

# Challenges Impeding the Implementation of Effective Continuous Teacher Professional Development Programs in Eastern Cape Department of Education

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**Type of manuscript:** research paper

**Abstract:** *Training opportunities are essential for introducing teachers to effective instructional strategies and pedagogical approaches. Teachers need access to professional development programs that promote knowledge and skills acquisition to improve learner performance. Due to a lack of training, school administrators frequently misinterpreted key elements of the teaching and learning process and failed to understand the objectives and requirements of the new curriculum. To increase the ability and competency of educators in the province, it is the goal of this article to identify obstacles preventing the Eastern Cape Department of Education from implementing training programs effectively. This study utilises a descriptive and explanatory qualitative case study. Data was collected using interviews with five (5) (n-5) key informant participants. The findings indicate that Human Resource Development lacked competitive and practical skills development programs, resources (finance), capacity, low participation from educators, effective human resource strategy and training opportunities for educators, leading to poor learner results throughout the province. ECDoE is recommended to implement well-designed professional development programs which align with the curriculum and educational objectives of the National Department of Basic Education. By focusing on specific areas of need, such as literacy, numeracy, or inclusive education, these programs can address critical challenges faced by teachers and students in the province. The study suggests that ECDoE can implement competitive training programs, develop a comprehensive human resource development strategy, hires well-skilled trainees and training opportunities should be given to all educators in the province.*

**Keywords:** educator, Eastern Cape Department of Education, human resource development, skills development programs, training.

**JEL Classification:** J24, H52.

**Received:** 18 July 2023

**Accepted:** 30 September 2023

**Published:** 31 December 2023

**Funding:** There is no funding for this research.

**Publisher:** Academic Research and Publishing UG (i.G.) (Germany)

**Founder:** Sumy State University and Academic Research and Publishing UG (i.G.) (Germany)

**Cite as:** Zindi, B., & Sibanda, M.M. (2023). Challenges Impeding the Implementation of Effective Continuous Teacher Professional Development Programs in Eastern Cape Department of Education. *Business Ethics and Leadership*, 7(4), 46-61. [http://doi.org/10.61093/bel.7\(4\).46-61.2023](http://doi.org/10.61093/bel.7(4).46-61.2023).



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# Challenges Impeding the Implementation of Effective Continuous Teacher Professional Development Programs in Eastern Cape Department of Education

## Introduction

The persistent shortage of skills and training opportunities causes sub-optimal performance in whole-school improvement, school effectiveness and improved learning achievement outcomes in various schools in the ECDoE. Continuing Teacher Professional Development (CTPD) programs are critical in equipping employees with relevant skills to carry out their work optimally and productively. According to Boon, Eckardt, Lepak, and Boselie (2018), a significant barrier to productivity and efficiency is the lack of investment in human capital development, which is caused, among other things, by a lack of knowledge about the precise competencies needed to drive production. The ECDoE is urged to establish training programs that would increase performance and whole-school effectiveness in the province since a lack of capacity, skills, and knowledge affects both educator and learner performance (Stone & Deadrick, 2015; Chadwick, 2017; Brymer, Chadwick, Hill, & Molloy, 2019). Amid skills scarcity, well-capacitated employees with higher-level skills are always in demand (Chadwick, 2015). To fill this gap, the ECDoE must implement skills development programs to upgrade the skills of its educators. Mondy, Wayne and Martocchio (2016:44) argued that only a mere percentage of employees' skills are attained through formal educational qualifications. The biggest share of skills expansion is gained at the workplace, hence emphasising the importance of skills development programs to improve the performance of workers and organisational output.

Towards improving efficiency and effectiveness in operations and improvement in organisational output, Tuffour (2017: 15) underscores the imperativeness of a workforce capacity-building strategy based on the development of a robust set of working manuals. As a nation, South Africa needs to execute policies and programs that address skills shortages and encourage employees to upgrade their skills continuously. The Growth Employment and Redistribution Strategy focused on improved human capital development. However, Wang, Werner, Gilley and Gilley (2017: 1168) posit that the lack of suitably qualified and skilled employees is one of the challenges hindering economic service delivery and growth in South Africa. The government developed the Skills Plan to equip employees with skills and knowledge that are relevant in a modern developmental state (Cheon and An, 2017). However, organisations such as the ECDoE still experience a dearth of human capital skills and capacity to actuate the National Development Plan (NDP) and Vision 2030 to ensure that these are fully implemented and realised in line with the strategic plan and its mission and vision. Drawing from the Social Learning Theory, this article responds to the following questions:

- What challenges are faced by Human Resource Development (HRD) officials in implementing CTPD programs in Eastern Cape schools?
- Which strategies can be offered to Human Resource Development (HRD) officials to enhance the implementation of CTPD programs in the Eastern Cape?

After the introduction, the following section focuses on the theoretical perspectives, followed by concepts, HRD Learning Activities/Approaches, methodology, results, conclusions, recommendations, and direction for further research.

## Literature Review

The lack of teacher training, notably in the Eastern Cape region, has gained attention since most research contends that poor matric results across the province are caused by educators' incapacity and lack of abilities. According to the ECDoE Annual Report (2021/22: 142), which considers the province's schools' overall low performance, teachers' lack of adequate and necessary abilities is the leading cause of this underperformance. Similarly, the ECDoE Annual Report (2020/21: 152) notes a mismatch between training outcomes and educator needs. Many teachers in the Eastern Cape province are unable to raise student performance because they lack pedagogical knowledge and subject-matter understanding (Hartley, 2017: 20). Thus, with only a minimal amount of in-service training, instructors are expected to implement the curriculum as envisioned in the strategic plan (Carl, 2009: 130). Due to poor participation in Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS), which establish specific curricular standards and goals, the Provincial Department of Education's (PDE) strategic plan is frequently regarded as having trouble being executed (Matsepe and

Maluleke, 2019: 186-189). Due to a lack of training, the school administrators frequently failed to comprehend the expectations and requirements of the new curriculum and misunderstood crucial details in the teaching and learning process (Manison, 2015: 100; Esho and Verhoef, 2020). More troubling is the fact that most principals and educators in the province are not given the chance to participate in skill-development programs (Zachmeier, Cho, and Kim, 2014: 320; Laskowska and Daska-Borsiak, 2016: 67; Matsepe and Maluleke, 2019: 170). Most principals and educators, according to some researchers (Brauns 2013: 1412; Mondy and Martocchio, 2016:56; Matsepe and Maluleke, 2019: 170), are not well-versed in all areas of subject content.

