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A Decent Work-Needs-Professional Development Model: A Case of Rural Teachers at Raymond Mhlaba Local Municipality in the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa.



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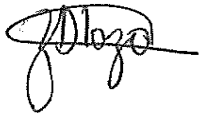
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DECLARATIONS

I, Zikhona Dlaza, student number 201704716, hereby declare that this dissertation entitled “A Decent Work-Needs-Professional Development Model: A Case of Rural Teachers at Raymond Mhlaba Local Municipality in the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa is my work and all the sources I have used have been indicated and acknowledged through complete references. Ethical clearance to conduct this research has been obtained from the University Research Ethics Committee. I have followed the University’s policy on plagiarism and taken every precaution to comply with the regulations.

Signature:



Date: 15 November 2024



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- I thank God for carrying me throughout this journey. It was not easy, but it would have been worse without Him.
- To my supervisors, Professors Willie Chinyamurindi and Katharina Chudzikowski, thank you very much for guiding me and being patient.
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ABSTRACT

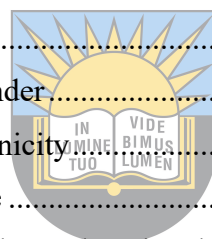
This study aims to test a decent work, needs-professional development model of rural teachers to determine the effect of decent work on teacher professional development. Specifically, the study explores the role of need satisfaction (i.e., survival, social contribution, and self-determination) in the relationship between decent work and rural teacher's professional development. Rural teachers face distinct challenges that are unique to their environment. These challenges stem from several sources linked to impoverishment, lack of resources, isolation, and overcrowded classrooms. Subsequently, this determines the degree to which teachers participate in professional development activities that impact the provision of quality education. Therefore, this study seeks to understand how improving work conditions (decent work) can influence teachers' professional growth in these settings. Data was collected through a self-administered questionnaire from a sample of 330 rural teachers in Raymond Mhlaba Municipality, located in the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa. The study analysed the data using structural equation modelling (SEM). The results of the SEM indicated that decent work has a positive but non-significant effect on teacher professional development. Moreover, decent work positively and significantly predicted the needs satisfaction of rural teachers. Survival need satisfaction mediated the effect of decent work on rural teachers' professional development, while social contribution and self-determination need satisfaction had no significant mediating effect. The findings of this study suggest that the more the rural teachers perceive their work as decent and feel that their survival needs are fulfilled, the more they participate in teacher professional development activities. Furthermore, the study extends the literature on the antecedents of teacher professional development, and the results can offer some implications. Specifically, it can guide policymakers in developing targeted interventions to address the specific challenges that rural teachers face and impact their access to professional development programmes. Practitioners and educational stakeholders can use the study's findings to advocate for the work conditions that fulfil the needs of rural teachers as a strategy to enhance teaching practices and career development prospects. In the epilogue, this study is critical because it highlights the importance of addressing decent work conditions that fulfil the needs of rural teachers as a strategy to enhance their professional development.

Table of Contents

DECLARATIONS.....	i
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	ii
ABSTRACT.....	iii
CHAPTER 1	1
INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND	1
1. Chapter Overview	1
1.1. Introduction and Background of the Study	2
1.1.1. The rural dimension of TPD in South Africa.....	5
1.2. Problem Statement	7
1.3. Research objectives	7
1.4. Research hypotheses	8
1.5. The significance of the study	8
1.6. An overview of the theoretical framework	9
1.7. An overview of the methodology.....	10
1.11. Chapter Outline.....	12
CHAPTER TWO	14
LITERATURE REVIEW ON DECENT WORK.....	14
2. Introduction.....	14
2.1. The Psychology of Working Theory.....	14
2.1.1. The Origin of PWT	14
2.1.2. Core tenets of PWT	16
2.1.3. Predictors of decent work	17
2.1.4. Moderators of decent work	19
2.1.5. Outcomes of decent work	20
2.1.6. Needs satisfaction as a mediator of decent work	22
2.2. The Self-Determination Theory	24
2.2.1. The origin and core tenets of SDT.....	24
2.3. The conceptualisation of decent work.....	26
2.3.1. Measurements of decent work	28
2.3.2. Components of Decent Work Scale	30
2.3.3. Decent work on the Agenda for Sustainable Development.....	33
2.3.4 Decent Work and Economic Growth in the Covid-19 Pandemic Era	36
2.4. The overview of decent work.....	39
2.5. Conclusion.....	41
CHAPTER THREE	42

