ACCOUNTABILITY THROUGH CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: PERCEPTIONS OF EDUCATORS IN UMGUNGUNDLOVU DISTRICT, SOUTH AFRICA

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─Abstract─

Many institutions have embraced professional development as a way of capacity building in response to external accountability imperatives. Predicated on an envisaged linear relationship between CPD and educational outcomes, which assumes that an improvement in teachers' content and pedagogic knowledge would result in the improvement of educational outcomes, the Department of Basic Education devotes an enormous amount of resources to CPD. This paper sought to elicit the understandings of educators regarding the implementation and effectiveness of CPD in the South African Education system using a case study of uMgungundlovu District in KwaZulu-Natal. Using a mixed methods approach, the study conducted in-depth interviews with 15 purposively selected school principals and 100 questionnaire surveys with teachers. The study found that CPD is implemented as an accountability mechanism with much success. However, a significant number of respondents reported that they do not use what they learn from such CPD. The findings of this research provide profound insights for training and development in the public sector. Unless the public sector adopts a systematic CPD that is informed by needs analysis and facilitated by competent practitioners, quality education and efficient service delivery will not be attained.

Key Words: professional accountability, professional development, skills development

JEL Classification: M53

1. INTRODUCTION

In the face of performativity and external accountability mechanisms informed by a pincer movement of managerialism and marketized public sector across many countries, various institutions have turned to Continuous Professional Development (CPD) as a way of capacitating their employees. The theoretical argument for CPD in the era of accountability is premised on the argument that compliance without competence is of no consequence to public service delivery. This is the main basis of professional accountability, which can be defined as ensuring that professionals are held accountable for their practices and are held answerable for their professional activities. Their professional training, ethics and standards, as well as national legislation, should inform their practice. It is the street-level bureaucrats that are at the coalface of service delivery, hence, they determine what is delivered and how it is delivered due to their immense discretion and autonomy (Lipsky, 2010). Based on this narrative, it is reasonable to suggest that an improvement in public sector workers skills, knowledge and disposition is the key to professional accountability. To ensure professional accountability, many public sector institutions prescribe minimum educational and professional qualifications for entrance into a profession and continuous CPD.

Due to the dynamic nature of the public sector institutions and the external influence of globalisation, initial education and competencies acquired at post-school institutions may become obsolete. This implies that dependence on initial training as a mechanism of professional accountability becomes questionable. Drawing on this argument, many institutions have embraced CPD as a way of capacity building in response to external accountability imperatives (Hochberg and Desimone, 2010). Such CPD is often content-focused and targets capacity challenges in the employees. The need to meet external accountability demands through CPD has seen the development and implementation of continuous CPD (CPD) in the public sector across the world. For instance, in South Africa, the Health Professions Council of South Africa (2014) requires ongoing lifelong learning by health officials to update the attributes that underpin competent practice. This, however, is not a recent requirement, as it is a legal requirement of the Health Professions Act of 1974 that required such CPD as a way of promoting public interests and accountability. In the education sector, for instance, CPD receives equal recognition. The South African Council for Educators (SACE), a legally constituted institution that upholds the teaching profession, argues that

teachers need to deepen their knowledge in order to be responsive to the dynamic educational needs of the post-apartheid South Africa (South African Council for Educators, 2013). The Department of Basic Education (DBE) placed classroom teacher development at the heart of its curriculum delivery in its 2015 – 2016 Annual Performance Plan (Department of Basic Education, 2015). The case for this is predicated on an envisaged linear relationship between CPD and educational outcomes, which assumes that an improvement in teachers' content and pedagogic knowledge would result in the improvement of educational outcomes. To that end, SACE cautions that, with time, teachers who refuse to take part in CPD could face punitive action in line with the Code of Professional Ethics.

Despite the enormous effort and resources devoted to the CPD of teachers, the educational outcomes are yet to show any meaningful improvement. For instance, the results of the Annual National Assessment and the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) show that there is still no significant improvement in educational outcomes (cf. Wilkinson, 2016). Such outcomes seem to refute the theoretical assumptions that underpin CPD. Although several studies have demonstrated the effectiveness of CPD in improving employees' competencies and the robustness of the theoretical principles that underpin them (cf. Earley and Porritt, 2014), it is difficult to understand why this has not been the case in the South African education system. Insufficient scholarly attention has been paid to the role of CPD as a mechanism of accountability in both the Nigerian and South African politico-administrative systems. Our knowledge on this is primarily based on speculation since there is a paucity of CPD impact studies in the South African and Nigerian street-level bureaucracy. A deeper understanding of the nuances of the current implementation of CPD that is based on empirical studies is useful as it provides profound insight for evidence-based decision-making tools for its effective implementation as a mechanism of professional accountability.