**Theoretical Perspectives – Social Learning Theory.** The paper draws from the Social Learning Theory that Albert Bandura developed. As postulated by Edwards (2016: 47), the learning process occurs in social settings through direct instruction or learning. Bandura argued that most people are involved in the processing of information and are attentive to the relationship that occurs between their behaviours and the significance attached to the behaviours (Bandura, 2006a: 11; Williams, 2010: 44). The Social Learning Theory is premised on the assumption that people can learn certain behaviours through copying, observation, learning and social interactions (Boon et al., 2018). Observing and cognitive learning are relevant to this research in that educators observe and learn behaviour and skills during human capital development sessions. Such training should be following the vision and objectives of the ECDoE (Matsepe and Maluleke, 2019: 184). When educators observe specific skills, behaviours and strategies and apply the skills when performing their duties, this allows the ECDoE to accomplish its objectives of improving educator and learner performance (Matsepe and Maluleke, 2019: 186). Through learning, imitating and observing, educators develop the much-needed capacity necessary for the realisation and achievement of ECDoE strategic plan, mission and vision (Tuffour, 2017: 18).

The Social Learning Theory provides a potent lens for the training and practical application of HRD strategies and programmes. An understanding of how people learn is a critical ingredient in planning and conducting HRD programs. As pointed out by Chen, Park and Breazeal (2020), HRD officials need to have a good understanding of the basic concepts of Social Learning Theory. This enables them to plan how to conduct HRD programmes and projects to improve the skills of the educators (DeSimone, 2011: 70). It means that those educators and others in the employ of the ECDoE can deploy skills and knowledge learnt through the HRD programmes, bringing the organisation closer to achieving its goals and objectives. As such, when HRD programs capitalise on educating or training educators and other employees, benefits ultimately accrue to the organisation, as well as the individual employees (Wilson, 2016: 117).

**Defining Concepts.** This section is made up of two concepts, namely Human Resource Management and Continuing Teacher Professional Development programmes derived from this article. A fuller detail of these concepts is discussed below.

**Human Resource Development (HRD).** Different scholars understand the concept of HRD depending on how it is used. Nyberg, Reilly, Essman and Rodrigues (2018: 74) define HRD as a framework that is used to assist workers in acquiring their personal and organisational skills, knowledge and capacity that can be used in accomplishing organisational goals. Adams (2021: 11) confirms that HRD is a process that includes training, organisation, individual, and career developmental efforts to improve individual, group and organisational performance to achieve maximum output. Several scholars posit that HRD accelerates the development of requisite skills needed by workers to achieve their optimum productivity in both their current and future designated work functions and roles (Ulrich, Younger, Brockbank and Ulrich, 2012: 23; Brauns, 2013: 15; Bell and Marais, 2015; Nicol, 2019). The HRD functionaries need to implement several sub-systems and develop requisite production climate and organisational culture to facilitate the growth of employee competencies, incentivise their commitment to their work, and retain them in their positions (McChesney & Aldridge, 2021). Importantly, organisational authorities have a fiduciary responsibility of designing and equitably implementing HRD policies and strategies which capture and effectively drive the various sub-systems of their organisations. Kennedy (2022: 9) mentions that at the core of HRD is a commitment to developing human resources and an unparalleled regard for competence. HRD is becoming increasingly important in the public sector; organisations are encouraged to take skills development programmes seriously so that they can remain innovative and able to compete in the globalised world. It is recommended that HRD could be used as a framework and pillar to support institutions to equip its employees and the organisation with relevant skills, knowledge and attitude (Lim & Rager, 2015; Hussein, 2015). The HRD plays a fundamental function in improving organisational and employee performance. At its core, HRD aims to build the capacity of employees to enable them to reach their optimum performance levels (Chadwick, 2015). By improving employees' competencies, HRD indirectly improves their performance (Vasantham, 2015; Wilson,

2016). Increased workforce performance associated with improvements to a skills base is concomitant with economic development and social development in any country (Koukis & Jimoyiannis, 2019). Chadwick (2015: 502) opines that HRD entails implementing deliberate strategies to increase competencies within an organisation's workforce towards maximising productivity and, therefore, benefit the wider society. HRD has featured very prominently in the international discourse on development. Most countries are implementing a systematic strategy for HRD in support of economic growth and development. Analysts have noted that HRD has continued to be topical worldwide; its popularity is primarily informed by its ability to drive economic and social development agendas in different contexts (Vasantham, 2015).

***Conceptualising Continuing Professional Teacher Development Programs.*** The continuous training programs of teachers are termed differently in various countries. In Botswana, it is called Continuing Professional Development (CPD) (Kasule, Mapolelo, & Kasozi, 2019: 1); in Zimbabwe, it is called Teacher Continuous Improvement Programs (TCIPs) (Maunganidze, 2017: 3); and in South Africa, it is termed Continuing Teacher Professional Development (CTPD) programs (Wilson, 2016: 11). It is thus expected that organisations recruit, develop and train employees and develop policies (Thwala, 2015: 8) that assist in realising their strategic plan, mission and vision. In addition, Wilson (2016: 11) conceptualises continuing professional teachers' development in terms of skills and knowledge development of teachers to improve teacher and school effectiveness and functioning.

