated on. A comparison between international and national trends on the roles of LSTs and RCTs displayed evidence of chronotime transformation and role conversions. This Chapter thoroughly pondered on, and laid out the impact of universal inclusive philosophy, as it manifested locally on the role transformation that accompanied policy development in the South African context over a set period. The need was discussed for appropriate sustained professional development to fulfil the increasingly demanding responsibilities of support teachers, as exposed by all the changes.

6.2.3 Chapter Three

This chapter analysed literature and policy documents to shed light on the professional development issues of LSTs and RCTs. Scrutinized policy and framework documents that mandate professional development of support teachers and aim at facilitating teacher efficiency and improved professional ability, including White Paper 6 (DoE 2005:18), The National Policy Framework for teacher development in SA (DoE 2006) and the Integrated Strategic Planning Framework for Teacher Education and Development in South Africa, 2011-2025 (DoE 2010). An examination of a series of job descriptions and roles and responsibility documents attested to the subsequent demands for capacity building in the predominant uncovered areas of need. Literature investigations further proposed an overall collaborative approach, including individual and systems capacity building to fit in with the underlying nested or interconnected framework of this study. Continuing professional development (as located in the Integrated Quality Management Systems), was exposed as holding its own challenges when it comes to the evaluation of support teachers. An in-depth discussion of the IQMS and its accompanying instruments transpired, with an elaboration

on the challenges of the IQMS as applicable to LSTs and RCTs. Specific reference was made to conflicting areas as they impact the efficiency of contributing to the professional development of the support teachers. During investigating the IQMS, the question was raised whether the system adheres to its fairness and transparency principles with regard to the appraisal of support teachers. Further developments in professional development policies and legislation that led to the rebranding of the old IQMS were discussed, as well as the implications that it holds for support teachers.

6.2.4   Chapter Four

This chapter outlined the research methodology and design, with a description of the population, sample, and the instruments that were used to answer the research questions. Procedures were discussed, study participants described, data collection elucidated and interview questions were also deliberated on. These procedures demarcated the details of how the study was conducted and who participated in the study. The study employed a constructivist-interpretivist theory methodology to develop a theory on the professional development of LSTs and RCTs. By sharing their experiences with and perspectives on IQMS and professional development, all study participants contributed to this theory and framework development.

6.2.5   Chapter Five

This Chapter described the characteristics and background of the participants. Chapter Five further presented and discussed the key themes from qualitative online, asynchronous, in-depth interviews, combined with a once of Microsoft Teams focus group interview. This elaboration was done in relation to the research questions that guided this investigation. Twenty open-ended research questions for LSTs and RCTs and 6 online focus group questions for the LSAs guided this investigation. This chapter further delineated, analysed and presented findings based on the gathered data. Findings from document analysis and literature (cf. Chapter Three) were also integrated into ground results obtained from the gathered data. Lastly, the findings from the results were synthesised according to the main themes.

6.3   Limitations and Delimitations of the Study

This study does not include any sentiments/contributions from other District role players other than the LSAs. The research is delimited to the experiences of LSTs, RCTs and LSAs of a small geographic area, the Eden and Central Karoo Education District in the Western Cape. The Western Cape consists of eight education districts that are further divided into 49 circuits, while the Eden and Central Karoo Education District is divided into eight circuits with 222 schools in total to date. The Eden and Central Karoo Education District had only four male Learning Support Teachers at the time of the study. The one male participant was the only one of three possible male candidates who qualified for the study. He was also the only one who opted to participate. There may be different views and experiences concerning challenges and experiences with professional development and IQMS amongst LSTs and RCTs of other districts and circuits. The same goes for the LSAs from other districts.

The study is also methodologically delimited to a constructivist, qualitative case study. Information was gathered through online, in-depth interviews and one online focus group interview, document analysis and reflexive notes. Schreier (2018) however, argues that the results of a qualitative case study can be generalized to some broader theory. Some critics might raise an argument concerning how much room is left for generalization to LSTs, RCTs and LSAs in other districts (Mohajan 2018:14; Schreier 2018:85). Such generalization happens when additional cases are studied by qualitative researchers and findings are generalized to the new cases. Good documentation of qualitative procedures is required to repeat a case study's findings in new case settings. These include the protocol for detailed documenting of the problem and the development of a thorough case study database.

Scheier (2021:89), concerning generalisation and transferability, point out that chosen sample units are precisely criterion-based with particular features and characteristics to represent a location in relation to a key criterion. According to the scholars, this refers to the 'symbolic representation' of the LSTs and RCTs as a "unit that is chosen to both 'represent' and 'symbolise' features of relevance to the investigation". Such "information-rich cases"

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can yield an in-depth understanding of issues important to a study which might be emulated by this study (Strydom 2018:383).

Limitations to this study include LSTs and RCTs willingness to participate in this study. Only one out of 4 potential male LSTs chose to participate. Further inclusionary criteria limited the study to LSTs and RCTs with more than two years of experience in the IQMS.

Further limitations might include the researcher's professional experience with the IQMS motivated this study. Furthermore, as the primary researcher, the researcher played a dual role which may prejudice the research. Firstly, being employed as an Education Specialist (Learning Support Advisor), she must support and train all the participants and their respective schools. There could be no assumption that participants would necessarily cooperate. Secondly, in their role as "human instruments" (Dreyer 2008:16), they had to gather and analyse data as well as produce meaningful information. The nature of the work of LSAs requires regular personal contact with the LSTs and RCTs and the situation under study. Concerns regarding the subjectivity of the approach might be raised. Additionally, even if the participants did give consent, there was no guarantee that their opinions would be authentic (McMillan & Schumacher 2010:205). In mitigating such a situation, the researcher emphasized confidentiality and participants were allowed to check on the perceptions of the interviewer. Furthermore, as recommended by McMillan and Schumacher (2010:207), the researcher/interviewer made the participants feel comfortable and showed interest in their welfare.

Doctoral dissertations commonly consume several years (Yin 2011:60). Although Yin and Kumar (2011:214) propose a systematically planned work schedule with certain time frames and checking against indicated steps of task completion, work demands still posed challenges to the researcher. Practical and time constraint limitations were indeed evident in all the operational, data collection and instrumentation challenges brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic (cf. 4.7). The researcher curbed these challenges by timeous, appropriate, protocol adhered changes in data gathering methods and a properly planned (but open to flexibility) schedule in collaboration with the Eden and Central Karoo Learning

support coordinator, the CMs and the LSAs of the respective circuits that formed part of this investigation.

Availability of funding from external or personal resources could affect the possibilities of the study in terms of scope, period of study and even data that could come from the multiple sites. In the case of this study, the researcher had the opportunity to apply for financial support in the form of a bursary from the particular institution of study. However, the possible limitations as laid out above, these constraints could be overcome by adhering to protocol and proper well-timed practical arrangements.

6.4   Conclusions and Implications of findings

This section also serves to answer the research questions and objectives of the study. The main question served to inquire how the IQMS can be enhanced as a framework to support the professional growth of LSTs and RCTs teachers in the Eden and Central Karoo Education District. The sub-questions served to investigate: the constraints to the professional development of LSTs and RCTs regarding their IQMS; how the roles and functions of LSTs and RCTs can be aligned to their key performance areas; any inclusive teaching and learning guidelines that can improve the professional growth of LSTs and RCTs in the Eden and Central Karoo Education District; the relevance of education policies regarding professional development and IQMS of LSTs and RCTs.

Participant responses provided interrelated themes and sub-themes and as such provided answers applicable to more than one theme. The key themes entail Common impressions, understanding of IQMS/CPTD; Perception of Challenges; Perception of appropriateness/ relevance of Measurement Instruments; Professional Development; Perceptions of effectiveness/Contribution to professional Development; Perceptions of Support structures (cf. 5.4).

6.4.1   Objective One: Experiences, Constraints and Challenges of LSTs and RCTs Regarding their Integrated Quality Management System

Regarding points undercurrent, points feature prominently in the overall understanding and impression of the IQMS and related CPTD system. Points constitute the nucleus of the

challenges, which together with questioning appropriateness and relevance, are counterproductive to the system's purpose of credibility, accountability and efficiency goal of the whole IQMS process.

For most participants, points or merits represent the link between the IQMS and the CPTD. This linkage nerves through three sub-themes, widening its influential web over different aspects under contention. As such, it exposes several systemic deficiencies that transpire in contrasting sentiments including incentivising vs. disincentivising; motivating vs. demotivating; positivity vs. negativity; connectedness vs. disconnection; applicability vs. inapplicability; relevance vs. irrelevance.

a) Points / rewards/ Merits

While the IQMS points appraise with the intent to draw up a personal growth plan, the CPTD points reward personal growth plan goal completion and serve as proof of professional development. The IQMS and accompanied personal growth plan produce points that lead to employment benefits and maintaining professionalism, through acquiring a target number of points every three years (c.f.3.11). This links to issues of motivation as explained in the next section.

b) Points-Motivation and accountability

Beneficial employment is extrinsically reinforced and motivated through the accumulation of merits that will culminate into an annual one percent salary incentive for reaching the required number of training sessions. Monetary rewards thus serve as extrinsic incentives and means of motivation for self-motivation and improvement. While there are arguments that points will motivate support teachers to participate in more training, some participants note that the financial incentive that is to be gained from such points is too little for the hard work and overall teaching efforts of LSTs. For these participants, self-expectations and self-enrichment are from a personal drive, and not for points, nor monitory rewards. Some support teachers experienced monetary rewards as de-motivating and not worth the effort of fighting for. Self-motivation for self-development (5.3.1.5) is thus linked to an attitude of

accountability or intrinsic professional responsibility which is a required skill for support teachers.

c) Points- Link encourages Abuse/Misuse

The IQMS and related CPTD systems harbour several misused loopholes. Incentive-driven motivation negatively support misuse and opens the system to abuse. Dishonest endeavours to accumulate the *"correct"* number of points is encouraged by attempts of doing what is necessary to comply (cf. 5.3.1.5, Discussion 5). The systems encourage "self-selling", window dressing and practices of "self-saving from failure". Marks or points are awarded by peers, leaving the system exposed to misuse. Individuals can use their friends to make them look good by obtaining high points for their IQMS.

d) Points-Goal attainment, resources, time and productivity

The points system and related issues are directly linked to goal attainment, resources, time and productivity. CPTD points are rewarded when individuals reach their personal development goals (3.11). The personal growth plan links areas for development to a specific time frame, however, the challenging part is to maintain realistic goal setting and goal attainment within such specific self-determined time frames. The time to implement the IQMS and personal growth plan goals is insufficient, as goal attainment as specifically related to accommodating all learners with support needs and learner achievement per se, is also hampered by lack of resources.

e) Points-Job description and role alignment

Job description and role alignment directly link to goal attainment, resources, time and productivity as elaborated on above. Participants regard the IQMS instrument as a general document that is mostly designed for mainstream teachers. As such, criteria in the IQMS do not reflect the role of support teachers. The sentiment from the research data is that LSTs perform tasks that they do not acquire points for. This implies that their key responsibility areas are not aligned with their core function. Measurement instruments' fairness and relevance are questioned.

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f) Points- Instrument fairness

Despite the specialised duties of support teachers, the same instrument with the same performance standards is utilized for both mainstream and Learning Support Teachers. The standardised points system thus allocates scores for divergent job descriptions. Information from the personal growth plans is collated into school improvement plans by the school development teams. If incorrect information is to be filtered through, then training and development programmes will not reflect the needs in the personal growth plans or school improvement plans. Incorrect personal growth plan information will in turn hamper LSTs and RCTs from earning professional development points, therefore blocking them to benefit from IQMS participation.

g) Points- Systemic issues

The CPTD system cannot succeed without accurate recording and data capturing of points (DoE 2007:21). The linkage web continues as the points or merits challenge directly relates to challenges with an ineffective electronic CPTD management information and communication systemic. Points seem to be mythical despite compulsory training registration. Points for CPTD do not apply to LSTS/RCTs yet. Not all LSTs/RCTs are registered on the CPTD system yet and therefore they cannot acquire or cannot benefit from points, although they do partake in regular professional development. Some LST's CPTD points do not reflect anywhere. There are limited options for logging points while the website sometimes does not respond to entries or reflect information that is not correct. Their training could not be loaded, with the implication that they forfeited their points because of not being able to commit to the SACE code of conduct. Concerns are that the CPTD systems do not take support teachers into consideration

h) Training availability and funding

The study uncovered a need for sufficiently funded training. Discrepancies in prioritising training and related funding between curriculum and specialised learner support are revealed. The overall sentiment is that curricula are prioritised over learning support when it comes to training and development opportunities. The ISLES component does not have

any budget for training to support the details of the personal growth plan-related needs of the support teachers. Although there is a reference to a few fortunate free trainings that were conducted, money is perceived to be a setback. Learning support struggles to get funds for the development of support teachers. There is a lack of relevant free specialised training, whereas, on the other hand, general mainstream courses are usually free or paid for. Learning support specific training must be presented separately, and not together with the mainstream. General availability of development opportunities for curriculum makes Learning Support Teachers feel left out all the time. Despite resource and training funding being a provincial obligation, there are still disparities in the availability of resources and human capital within provinces and are therefore not on the same level of implementation.