This study sought to uncover the understandings of street-level bureaucrats regarding the implementation of CPD and its effectiveness in the South African Education system using a case study of uMgungundlovu District in KwaZulu-Natal. Against the conventional assumptions of CPD, the results of this study reveal that there is a cosmic gap between its goals and the actual outcomes in the schools. Drawing on data elicited through surveys and interviews in uMgungundlovu District, this paper challenges the linearity assumptions of CPD.

The paper argues that although CPD is used as an accountability mechanism, its relationship with service delivery outcomes is far from being linear. In fact, due to contextual issues such as the economic status of schools, this the paper demonstrates the complexity of CPD in the South African schools.

Following this introduction, this paper is set up as follows. First, the next section explores the concept of professional accountability in the politico-administrative systems. Second, the paper describes the methodological approach employed to glean the data for the case study. Third, in the fourth and fifth sections of this article, a case study is presented to demonstrate concrete examples of the use of CPD as a mechanism in politico-administrative systems in South Africa. Drawing on the case study, the last sections draw some conclusions and implications of the case study for accountability not just in South Africa, but also in politico-administrative systems in general.

2. CONCEPTUALISING CPD AS A PROFESSIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY MECHANISM

The discourse on the relationship between CPD and professional accountability is not a recent phenomenon. In fact, CPD forms a key pillar of Frederick Winslow Taylor's (1911) seminal work on *The Principles of Scientific Management.* He argues that *"...it follows that the most important object of both the workmen and the management should be the training and development of each individual in the establishment, so that he can do (at his fastest pace and with the maximum of efficiency) the highest class of work for which his natural abilities fit him"* (Taylor, 1914:3). In this argument, Taylor affirms the role of training and development without which accountability to performance is difficult. Taylor's work on scientific management has remained critical in public policy management in theory and practice (cf. Wilkinson et al., 2016). It is against this background that scholars often argue that professional bureaucratic accountability should be predicated on competent staff. However, one of the limitations of Taylor's work is that it tends to be silent or ignores the initial education and training that workers bring to the workplace. Modern bureaucratic organisations employ people with high level of skills gained from post-school institutions. Notwithstanding this limitation, CPD remains a pivotal pillar of professional accountability due to the dynamic nature of the skills needs in the workplace.

Drawing on Taylor's work, Herbert Simon, in his influential book, *Administrative Behavior,* explains how CPD is useful in influencing the decision-making processes of street-level bureaucrats. CPD equips workers with information and advice. Simon (1944) argues that such *advice and information* can be used to influence the behaviour of street-level workers. Simon draws a distinction between the hard mechanisms and the tacit mechanism of accountability. Unlike the overt and formal accountability mechanisms, Simon says that advice and information may be viewed as internal public relations for there is no guarantee that advice rendered will be used (1997:12). He adds that information and advice may be used as alternatives to the exercise of authority (Simon, 1944:23). Public organisations seek to improve accountability and control of their street-level bureaucrats through training and CPD (Simon, 1997:13; Simon, 1944:24; Lint, 1988:283). Training constitutes a tacit mechanism of controlling workers and attaining accountability. Simon believes that training, like institutional loyalties and other overt accountability mechanisms, influences decisions "from the inside out" (Simon, 1997:13; Simon, 1944:24). In line with this view, Lint, in his study entitled *Regulating Autonomy: police discretion as a problem for training*, demonstrates how training can be a significant tool in restraining discretion and securing accountability in street-level bureaucrats (Lint, 1998:277).