Wolf and Floyd (2017: 1762); Felton and Stickley (2018: 57); Matsepe and Maluluke, (2019: 186) refer to CPTD as service training, learning and support activities that cement the capability, new knowledge and skills to new tasks, increasing performance of educators. The Department of Education (DoE) plays a crucial role in providing quality educational skills that will advance the pedagogical knowledge and understanding of educators to raise the performance of the matric results across the provinces in the country (Department of Education, 2018: 54). Therefore, all educational employees must continuously upgrade their knowledge and skills by way of teacher development programs. It must be acknowledged that a teacher's knowledge and skills are subject to weakening. Kazmi, Ali, and Ali (2017: 32) believe that all professions require continuous updating of knowledge and skills, and teaching is no exception to improving teacher performance.

Furthermore, Howard, Gagné & Morin (2020: 77) argue that CPTD for teachers does not only include ordinary training courses rather, it is an ongoing process of education and knowledge development. The Continuing Professional Teachers' Development programs play a pivotal role in bringing new reforms in the education system that will increase the performance of educators to obtain best results (Mukeredzi, 2013: 10; Sabah, Fayez & Alsharami, 2014: 17; Kassa, Tefer & Amdemeskel, 2015: 54; Blau & Shamir-Inbal, 2018: 9). The introduction of CPTD in the educational sector raised morale of the young people to undertake teaching as a profession and career in most countries in the world. Various changes take place in the education system around the world. This forced several countries to transform the education systems and find new ways of practising and generating new skills and teachers' knowledge in the education sector (Radhakanta & Sushama, 2013: 54; Neal, 2015: 28; Delery & Roumpi, 2017: 48).

All professions in the world require a continuous update of knowledge and skills, and teaching is no exception. Because of globalisation and new developments in educational thinking, educators are encouraged to upgrade their skills and capabilities through CTPD programs (Matsepe & Maluleke, 2019: 34). The Department of Education advocates for an improved education system that improves teacher competence and student performances in all schools across the country. The introduction of the CPTD programs is hailed as a positive move in transforming the learning and teaching process in the education sector and improving the skills and capacity of educators. The lack of skills among educators can be traced back to the apartheid regime, where skills discrimination among blacks negatively affected skills and knowledge acquisition among the Black teachers in the country (De Clercq & Shalem, 2015: 67). Although there was a considerable improvement in terms of formal qualifications, most teachers lack the relevant skills and capacity to perform the jobs, and this has resulted in poor performance of educators (Department of Education, 2018:6). Therefore, the ECDoE is encouraged to offer training programs and equal opportunities among educators to attend skills development programs to improve employee's performance. Professional development programs boost confidence and credibility. By increasing professionals' expertise through professional development, their confidence in their work will also increase. The ECDoE still need teachers with professional training who are prepared to handle the difficulties and requirements of the growing country.

### *Human Resources Development Learning Activities/Approaches*

The HRD employ several approaches to upgrade the skills of workers to improve their performance (Ferrary, 2015: 45; Felton & Stickley, 2018: 21). To meet an organisation's present and long-term goals, Brown and Hanlon (2017: 410) note that all HRD activities are intended to either increase an individual's performance on their current job, train them in new skills for future jobs or positions, or promote overall growth for both individuals and the organisation. In this regard, Hartley (2017:20) submits that it is very important to make wise decisions regarding which approach to be used and how to implement them; therefore, the government should make sound decisions pertaining to HRD teacher development programs.

#### *Through-the-Job Activities*

David (2018: 375) pointed out that through-the-job activities are educational activities that manifest as new duties that are focused on the professional development of employees. Programs for job enrichment and job rotation are included to provide workers with the necessary knowledge, abilities, and competencies to enhance their performance. Employees are rotated through some positions inside or between departments as part of a work rotation program, giving them a chance to learn about various aspects of the business while developing and broadening their skill sets (McChesney & Aldridge, 2021: 23). With this approach, it is possible to acquire fresh talents that are essential in today's cutthroat society. Job rotation is meant to promote employee satisfaction; however, it can potentially annoy (Yurtseven-Yilmaz & Sever, 2021). People may become exhausted if they frequently switch between different job roles. For instance, being transferred to a new role when a team member is just becoming familiar with their present work can be very demoralizing.

#### *On-the-Job Learning Activities*

On-the-job training is a hands-on method for teaching staff the abilities needed to complete a particular task in the workplace (Brown & Hanlon, 2016: 495). Employers receive their training when they are required to put the skills and knowledge they have acquired to use. Worker learns how to execute their job effectively using the tools, equipment, papers, and knowledge already available through on-the-job training (Bidwell et al., 2015: 1173; Hicks, 2016: 80; Wolf & Floyd, 2017). Training takes place in the workplace where the person performs their regular duties. It may also occur elsewhere in the office utilizing specialized training facilities, workstations, or tools. Training programs equip employees with the essential knowledge and abilities to carry out their everyday tasks.

Additionally, training programs give workers in-depth information about their specialized industries, enabling them to gain experience and feel more at ease carrying out their jobs (Chadwick et al., 2019: 220). This strategy, according to Zviel-Girshin, Luria, and Shaham (2020), consists of some capacity-building exercises carried out by a person as they carry out tasks associated with their line of work. Under the close supervision of a subject-matter expert, the employee performs actions crucial to their job function as part of the on-the-job training process (Nicol, 2019: 11). On-the-job training's objectives are to extend employees' skill sets and boost organisational productivity.

### **Methodology and Research Methods**

The paper adopted a qualitative approach using a case study of ECDoE. The case study provided bounded, in-depth data on the challenges being faced by ECDoE in implementing Continuous Teacher Development Programmes (Wildschut, 2017: 56). A constructivist paradigm guides the research. According to the constructivist paradigm, knowledge is socially created; researchers must comprehend lived realities from the viewpoints of individuals who lived them (Kurmar, 2019). In constructivism, reality is formed and articulated in each person's mind and is a product of the researcher's ideals. According to Kivunja and Kuyini (2017), meaning should ideally be created through reflections, and this can only happen when the researcher and participants engage. The researchers used a purposive sampling technique to collect data from participants.