LITERATURE REVIEW ON TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	42
3. Introduction.....	42
3.1. The Sociocultural Theory.....	42
3.1.1. The origin and tenets.....	42
3.1.2. Teacher professional development within Sociocultural Theory	44
3.2. Teacher Professional Development.....	48
3.2.1. Categories of Teacher Professional Development.....	49
3.2.2. Teacher professional development from a global perspective.....	51
3.2.3. Implementation of Teacher Professional Development in South Africa	53
3.2.4. Characteristics of effective TPD	56
3.2.5. The factors that influence teachers' participation in TPD.....	58
3.3. Conclusion.....	60
CHAPTER FOUR.....	61
DECENT WORK, NEEDS SATISFACTION AND TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	61
4. Introduction.....	61
4.1. The overview of work in South Africa.....	61
4.2. Government policies in promoting Decent work	62
4.3. Decent Work in the public and private sector	64
4.4. Decent Work in the Teaching Profession.....	65
4.5. The effects of decent work on Teacher Professional Development.....	67
4.6. Decent work on needs satisfaction.....	68
4.7. Needs Satisfaction and Teacher Professional Development	69
4.7. Needs satisfaction as a mediator between decent work and professional development.....	70
4.8. Conceptual Framework	71
4.19. Conclusion.....	72
CHAPTER FIVE	73
RESEARCH DESIGN & METHODOLOGY	73
5. Introduction	73
5.1. Research Paradigm.....	73
5.2. Research Approaches.....	74
5.3. Research designs.....	74
5.4. Population	75
5.5. Sampling Method.....	76
5.6. Research instrument.....	77
5.6.1. Decent Work	78

5.6.2. Needs Satisfaction	79
5.6.3. Teacher Professional Development.....	80
5.7. Method of Data Collection.....	80
5.8. Method of Data Analysis	81
5.8.1. Reliability and validity of the instrument.....	81
5.8.2. Descriptive and inferential analysis	82
5.9. Ethical Considerations	83
5.10. Conclusion	84
CHAPTER SIX.....	85
DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS	85
6. Introduction.....	85
6.1 Validity and Reliability Analysis.....	86
6.1.1 Factor and reliability analysis for needs satisfaction (Mediating variables).....	86
6.1.2 Factor and reliability analysis for decent work (Independent variable).....	89
6.1.3 Factor and reliability analysis for teacher professional development (Dependent variable).....	91
6.2 Demographic data of respondents.....	94
6.2.1 Percentage distribution by gender.....	95
6.2.2 Percentage distribution by ethnicity.....	96
6.2.3 Percentage distribution by age	97
6.2.4 Percentage distribution by highest educational qualifications	97
6.2.5 Percentage distribution by employment status.....	98
6.2.6 Percentage distribution by position within the organisation	99
6.2.7 Percentage distribution by type of school	100
6.2.8 Percentage distribution by incentive for continuous professional development activities	100
6.3 Descriptive analysis of major theoretical variables and constructs	101
6.4 Friedman's two-way ANOVA tests for establishing dominant factors	102
6.4.1 Friedman's two-way ANOVA tests for needs satisfaction constructs	102
6.4.2 Friedman's two-way ANOVA tests for decent work constructs.....	103
6.4.3 Friedman's two-way ANOVA tests for professional development constructs	104
6.5 Mean comparisons of major theoretical variables by demographic characteristics	106
6.5.1 The independent sample T-Test mean comparisons by gender	106
6.5.2 The independent sample T-Test mean comparisons by ethnicity	106
6.5.3 The non-parametric Kruskal-Wallis mean comparisons by age	107
6.5.4 The non-parametric Kruskal-Wallis mean comparisons by highest educational qualifications	108



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Together in Excellence

6.5.5 The non-parametric Kruskal-Wallis mean comparisons by position	108
6.6 Correlation analysis	109
6.7 Hypotheses testing using structural equation modelling in AMOS.....	110
6.7.1 Full measurement model	110
6.7.2 Full measurement model	113
6.7.3 Hypothesis testing for the direct predictive effects	115
6.7.4 Hypothesis testing for the mediation hypotheses	124
6.8. Conclusion	129
CHAPTER SEVEN	130
DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	130
7. Introduction.....	130
7.1. Discussion.....	131
7.1.1. Decent work on rural teacher's professional development	131
7.1.2. The relationship between decent work, needs satisfaction and teacher professional development	133
7.1.3. The mediating effect of needs satisfaction on decent work and teacher professional development	134
7.2. Contribution of the study	135
7.2.1. Model for Decent Work on Rural Teachers	135
7.2.2. Theoretical Implications.....	137
7.2.3. Practical Implications.....	137
7.3. Limitations and directions for future research	139
7.4. Conclusion	140
References.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Model fit indices summary of the most important parameters and their accepted values according to the literature	86
Table 2: The needs satisfaction confirmatory factor analysis and internal consistency output	88
Table 3: The goodness-of-fit measures assessment for the needs satisfaction model	88
Table 4: Decent work confirmatory factor analysis and internal consistency output.....	90
Table 5: The goodness-of-fit measures assessment for decent work measurement model.	91
Table 6: Professional development confirmatory factor analysis and internal consistency output.	93

Table 7: The goodness-of-fit measures assessment for the professional development measurement model.	93
Table 8: Descriptive summary of demographic variables	94
Table 9: Summary of descriptive statistics of main variables.	102
Table 10: Related samples Friedman's two-way ANOVA by ranks for needs satisfaction constructs.	103
Table 11: Friedman's two-way ANOVA pairwise comparisons for needs satisfaction constructs.	103
Table 12: Related samples Friedman's two-way ANOVA by ranks for decent work constructs.	104
Table 13: Pairwise results for the Friedman's two-way ANOVA pairwise comparisons for decent work constructs.	104
Table 14: Related samples Friedman's two-way ANOVA by ranks for professional development constructs.	105
Table 15: Pairwise results for the Friedman's two-way ANOVA pairwise comparisons for professional development constructs.	105
Table 16: Summary mean levels with respective independent samples T-Test mean comparisons for major theoretical variables by gender.	106
Table 17: Summary mean levels with respective independent samples T-Test mean comparisons for major theoretical variables by ethnicity.	106
Table 18: Summary of the independent-samples Kruskal-Wallis test for differences of the mean rankings of social contribution needs satisfaction by age.	107
Table 19: Summary of the independent-samples Kruskal-Wallis test for differences of the mean rankings of decent work by age.	107
Table 20: Summary of the independent-samples Kruskal-Wallis test for differences of the mean rankings of self-determination needs satisfaction by highest educational qualifications.	108
Table 21: Summary of the independent-samples Kruskal-Wallis test for differences of the mean rankings of self-determination needs satisfaction by position within the organisation.	108
Table 22: Summary of the independent-samples Kruskal-Wallis test for differences of the mean rankings of decent work by position within the organisation.	109
Table 23: Pearson correlation coefficients (r) for relations between the various main theoretical variables.	110
Table 24: The goodness-of-fit measures assessment for the full measurement model.	111
Table 25: The goodness-of-fit indices assessment for the structural model.	115
Table 26: Structural equation estimates and bootstrapped 95% bias-corrected confidence intervals for the regression weights for the influence of decent work on professional development.	116

Table 27: Structural equation estimates and bootstrapped 95% bias-corrected confidence intervals for the regression weights for the influence of decent work on survival needs satisfaction.	117
Table 28: Structural equation estimates and bootstrapped 95% bias-corrected confidence intervals for the regression weights for the influence of decent work on social contribution needs satisfaction.	118
Table 29: Structural equation estimates and bootstrapped 95% bias-corrected confidence intervals for the regression weights for the influence of decent work on self-determination needs satisfaction.	119
Table 30: Structural equation estimates and bootstrapped 95% bias-corrected confidence intervals for the regression weights for the influence of survival needs satisfaction on professional development.	120
Table 31: Structural equation estimates and bootstrapped 95% bias-corrected confidence intervals for the regression weights for the influence of social contribution needs satisfaction on professional development.	121
Table 32: Structural equation estimates and bootstrapped 95% bias-corrected confidence intervals for the regression weights for the influence of self-determination needs satisfaction on professional development.	122
Table 33: Summary results for the hypotheses testing for the direct predictive effects.	123
Table 34: Mediation effects and respective path estimates to determine the mediating effect of survival needs satisfaction on the relationship between decent work and professional development.	125
Table 35: Mediation effects and respective path estimates to determine the mediating effect of social contribution needs satisfaction on the relationship between decent work and professional development.	127
Table 36: Mediation effects and respective path estimates to determine the mediating effect of self-determination needs satisfaction on the relationship between decent work and professional development.	128
Table 37: Summary results for the mediating effect hypotheses.	129

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: The path diagram for the CFA measurement model for needs satisfaction	88
Figure 2: The path diagram for the measurement model of decent work	90
Figure 3: The path diagram for confirmatory factor analysis of the professional development scale.....	93
Figure 4: Percentage distribution by gender	96
Figure 5: Distribution by ethnicity.....	96
Figure 6: Percentage distribution by age	97
Figure 7: Distribution by highest educational qualifications.....	98

Figure 8: Distribution by employment status.....	98
Figure 9: Distribution by position within the organisation.....	99
Figure 10: Distribution by school	100
Figure 11: Distribution by incentive for continuous professional development activities	100
Figure 12: The path diagram for confirmatory factor analysis of the full measurement model.	112
Figure 13: The path diagram for the structural model.	114
Figure 14: The summary conceptual model for direct effects.	124

ACRONYMS

AVE- Average Variance Extracted

BPNT- Basic Psychological Need Theory

CC- Critical Consciousness

CFA - Confirmatory Factor Analysis

CPTD- Continuing Professional Teacher Development

CR- Composite Reliability

DA- Dynamic Approach

DAS- Development Appraisal System

DBE- Department of Basic Education

DoE- Department of Education

DHET- Department of Higher Education and Training

DWA- Decent Work Agenda

DWCP- Decent Work Country Programme

DWQ- Decent Work Questionnaire

DWS- Decent Work Scale

EU- European Union

ECDOE-Eastern Cape Department of Education

GDDE- Gauteng Department of Economic Development

LGBT- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender

