

Continuing Professional Development for Secondary School Teachers in Kenya; Policies, Trends and Practices: A Case of Kirinyaga District

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Abstract

The objective of this study was to explore and analyse the policies, trends and practices that influence secondary school teachers' participation in Continuing Professional Development (CPD). In the current educational era, the trial and error teaching, and take it or leave it professional development programmes are no longer acceptable. This has been necessitated by the diverse compositions of student populations, changing paradigms in teaching and learning, and changing expectations about the quality of education that are occurring at an unexpected rate. Teacher training is more than the mastery of certain practical knowledge, pedagogical skills, and techniques. Therefore, CPD plays an important role in teacher improvement geared towards classroom improvement. Chapter one has highlighted the plight of secondary schoolteachers and the need to be involved in CPD. Chapter two reviews works undertaken by various scholars on the problem and identifies the gaps in information, which the study sought to fill. The study reviewed the literature using the following themes: Conceptualization of teacher professional development, issues of teacher professional development in Africa, the impact of teacher professional development on pupil performance and indicators of quality CPD programmes together with the status of teacher CPD in Kenya. Chapter three discusses the methodology that the study adopted. The methodology involved a vertical case mixed study approach design that involves analysis of macro and micro aspects using quantitative and qualitative techniques in the collection of data. The national policies on CPD in Kenya and the channels that were used were derived through desk review of documents. Twelve secondary schools in Kirinyaga district were sampled for the survey while six others were subjected to an in-depth case study. The data collected was analysed qualitatively, though quantitative data was used for clarification where it was found necessary. Chapter four dwelt with the data analysis. The data analysed indicated the importance of mentoring and involvement of other stakeholders in the provision of CPD as laid out by the education policies. A variety of providers have been identified in the provision of CPD programmes in the country. The MOE has been providing CPD courses that involved short duration while TSC has been recognizing certificates of teachers involved in accredited CPD courses. Teachers highlighted other areas that they would like to pursue. They involved video shooting, human resource management and banking. These were courses that were viewed by teachers to be more important in changing careers. Most of the programmes that teachers engage in were geared towards improvement of their academic status, with little concern in improving teaching at the classroom level. In the light of these findings, chapter five recommended provision of support at the school level so that teachers would participate in and complete CPD programmes. Since funding was a major problem that teachers faced, alternative financial sources need to be explored to support teacher CPD.

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