The CPD narrative is theoretically and pragmatically defensible. Owing to this, many bureaucracies require people to undergo some form of training. Training can be pre-service or in-service. Lipsky (1980:200) concurs and adds, "…on the job training is likely to be more effective than classroom learning experiences because the training is provided in the context of actual problem-solving situations". New members of an organisation are trained in what is appropriate and acceptable in a way that will guide their future decisions in their organisations. Although training does not force a worker to make any decision, it provides the premises on which to make a decision. Training prepares a member of an organisation to reach a satisfactory decision himself, without the need for constant authority and advice (Simon, 1944:24). Simon's work provides a strong theoretical argument for CPD. CPD can be effective to the extent that Hardy and Lingard (2008:66) argue that it may lead to restricted professionalism. Arguably, this may be an overstatement considering that most street-level bureaucrats enjoy a significant level of discretion and autonomy in their work, nonetheless, it illustrates the perceived influence of training and development in the workplace. However, there seems to be a dearth of empirical studies to confirm these

theoretical positions. Despite this lack of empirical studies on CPD as an accountability mechanism, particularly in Africa, there has been a resurgence of interest in Simon's work on public policy theory and practice in recent years (cf. Jones, 2017). The case study in this paper demonstrates the perceptions of street-level bureaucrats and their response to CPD.

3. LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK OF CPD IN SOUTH AFRICA

The theoretical argument for CPD is convincing and finds expression in a number of pieces of legislation passed by the South African parliament in the post-apartheid era. The pieces of legislation are a clear indication that professional accountability without competence is futile. In 1998, the South African legislature passed the *Skills Development Act.* The main purpose of this Act was to ensure adequate funding for CPD. It required each employer to ring-fence one percent of its payroll for CPD. The same Act requires all employers, with the exception of the public sector, to contribute towards the Sector Education Training Authority of their sectors. The passing of the *Skills Development Levies Act* in 1995 followed this. The purpose of the Act was to prescribe how employers could contribute to the National Skills Fund. Before that, in 1994, the parliament had passed the *Public Service Act* to, *inter alia,* provide for the establishment of a training institute listed as a national department to provide CPD for public sector workers. Section 4(3) (a) of that Act states that the institution shall provide training or cause such training to be provided. These are just examples of the broad Acts the South African parliament passed to ensure that its human resources do not just conform to the set regulations and goals of the public sector without the requisite competencies. In much detail, the *Public Service Regulations* of 2001 Part IX on training and education specifies that all public sector employees should be undergoing training geared towards achieving efficient, non-partisan and representative public service. The regulations privilege the training needs analysis that ensures that CPD is strategically linked to the broader objectives of each organisation. Consistent with the professional accountability narrative, the South African parliament seems to realise that compliance without competence does not lead to meaningful accountability. The purpose of this section is not so much about giving detailed explanations of all the policies that underpin CPD nor discuss their merits or demerits. Important as this may be, the section illustrates political will to ensure professional accountability in the South African politico-administrative systems.

While it is clear that the case for CPD finds purchase in the policy and legislation in South Africa, there is very little evidence to suggest improved public service delivery. In view of the strengths of the theoretical assumptions of CPD and the policy and financial support accorded it, it is difficult to understand the gap between policy and outcomes. Critical questions on the implementation processes and participants of CPD need answers. It is against these questions that the paper draws on the implementation of a CPD case study in uMgungundlovu Education District to elicit the views and understandings of teachers, principals and district education officers on CPD as a mechanism of professional accountability.

4. METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES

This paper draws on data that were collected through a mixed method approach in the secondary schools of the uMgungundlovu District, which is in KwaZulu-Natal province (KZN) in the eastern part of South Africa. UMgungundlovu District has 547 schools and about 179 (both public and independent schools) of these are secondary schools, which are also known as high schools.

4.1 Participants

The broader project from which this article emerged used data from multiple sources, that is, from documents, interviews, questionnaires, and observation as well as secondary sources. The official documents used in this study include those from the government, the Department of Basic Education (DBE) and *Umalusi*[1]. This article draws on data that were collected through questionnaire surveys and interviews. Although the schools were purposively selected, participants for the survey were 100 practicing secondary teachers from schools in the uMgungundlovu District that volunteered to participate. Twenty-five of them were from independent schools (private schools), 48 from former Model C public schools (well-resourced formerly white public schools that are largely funded by a governing body of parents and past students) and 27 from townships public schools. Fifty-five of them were black Africans, 20 whites, 19 Indians, four were coloureds [biracial] while two of them did not indicate their race. Six school principals were purposively selected to participate in the face-to-face interviews.