The sample size comprises five (5) key informants from the HRD section. The saturation point determined the sample size. The data saturation technique involved recruiting participants for interviewing up to a point when the addition of new participants' data ceased to bring in any new insights. With purposive sampling, participants did not have an equal chance of being sampled (Gross, 2018: 39). Participants were selected for an explicit purpose; they were selected based on the seniority of their positions in the HRD directorate of the ECDoE and the researchers' subjective judgements, of the sampled participants being information rich in HRD, making them trustworthy key informants for purposes of this study. The participants of the study were coded as follows: HRD Training Coordinator- Participant 1 (P1), Teacher Development – Participant 2 (P2),

Skills Development Auditing – Participant 3 (P3), Human Resource Administration – Participant 4 (P4) and Human Resource Planning – Participant 5 (P5) to uphold confidentiality and privacy.

Table 1. Summary of the Study Sample

Participant ID	Gender	Role	Duration of Interview
P1	Female	HRD Training Coordinator	20min
P2	Male	Teacher Development	22mins
P3	Female	Skills Development Auditing	18mins
P4	Male	Human Resource Administration	19mins
P5	Male	HRD Facilitator	22mins
<b>Average Interview time</b>			20.2 mins

Source: Compiled by the authors

Data was collected using structured interviews. The interviews took an average of eighteen 20.2 minutes. The interviews were recorded using a tape recorder and were later transcribed. Data from key informant interviews was analysed using thematic analysis techniques, first transcribing the data sets from audio clips generated during interviews into Microsoft Office Word format. The transcribed data was then subjected to rigorous processes of data coding, reduction and establishment of themes and subthemes (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). The researchers asked for and received the participants' written informed consent to protect the investigation's validity and findings. The University Research Committee issued the researcher an ethical clearance certificate with the number SIB011SZIN01. This research's trustworthiness was evaluated using four criteria: credibility, reliability, confirmability, and transferability.

Table 2. Schematic Representation of Themes and Subthemes

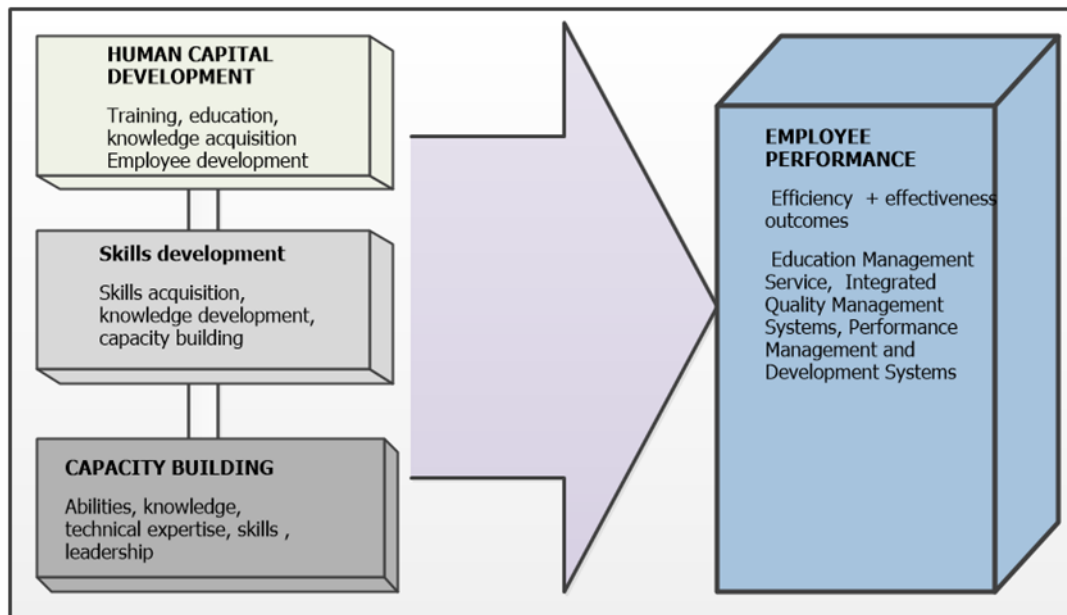
Themes	Sub themes
Low participation from the educators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Non- attendance of educators</li> <li>• Educators not paying attention during training</li> <li>• Educators arriving late at the training venue</li> <li>• Educators not taking training seriously</li> </ul>
Lack of co-operation from the school-based support teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of communication from school- based support team</li> <li>• Lack of co-operation from our school-based support team</li> <li>• Inadequate information sharing from school- based support teams</li> </ul>
Inadequate financial resources for skills development programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Insufficient money due to budget cut</li> <li>• Lack of financial support from the various stake holders and partners</li> <li>• Lack of training opportunities for educators</li> <li>• Competing priorities versus small budget</li> </ul>
Lack of monitoring and evaluation of training of training programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trainings not bringing the expected outcomes</li> <li>• Poor quality of trainings</li> </ul>
Outsourcing of the training programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outsourcing training is very costly to the Department</li> <li>• Unavailability of local service providers</li> <li>• Lack of understanding of the local context, curriculum, or unique challenges faced by teachers in the Eastern Cape</li> <li>• ECDoE should collaborate with locally based institutions</li> </ul>
Limited Follow-up and Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A gap between training and actual classroom practice</li> <li>• Lack of regular reinforcement and support</li> <li>• Ongoing support helps teachers translate their learning into practice</li> </ul>
Lack of co-ordination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poor co-ordination and planning in the ECDoE</li> <li>• Lack of requisite competencies to co-ordinate and implement trainings</li> <li>• Fear of change to implement new modern ways of training</li> </ul>

Note: ECDoE – Eastern Cape Department of Education

Source: Compiled by the authors

## Results

This section provides a presentation and discussion of the findings.