6.4.2 Objective two: Roles and Functions Alignment in Relation to the Current KPAs of LSTs and RCTs2

6.4.2.1 Appropriateness/ Relevance and fairness of Measurement Instruments in Relation to job descriptions and KRAs

The results show that the IQMS measurement instrument is a fixed, pro-mainstream design document. It is inappropriate and in its current state as it does not accommodate the wide, specialised work sphere and developmental needs of specialist post teachers. The results identified unfairness in that one instrument with the same performance standers is utilised for both mainstream and Learning Support Teachers, despite the specialised duties of LSTs. Contextual imbalances and consequent role variations, complicate the application of IQMS Performance Standards to the personal growth plans, as to indicate the unique needs of support teachers. The IQMS instrument does not understand the social realities of LSTs and RCTs, therefore it is not reflected in the design and implementation of the policy. This is evident in the performance standards that are not formulated or stated according to the job description of the support teachers.

Fairness is further compromised since there is no alignment in the job descriptions and the IQMS Performance Standards and the training that LSTs must record within the SACE framework (cf. 6.4.1.6). Improper recording may impact the information that is filtered through by the school development teams. As the information from the personal growth

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plans s are being collated into school improvement plans, there are also concerns that support teachers will be blocked from benefitting from IQMS participation and that training and development programmes will not reflect the needs in the personal growth plans or school improvement plans.

Linking to instrument inappropriateness and unfairness, certain areas of the IQMS-QA3 form do not accommodate the exact activities that LSTs have to perform. Many LST duties are being performed, but they cannot be scored as it is not stipulated in the scoring instrument. Specific references to Performance Standards 6 and 7 are revealed as comprising the crux of the difference between the job descriptions of mainstream teachers and that of LSTs and RCTs. Extra-curricular activity expectations do not align with their core functions, causing principals and HODs to not understand the scope of extra-curricular activities that the LSTs must perform. This bears direct impact positively scoring points or not.

6.4.2.2   *Job description and role alignment vs goal setting and job dissatisfaction*

Job description and role alignment directly link to goal attainment, resources, time and productivity as elaborated on above. Participants regard the IQMS instrument as a general document that is mostly designed for mainstream classes because they feel the criteria in the IQMS do not reflect their actual roles. The sentiment from the research data is that LSTs perform tasks that they do not acquire points for. This implies that their key responsibility areas are not aligned with their core function. The conclusion that IQMS does not reflect the role of support teachers raises concerns regarding appropriateness and relevance. Measurement instruments' fairness and relevance are questioned.

Support teachers have a wider, differently designed professional dimension than mainstream teachers. Despite the managerial and authoritative roles that they perform, they fall in the lowest category, on par with newly employed teachers. Although LSTs and RCTs are Post level 1 teachers, the SIAS document explains their roles as part of the DBST, which comprises Post level 2 to 5 positions. Support teachers have increased accountability since they perform duties that spread over the whole spectrum of Post levels one to four (cf. 3.4.2.2; 3.8.4.1a). Their duties array over categories of supervision, management,

training, liaising, and communication that strongly align with the transformed and expanded roles of support teachers within the SIAS (inclusive education) framework.

Even so, support teachers feel that they are not being judged or measured uniquely to their specialised job description. The impact on their levels of job satisfaction is further aggravated by feelings that their work is not always regarded as important. It is not easy to command authority and there is no weight to commands/requests, especially to higher-ranked or senior colleagues. The sentiment is shared that LST/ RCT could perhaps be on Post level 2 to ensure that their support and inputs carry weight due to the fact that they work with SMTs. This implicates job dissatisfaction that can negatively affect the expected roles of support teachers. Job satisfaction is further compromised as the whole compulsory IQMS process is experienced as something negative that should just get over and done with, then be forgotten until the next year. Compliance even provoked anger in many cases, which impacted heavily on the perception of the significance of the whole IQMS process.

6.4.2.3   *Job description / KRA alignments*

In terms of supporting teachers' roles, there are expectations that do not align with their core functions. The roles of LSTs and RCTs also differ from context to context, leading to further contextual expectations that further raises questions concerning job description-KRA alignment of the support teachers.

LSTs and RTs have to decide on how best they can apply their job descriptions within their unique circumstances. Even so, itinerant support teachers may operate differently within the number of schools that they have to serve, due to contextual differences and expectations. Research data revealed that LSTs and RCTs tasks performance without acquire points for due to the missing link between the appraisal instrument and their actual roles and responsibilities. There is a clear need for explicitly stipulated criteria content according to the KPAs and KRAs of the LSTs and RCTs. This demands a well-written job description that comprehensively define all activities, practices, roles and responsibilities of LSTs and RCTs.

6.4.3 Objective three: Inclusive Teaching and Learning Guidelines that can improve the Professional Growth of Learning Support Teachers in Eden and Central Karoo.

Professional Development is discussed in terms of awareness, as well as preferred, previous, and further development.

a) Awareness

There are varying levels of awareness regarding available development opportunities over all three types of activity programmes, amongst all the participants (cf. 5.3.4.1). Most LSTs/RCTs are aware of development initiatives that are available from non-profit and non-government organizations, followed by knowledge about WCED online webinars. There is lesser awareness of CTLI and teacher union presented courses, District and circuit training initiatives and e-learning opportunities. One participant indicated no awareness about in-service/professional development programmes.

Although LSAs are partly responsible to update LSTs of possible training initiatives, there is a variation in their levels of awareness. Free provincial and district courses are mentioned, against a perceived lack of structured training that is based on learning support on specific platforms. Two specific awareness questions regarding reform initiatives were posed to the LSAs exclusively. The study eludes to a lack of learning support for supervisors' awareness about national development legislative frameworks such as the NPFTED (DoE 2007) and the ISPFTED (DoE 2011).Preferred training

b) Preferred development

The results indicate the following strategies as the best or most effective for teaching skills and knowledge development, in order of highest to lowest rating: Own initiative, peer teaching, workshops/clusters, specialised training and development, practical, in-service/job shadowing, online and e-learning, planning and resources, collaboration.

Although only one participant indicated collaboration as a skills and knowledge development strategy, the biggest percentage of participants hinted at collaborative foundations of learning. The results identify that LSAs support peer teaching in stating that peers can play a big role in one another's development. LSAs also preferred direct specialised training and development programmes. Online platforms like Teams platform or Zoom platform are indicated to be beneficial to support teachers.

c) Previous development

The significant variety and a number of previous development courses and in-service participation amongst the participants can be grouped into four focus areas: Client-orientated-and-customer focused; Collaborative-focussed; Curriculum-focussed; Administrative skills and managerial skills. There is a positive alignment between these in-service training initiatives and the required developmental need areas or skills that were identified through prior literature and learning support documents that are currently in use (cf. 3.6.1); i.e., collaboration skills set, administration and managerial skills set, inclusive agents, resilience.

d) Further development

A vast amount of support teacher in-service development focused on knowledge of specific disabilities, and methodologies. LSTs and RCTs results reveal a shift away from the knowledge of specific disabilities, and methodologies to more innovation, people skills, collaboration and further formal qualifications. In a curriculum focus in-service training category, most Resource Class Teachers desire e-learning, innovation, new ideas and smarter ways and practices to teach skills in the classroom. The second development request has a collaborative people-skill focus that includes Human resource management. Thirdly, requests for peer support/learning strategies, also fall on the collaborative scale. Fourthly, self-study and empowerment through courses, reading and general up-skilling- involve professional postgraduate. Fifthly, a request regarding psychometric and/or psychological assessment. A major concern raised is that some training courses that support teachers' endeavours are not recognised by professional bodies such as SACE.

6.4.4 Objective Four: The Effectiveness of Education Policies Regarding Professional Development and IQMS of LSTs and RCTs

6.4.4.1 Effectiveness/Contribution of the IQMS to professional development

Both groups of participants presented mixed sentiments, experiences and opinions regarding IQMS Contribution to professional Development. Effectiveness differs from school to school and from teacher to teacher. The IQMS can be a needs identification and goal setting practice. While it enables employers' awareness of the support needs of their employees, it can also work as effective monitoring and supporting tool for development. Continuous self-enhancement goals produce growth that prevents stagnation, while critical skills and attributes such as self-motivation, self-confidence, leadership, problem-solving, agility and flexibility are fostered.

Limitations include systemic challenges. The process is not being taken seriously by some, Further, there are time limitations, the potential for abuse and misuse, and a lack of availability of training that is directly aligned to IQMS related needs. The results also identify the IQMS as a once-off, a fixed document that only test the perception of peers and advisor about a teacher, with no contribution to 2021 classroom and school environment challenges. There is a perceived lack of available specialised capacity-building opportunities. Every SACE registered teacher is not yet enabled to attain their professional development points. The process can for some only be a way of acquiring the one percent pay increase.

6.4.4.2 National Policy Framework for Teacher Education and Development

Fistly, neither Employment of Educators Act (EEA, (ELRC 1998), the Personnel Administrative Measures (PAM, DBE 2016) differentiate between support and Mainstream teachers. This non-distinction between MST duties and that of support teachers becomes one of the biggest contributors to the IQMS dilemma of LSTs and RCTs. The PAM does however refer to educator posts that include teaching staff for learners with disabilities (DBE 2016:21), but do not necessarily refer to LSTs and RCTs, who are mostly based in mainstream schools.

The NPFTED (DoE 2007) firstly, attempts to address the need for teachers who are suitably qualified and secondly, to focus attention to professional development of teachers in South Africa. The ISPFTED (DoE 2011), or The Plan provides a framework for improvement of quality teacher education and development within the Teacher Professional Development Master Plan, 2017 to 2022. The EWP6 (DoE 2005) oblige the professional development of support teachers. The EWP6, NPFTED, and ISPFTED are vehicles of continuous professional development as implicated in the Norms and Standards for Educators (DoE 2000) (cf. 3.7.2). The SACE Code of Professional Ethics (cf. 1.2, 5.3.1.1) manages the CPTD system loading teacher development and is administered from the CTLI (on a provincial level). The legislative frameworks combine as vehicles of CPTD and are implicated in the Norms and Standards for Educators (DoE 2000) (cf. 3.7.2). All these Government education policies and frameworks, together with ISLES policies necessitates coordination on all bio-ecological systemic levels.

Broader National policy legislations and systems however harbour specific challenges for LSTs and RCTs. Despite the prominence of the national development legislative frameworks, this study revealed a lack of learning support for supervisors' awareness of the NPFTED (DoE 2007) and the ISPFTED (DoE 2011). The EWP6 (DBE 2001) mandates support teacher professional development and acknowledges the need to develop human and financial resources and institutional capacities, yet the Learning Support Teachers struggle to secure their space on the CPTD platform, experiencing systemic inaccessibility (cf. 5.3.2.1, 5.3.2.2). Both district and provincial levels include slow implementation of recommendations of the EWP6 and human resources/ financial constraints. (Mahlo 2011:68)

The ISPFTED (DoE 2011) or the Plan propose the development of Special Needs teachers in a specific category, the reference is specifically to underqualified teachers in special needs schools to complete their qualifications. LSTs and RCTs, in maninstream ordinary schools are not explicitly identified in The Plan. In the same breath, the follow-up document to The Plan, the Teacher Professional Development Master Plan 2017-2022 (DBE 2019:44), also does not distinctively refer to LSTs and RCTs in mainstream schools. The follow-up plan comes with a new Teacher Education and Development Support System,

the Information and Communications Technology system (TED ICT system). The TED ICT system is to be aligned with the SACE-CPTD management system to provides opportunities for applications to register for programmes and for funding to pay for studies.

Some LSTs and RCTs already experience issues to get onto the CPTD Management system, flagging possible issues of accessibility to the aligned online TED ICT support system. Restricted access to all the electronic systems would discriminating against LSTs and RCTs, becuase they will not be able to participate in diagnostic self-assessments and CPTD short courses. They will not be able to comply with their SACE responsibilities.

6.4.4.3 Support Structures

a) School level support

On the microsystemic level, the degree of principals' involvement in the IQMS process differs from school to school, although principals are important role players in the immediate environment of the LSTs and RCTs. Some principals are not aware of the lack of correlation between the IQMS performance standards and the job description of the LSTs and RCTs. Principals lack an understanding of what the actual key performance areas of support teachers entail. School management teams are not being equipped to attend to the completion and support of every personal growth plan and are hesitant to be involved in the IQMS proses. SMTs are not open to new ideas and as such pose obstacles to innovation.

A significant micro-systemic challenge involves the Post level of LSTs. Although Post level 1 teachers, LSTs and RCTs do not form part of the staff establishments of their base schools because their posts are District designated. The current Post level of LSTs is counter-productive to the managerial and authoritative role that support teachers have to perform.

b) District level

The results emphasise collaboration between all role players and on all levels of education support services. Eco-systemic collaboration and coordination principles underscore these perceptions of support structures. The mesosystemic district level mostly reflects good LSA

leadership and support provided with emphasis on their capacity building role and the provision of development opportunities on different levels, through different modes. LSAs are crucial enablers in IQMS accessibility for support teachers. However, their supportability is perceived to be split over the whole grade spectrum and by district and/or circuit prioritized responsibilities. Other district level role players whose supporting roles are mentioned include the therapists of the inclusive outreach teams.

Continuous connections and processes between specialist teachers and DBSTs, SBST, and other mesosystemic level agents as explained, have conflict as well as encouraging effects on support teachers. There is a perceived lack of consultative processes between LSAs and the districts. Discouraging deficiencies in district level support include paperwork overload, improperly timed feedback and support processes, lacking awareness of and addressing support needs of LSTs/RCTs. The doubts regarding districts' awareness of support teacher needs are linked to the lack of budgeting for them as well as in implementing their CPTD.

c) Provincial and National

On the exosystemic level of the Western Cape Education Department, certain training that is being provided by the provincial department is not on a professional level to be registered with a professional body, nor could it award credits to LSTs. There is a need for specialised professional body accredited courses. Despite the availability of provincial professional development initiatives and opportunities, there is an uneven distribution of capital, resources and opportunities between Metros and rural areas. More training is available in the Metros than in rural areas. The ISLES component lacks a budget for training to support the details of the personal growth plan-related needs of the support teachers. Acquiring funding entails cumbersome processes and procedures. Curriculum prioritised training over learning support training and development opportunities are concerning.

Inclusive education (the heart of supporting teachers' work) is still the responsibility of a separate directorate in the national and provincial education departments (Dreyer 2008:218 & Barratt 2016:55). This is counter-productive to the systemic collaboration principle of holistic, whole-emphasis and interdependence of all parts.

Notwithstanding both national and provincial education department's responsibility to provide an environment for teacher development, LSTs/RCTs experience systemic inaccessibility and struggle to secure their space on the CPTD platform (national, macro-systemic level). There is no space for all the support teachers in the SACE managed system. There are limited options for logging points, and the website sometimes does not respond to entries or reflect incorrect information. LSTs and RCTs are not taken into consideration yet due to their status as Post level one district staff. On the other hand, some LSTs do not understand the ways how to capture points. Due to system inaccessibility, LSTs and RCTs could not load their training, with the implication of forfeiting their points and consequently not being able to commit to their SACE- an obligated commitment to self-development.

d) Community and other

LSTs and RCTs enjoy good support from mesosystemic role players such as NPOs, NGOs, community, government and teacher's organisations. LST and RCTs can gain access to much needed human resources, and finances that are not available from, or not in place at district, provincial or national levels. Close-to-person network systems enable micro-level role players to assist in their everyday functioning and their development. Multi-functional district teams from that play a significant role in capacitating the teachers. Support teacher peers play a crucial role in one another's development, sharing best practices, and encouraging holistic, collaborative relational learning and reflective practice.

6.5   Recommendations

The primary objective of this research is to generate data that can be applied to enhance the IQMS as a framework to support the professional growth of learning support and Resource Class Teachers in the Eden and Central Karoo Education District. The following recommendations are offered in terms of the secondary objectives of this study.

6.5.1 Objective One: Experiences, Constraints and Challenges of LSTs and RCTs Regarding their Integrated Quality Management System

6.5.1.1 Recommendations to the National Authorities: Department of Education and the Education Labour Relations Council

a) Appraisal credibility and motivation

The DoE together with the ELRC should secure a more credible appraisal system by totally divorcing constructs of credibility, accountability and efficiency from points. Loopholes and abuse should be eliminated by the total eradication of points. The DBE should determine and utilize more credible measures to maintain professionalism and professional quality or competence. CPTD points should be linked to or changed to indicators for personal growth plan goal completion. Emphasis should be on fostering intrinsic, self-motivation, self-driven willingness to develop oneself and taking self-responsibility for personal and professional development. Beneficial employment, instead of appraisal and CPTD points should comprise alternative concrete means of motivation that may include teacher recognition, appropriate funding, proper infrastructure like well-equipped classrooms and work stability. Encouragements (as opposed to incentives) can also be in the form of leave credits or other educational resources. If monetary rewards are involved, it should be more significant, to incentivise hard work and overall teaching efforts.

b) Training

Free training or more sufficiently funded training and resource is still a national and provincial obligation. The DoE should eradicate disparities in the availability of resources and human capital within provinces, to ensure the same level of implementation.

c) Instrument fairness and job satisfaction

The performance standards in the appraisal instrument should be made more appropriate and accessible to LSTs and RCTs by aligning them with the learning support job description. For job satisfaction and appraisal instrument fairness, appraisal descriptors for LSTs and RCTs should include clear criteria per performance level, related to the learning

support job description. Bigger job satisfaction requires a shift away from the once-a-year compliance process to an emphasis on a more continuous developmental significance of the whole appraisal process. LSTs and RCTs should also be elevated to Post level 2 to acknowledge their managerial and authoritative roles and to ensure that their support and inputs carry weight.

6.5.1.2 Recommendations to the Western Cape Education Department

The provincial department (together with national) should make more specific or specialised training available for LSTs and RCT, not only for curriculum in general. There should be no curriculum prioritising over learning support when it comes to training and development opportunities. Moreover, there should be a fairer and more reasonable distribution of financial training resources between Curriculum and ISLES directorates.

6.5.1.3 Recommendations to the Western Cape Education Department, Inclusive Specialized Learner and Educator Support Directorate

a) Job Description alignment

The ISLES learning support component should ensure that LSTs and RCTs are appraised uniquely to their specialised job descriptions. Instrument unfairness mandates changes in the instrument to make it more appropriate for and more accessible to LSTs and RCTs. There should be more alignment between their job description and the appraisal performance standards. Their key responsibility areas should be aligned to their core functions, to eliminate that they perform tasks that they do not acquire recognition for.

b) Training

There is a need for appropriate training timeslots that do not interfere with contact time. Whole-day training should as far as possible not impact teaching time. It should happen after school hours, during weekends or school holidays. The WCED and ISLES should consider presenting more training on district level to also compensate teachers in general with regards to family time sacrifices. LSTs and RCTs should form part of Provincial

curriculum initiatives that concern, training on common or overlapping topics between learning support and curriculum.

Training should be a Curriculum-ISLES collaborative strategy and that should be planned and implemented by both. For more effective collaborative support, both directorates should investigate common developmental opportunities that include both groups, in addition to specific specialised training. LSTs and RCTs should be invited to such training together with mainstream teachers and not as an after-thought only if there are enough funds left to include them.

6.5.1.4 Recommendations to Learning Support Advisors at District level

Since there is no budgeting for support teachers and the implementation of their CPTD at district level, LSAs must make district management aware of support teacher needs. LSAs should make sure that the correct IQMS appraisal data gets filtered through to CTLI programme directors. Regular class visits to LSTs and RCTs must be combined with continuous observation and other build-in measures to diminish any form of dishonesty and openness and pretence. Observation should thus occur over a period of time instead of being once-off, short-timed. Personal growth plan implementation should be ensured by supporting realistic goal setting with specific self-determined developmental timeframes. LSAs should be more than supervisors but act as mentors for continuous positive encouragement.

6.5.2 Objective two: Roles and Functions Alignment in Relation to the Current KPAs of LSTs and RCTs

Recommendations to the Western Cape Education Department, Inclusive Specialized Learner and Educator Support Directorate follow. These recommendations link to that offered to alleviate challenges of concern under Objective one, above (cf. 6.5.1.3). The job description of the LSTs and RCTs should be reconceptualised to provide clear direction in terms of all their expected activities, practices, roles and responsibilities. All extra-curricular and co-curricular activities of support teachers should be pertinently stipulated to align with their core functions. The roles and responsibilities should be stipulated precisely, with

explanatory detail, to enable a better understanding of fit to their job descriptions for both LSTs and mainstream teachers. There should be clear guidance on the minimum targets for performance standards to be achieved per term. These targets should be further aligned to the provincial learning support operational plans.

6.5.3 Objective three: Inclusive Teaching and Learning Guidelines that can improve the Professional Growth of Learning Support Teachers in Eden and Central Karoo.

6.5.3.1 Mesosystemic recommendations: National Department of Education, Western Cape Education Department and the Western Cape Inclusive Specialized Learner and Educator Support Directorate

a) Professional development Awareness

Collaboratively, there should include more awareness-raising for Learning Support Advisors as well as support teachers about:

- National development legislative frameworks such as the NPFTED (DoE 2007) and the ISPFTED (DoE 2011), and the possibilities for support platforms and initiatives;
- Existing in-service/professional development programmes;
- CTLI and teacher union presented courses;
- Provincial, district and circuit training initiatives;
- Free provincial and district courses; and
- WCED online webinars and e-learning opportunities.

b) Professional development initiative requirements

There should be a compulsory induction period, where new LSTs and RCTs can build confidence, familiarise themselves with policies and their applications, and with knowledge of specific disabilities, and methodologies. Own development initiatives should be encouraged but monitored. Initiatives should be a combination of preferred methods as identified in this study and proven effective innovative strategies. Initiatives should not reinvent the wheel, but instead include:

- Encouragement, support and instil resilience in LST and RCT to cope with the constantly changing special needs challenges and increased demands over time (educational and policy changes, role transformations).

- Well-planned professional learning opportunities to foster and maintain positive inclusive attitudes towards education should replace initiatives just for topping up new information, knowledge and skills.

- Comprehensive, longer-lasting direct and specialised to acquire the vast range of skills LSTs and RCTs needed.

- Emphasize authentic, continuous professional learning (CPL), which is holistic, collaborative, dynamic and interactive to focus away from knowledge transfer towards support teachers being knowledge co-construction partners.

- Peer teaching provides support teachers with opportunities to discuss their learning and connect new strategies and concepts to their unique situations.

- Hands-on practical learning to foster more in-depth, ongoing supportive engagements.

- Innovation, new ideas, smarter ways and practices to teach skills in the classrooms, especially RCTs who have learners with various barriers to learning on different ability levels.

- A bigger focus on E-learning and 21st century skills for all support teachers.

- LSTs and RCTs should further be encouraged to join professional bodies to open up development opportunities that will allow them to carry out their roles and responsibilities effectively.

6.5.3.2 Recommendations: Principals and School management leadership

Principals are important role players in the immediate environment of the LSTs and RCTs and should be aware of the lack of correlation between the appraisal instrument performance standards and the job description. Principals and staff should know the detail of the daily job description and key performance areas of the LSTs and RCTs. They must understand their extra-curricular activities, to provide justified criticism regarding their work. Principals should secure weekly or bi-weekly scheduled discussions or feedback sessions

with LSTs and RCTs, to assist understand the detail of the core responsibilities of support teachers.

Principals and SDTs should ensure that LSTs and RCTs are incorporated in all the school-level appraisal systems and continuous professional development training, despite them not being on the school's staff establishment. Principals, SMTs and SDTs should further attend to the completion and support of every personal growth plan of LSTs and RCTs and without any hesitancy, be involved in their appraisal process. SMTs should be open to new ideas and innovation from LSTs and RCTs. Principals and SMTs should support the LSTs and RCTs in their managerial and authoritative roles, despite their Post level 1 status. Principals should secure the necessary respect for the work of the LSTs and RCTs amongst the rest of the staff. Principals and SDTs should make sure that the correct information concerning the developmental needs of LSTs and RCTs are filtered via the school improvement plans.

6.5.3.3 *Recommendations: The Western Cape Education Department, Inclusive Specialized Learner and Educator Support Directorate*

The ISLES component should capacitate principals and staff to embrace the roles and values of the LSTs and RCTs although they are not on the school staff establishment, but rather district-designated. Programme directors decided upon CTLI courses content, based on the information channelled from schools, via the circuit to the district, mainly as a result of the IQMS process and school improvement plans. The WCED-ISLES directorate should ensure that systemic challenges get attended to on the appropriate levels. (etc., website issues, correct information being loaded). WCED-ISLES authorities should sort out the CPTD registration issue, so that all LSTs and RCTs can get registered on the CPTD system, to be able to upload their development. More options must be provided for loading /registering development. WCED-ISLES authorities must secure that National appraisal authorities give credit to all past development of LSTs and RCTs. There should be no forfeiting "points" since systemic issues are out of the control of LSTs and RCTs.

6.5.3.4 Recommendations: District specific support structure guidelines.

a) Learning Support Advisors

Learning Support Advisors (LSAs) are the mesosystemic link between schools, district and provincial support levels at district level, the role of LSAs should be far more encompassing than being supervisors and trainers. They should be mentors to and gatekeepers of the well-being of LSTs and RCTs. LSAs should prioritise support responsibilities to LSTs and RCTs. LSAs should further engage in regular discussions concerning the work activities of LSTs and RCTS as it relates to the appraisal instruments so that such instruments can be more accessible to support teachers. LSAs should deliberate with principals and SDTs about effective personal growth plans for LSTs and RCTs, as to ensure that correct developmental needs are filtered through to the District. There should be regular consultative processes between LSAs and the district management to raise awareness of and address the support needs of LSTs and RCTs.

b) District leadership and management

With regards to training, District-ISLES should secure more courses and budgets for LSTs and RCTs. District-level leadership should consult and collaborate with the district-level component for Staff Performance Management and Development (SPMD) to render more security in the CPTD registration of LSTs and RCTs and the implementation of their CPTD. All LSTs and RCTs should be capacitated to understand the ways of capturing points. They should not be left out or treated otherwise because their posts are district-designated. District-ISLES and District-SPMD components should collaborate to ensure that LSTs are part of all the school-level appraisal systems and continuous professional development training, although they do not form part of a specific school's establishment.