4.2 Instrumentation

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[1] Council for Quality Assurance in General and Further Education and Training

A survey questionnaire was designed to solicit the perceptions of teachers regarding the purposes of CPD as an accountability mechanism. Three broad themes were covered in the questionnaire to gain some insights into how CPD has become increasingly embedded in South African education. The aim of this was to analyse and to deconstruct this mechanism at the level of teachers, schools, and administrators. The respondents were asked how they view CPD as an accountability mechanism for schools, teachers and administrators. The data collection instrument was a five-step Likert scale where respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement in terms of the use and effectiveness of CPD in the South African education system (1 = Never, 2 = Almost never, 3 = Sometimes, 4 = Almost always and 5 = Always). The Cronbach's alpha coefficient was 0.74. The questionnaire also contained open-ended questions where respondents could express themselves further or add any views regarding the use of high-stake testing. An interview guide was also used to gain some deeper insights into the understandings the school principals had regarding high-stake testing.

4.3 Data collection procedures

Following the granting of permission to conduct the fieldwork by the provincial Department of Basic Education in KwaZulu-Natal and permission from specific schools and the pilot test, the researcher went to schools and explained the purpose of the study to the participants that had volunteered. Questionnaires were hand-delivered to each participant and collected later, which yielded a 100 per cent response rate. This was the advantage of the volunteer sampling method although t does not pretend to represent the wider population. This was followed by the interviews that sought to understand CPD as a mechanism of accountability within the context of marketisation and managerialism. For the interviews, appointments with the selected school principal were made telephonically days before. The face-to-face interviews took approximately 30 to 45 minutes. These interviews were useful, particularly in capturing the non-verbal responses and body language. With the permission of the respondents, the interviews were audio recorded.

4.3 Data analysis

Given that the respondents came from three types of schools, the data analysis was done based on responses from the closed-ended questions in the questionnaire for the educators, which were analysed quantitatively, using SPSS Windows version 21, based on the schools them came from. Crosstabs were useful in

illuminating the similarities and differences in perceptions of respondents from different schools. The thematic content analysis was used to analyse responses to the open-ended comments in the questionnaires and interviews. Data from the interviews were transcribed verbatim and analysed through pattern matching logic, which 'compares an empirically-based pattern with a predicted one' (Yin, 2003:116). Data were then analysed on the basis of the theoretical framework of the study. The purpose was to grasp the nuances of the data by identifying manifest and latent themes and patterns emerging from it. This was done repeatedly and each identified unit was labelled with a code.

5. FINDINGS

5.1 CPD as a means of enhancing professional accountability

In order to respond to external accountability demands, the DBE has been using CPD and training as a way of making teachers accountable. CPD may take the form of pre-service training and in-service training. To what extent can CPD be related to professional accountability? This question was raised in interviews and the findings are presented here.

*CPD and accountability are different sides of the same coin - therefore Umalusi and other departments are insisting that teachers should not end with an academic degree but there is a need to have a professional qualification and continuous development (*Pr1).

If the department was doing proper training and the development of teachers – I mean if I get trained to function properly I can be held accountable to function properly. But if I am not trained properly and come along you ask me why I am not doing this like it should be done. ... In another way, I don't think the department should hold the teachers entirely responsible. It is the department that has not done its job properly in terms of CPD and training (Pr3).

Accountability and training are linked. Training of educators should most definitely involve the adoption or internalisation of ethical standards, responsibility, and accountability (Prl4).

It was quite clear from these interviews that CPD was seen as linked to professional accountability. All the respondents acknowledged the crucial role of staff development in professional accountability. Prl1 highlighted the importance of continuous staff development well after teachers have attained their professional

qualifications. This data also revealed that the DBE is instituting a sub-directorate for teacher development. The data has also shown the belief that educated and qualified teachers are likely to perform effectively because of the acquired professional competence. The next section will consider the role of CPD in uMgungundlovu District.

5.2 Use in the classroom of knowledge learned from CPD

Observation showed that at times teachers did not attend the formal CPD workshops out of the desire to learn but rather as a duty. Because of this, some teachers did not apply what they learnt from such workshops. Teachers were asked about this with specific reference to formal workshops and the results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1 Use of knowledge acquired from formal CPD workshops by teachers, according to the type of school

Type of school	Formal (workshops and training)				
	Never	Almost never	Sometimes	Almost always	Total
Independent	2	8	8	6	24
	8.3%	33.3%	33.3%	25.0%	100.0%
	33.3%	24.2%	25.0%	21.4%	24.2%
Public former Model C	2	19	14	13	48
	4.2%	39.6%	29.2%	27.1%	100.0%
	33.3%	57.6%	43.8%	46.4%	48.5%
Public township	2	6	10	9	27
	7.4%	22.2%	37.0%	33.3%	100.0%
	33.3%	18.2%	31.3%	32.1%	27.3%
Total	6	33	32	28	99
	6.1%	33.3%	32.3%	28.3%	100.0%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

A small majority (33.3%) of all the respondents indicated that they 'almost never' used what they learned from formal professional development workshops and 32.3% that they did so 'sometimes'. 28.3% rated this as 'almost always' the case

while a small proportion (6.1%) thought that they 'never' used knowledge acquired from formal professional development workshops. Although the number of negative response was considerable, most teachers indicated that they did apply in the classroom what they learn from workshops. Further analysis indicated that 25% of respondents from independent schools indicated that they 'almost always' used knowledge learnt from the professional development workshops, 33% suggested that they did so ' sometimes' while another 33.3% felt this was 'almost never'. 8.3% of respondents from these schools were 33.3% of all respondents who indicated that they 'never' use what they learn from the workshops.

Turning to respondents from former Model C schools, 27.1% felt that they used what they learn from workshops 'almost always' (46.4% of all such respondents), 29.2% rated this as 'sometimes', 39.6% said they 'almost never' did so (57.6% of all respondents who held such a view). Only 4.2% said they 'never' use what they learn from formal professional development workshops. The response from former Model C schools was largely negative. This is despite the fact that some of the workshops are facilitated by teachers from such schools [noted during observation].

With regard to respondents from public township schools, 33.3% indicated that they used what they learn from formal professional development workshops 'almost always' and a small majority (37%) that they did so 'sometimes', while to 22.2% it was 'almost never' the case. 7.4% believed that they 'never' use anything they learn from formal professional development workshops. In general, the response from these schools was positive. It is apparent that most respondents apply what they learn from formal professional development workshops. However, the proportion of teachers who did not use what they learnt from formal professional development workshops was significantly high, bearing in mind the value and resources spent on them.

5.3 Perceived effectiveness of CPD workshops

The respondents were asked about the effectiveness of different CPD workshops in enhancing professional accountability among teachers. CPD workshops were classified according to the areas, knowledge or skills they intended to develop among teachers. Findings showed that a small majority (37.2%) of all respondents indicated that CPD aimed at subject content knowledge was 'effective' in promoting professional accountability, 32.1% that it was 'very effective' and 15.4% that it was 'extremely effective'. A small proportion (7.7%) rated this as 'slightly

effective' and 1.3% (one respondent) believed that it was 'not effective at all'. Generally, this factor received a positive response from all respondents. Further investigation revealed that 46.7% of respondents from independent schools suggested that CPD aimed at subject content knowledge was 'very effective' (28% of all respondent who took such a view), 20% that it was 'extremely effective' (25% of all such respondents) and 20% that it was effective (10.3% of all those who held such a position). Only 6.7% rated this as 'slightly effective'. On the whole, respondents from these schools gave a positive response to this question. A small majority (39%) of those who were surveyed in the former Model C schools rated the CPD workshops based on subject knowledge as simply 'effective' (55.2% of such respondents), 24.4% as 'very effective' and 17.1% as 'extremely effective' (58.3% of all respondents who held such a view). 7.3% believed that it was 'slightly effective' and 2.4% that it was 'not effective at all' (100% of all such respondents). Most respondents from these schools identified CPD that focused on subject content knowledge as beneficial in enhancing professional accountability. Turning to the public township schools, a small majority (45.5%) of respondents indicated that CPD aimed at subject content knowledge was 'effective', 36.4% rated this as 'very effective' and 9.1% as 'extremely effective' (16.7% of all such respondents). Only 9.1% of these schools felt that it was 'slightly effective'. Like respondents from other types of schools, respondents from these schools also identified subject content knowledge as crucial in enhancing professional accountability.

It is apparent that regardless of the type of school in which the respondents were situated, they all identified CPD that was subject-based as effective in enhancing professional accountability. However, those from independent schools rated the effectiveness more highly than those from other types of schools.

6. Discussion

6.1 The use of CPD as an accountability mechanism

This study has established that the DBE has used training and staff development as a tacit way of securing accountability among educators in uMgungundlovu District. All respondents reported that they had attended various workshops and seminars relating to staff development. This finding seems to draw on Simon's (1997:308) assertion that, "the behaviour of a rational person can be controlled if the value and factual premises upon which he bases his decisions are specified for him" (1997:308). To that end, Simon argues that "influence is exercised through control over the premises of decision-making" (1997:308). Simon argues that "when

persons with particular educational qualifications are recruited for certain jobs, the organisation is depending upon this pre-training as principal means of assuring correct decisions in their work". This view is barely distinguishable from Lipsky's observation and recommendation for minimum qualification for entry into teaching (Lipsky, 1980:201).

Staff development and training are used in uMgungundlovu District to equip educators with the requisite skills, knowledge and competence to meet external accountability demands. This is a clear sign that training is an important component of accountability, as noted by Simon (1944:24; 1997:13) who avers that training influences decisions "from the inside out". Simon further asserts: "training prepares the organisation member to reach satisfactory decisions himself, without the need for constant authority or advice" (1944:24). Put another way, training is an alternative to the use of authority as a means of controlling street-level bureaucrats. Another reason put forward by Riccucci (2005:87) is that "by setting up workshops with managers and staff to discuss the consequences of various behaviours, professional staff is able to see the broader picture of the actual services delivered by their organisation".

When it comes to in-service training, street-level bureaucrats may be given this (such as that carried out in uMgungundlovu District) during school holidays or weekends to enable teachers to perform their task with less supervision. In essence, training provides the street-level bureaucrats with a "frame of reference for thinking" (Simon, 1997:13). This is hardly distinguishable from the minimum qualifications demanded by SACE for a teacher to register as a professionally qualified educator, as discussed earlier.

6.2 The effectiveness of training and CPD

Empirical evidence from this study affirms the theoretical arguments of CPD. The interesting finding in this study was that, generally, most respondents said that the workshops and training were very effective in making them more capable in different CPD. This was not surprising since such findings have been recorded elsewhere. For example, a study of in-service training in Jerusalem's secular elementary schools revealed that children's achievement in reading and mathematics improved significantly (Angrist and Lavy, 2001:365). This is also in line with Ngidi's findings on an evaluation of the Post Graduate Certificate in Education in South Africa (NPDE) in which 70% of the respondents reported a

considerable improvement in the effectiveness of their development, which, moreover, was not related to the school or level of qualification of recipients (Ngidi, 2005:37).

However, there was a small proportion of respondents who reported that CPD was not effective. Those who were negative about the effectiveness of workshops also complained about the competence of workshop facilitators and/or the timing of such workshops. These findings are consistent with Ngidi's (2005) findings, which also reported that about 30% of the respondents did not find the in-service training effective. Even in Jerusalem's religious schools, the in-service training was reported to be ineffective, albeit for other reasons that were not related to religion and the main one being the duration of training (Angrist and Lavy, 2001:365). This is not to suggest that CPD is not effective. Rather, the point is that such training must be systematic and informed by properly identified training needs.

Taken together, professional accountability in uMgungundlovu District was both internal and external. Based on their professional training, teachers were expected to make independent judgements about learning in their classes. The SMTs accorded them professional autonomy. What this study concluded is that holding street-level bureaucrats accountable to the goals of the DBE was not an easy task. It required various actors and different mechanisms of accountability in a combined effort. However, it was also seen at times that educators did not have the requisite skills to comply. To address this challenge, professional accountability played a key role in influencing educators' decisions without resorting to the use of authority through CPD.

7. Conclusion

Professional accountability can be viewed as a softer way of holding street-level bureaucrats accountable to the objectives of an organisation. This paper has established that DBE was playing a critical role in enforcing such a form of accountability in uMgungundlovu District. This study has demonstrated that, in order to promote such professionalism, teachers were often targets of CPD programmes. A majority of respondents who apply what they learn from such workshops highlighted its positive effect. Although most respondents had positive views of CPD, its relation with stated outcomes seemed to be far from being linear. A significant number of respondents noted that they rarely use or apply what they learn from such workshops. The importance of CPD in professional accountability

stems from its ability to influence the decisions of street-level bureaucrats from the inside out. The findings of this study might have important implications for strengthening professional accountability as a means of securing compliance among educators without resorting to the exercise of authority. Policy makers and education administrators can draw lessons from the realisation that CPD could foster an intrinsic motivation to accomplish their tasks. Further implications relate to the role of human resources managers in identifying training needs and designing appropriate and effective training programmes. Although this study may be limited in terms of a small sample and limited geographical area, it sets an important initial step towards understanding the nuances of CPD as means of accountability and can be used as a springboard for further research.

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