**Figure 4. Impact of Training Programs on Educator Performance**

Source: Compiled by the authors

The ECDoE acknowledged the introduction of several CPTD programmes in schools, such as coaching, mentoring, school clusters, communities of practice and action research that are important for improving the skills and knowledge of educators. The goal of CPDT is to assist teachers in addressing the needs and problems of a democratic South Africa in the 21st century. The CPTD system improves teachers' competencies (Matsepe & Maluleke, 2019: 180) and teaching skills by providing them with the tools they need to complete their crucial and challenging jobs successfully. Sunmoni (2015: 23) adds that the CPTD programs continue to raise the caliber of instruction by enhancing instructors' performance and professional competence. More crucially, it has been said that the CPTD programs have given educators and students more professional confidence, which has improved results (Tuffour, 2017). Additionally, it improves the standing of teachers as professionals and helps them find appropriate professional development (PD) programs that may advance their careers and shield them from dishonest service providers (Maunganidze, 2017: 71). The Department of Education has launched the CPTD programs to improve the knowledge and abilities of South African teachers.

The Figure 4 shows that effective implementation of CPTDs programmes in schools increases employee performance and learner results. Human Capital Development (HCD) incorporates three main areas: training and development, promotion and professional growth, and organisation development. Felton and Stickley (2018: 9) sustain the supposition that workers can be viewed as human capital to be hired and hired based on their contribution to the organisation or the driving force of HCD. Human Capital Development is an important input for ECDoE to accomplish its goals and mission. Therefore, organisations such as the ECDoE need to upgrade the knowledge and capacity of its workers through organising training and development programmes (Twyford, 2014: 14; Wilson, 2016: 11; Van der Waldt, 2016: 9). When the ECDoE regards its employees as human capital, it needs to devote time and resources towards the development of its educators and other employees.

Capacity building is aimed at improving human and non-human potentiality and effectiveness. Wolf and Floyd (2017: 168) add that to achieve capacity building, there is a need to improve employee performance by organising training programmes for employees. Similarly, in the ECDoE, capacity building of employees can be accomplished through organising skills development workshops to equip employees with relevant skills to perform their assigned jobs. The main aim of capacity building is to create and implement at the organisational level to design, execute and monitor social protection and social security schemes.

According to David, Michael, and Hokim (2018: 365), employee performance is the individual's capacity to execute their task effectively and efficiently. A Performance Management System must be tailored towards

achieving effectiveness, efficiency and productivity. To enhance the performance of educators and other employees, the ECDoE uses performance tools such as the IQMS and PMDS (Brown & Hanlon, 2016: 401). An improved employee performance leads to the achievement of organisational goals. Training employees is very important in strengthening and developing necessary and relevant skills that the organisation currently needs. With the introduction of IQMS and PDMS in the ECDoE, the department hopes to reach its organisational goals, as set out in its strategic plan, mission and vision. The performance of ECDoE educators can be improved through human capital development, skills development, and capacity building.

**Low Participation from the Educators.** The collected data established that low participation from educators was one of the challenges being faced by HRD officials during training and development programs. The HRD are working tirelessly in organising training workshops that would improve the skills and capacities of educators in the province. Skills training programmes are crucial in improving educators' skills, capacity and knowledge base, leading to improving learner results (Zindi & Sibanda, 2022: 3).

One of the participants expressed that: *As HRD officials, we organise expensive and skillful training workshops for our educators every year. Oooh! But to my surprise, only a few educators attended some of these training programmes. Some will be just sitting and busy playing candy crush and chatting on WhatsApp, which is very disheartening after spending much money on preparing and hiring trainers. Some educators sometimes decided not to attend at all and gave some excuses (P1).*

One participant reiterated that: *Our efforts in organising training workshops are futile and unrecognised by these educators. A large percentage of them do not show up for the training. For instance, we organise a workshop for 100 educators, and 40-50 educators chose not to attend. It defeats the purpose of skills development programmes after pumping vast amounts of money (P2).*

Another participant explained that: *The Department is committed to improving educators' performance by organising various workshops to equip them. But, the great challenge is that most educators can choose not to attend and do their personal business. In many training workshops, they start the training at 8 o'clock, most of the educators arrive at 9:30 am, and some choose not to attend at all, which is very worrying after all the efforts the ECDoE has made in organising these expensive workshops (P3).*

The quotations above show that low participation among educators affected the effective implementation of training programs in ECDoE. Most educators were absent during the training sessions, which made the training sessions futile. The social learning theory contends that social learning occurs through observation of other people's behaviour and runs directly counter to the principles when instructors choose not to participate in skill development programs. Specific situational acts are observed for their effects, and based on how those effects turn out, that behaviour is then imitated. People can learn which behaviours are typically praised in society and which are typically criticised in this way. Therefore, the researchers are encouraging all educators who have opportunities to attend training programs to utilise the available opportunities wisely and cascade the information to the ones who did not have the opportunity.

The Department should ensure skills development aligns with the participants' key performance areas and individual needs analysis. The results show that there is a need to research the training needs of the participants such that they are provided with valuable training which is beneficial to them and encourages them to attend training sessions. The ECDoE need to do much on individual needs analysis to organise relevant training programs for educators' skills development. Training programs should suit the training needs of employees and must contribute to skills acquisition and job performance. Skills development equips workers with the appropriate skills and expertise to perform their duties. By implementing skills development programs, the ECDoE can achieve the Departmental goals by putting skills development programs into practice. The skills development programs should be geared towards improving the skills of educators and knowledge acquisition of educators to enhance their performance through the teaching and learning process.

**Lack of Cooperation from the School-Based Support Teams.** The research findings showed that the school-based support team did not cooperate. To plan training based on the needs of each educator, the HRD officials contended that the school-based support team had not given them enough information about the analysis of educator training needs. The mission of the school-based support team is to advance inclusive education through leadership, general administration, curriculum delivery, resource distribution, identification, assessment, and removal of learning impediments.