Systemic District and Circuit prioritized operational responsibilities should be evenly shared amongst all components, to allow LSAs to prioritize effective support to LSTs and RCTs, instead of managing them from a distance. Furthermore, there should be deliberations and consultation between the schools and the ISLES management component to decrease paperwork overload and improperly timed feedback on support processes.

6.5.3.5 Recommendations: National and Provincial specific support

Both national and provincial education departments have a responsibility to provide an environment for teacher development. Appraisal and professional development authorities should ensure that LSTs and RCTs do not experience systemic inaccessibility, nor struggle to secure their space on the CPTD platform (national, macro-systemic level). One, an integrated Inclusive education system instead of separate curriculum and ISLES directorates, should merge funding and initiatives to adhere to systemic collaboration principles. The WCED should eradicate disparities in the availability of human resources, opportunities and capital within provinces to secure equal levels of implementation between Metros and rural areas.

Provincial professional development initiatives and opportunities should be equally available to all support teachers. Provincial ISLES should secure specialised professional body accredited courses. The current Post level of LSTs is counter-productive to the Post level 2 managerial and authoritative role that support teachers has to perform. This study recommends that national and provincial management reconsider the Post level status of LSTs and RCTs. There should be an elevation from PL1 to PL2 to ensure that their support and inputs carry weight due to the fact that they work with SMTs.

6.5.3.6 Recommendations: Community and Other foci

Micro-level role players and close-to-person network systems should assist in the everyday functioning and development of LSTs and RCTs. Mesosystemic role players such as NPOs, NGOs, community, government and teacher's organisations should provide access to much needed human resources, and finances that are not available from, or not in place at district, provincial or national levels. Multi-functional district teams from special schools, support teacher peers from neighbouring schools and other circuits play major roles in one another's development. The establishment of support teacher PLCs is recommended for sharing best practices and encouraging holistic, collaborative relational learning and reflective practice.

6.5.4 Objective Four: The Effectiveness of Education Policies Regarding Professional Development and IQMS of LSTs and RCTs

6.5.4.1 *Recommendations: Department of Education and National Policy authorities*

National policy's design and implementation should commit to attending to the needs, understandings and social realities of LSTs and RCTs as well, not just teachers in general. The National Policy Framework for Teacher Education and Development in South Africa (NFTED, DoE 2007) should prioritize specialised training of LSTs and RCTs for their transformed roles. The Integrated Strategic Planning Framework for Teacher Education and Development (ISPFTED 2011-2025 or The Plan, DoE 2010) and related output processes of the Teacher Professional Development Master Plan 217-2022 (DBE 2019) should prioritise LSTs and RCTs working in mainstream and Full-service schools although they are not explicitly identified in The Plan. The National Institute for Curriculum and Professional Development (NICPD) which aligns with the IQMS and CPTD, should firstly secure that LSTs and RCTs become part of the coordinated national system for teacher education and development.

There should be no restricted access for LSTs and RCTs on any electronic systems, for them to be able to partake in diagnostic self-assessments and CPTD short courses that will ultimately enable compliance with their SACE responsibilities. SACE authorities should assure that all LSTs and RCTs get registered on the electronic CPTD system as well as the NICPD proposed online Teacher Education and Development support system (TED ICT system).

The national appraisal instrument should allow appropriate adaptations for effective analysis of LST and RCT performance so that professional development and training can be aligned with the needs as identified in their personal growth plans. LSTs and RCTs should be able to add all context required additional chores. All extra-curricular and co-curricular activities of support teachers should be appropriately specified to align with their core functions. (Reference to the "outside of class" PS6 (Human relations and contribution to school development) and PS7 (networking and fostering of inter-sectorial partnerships).

The aforementioned recommendations link directly to those suggested below for provincial intervention.

6.5.4.2 Recommendations: The Western Cape Education Department, Inclusive Specialized Learner and Educator Support Directorate

To curb unreasonable extra-curricular activity expectations, provincial or district ISLES should embark on an intensive awareness campaign to capacitate principals and SMTs and school development teams in understanding the job descriptions and especially the scope of extra-curricular activities that the LSTs should perform. Such an awareness campaign, even more, calls for pertinently stipulated core functions.

Considering that the IQMS is a national policy tool, the ISLES directorate should work towards or develop formal, uniform formative assessment instruments that can be linked to the performance standards according to specific job descriptions of special support teachers. Otherwise, performance standards should be streamlined or formulated in line with job descriptions and specialised training. A learning support operational-work plan design (combination of the operational plan and work plan) may enable a true reflection of social reality, contextual imbalances, and role variations.

6.6 A Proposed Framework for Learning Support and Resource Class Teacher's Development

Ecosystemic collaboration and interaction are demonstrated and emphasized in Figure 6.4 below. The framework displays the key role players and most significant mesosystemic interactions that this study's results identified with specific reference to the professional development of RCTs and LSTs in the Eden and Central Karoo Education District. The proposed framework should further be interpreted alongside Section 6.5 above, i.e., the recommendations of this study. The proposed framework will only be effective if all recommendations as proposed above, are implemented (cf. 6.4).

DOE and National Policy authorities

National policy's design/implementation-LSTs and RCTs needs
NFTED (DoE 2007): prioritize specialised training of LSTs/RCTs for their transformed roles.
ISPFTED (DoE 2010) and related Teacher Professional Development Master Plan 217-2022 (DBE 2019): prioritise LSTs/ RCTs in mainstream and FSS.
NICPD-aligned with IQMS/ CPTD
Secure that LSTs and RCTs become part of the coordinated national system for teacher education and development.
Unrestricted access on any electronic systems,
SACE authorities: LSTs and RCTs registration on the electronic CPTD system and NICPD proposed online (TED ICT system)

National Authorities: (ELRC) DoE/DBE

Appraisal credibility /Eradicate points
Training -Free -sufficient, equal implementation
Instrument fairness
Job satisfaction — instrument accessibility.
Job description/Performance

National and Provincial specific support

LST/RCT teacher development.
NO systemic inaccessibility,
Secure space on CPTD platform
One integrated Inclusive education system instead of separate curriculum and ISLES directorates,
Systemic collaboration/
Merged funding and initiatives to.
Equal availability initiatives human resources and opportunities
Specialised professional body accredited courses.
LSTs and RCTs post level status - elevation from PL1 to PL2

Principals and School management leadership

Awareness -lack of correlation between the appraisal instrument PSs and the JD.
Detail of daily JDs and KRA -understand core responsibilities/extra-curricular activities
Feedback discussions with LSTs /RCTs
Incorporated LSTs and RCTs in all the school-level appraisal systems and CPD training processes
Completion and support of PGPs of LSTs and RCTs,
SMTs should be open to new ideas and innovation from LSTs and RCTs.
Secure /respect for LSTs and RCTs in their managerial and authoritative roles,
Filtered correct developmental need information of LSTs and RCTs via the school improvement plans.

Community and Other foci

Close-to-person network systems everyday functioning
NPOs, NGOs, community, government and teacher's organisations should provide access to human resources, and finances,
Multi-functional district teams from special schools, support teacher peers from neighbouring schools and other circuits
The establishment of support teacher PLCs- sharing best practices and encouraging holistic collaborative relational learning

DOE, /WCED/ ISLES Professional development Awareness

Collaborative awareness-raising -LSAs plus LSTs of existing initiatives on all levels
Professional development initiative requirements
Compulsory induction period,
Encouraged /monitored.
Own development initiatives
Combine of preferred methods, proven effective innovative strategies.

WED/ISLES

Capacitate principals and staff to embrace the roles and values of the LSTs and RCTs
Attendance to systemic challenges on the appropriate levels. (etc., website issues, correct information being loaded).
Secure CPTD registration issue for Options: loading /registering development.
Secure credit to all past development of LSTs and RCTs. No forfeiting "points"

WCED/ISLES

Appraisal to uniquely specialised JDs
Instrument unfairness: appropriateness/ accessibility
Performance standards- Job Description alignment
KRA /core functions alignment
Reconceptualise -LSTs and RCTs job description
Extra/ Co-curricular - stipulated.
Roles and responsibilities –stipulated
Clear minimum targets for PS per term.
Aligned targets: Provincial learning support operational plans.
Training: appropriate timeslots.
More district-level training
LSTs /RCTs form part of Provincial curriculum initiatives
Curriculum-ISLES collaborative support, common developmental opportunities,

District leadership and management

District-ISLES: secure more training courses and budgets for LSTs and RCTs
CPTD registration **and** implementation of their CPTD consult and collaborate with district-level Staff Performance Management and Development (SPMD)-.
Capacitated LSTs/RCTs to understand the ways of capturing points.
District-ISLES and District-SPMD components collaboration to ensure that LSTs are part of all the school-level appraisal systems and CPD training,
Allow LSAs to prioritize effective support to LSTs and RCTs, instead of managing them from a distance -evenly shared Systemic District /Circuit prioritized operational responsibilities amongst all components.
decrease paperwork overload

LSAs at District level

District management awareness of LST needs.
Correct IQMS appraisal data- CTLI programme directors.
Regular visits / continuous observation
Ensure PGPs implementation
Realistic goal setting -specific self-determined developmental timeframes.
LSAs mentorship VS supervision Prioritised support
Well-being of LSTs/RCTs
Instruments accessibility
Regular engagement discussions on work activities related to the appraisal instruments
Deliberate with principals and SDTs about PGPs for LSTs and RCTs
ensure that correct developmental needs are filtered through to the District.
Consultative processes between LSAs and the district management

NPFTED
2011   ISPFTED   2025
SACE
IQMS   CPTD
CTLI
Global System
Macrosystem
Mesosystem
Mesosystemic interactions
LSA
Microsystem
School
LST RCT

National Department of Education
Department basic Education
SACE/IQMS

Provincial ISLES Directorate
Provincial Curriculum Directorate
WCED-online/other
Higher Education
CTLI

District-Based Support Teams
District Management
Curriculum
ISLES
Inclusive OutreachTeam, Special schools

Circuit-Based Support Teams
Peer LSTs/RCTs

School Development Teams
School-Based Support Teams

HOLISTIC, FLEXIBLE, INTEGRATED
COLLABORATIVE UMBRELLA DEVELOPMENT
THEME (cf. Figure 3.1)

Core R&R/ KRA aligned adapted instruments
Job description/Operational-Work plan Specific Appraisal instrument
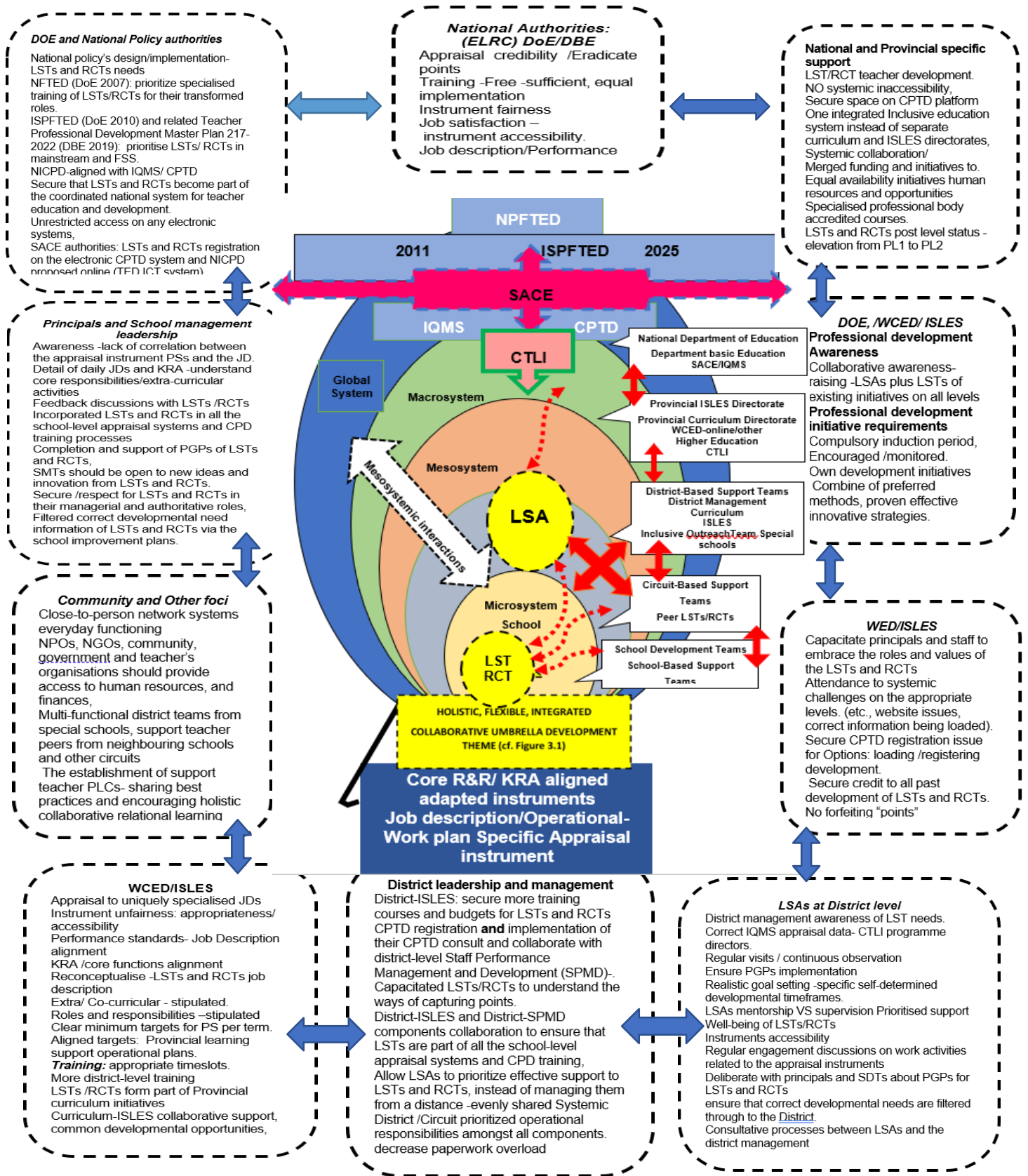
Figure 6.1: Proposed framework for LST and RCT development

The proposed framework in Figure 6.1 above, should be understood against the current Integrated Strategic Planning Framework for Teacher Education and Development (ISPFTED) in SA 2011-2025, or The Plan. Although The Plan applies to the school system servicing teachers, there is no particular reference to LSTs and RCTs. However, The Plan does stipulate special needs teachers in special needs schools, whilst LSTs and RCTs are based in different contexts in mainstream schools. The Plan does not propose a specific model for professional development but focuses on a combination of collaborative or networking professional development activities and programmes on all levels of the educational ecosystem.

Reference is made to learning-in-practice Professional Practice Schools and Work Integrated Learning (WIL) programmes as part of formal teacher education programmes in general. In reality and as evident from this and other research findings, LSTs and RCTs still do not benefit adequately from all the ideals of The Plan. Concomitant exclusionary practices perpetuated by separate Curriculum and ISLES directorates and CPTD systemic challenges, negatively affect LSTs and RCTs on all levels.

The proposed framework focuses specifically on a multi-contextual personalized professional development framework for LSTs and RCTs. The framework imposes whole-system changes and assumes that all the systemic gears will fit effectively to enable optimal LTS and RCT growth. The development of LST and RCT is based on research-proven collaborative practices. The most significant feature of the framework is the prerequisite adapted appraisal instrument guidelines that should be context-based and learning support job description or operational-work plan specific. Although LSTs and RCTs are responsible for their development, LSAs are central in the process and should act as gatekeepers to all the other role-players on the different levels of the system.

The framework is still based on The Plan, with designated micro, meso, exo, and macro level role-players that should contribute positively within the chronotime requirements of this plan. For the success of this framework, it is crucial that all role-players on every level of the development system should attend to the findings in Chapter Five and the recommendations that are offered in this Chapter Six. Emphasis is on an all Inclusive

Education Department. A genuine collaborative development culture should reflect in integrated funding, planning and execution of initiatives from National down to District and Circuit levels.

6.7   Recommendations for Further Research

The following recommendations are made in response to the limitations stated above. The first suggestion is for a qualitative study that will include the views of district management regarding the LST and RCT matters as discussed in this research. Secondly, a comparative study to investigate different views and experiences concerning the professional development and IQMS amongst LSTs and RCTs and LSAs across districts in the Western Cape. Thirdly, a more comprehensive study including provincial ISLES management may provide a broader perspective concerning the applicability and effectiveness of appraisal systems for, and development of LST and RCTs within currently available initiatives.

Fourthly, the researcher's own background and experience with the appraisal system may raise subjectivity issues, despite ethical protocol measures. Therefore, in the interest of possibly more objective views, investigations by other LSAs or independent investigators on the development of LSTs and RCTs are encouraged. The last suggestion concerns the rebranded IQMS, namely the QMS, which was only introduced to schools in Term 3, 2021. The features of the new QMS were discussed in a nutshell, because it is not the focus of this study. Since the QMS was to replace the current IQMS, its features and possibilities are worthy of further research. Especially how it will impact the development of LSTs and RCTs in relation to the current challenges experienced with the IQMS.

6.8   Conclusion

This in-depth investigation of the experiences of LSTs and RCTs in the Eden and Central Karoo Education District concerning their IQMS and related professional development produced data that can be applied to enhance their professional growth and development framework. Individual online email interviews were supplemented by perspectives from one online focus group with LSAs. Scrutinizing official policy documents and current developmental initiatives, located and contextualised their experiences theoretically in an

ecosystemic perspective that facilitated meaningful insight into the phenomena under study. In answer to the objectives of this study, herewith briefly some methodological suggestions for the findings.

Centre to the despondency with the current appraisal and CPTD system is the distinctive points/scoring network. Delinking points from the appraisal and development systems may contribute to more credibility, accountability and efficiency, and most importantly, provide job satisfaction to LSTs and RCTs. Alternative measures to points/merits were suggested. Job satisfaction does not only link to role security but also to respect required from such transformed managerial and authoritative roles. Hence, the call for elevating support teachers from Post level 1 to Post level 2.

Systemic collaboration and awareness by role players and stakeholders from school-level, to district, provincial and national levels, are crucial to honouring dedications to effective professional growth for both mainstream and support teachers. LST and RCT training and related issues such as availability, funding and training timeslots require negotiations between Curriculum and ISLES directorates with planning coordinated initiatives. This implies contribution to streamlined development and elimination of disparities to ensure effective, focused and equal implementation in both directorates, from rural- to Metro levels.

Microlevel ignorance and/or misunderstanding and related unreasonable expectations regarding the core job-related roles of LSTs and RCTs necessitate re-conceptualising of their job descriptions to include their transformed roles. These roles require reinforcement on a mesosystemic level, where LSAs should be allowed to prioritize effective support for LSTs and RCTs and to engage more on IQMS instrument accessibility and support teacher needs.

Suggestions for effective professional development related education policies include that district, provincial, and ISLES management in collaboration with national systems like the NICPD and SACE should sort out all IQMS, and CPTD systemic related issues. Therefore, ensuring LST and RCT registration and participation in all development-related electronic systems, as well as guaranteeing retention of benefits relating to previous development. Further professional development initiatives should focus on proven effective and

innovative methods; comprehensive, holistic, authentic, collaborative and interactive continuous professional learning; online/ digital for 21st -century skills; and should include an induction period, with professional body membership.

LSTs and RCTs need meaningful linking between appraisal and professional development to accommodate their contextually varied, wide specialised work sphere and developmental needs relevance. A work plan design should enable a true reflection of social reality, contextual imbalances, and role variations. The ISLES directorate should develop formal, uniform formative assessment instruments that can be linked to the performance standards according to specific job descriptions of special support teachers. Formalizing learning support PLCs may enable peer support, sharing of best practices, collaborative relational learning and reflective practice.

Finally, if the IQMS and related continuous professional development of LSTs and RCTs are to be taken seriously, there should be serious consideration to all the aspects and recommendations as elaborated on above. A subtheme of the current learning support job description, KRA2 on strengthening SBSTs, states that LSTs and RCTs are allowed to provide learning support inputs for the district concerning policy development and reviews. Therefore, this study trust that the voices of its participants regarding their own development, will be heard and echoed by higher policy decision making power.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Ethics Clearance

UNISA | university of south africa

UNISA COLLEGE OF EDUCATION ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE

Date: 2020/09/09

Ref: **2020/09/09/50903675/06/AM**

Name: Mrs BE Treurnicht

Student No.: 50903675

Dear Mrs BE Treurnicht

Decision: Ethics Approval from 2020/09/09 to 2025/09/09

Researcher(s): Name: Mrs BE Treurnicht
E-mail address: beatreurnicht@gmail.com
Telephone: 0837587537

Supervisor(s): Name: Prof MW Mndawe
E-mail address: mndawemago@gmail.com
Telephone: 0767438313

Title of research:

Towards inclusive learning support teacher productivity through the Integrated Quality Management System in the Eden District

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Qualification: PhD Inclusive Education

Thank you for the application for research ethics clearance by the UNISA College of Education Ethics Review Committee for the above mentioned research. Ethics approval is granted for the period 2020/09/09 to 2025/09/09.

*The **low risk** application was reviewed by the Ethics Review Committee on 2020/09/09 in compliance with the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics and the Standard Operating Procedure on Research Ethics Risk Assessment.*

The proposed research may now commence with the provisions that:

1. The researcher will ensure that the research project adheres to the relevant guidelines set out in the Unisa Covid-19 position statement on research ethics attached.

2. The researcher(s) will ensure that the research project adheres to the values and principles expressed in the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics.

3. Any adverse circumstance arising in the undertaking of the research project that is relevant to the ethicality of the study should be communicated in writing to the UNISA College of Education Ethics Review Committee.

4. The researcher(s) will conduct the study according to the methods and procedures set out in the approved application.

5. Any changes that can affect the study-related risks for the research participants, particularly in terms of assurances made with regards to the protection of participants' privacy and the confidentiality of the data, should be reported to the Committee in writing.

6. The researcher will ensure that the research project adheres to any applicable national legislation, professional codes of conduct, institutional guidelines and scientific standards relevant to the specific field of study. Adherence to the following South African legislation is important, if applicable: Protection of Personal Information Act, no 4 of 2013; Children's act no 38 of 2005 and the National Health Act, no 61 of 2003.

7. Only de-identified research data may be used for secondary research purposes in future on condition that the research objectives are similar to those of the original research. Secondary use of identifiable human research data requires additional ethics clearance.

8. No field work activities may continue after the expiry date **2025/09/09**. Submission of a completed research ethics progress report will constitute an application for renewal of Ethics Research Committee approval.

Note:

The reference number **2020/09/09/50903675/06/AM** *should be clearly indicated on all forms of communication with the intended research participants, as well as with the Committee.*

Kind regards,

Prof AT Motlhabane
CHAIRPERSON: CEDU RERC
motlhat@unisa.ac.za

Prof PM Sebate
EXECUTIVE DEAN
Sebatpm@unisa.ac.za

Appendix B: Permission to conduct research

Western Cape Government
Education

REFERENCE: 20200928-8280
ENQUIRIES: Dr A T Wyngaard

Mrs Beatrice Treurnicht
17 St John's Circle
Great Brakriver
6525

Dear Mrs Beatrice Treurnicht

RESEARCH PROPOSAL: TOWARDS INCLUSIVE LEARNING SUPPORT TEACHER PRODUCTIVITY THROUGH THE INTEGRATED QUALITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM IN THE EDEN DISTRICT

Your application to conduct the above-mentioned research in schools in the Western Cape has been approved subject to the following conditions:

1. Principals, educators and learners are under no obligation to assist you in your investigation.
2. Principals, educators, learners and schools should not be identifiable in any way from the results of the investigation.
3. You make all the arrangements concerning your investigation.
4. Educators' programmes are not to be interrupted.
5. The Study is to be conducted from **05 October 2020 till 30 June 2021.**
6. No research can be conducted during the fourth term as schools are preparing and finalizing syllabi for examinations (October to December).
7. Should you wish to extend the period of your survey, please contact Dr A.T Wyngaard at the contact numbers above quoting the reference number?
8. A photocopy of this letter is submitted to the principal where the intended research is to be conducted.
9. Your research will be limited to the list of schools as forwarded to the Western Cape Education Department.
10. A brief summary of the content, findings and recommendations is provided to the Director: Research Services.
11. The Department receives a copy of the completed report/dissertation/thesis addressed to:

    The Director: Research Services
    Western Cape Education Department
    Private Bag X9114
    CAPE TOWN
    8000

We wish you success in your research.

Kind regards.
Signed: Dr Audrey T Wyngaard
Directorate: Research
DATE: 29 September 2020

Appendix C: Request to conduct research in ECKED

Request for permission to conduct research in the Eden and Central Karoo Education District/ Circuit

Title: A framework towards enhancing the productivity of Inclusive Learning Support Teachers within the Eden Central Karoo Education District

July 2020

THE DISTRICT DIRECTOR / HEAD OF SLES/ CIRCUIT MANAGER
EMDC: Eden Karoo & Central Karoo
WESTERN CAPE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
Tel/email………………………………………

Dear Sir/Madam

I, Beatrice Treurnicht, am doing research under supervision of Professor MW Mndawe (078 143 8313) in the Department of Inclusive Education towards a PhD (Inclusive Education) at the University of South Africa (UNISA). We have funding from the Master's and Doctoral Research Bursary Committee of UNISA for research purposes. We are inviting you to participate in the study entitled A framework towards enhancing the productivity of Inclusive Learning Support Teachers within the Eden Central Karoo Education District.

The aim of the study is to:

1. To explore the experiences, constraints and challenges of LSTs and RCTs regarding their IQMS.
2. To examine how the roles and functions of LSTs and RCTs can be aligned in relation to their current KPAs.
3. To investigate inclusive teaching and learning guidelines that can improve the professional growth of Learning Support Teachers in Eden Central Karoo.

4. To evaluate the effectiveness of education policies regarding professional development and IQMS of LSTs and RCTs.

Your department has been selected because of the sustained support record to Learning Support Teachers and Resource Class Teachers who are currently supporting schools in Inclusive Education.

The study will entail a qualitative design with methods of data collection that will include telephone and e-mail interviews, Teams focus group interviews, and analyzing documents pertaining to IQMS and Professional development. Learning Support and Resource Class Teachers, as well as learner support stakeholders will be interviewed by the researcher. This will take not more than one hour after normal teaching time.

The benefits of the study is that it may offer valuable contributions to existing knowledge about current professional development initiatives of support teachers, not

just on the primary school level, but also on the high school level. This study will benefit the wider learning support community, as it may contribute to the development of a framework for a coordinated support model, which can contribute to productive professional development.

There is no perceived potential risk involved in this study. Participants are assured that the principles of confidentiality, anonymity and privacy will be adhered to. There will be no reimbursement or any incentives for participation in this study. Feedback will entail copy of the transcription that will be returned to the participants to ensure that no misunderstandings occurred in terms of any information.

Yours sincerely

_____

B.E. Treurnicht (Mrs), Learning Support Advisor, Tel:083 7587537

Appendix D: Request for permission to conduct research at schools

17 St John's Circle

Great Barkriver

6525

Request for permission to conduct research

Title: Towards inclusive learning support teacher productivity through the Integrated Quality Management System in the Eden District

30 September 2020

The Principal

Dear Sir/Mam

I, Beatrice Treurnicht, am doing research under supervision of Professor MW Mndawe (mndawemago@gmail.com) in the Department of Inclusive Education towards a PhD (Inclusive Education) at the University of South Africa (UNISA). We have funding from the Master's and Doctoral Research Bursary Committee of UNISA for research purposes. I hereby request permission to conduct research at your school. The title of the study: Towards inclusive learning support teacher productivity through the Integrated Quality Management System in the Eden District.

The aim of the study is to:

1. To explore the experiences, constraints and challenges of LSTs and RCTs regarding their IQMS.
2. To examine how the roles and functions of LSTs and RCTs can be aligned in relation to their current KPAs.
3. To investigate inclusive teaching and learning guidelines that can improve the professional growth of Learning Support Teachers in Eden Central Karoo.
4. To evaluate the effectiveness of education policies regarding professional development and IQMS of LSTs and RCTs.

Your school has been selected because it utilize the services of an inclusive learning support or Resource Class Teachers.

The study will entail a qualitative design with methods of data collection that will include telephone and e-mail interviews, Teams focus group interviews, and analyzing documents pertaining to IQMS and Professional development. Learning Support and Resource Class Teachers, as well as learner support stakeholders will be interviewed by the researcher. This will take not more than one hour after normal teaching time.

The benefit of the study is that it may offer valuable contributions to existing knowledge about current professional development initiatives of support teachers, not just on the primary school level, but also on the high school level. This study will benefit the wider learning support community, as it may contribute to the development of a framework for a coordinated support model, which can contribute to productive professional development.

There is no perceived potential risk involved in this study. Participants are assured that the principles of confidentiality, anonymity and privacy will be adhered to. There will be no reimbursement or any incentives for participation in this study. Feedback will entail copy of the transcription that will be returned to the participants to ensure that no misunderstandings occurred in terms of any information.

Yours sincerely

_____

B.E. Treurnicht (Mrs)

Learning Support Advisor

beatreurnicht@gmail.com

0837587537

Appendix E: Request for permission to conduct research in the ECKED circuits

Title: Towards inclusive learning support teacher productivity through the Integrated Quality Management System in the Eden District

Date: _____

The Learning support advisor

Circuit ___: Eden & Central Karoo

WESTERN CAPE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

_____

Dear Mr/ Ms. _____

I, Beatrice Treurnicht, am doing research under supervision of Professor MW Mndawe (mndawemago@gmail.com) in the Department of Inclusive Education towards a PhD (Inclusive Education) at the University of South Africa (UNISA). We have funding from the Master's and Doctoral Research Bursary Committee of UNISA for research purposes. This is an invitation to participate in the study entitled Towards inclusive learning support teacher productivity through the Integrated Quality Management System in the Eden District.

We hereby request your permission to conduct a study with Learning Support Teachers after school/working hours. The research entails virtual modes, therefore no actual research will be conducted in any school.

The aim of the study is to:

5. To explore the experiences, constraints and challenges of LSTs and RCTs regarding their IQMS.
6. To examine how the roles and functions of LSTs and RCTs can be aligned in relation to their current KPAs.
7. To investigate inclusive teaching and learning guidelines that can improve the professional growth of Learning Support Teachers in Eden Central Karoo.

8. To evaluate the effectiveness of education policies regarding professional development and IQMS of LSTs and RCTs.

Your Circuit has been selected because of the involvement of Inclusive Learning Support professional in the Integrated Quality Management System. The study will entail a qualitative design with methods of data collection that will include telephone and e-mail interviews, Teams focus group interviews, and analyzing documents pertaining to IQMS and Professional development. Learning Support and Resource Class Teachers, as well as learner support stakeholders will be interviewed by the researcher. This will take not more than one hour after normal teaching time.

The benefit of the study is that it may offer valuable contributions to existing knowledge about current professional development initiatives of support teachers, not just on the primary school level, but also on the high school level. This study will benefit the wider learning support community, as it may contribute to the development of a framework for a coordinated support model, which can contribute to productive professional development.

There is no perceived potential risk involved in this study. Participants are assured that the principles of confidentiality, anonymity and privacy will be adhered to. There will be no reimbursement or any incentives for participation in this study. Feedback will entail copy of the transcription that will be returned to the participants to ensure that no misunderstandings occurred in terms of any information.

Yours sincerely

B.E. Treurnicht (Ms.), Learning Support Advisor, btreurnicht0@gmail.com

0837587537

Appendix F: Participant information sheet: LSAs

29 September 2020

Title: Towards inclusive learning support teacher productivity through the Integrated Quality Management System in the Eden District

Dear Prospective Participant

My name is Beatrice Eugene Treurnicht and I am doing research with Mago William Mndawe a professor, in the Department of Inclusive Education towards a Phd (Inclusive Education), at the University of South Africa. We have funding from Unisa's Student Funding Directorate (DSF) for research purposes. We have funding from the Master's and Doctoral Research Bursary Committee of UNISA for research purposes. We are inviting you to participate in a study entitled Towards inclusive learning support teacher productivity through the Integrated Quality Management System in the Eden District.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE and POTENTIAL OF THE STUDY?

There will be no benefit to individual participants for participating in this research study. However, this study is expected to collect important information that could contribute to comprehend the experiences and perceptions of LSTs and RCTs concerning the effectiveness of the Quality Management System and Professional development. This study may offer valuable contributions to existing knowledge about current professional development initiatives of support teachers, not just on the primary school level, but also on the high school level. This study will benefit the wider learning support community, as it may contribute to the development of a framework for a coordinated support model, which can contribute to productive professional development.

WHY AM I BEING INVITED TO PARTICIPATE?

You have been chosen to participate because:

- You are a Learning support professional

- You have first-hand experience of the Integrated Quality management system and professional development of/for learning support/Resource Class Teachers.

The research will involve approximately 29 learning support and Resource Class Teachers and 7 Learning Support Advisors from the Eden and Central Karoo education district.

WHAT IS THE NATURE OF MY PARTICIPATION IN THIS STUDY?

Your participation in the study involves a Teams focus group that will be audio-taped. Questions about your experience and challenges with regards to the Integrated Quality management system and professional development of learning support and Resource Class Teachers the will guide the interviews. Microsoft Teams Focus group interviews will approximately be 60 to 90 minutes in length.

CAN I WITHDRAW FROM THIS STUDY EVEN AFTER HAVING AGREED TO PARTICIPATE?

Participation in this study is voluntary and that there is no penalty or loss of benefit for non-participation. You are under no obligation to consent to participation. You are free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason. However, any personal data will be anonymized. If you do decide to take part, you can keep this information sheet and be asked to sign a written consent form. The consent form can be forwarded to the researcher via fax or email. This is to adhere to COVID-19 safety protocol.

ARE THEIR ANY NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES FOR ME IF I PARTICIPATE IN THE RESEARCH PROJECT?

The research cannot foresee any potential risk and/or discomfort as a result of participation in this study. However, should any other discomfort arise, the researcher will make every effort to minimize this.

WILL THE INFORMATION THAT I CONVEY TO THE RESEARCHER AND MY IDENTITY BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL?

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be used to identify you will remain confidential. Your name will not be recorded anywhere and no one will be able to connect you to the answers you give. Your answers will be given a code number or a pseudonym and you will be referred to in this way in the data, any publications, or other research reporting methods such as conference proceedings. Any identifiable data from personal records will be de-identified for your protection.

An external coder will have access to the data and will be bind to confidentiality by signing the confidentiality agreement of the Research Ethics Review Committee of UNISA. The signed confidentiality agreement will be submitted to the Research Ethics Review Committee of UNISA.

Your answers may be reviewed by people responsible for making sure that research is done properly, including the external coder, and members of the Research Ethics Review Committee. Otherwise, records that identify you will be available only to people working on the study, unless you give permission for other people to see the records. Your anonymous data may be used for other purposes, such as a research report, journal articles, and/or conference proceedings. A report of the study may be submitted for publication, but individual participants will not be identifiable in such a report.

Please keep in mind that it is sometimes impossible to make an absolute guarantee of confidentiality or anonymity, e.g. when (Teams) focus groups are used as a data collection method. A Teams focus group is an electronic online meeting of individuals who have a common interest or characteristic, brought together for gaining information about a particular issue. While every effort will be made by the researcher to ensure that you will not be connected to the information that you share during the Teams focus group, I cannot guarantee that other participants in the Teams focus group will treat the information confidentially. I shall, however, encourage all participants to do so. For this reason, I advise you not to disclose personal sensitive information in the Teams focus group. I will also be making use of a focus group assistant to assist with recording during Teams focus group interviews, who will be required to sign a confidentiality agreement form.

HOW WILL THE RESEARCHER(S) PROTECT THE SECURITY OF DATA?

Hard copies of your answers will be stored by the researcher for a period of five years in a locked filing cabinet, in a private study at the home of the researcher, for future research or academic purposes. Electronic information will be stored on a password-protected computer. Future use of the stored data will be subject to further Research Ethics Review and approval if applicable. After transpiring of the storage period, the information will be destroyed if necessary. Hard copies will be shredded and/or electronic copies will be permanently deleted from the hard drive of the computer through the use of a relevant software program.

WILL I RECEIVE PAYMENT OR ANY INCENTIVES FOR PARTICIPATING IN THIS STUDY?

There will be no financial gain for participating in this study or any other form of compensation. With regard to any personal cost incurred by traveling to interviews, the researchers will to the best of her ability attempt to arrange venues closest to the participants.

HAS THE STUDY RECEIVED ETHICS APPROVAL?

This study has received written approval from the UNISA College of Education (CEDU) Ethics Review Committee (ERC). A copy of the approval letter can be obtained from the researcher if you so wish.

HOW WILL I BE INFORMED OF THE FINDINGS/RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH?

If you would like to be informed of the final research findings, please contact Beatrice Treurnicht at beatreurnicht@gmail.com. The findings are accessible for 5 years. Should you require any further information or want to contact the researcher about any aspect of this study, please contact Beatrice Treurnicht, beatreurnicht@gmail.com.

Should you have concerns about the way in which the research has been conducted, you may contact Professor Mago William Mndawe, mndawemago@gmail.com.

Thank you for taking time to read this information sheet and for participating in this study.

Thank you.

Beatrice Treurnicht

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY (LSAs)

I, _____(participant name), confirm that the person asking my consent to take part in this research has told me about the nature, procedure, potential benefits and anticipated inconvenience of participation.

I have read (or had explained to me) and understood the study as explained in the information sheet.

I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and am prepared to participate in the study.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without penalty (if applicable).

I am aware that the findings of this study will be processed into a research report, journal publications, and/or conference proceedings, but that my participation will be kept confidential unless otherwise specified.

I agree to the recording of the Teams Focus group interview.

I have received a signed copy of the informed consent agreement.

Participant Name & Surname .... (please print)

Participant Signature…………………………………………………..Date…………………

Researcher's Name & Surname...(please print)

Researcher's signature…………………………………………..Date…………………

Appendix G: Participant information sheet: Learning Support and Resource Class Teachers

_____2020

Title: Towards inclusive learning support teacher productivity through the Integrated Quality Management System in the Eden District

Dear Prospective Participant

My name is Beatrice Eugene Treurnicht and I am doing research with Mago William Mndawe a professor, in the Department of Inclusive Education towards a PhD (Inclusive Education), at the University of South Africa. We have funding from Unisa's Student Funding Directorate (DSF) for research purposes. We have funding from the Master's and Doctoral Research Bursary Committee of UNISA for research purposes. We are inviting you to participate in a study entitled: Towards inclusive learning support teacher productivity through the Integrated Quality Management System in the Eden District.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE and POTENTIAL OF THE STUDY?

There will be no benefit to individual participants for participating in this research study. However, this study is expected to collect important information that could contribute to comprehend the experiences and perceptions of LSTs and RCTs concerning the effectiveness of the Quality Management System and Professional development. This study may offer valuable contributions to existing knowledge about current professional development initiatives of support teachers, not just on the primary school level, but also on the high school level. This study will benefit the wider learning support community, as it may contribute to the development of a framework for a coordinated support model, which can contribute to productive professional development.

WHY AM I BEING INVITED TO PARTICIPATE?

You have been chosen to participate because:

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- You are a Learning support professional

- You have first-hand experience of the Integrated Quality management system and

  professional development of/for a learning support/Resource Class Teachers

- You can provide valuable insight into the experiences and challenges of learning support/resource class teachers in this regard.

Where I did not obtain your email address from you personally, it was obtained through your Learning Support Advisor or the Coordinator of Learning support (ECKED). The research will involve approximately 29 learning support and Resource Class Teachers and 7 Learning Support Advisors from the Eden and Central Karoo education district.

WHAT IS THE NATURE OF MY PARTICIPATION IN THIS STUDY?

The study involves individual semi-structured telephone or email interviews that will be audio-taped. Participants have a choice between the telephone or email interviews. Telephonic interviews will be recorded. Questions about your experience and challenges with regards to the Integrated Quality management system and professional development the will guide the interviews. Individual interviews of approximately 45 to 60 minutes in length will take place at a mutually agreed time convenient to you. Personal documents that will be used for additional data analysis include learning support operational administration files, IQMS files and Personal growth plans. These documents will only be utilized if you consent to the use thereof.

CAN I WITHDRAW FROM THIS STUDY EVEN AFTER HAVING AGREED TO PARTICIPATE?

Participation in this study is voluntary and that there is no penalty or loss of benefit for non-participation. You are under no obligation to consent to participation. You are free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason. However, any personal data will be anonymized. If you do decide to take part, you can keep this information sheet and be asked to sign a written consent form. The consent form can be forwarded to the researcher via fax or email. This is to adhere to COVID-19 safety protocol.

ARE THEIR ANY NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES FOR ME IF I PARTICIPATE IN THE RESEARCH PROJECT?

The research cannot foresee any potential risk and/or discomfort as a result of participation in this study. However, should any other discomfort arise, the researcher will make every effort to minimize this.

WILL THE INFORMATION THAT I CONVEY TO THE RESEARCHER AND MY IDENTITY BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL?

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be used to identify you will remain confidential. Your name will not be recorded anywhere and no one will be able to connect you to the answers you give. Your answers will be given a code number or a pseudonym and you will be referred to in this way in the data, any publications, or other research reporting methods such as conference proceedings. Any identifiable data from personal records will be de-identified for your protection.

An external coder will have access to the data and will be bind to confidentiality by signing the confidentiality agreement of the Research Ethics Review Committee of UNISA. The signed confidentiality agreement will be submitted to the Research Ethics Review Committee of UNISA.

Your answers may be reviewed by people responsible for making sure that research is done properly, including the external coder, and members of the Research Ethics Review Committee. Otherwise, records that identify you will be available only to people working on the study, unless you give permission for other people to see the records. Your anonymous data may be used for other purposes, such as a research report, journal articles, and/or conference proceedings. A report of the study may be submitted for publication, but individual participants will not be identifiable in such a report.

HOW WILL THE RESEARCHER(S) PROTECT THE SECURITY OF DATA?

Hard copies of your answers will be stored by the researcher for a period of five years in a locked filing cabinet, in a private study at the home of the researcher, for future research or

academic purposes. Electronic information will be stored on a password-protected computer. Future use of the stored data will be subject to further Research Ethics Review and approval if applicable. After transpiring of the storage period, the information will be destroyed if necessary. Hard copies will be shredded and/or electronic copies will be permanently deleted from the hard drive of the computer through the use of a relevant software program.

WILL I RECEIVE PAYMENT OR ANY INCENTIVES FOR PARTICIPATING IN THIS STUDY?

There will be no financial gain for participating in this study or any other form of compensation. With regard to any personal cost incurred by traveling to interviews, the researchers will to the best of her ability attempt to arrange venues closest to the participants.

HAS THE STUDY RECEIVED ETHICS APPROVAL?

This study has received written approval from the UNISA College of Education (CEDU) Ethics Review Committee (ERC). A copy of the approval letter can be obtained from the researcher if you so wish.

HOW WILL I BE INFORMED OF THE FINDINGS/RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH?

If you would like to be informed of the final research findings, please contact Beatrice Treurnicht at btreurnicht0@gmail.com. (0837587537). The findings are accessible for 5 years. Should you require any further information or want to contact the researcher about any aspect of this study, please contact Beatrice Treurnicht, btreurnicht0@gmail.com.(0837587537)

Should you have concerns about the way in which the research has been conducted, you may contact Professor Mago William Mndawe, mndawemago@gmail.com.

Thank you for taking time to read this information sheet and for participating in this study.

Thank you.

Beatrice Treurnicht

0837587537

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY

I, _____ (participant name), confirm that the person asking my consent to take part in this research has told me about the nature, procedure, potential benefits and anticipated inconvenience of participation.

I have read (or had explained to me) and understood the study as explained in the information sheet.

I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and am prepared to participate in the study.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without penalty (if applicable).

I am aware that the findings of this study will be processed into a research report, journal publications, and/or conference proceedings, but that my participation will be kept confidential unless otherwise specified.

OPTIONS FOR PARTICIPATION:

(please tick (√) the option that you will be comfortable with)

1.   I agree to participate via:

Telephonic interview		Email interview answering	

2.   If telephonically interviewed, I agree to participate via telephonic interview.

YES		NO	

3.   I agree to the perusal of my personal documents (learning support operational administration files, IQMS files and/or Personal growth plans) for additional data analysis.

YES		NO	

I have received a signed copy of the informed consent agreement.

Participant Name & Surname ....(please print)

Participant

Signature………………………………..……………..Date…………..………

Researcher's Name & Surname ....(please print)

Researcher's signature Date:2020/10/03

Appendix H: Interview Guide (LSAS)

Researcher   : Beatrice Eugene Treurnicht

Topic   : A framework towards enhancing the productivity of   Inclusive

Learning Support Teachers within the Eden Central Karoo Education

District

Supervisor   : Prof MW Mndawe

Interview Guide

1. What do you regard as the main challenges of LSTs / RCTs with regards to the IQMS?

2. What is your overall impression of the IQMS as it is currently designed and implemented for LSTs and RCTs?

3. What are some of the challenges you encounter/ed in achieving your goals towards the CPD/CPTD of LSTs/RCTs?

4. What is your opinion with regards to the IQMS as a vehicle towards the CPTD for LSTs/RCTs?

5. What skill and knowledge areas would you regard as priorities for the Professional Development of LSTs/RCTs to carry out their roles and responsibilities effectively?

6. In your opinion, what type of in-service/professional development programs /courses can best provide the requisite skill and knowledge areas?

7. What do you know about the National Policy Framework for Teacher Education and Development?

8. What do you now / Are you aware of the Integrated Strategic Planning Framework for Teacher Education and Development in SA?

Greetings and thanks for agreeing to be interviewed. Many thanks for your contribution.

Appendix I: Interview Guide (LSTS/RCTS)

Interview questions for learning support/Resource Class Teachers

Researcher   : Beatrice Eugene Treurnicht

Topic   : Towards inclusive learning support teacher productivity through the Integrated

Quality Management System in the Eden District (Research on IQMS/ Professional

Development for Learning Support and Resource Class Teachers)

Supervisor   : Prof MW Mndawe

Participant   …………………………………………...

Date   …………………………………………

Time   …………………………………………

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Interview Foreword

Greetings and thank you for agreeing to be interviewed.

My appreciation for your agreeing to / and for your participation in this research.
Your contribution is highly valued.

The areas I hope to cover are changes /issues in IQMS and PD in SA, IQMS/PD policy.

PART 1: PERSONAL and BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1.   Kindly state your name. _____

2.   How many years have you been in teaching? _____

3.   How many years of experience do you have in special education teaching?

4.   Are you stationary or itinerant? _____

5.   Kindly elaborate on your initial qualifications.

    _____

6.   Kindly elaborate on your SEN/ specialized qualification.

    _____

PART 2: INTERGRATED QUALITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM and

 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT RELATED

1.   What do you understand by the concept of the Integrated Management System (IQMS)?

2.   How does (has) the IQMS contributed towards your development?

3.   What do you perceive/experience as the greatest challenges facing the

LSTs/RCTs with regards to IQMS?

4.   What is your overall perception of the effectiveness of IQMS to promote/contribute to PD of LSTs/RCTs?

5.   What assistance is received from your principal to understand and cope with the IQMS and the accompanying challenges?

6.   What support has been received from department/ district/Learning support advisers to address areas that require improvement?

7.   What do you understand by the concept of PD/CPTD?

8.   In your experience, what (if any) is the link between IQMS and PD/CPTD?

9.   What according to your experience are the greatest challenges of LSTs/RCTs with regards to CPD and CPTD?

10.   What benefits do you see for LSTs/RCTs participating IQMS/CPTD?

11.   In what professional development courses have you participated previously?

12.   What previous in-service/professional development do you have?

13. What in-service/professional development programs/courses are you aware of in the area of Learning Support /SEN?

(*Prompts Types of courses: WCED/SLES provided; year-long full-time; part-time daylong; weekend; evening; evening; education centers; online*)

14. Apart from the District, what other organizations or persons play a pivotal part in the Continuous Professional Development of LSTS/RCTs?

15. What have you experienced or found to be the best/most effective way for LSTs/RCTs to develop their teaching skills?

16. In your opinion, what type of in-service/professional development programs /courses can best provide the requisite skill and knowledge areas of LSTs/RCTs?

(*Prompt: Consider attending in-service, post graduate qualifications in teaching; working with experienced colleagues; from books and materials; research articles in journals; new ideas from online sources; attending self-selected courses in education centres; SEN provided in-service etc.*)

17. What (further) Professional Development do you need to carry out your roles and responsibilities as LST/RCT effectively?

18. Are there any other insights/comments you would like to add?

Greetings and thank you for agreeing to be interviewed. Thank you for your contribution.

Appendix J: Comparison - Role Development from 2014 To 2017 onwards

The Process Mapping for Specialized Learner and Educator Support (SLES) Pillar (WCED 2014:8) Support the mainstream school with regard to:	Learning Support Memo (2017)	The 2017 JD: **Job purpose:** Teach support and guide learners to develop and learn optimally according to individual strengths and needs in an inclusive environment **Main objectives:** Support the mainstream/inclusive /full service schools and special/resource centres with regard to:	Roles and Responsibilities (2017) **Four core functionality areas**	Most recent JD (WCED 2017) onwards **Main Purpose:** To render a learning support / remedial education service within Public Ordinary Schools in the Education District.
• Play a supportive role regarding the functioning of SBST and development of ISPs) – SIAS • Optimal utilisation of Learning and Teaching Support Materials (LTSM) by Learning Support Teachers within the Learning Support classrooms and schools. • Inclusive Education and other relevant policies. • Advocate and support inclusive environments in schools	• Plays pivotal role on SBST / Attend and contribute to the functioning of SBST's. • Assist with the development and implementation of individual support plans. • Supports learners with curriculum barriers through effective lesson planning and use of LTSM • Withdraws learners for group support in Home Language and/or mathematics • Ensure all administrative files are available: Learner Profiles, Planning File, Resource files	• Support and sustain effective SBST • Assist teachers and SBST with the implementation of alternative assessment strategies. • Optimal utilisation of Learning and Teaching Support Materials (LTSM) in the school. • Inclusive Education: White paper 6 and other relevant policies. • To assist teachers to maintain comprehensive learner Profile	• Human resource development • Develop ordinary schools into full service/ inclusive schools • Increase the capacity of the system to address barriers to learning and become more inclusive • Foster inter-sectorial partnerships to enhance support and inclusion	• KRA 1: Implement learning support capacity building programmes for early identification of and interventions relating to barriers to learning. • • KRA 2: Provide specialised learning support to strengthen School-based Support Team(s) (SBSTs). • KRA 3:Participate in inter- and intra-sectoral networks and collaborations

• Support mainstream teachers with regard to learners who experience barriers to learning in the schools. • Early identification and support of learners experiencing barriers to learning. • Identification and addressing of learning and developmental barriers in the mainstream school • Implement strategies to improve Literacy and Numeracy. • Render support to learners who experience barriers to learning. • Work in collaboration with other disciplines and community members to address barriers to learning in schools • Participate and adhere to the Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS) process. • To ensure Quality Assurance of Learning Support within the schools.	• Analysis of results Baseline Assessment • Early identification and screening of learners to address barriers to learning in the Foundation Phase, • In class / collaborative support rendered to teachers at school • Identification, assessment and recommendation of leaners in need of High Level Support • Assessing learners for support (withdrawal) and further support • Develop and implement stimulation programs to prevent later barriers to learning • Render differentiated teaching approaches and methodologies. • Addressing Barriers to learning through Cooperative Teaching & Demonstrating Classroom Practice • High School Projects for learners with high level needs. Assessment of learners at risk in the high schools. Small group withdrawal (LST's at High Schools)	• Record intervention and report on learner progress to teachers and parents. • Support teachers to analyse, address and implement strategies to improve Literacy and Numeracy. • Screening, identification, assessment and support to address barriers to learning. • To network and foster intersectoral partnerships with other disciplines and community members to advocate and address barriers to learning. • Develop and implement support programmes to prevent and address barriers to learning. •Address needs to learners with low, moderate and high levels of support in collaboration with classroom teacher.		

• To support research regarding Learning Support in the schools. • Provide inputs regarding formulation of policies • Capacity building of teachers • Give input regarding professional development of mainstream teachers regarding ELSEN needs of the schools. • Work within the framework of Whole School Evaluation • Assist School Management Team members in the execution of learning support activities in the schools.	• Straddling of grades/curricula • Quarterly reports	• Participate and adhere to the Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS) process. • To partake in extra-mural and co-curricular activities enhance learning support practices. • • To support research regarding Learning Support in the schools. •Human resource development of teachers, class assistants and parents. • Work within the framework of Whole School Evaluation. • To assist School Management Team in the execution of inclusive practises in the schools.		

Appendix K: Streamlined Roles & Responsibilities (2017) vs Current (Hitherto) Formal Job Description Job Description (WCED 2017)

Roles and Responsibilities (2017)		Formal Job Description (2017) **Main Purpose**:To render a learning support / remedial education service within Public Ordinary Schools in the Education District (2017)
Core functioning areas	**The LSE has to (Roles and Responsibilities)**	1. KEY PERFORMANCE AREAS
HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT	Conduct workshops with school staff to address barriers to learning Minimum target:1 session per school per term	**KRA 1 Implement learning support capacity building programmes for early identification of and interventions relating to barriers to learning.**
	Support educators through demonstration lessons/ collaborative teaching in the classes to address barriers to learning Minimum target:As identified by district and context of schools	1.1 Train teachers, parents and support staff (e.g. class assistants): • in the early identification of learning barriers particularly barriers to accessing the curriculum. • to manage identified learners who experience curriculum barriers to learning (e.g. Individual Support Plan (ISP) / Group Support Plan (GSP) / Exit Plans).
	Conduct parent training sessions to understand barriers to learning and support their children at home. Minimum target:1 session per school per term	1.2 Develop and implement goals/needs driven initiatives/programmes and workshops for parents and School Governing Body's (SGB's) to prevent and address learning barriers.
	Adhere to IQMS process. Compile and update IQMS file regularly.	1.3 Implementation of Inclusive Education Policies including the Screening Identification and Assessment Support (SIAS) Policy:
	Sharing of best practices, buddy support for new and struggling educators Minimum target:As identified by district	• Implementation of the learner support pathway: conduct assessments; provide curriculum interventions to learners experiencing barriers to learning within a school(s), effective lesson planning and use of appropriate LTSM, short term withdrawal, collaborative teaching, learner tracking
DEVELOP ORDINARY SCHOOLS INTO FULL SERVICE/	Coordinate and support the development and the optimal functioning of SBST	• Identify learners in need of further support and assist with completing the necessary referrals
	Advocate the implementation of inclusive policies (Big 5)	
	Play an active role in the implementation of SIAS	

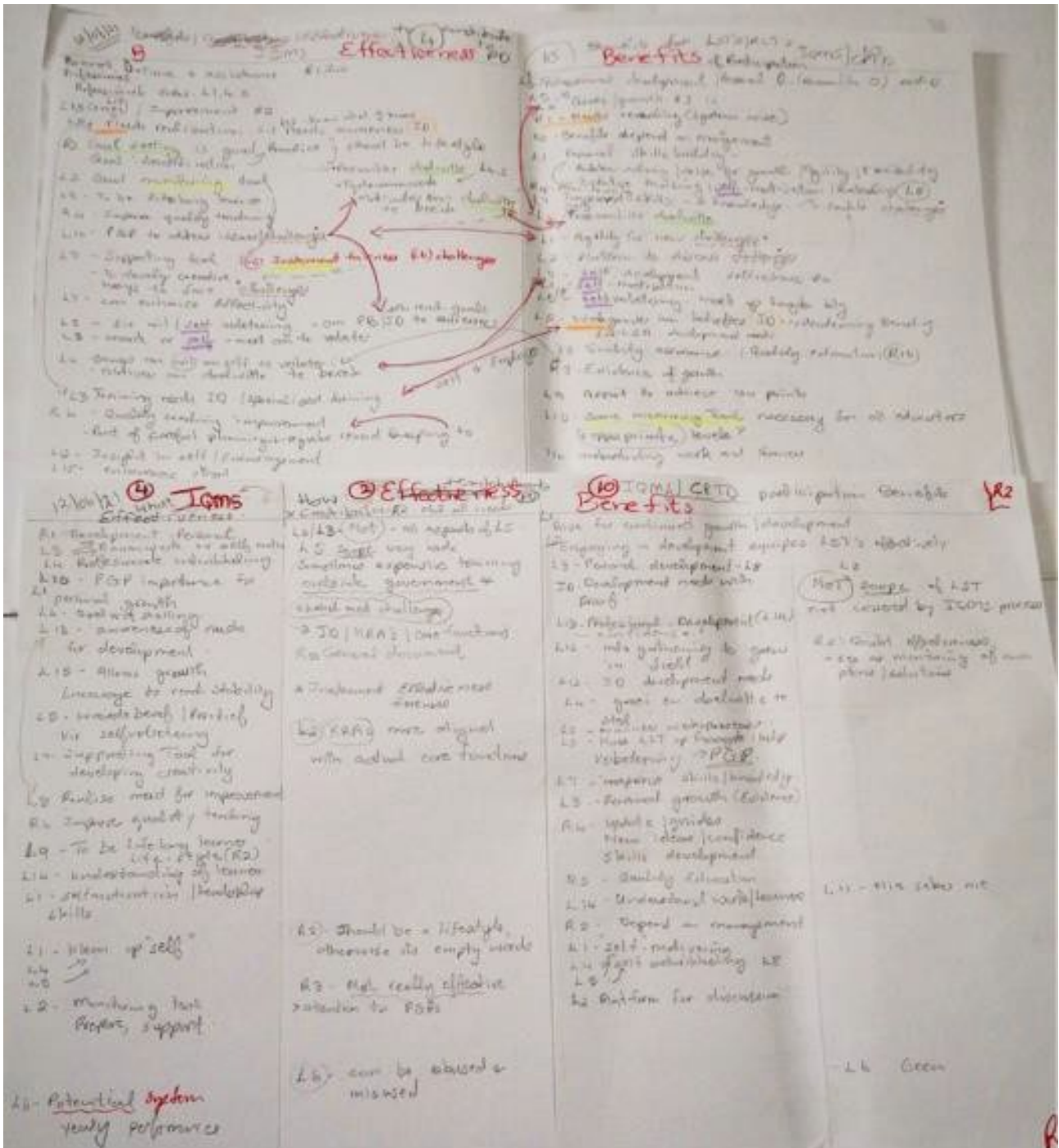|	
INCLUSIVE SCHOOLS	Support teachers and SBST with the implementation of alternative assessment strategies
	Guide and support teachers and SBST in the development of ISP for learners requiring high level of support
	Support SBST to maintain database of: • Learners referred to SBST • learners on waiting list for placement special schools • learners with ISPs • learners assessed through alternative methods of assessment
INCREASE THE CAPACITY OF THE SYSTEM TO ADDRESS BARRIERS TO LEARNING AND BECOME MORE INCLUSIVE	Early identification and screening of learners at risk through assessment, or analysis of systemic data (eg. ANA, baseline assessment).
	Support educators with the analysis of assessment findings and developing an intervention programme accordingly.
	Develop and implement support programmes to prevent and address barriers to learning.
	Monitoring identified learners with barriers to learning.
	Support educators with the optimal utilization of LTSM.
	Support class teachers with differentiation strategies, differentiated assessment and general classroom methodologies to support learners experiencing barriers to learning
	Support teachers to analyze, address and implement strategies to improve literacy and numeracy.
	Assist teachers to maintain comprehensive profiles for learners experiencing barriers to learning.
	Address needs of learners with moderate and high levels of support in collaboration with classroom teachers through collaborative teaching or withdrawal.

- Provide assistance to and training of teachers, parents, SGBs, etc. in collaboration with the Learning Support Advisor, with regards to legislation and the implementation of policies related to children experiencing barriers to learning within a school(s).
- Promote an inclusive ethos within a school(s) in collaboration with the all relevant role players.

1.4 Report quarterly on the implementation of learning support intervention programmes within a school(s) for early identification of and curriculum interventions relating to barriers to learning to the Learning Support Advisor (Inclusive and Specialised Learner and Educator Support) (ISLES).

KRA 2 Provide specialised learning support to strengthen School-based Support Team(s) (SBSTs).

2.1 Form an integral part of the SBSTs within the school(s).

2.2 Train, sustain and promote SBSTs within a School(s) with regards to:
- early identification of curriculum barriers to learning
- intervention strategies
- differentiated curriculum and assessment (including accommodations / concessions).

2.3 Collaborate with District-Based Support Team (DBST) to support learners experiencing curriculum barriers to learning.

2.4 Render direct learning support services to learners with moderate and high level needs.

2.5 Provide Learning Support inputs for the district with regard to policy development and reviews.

2.6 Report quarterly on the Learning Support / Remedial Education Interventions to the Learning Support Advisor (Inclusive and Specialised Learner and Educator Support) (ISLES).

Provide evidence of support to learners eg. Workbooks, learner files.	
Provide mainstream school educators and parents with written learners' progress reports and file in the learner profile. Minimum target:2 x per year	
Keeping administrative portfolio up to date • Updating daily register of learners receiving support • Timetable • Grouping of learners • Evidence of daily planning for learners receiving support • Evidence of assessment of learners receiving support • Keep an updated inventory of LTSM • Evidence of workshops with educators and parents • Evidence of meetings/discussions with parents and educators	
Quarterly reporting to LSA • Statistical data	**KRA 3** **Participate in inter- and intra-sectorial networks and collaborations.**
Maintain a resource file with strategies and methodologies to address learning difficulties	3.1 Promote inclusive schools as centres of care and support for teaching and learning (CSTL) and use this framework to coordinate support from other sectors including the provision learning support expertise in the role out of the Integrated School Health Programme.
Enhance personal knowledge and skills to address barriers to learning	
Support the DBST with assessments and reports for learner application for referral and placement according to levels of need.	3.2 Collaborate on learning support matters with the multi-disciplinary teams at the Special Schools/ Resource Centres and Full Service Schools/Inclusive Schools to include learners who experience curriculum barriers to learning.
Partake in extra-mural and co-curricular activities to enhance learning support practices. Minimum target:4 x per week. Co-curricular activities must be evident on time table and in weekly planning. • Intervention groups • Parental development sessions • Training sessions with teachers.	3.3 Participate in inter- and intra-sectoral forums to support and enhance the capacity of the system to address curriculum barriers to learning. 3.4 Report quarterly on learning support participation in and contributions to inter- and intra-sectoral networks to the Learning Support Advisor (Inclusive and Specialised Learner and Educator Support) (ISLES).

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	• Programme development • Lesson planning • SBST Meetings • Updating learner profiles of learners withdrawn by LSE.	
FOSTER INTER-SECTORAL PARTNESHIPS TO ENHANCE SUPPORT AND INCLUSION	Network and foster inter-sectoral partnerships with other disciplines and community members to advocate and address barriers to learning. • District Psychologist • District Social Worker • WCEDoutreach teams from Special School Resource Centers eg. IE Teams, CSPID, ASD • Governmental departments eg. Health, Social Welfare, Public Works • Community outreach teams and interest groups • NGOs	

Appendix L: Round 1 Manual Analysis

Appendix O: Ed

Goodwood Estate

Cape Town

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TO WHOM IT MAY CONCE1RN

I hereby confirm that ₁ have proofread and edited the following dissertation using 1 the Windows
'Tracking' system to reflect my comments and suggested corrections for the author to action:

*Towards Inclusive Le.arning Support Teacher Productivity Through the Integrated Quality
Management System in Jhe eden District*

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