One of participants pointed out that: *The lack of cooperation with our school-based support team is of great concern. If we call the districts regarding the training needs of educators, they will say they will compile the information and send it to us. Weeks can pass without receiving any information. Mmmm! This is really holding back the activities of HRD in regard to conducting workshops* (P4).

Another respondent opined that: *Communication breakdown among the ECDoE, district coordinators and school-based support team is of great concern. The Department is failing to get the much-needed information that is crucial towards capacitating and upgrading the skills and abilities of educators in the province* (P5).

Yet another participant was of the view that: *This sour relationship is very worrisome. We cannot rely only on the information from PMDS and IQMS; we also need the school-based support team to interact with educators regarding their training needs* (P1).

These verbatim *excerpts* expressly demonstrate that lack of cooperation from the school-based support team poses serious challenges to HRD officials in planning the training workshops for the educators. The Social learning theory improves institutional culture in an organisation while knowledge sharing in the workplace can increase task efficiency and organisational effectiveness (DeSimone, 2011: 70). To identify and eliminate barriers to learning, the school-based support teams performance play a critical role in supporting teachers and learners by consulting on classroom tactics, case management, and choices on resources within the school (Jay & Miller, 2016: 12). This includes among other things identifying skill deficiencies and being a mouthpiece between the school and the districts regarding training needs of educators.

Furthermore, HRD officials must clearly define the individual needs analysis of its employees to organise relevant training for them. Needs assessment is imperative since it assists an organisation in regulating the loopholes that are thwarting it from achieving its objectives. Kennedy (2022) mentions that it is essential for an organisation to know the areas in which it is performing well, and which areas need improvement, as this is critical for an organisation and those areas needing improvement for organisational continuity. A Training Needs Analysis (TNA) focuses on organisational purposes and aligns with employee development plan. It collects some reference information concerning the workforce's current situation and enables the Department to supply sufficient resources needed to execute their duties and achieve organisational objectives. In addition, a TNA helps pinpoint the necessary skills required for workers to perform their duties competently and creatively when executing such duties (Hsu, Chang & Hung, 2018).

**Inadequate Financial Resources for Skills Development Programs.** Most departments fail to achieve their objectives and targets due to lack of finance. For the past two years, the budget of ECDoE has been cut by the treasury, and this has limited the activities of the department in rendering efficient and effective service delivery (ECDoE Annual Report, 2019/20: 44). The ECDoE is struggling to meet its training needs to capacitate its educators due to budget deficit. The organisation of CPTD programs to enhance the performance of educators in the province is hampered by a lack of funding. Tuffour (2017: 11) made the case that there is an imbalance in the global economy, with too many low-skilled workers and insufficient skilled people, in support of this claim. Lack of access to trained labour could cause an organisation to become less competitive since they cannot benefit from lower unit prices and/or higher-quality products. Employees with the appropriate skill set are obviously in higher demand due to the skills deficit. Employers must arrange more training programs to provide workers with the appropriate skills they need to carry out their responsibilities to fill the open positions that require a specific level of knowledge (Bidwell et al., 2015: 9; Brymer et al., 2019; Adams, 2021).

The following were some of the prominent utterances captured during interviews: *The Department does not have money to organise as many training workshops as possible. Our budget is cut every year due to lack of finances and as a result, most organisational activities are put on hold. Yeah! With the little budget, we are trying to economise, and we are doing our best to conduct some training projects to upgrade the skills of our educators* (P3).

*Lack of finance to conduct training programs remains a thorn in the flesh. Every year, the Department allocates each directorate a budget to be spent on various departmental activities. As HRD, the budget is very small because we have many training programs to conduct. For instance, when we employ new interns, they must go for induction programs. On the other hand, educators need training on foundation Phase Subject Advisors, Primary School Reading Intervention Program (PSRIP) and training for General Education and Training (GET) and Further Education and Training (FET) teachers on Languages and Mathematics. The money is not enough* (P1).

*I am out of words to explain our financial challenges as HRD officials. The money allocated to us for skills development programs is not enough to train all educators in the province. We try our best to meet the training needs of our educators by selecting a few educators for training in each school so that they can cascade the skills to others (P5).*

Given the above verbatim experts, it can be deduced that the ECDoE cannot function well without the financial support to accomplish its objectives. The lack of teacher development programmes to provide educators with the necessary abilities to execute their professions might be connected to a shortage of skills among educators and low academic achievement.

**Lack of Monitoring and Evaluation of Training Programs.** Monitoring is a continuous procedure to ensure that the training program is on track and that the learning pace and material apply to all learner groups. The project/plan implementation is more successful and continues to be revised and updated due to the monitoring and evaluation processes. Follow-up sessions are crucial because they allow the management to assess the training programs and the trainees. The following utterances give credence to the lack of monitoring and evaluation of training.

*HRD must monitor and evaluate the training programs so that they can gauge whether they are bringing positive results or not. These training programs should be assessed with the set standards of the Department. Monitoring and evaluating programs identify areas that need improvement to achieve the expected results (P2).*

*The Department should implement monitoring and evaluation measures to assess the impact of the training on workers' performance. It can help the Department to stop wasting its financial resources on service providers that do not perform well. The Department must hire qualified trainees following the individual analysis of educators' needs (P4)*

The quotations above expressly demonstrate that ECDoE should implement monitoring and evaluation programs to track the performance of the implemented training programs. Monitoring and evaluation programs assist the Department in determining if the training initiatives are improving the performance of educators or are just a waste of money. Training programs should be implemented following the skills need analysis of the educators in those fields to improve educators' knowledge content, capacity, abilities, and performance.

**Outsourcing of the Training Programs.** The study revealed that outsourcing training programmes could be seen as a barrier that affects the effective execution of these training programmes. The HRD argued that it is challenging to find well-resourced and skilled service providers locally that would execute the skills development programmes, thus forcing the Department to acquire these from afar, and incurring costs since educators must travel to far off places offering teacher development program.

One respondent mentioned that: *Outsourcing training is very costly to the Department, but we have no choice; we end up hiring private service providers. The Department should raise this challenge to the Department of Basic Education; maybe it can intervene by providing National School of Government facilitators who are affordable (P4).*

Participant echoed H that: *With this budget cut from the Treasury, it becomes difficult to outsource training, but we have no choice since local service providers are scarce and difficult to locate (P3).*

Participant E stated that: *External organisations may not have a deep understanding of the local context, curriculum, or unique challenges faced by teachers in the Eastern Cape. This could result in training programs that do not fully address the specific needs and realities of the teachers and students in the region (P5).*

Another participant mentioned that: *The ECDoE should collaborate with locally based institutions such as the University of Fort Hare, Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University, Walter Sisulu University and Rhodes University in providing Funza Lushaka bursary to equip and upgrade the skills of educators with relevant quality skills. The Department must utilise all forms of training, such as training coaching, a community of practise and cascading approaches (P1).*

The Eastern Cape Department of Education should carefully evaluate the advantages, challenges, and potential risks when considering outsourcing training programs. It is essential to establish clear objectives, maintain strong communication channels, and actively monitor the quality and effectiveness of the outsourced programs to ensure they contribute to the professional development of teachers in the region.

**Limited Follow-up and Support.** Professional development programs need ongoing support and follow-up to ensure teachers can apply newly acquired knowledge and skills in their classrooms. Inadequate follow-up and support can result in a gap between training and actual classroom practice, diminishing the potential impact of the programs.

P5 stated that: *Without regular reinforcement and support, teachers may forget or neglect to use the knowledge and skills they acquired during professional development training. Follow-up activities, such as coaching, mentoring, or peer collaboration, can help sustain and deepen teachers' understanding and implementation of new practices (P5).*

P1 argued that: *Follow-up and support are critical components of effective professional development programs. Without ongoing support, the impact of training can diminish over time (P1).*

From the above views, it can be deduced that professional development programs introduce teachers to new strategies and techniques. However, teachers may struggle to apply these strategies effectively in their classrooms without follow-up and support. Ongoing support helps teachers translate their learning into practice and address any challenges. The ECDoE need to conduct classroom observations and feedback whereby trained facilitators or administrators observe teachers' implementation of new strategies and provide constructive feedback. This process helps to identify areas of improvement, reinforce effective practices, and ensure alignment with the goals of the professional development program.

**Lack of Coordination.** In South Africa, many departments struggle to provide the public with high-quality services due to ineffective planning and coordination. Since most public employees do not work together to undertake and manage departmental initiatives, a lack of coordination has led to irregular expenditure and overspending in many departments. For the transformation process to be successful, the activity of the key reform agencies and role-players must be well-coordinated (Danboeanu & Ramakers, 2018). This necessitates the creation of efficient coordination mechanisms as well as a collaborative work environment within the public sector. Mbaku (2020:18) argued that South Africa needs cooperative governance so that the national, provincial, and local administrations work together to deliver services to the populace when needed. All employees must participate in departmental initiatives and events to evaluate the services provided and offer ideas.

The following verbatim expression captures the essence of the challenge of coordination and its implications for implementing CPTDs in Eastern Cape schools:

*The big challenge in the department is lack of coordination, which affects the smooth running of the Departmental activities. Most departmental activities fail due to a lack of coordination and ubuntu among the people (P3). In some instances, those responsible for coordinating Departmental projects and activities lack the knowledge and capacity to coordinate and implement them. That big challenge needs urgent solutions and attention (P5). The failure of Departmental programs is sometimes caused by failure to accept change, recommendations, and new knowledge. Most individuals spearheading the implementation of Departmental projects and programs are adamant about change; they do not want to accept correction recommendations from different stakeholders (P1).*

Due to a lack of synchronisation and cooperation between the HRD and strategic planning divisions, the ECDoE's service delivery is inefficient. The department's ability to administer at all levels is being hampered, negatively impacting worker productivity. The ECDoE should always prioritise skill development programs to improve the performance of students and educators in the province. All educators should be given equal opportunities to attend training programs. The HRD officials and all top management officials must be active in the organisation and execution of skills development programs in the department. The ECDoE needs to motivate its educators to take skills development training more seriously by rewarding them when they have achieved pleasing results in their classes. The department should continuously venture into more competitive training programs to increase the performance of both learners and educators in the province. Regarding CPTD programs, the ECDoE must provide its educators with additional subject-specific knowledge and pedagogical skills to enhance the teaching and learning process.

## Conclusions and Recommendations

Table 3. Summary of Results and Recommendations

Challenge	Recommendations
Low participation of educators in the training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strict use of registers for attendance</li> <li>• Introduction of reporting back and feedback sessions at schools</li> </ul>
Lack of the school-based support teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effective communication channels between the Head Office, districts and schools should be implemented;</li> <li>• Strong relationships between Head Office, districts and schools should be strengthened;</li> <li>• Correct identification of individual needs analysis should be emphasized.</li> </ul>
Absence of a robust and comprehensive HRD strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Well-defined HRD strategy;</li> <li>• Clarifying the function of the HR team, determining the size, structure, and cost of the resources needed to deliver training programs;</li> <li>• HRD must be adequately skilled and knowledgeable.</li> </ul>
Lack of monitoring and evaluation of training programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• implement M&amp;E programs to assess the impact of training;</li> <li>• giving educators assessment at the end of each training sessions.</li> </ul>
Lack of finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• allocate enough resources such as finance towards skills development programs of employees;</li> <li>• ECDoE to liaise with the national government in the sharing of the national budget;</li> <li>• seeking funding from external stakeholders;</li> <li>• prioritizing the most important training.</li> </ul>

Source: Compiled by the authors

The available results showed that there are several challenges being faced by the HRD when implementing the CPTD programs to improve the performance of educators. Study findings revealed that low participation of educators in the training and development programs hinders the efforts of the HRD in implementing skills development programs. Matsepe and Maluleke (2019: 170) pointed out that it is more worrying that most of educators are not taking skills development programs very seriously resulting in low pass rates in the province. Most of the educators are not valuing the importance of training thereby making it futile (Laskowska & Dańska-Borsiak, 2016: 67). Social learning theory posts that it is crucial to observe, imitate, and mimic other people's behaviors, attitudes, and emotional responses. It also considers the complex interactions between environmental and cognitive factors that affect how people learn and behave. People make decisions based on their own reflection, but their environment has the biggest impact on how they act and develop. To replicate the great behavior that will result in the achievement of the ECDoE objectives as outlined in the Strategic plan, educators must make sense of and internalise what they observe. Therefore, cognitive processes are essential because educators need to interpret and internalize what they see to replicate the outstanding conduct. The ECDoE is recommended to use attendance registers during training programs to track the attendance of educators. Strict reporting and feedback sessions should be introduced by the ECDoE where educators are supposed report back the trainings they have attended.

Ineffective communication between the school-based support teams is a barrier to implementing effective training programs. When putting training programs to increase educators' abilities into place, HRD was having some issues because of the lack of collaboration from these teams. Principals are obliged to ensure that the training needs of educators are prioritized in their schools and must meet the requirements of individuals' job content to improve educator performance and accomplish departmental goals (Chadwick, 2017: 509). Identifying the disparity or "gap" between expected and actual performance is the primary goal of needs analysis (Blau, Shamir-Inbal, & Malka, 2019). When there is a discrepancy, a practical needs analysis will identify the causes of the difference before considering the best approaches to close the gap.

Results show that a major barrier to implementing CTPD programmes in Eastern Cape schools is the absence of a robust and comprehensive HRD strategy. The HRD strategy is the most crucial component that must be properly implemented to meet the employees' training requirements. The HRD strategy specifies how the HR process will function, how to ensure it functions, and how to help the institution reach its goal. According to Wang et al. (2017: 1172), after the strategy has been established, it will serve as the basis for how the HR department plans to operate at all levels. Clarifying the function of the HR team, determining the size, structure, and cost of the resources needed to deliver training programs, and ensuring that all HR activity is in line with departmental goals are all aspects of a well-defined HRD strategy (Wilson, 2016: 273). The Social Learning theory gives the ECDoE guidance on how to carry out training initiatives and efficiently implement HRD outcomes. The HRD must be adequately skilled and knowledgeable to create and carry out HRD programs that will enhance HRD impacts and outcomes. According to Thwala (2015: 20), HRD officials must

have a solid grasp of the fundamental ideas of social learning theory to help them organise training programs and enhance educators' abilities (DeSimone, 2011: 70).

Study findings determined a lack of monitoring and evaluation of training programmes as a challenge in implementing CPTD programs in the Eastern Cape schools. The ECDoE must implement M&E programmes to assess the impact of training on educators. It can do its evaluations by giving the educators some tests to write at the end of each training session or by giving educators evaluation forms to assess the trainees by giving them scores and comments at the end of every training workshop. A crucial part of the review process is monitoring. To make sure a program is on track and that the pace and substance of learning stay relevant to any set of educators, monitoring is viewed as an endless activity (Wolf & Floyd, 2017: 23). The purpose of evaluating a training program is to determine whether the training was practical in accomplishing its intended aims. The results of future training can be significantly improved by reviewing the training event using the correct evaluation tools.

The results showed that the major obstacle to implementing the CPTD programmes in Eastern Cape schools was a lack of funding. A study conducted by Vasantham (2015) showed that inadequately trained employees are likely to experience poor job performance and increased stress levels. The lack of training programmes in the ECDoE is mainly attributed to a shortage of finance to implement training programmes (Kennedy, 2022). Therefore, ECDoE must allocate enough resources, such as finance, towards employee skills development programmes. There is a need for ECDoE to liaise with the national government to share the national budget to assist in the organisation of training programmes to improve employee performance. The Department should partner with other organisations, such as Non-Governmental Organisations and other stakeholders, to complement its funds to help execute training programmes. More importantly, the ECDoE should also implement fundraising projects to supplement its budget towards CPTD programmes of its personnel. The Department can utilise less expensive ways of training like on-the-job training and cascading training models.

To fulfil the departmental goals outlined in the strategic plan, the ECDoE still requires properly prepared educators with the requisite competencies to compete in international marketplaces. Shortage of skills and knowledge among educators is caused by a lack of trainees, autonomy and finance to implement skills development programmes. The CPTD programs have been seen as a panacea to address these challenges that the education sector faces, thus increasing equal training opportunities for educators in the country. Implementing Skills Development programs is seen as a positive step towards attaining the objectives of the departmental strategic plan. Human resources development is significant because it invests in employees, resulting in stronger and more effective personnel. When an organisation develops their workers, they are strengthening their human capital and making these employees become more valuable. The ECDoE must implement monitoring and evaluation programmes to assess the impact of training programs. The main purpose of evaluating a training programme is to gain a deep knowledge of whether it has achieved or failed its objectives. Analysing the training event using appropriate evaluation tools can improve future training outcomes to a considerable extent. Future studies should investigate the effectiveness of HRD strategy in improving teacher performance in matric classes and the challenges educators face in teaching new curriculums.

**Author Contributions:** Conceptualization: Beauty Zindi & Modeni M. Sibanda; methodology: Beauty Zindi; software: Beauty Zindi; validation: Beauty Zindi; formal analysis: Beauty Zindi; investigation: Beauty Zindi; resources: Modeni M. Sibanda; data curation: Beauty Zindi; writing-original draft preparation: Beauty Zindi; writing-review and editing: Modeni M. Sibanda; visualization: Beauty Zindi; supervision: Modeni M. Sibanda; project administration: Modeni M. Sibanda.

**Conflicts of Interest:** Authors declare no conflict of interest.

**Data Availability Statement:** Not applicable.

**Informed Consent Statement:** Not applicable.

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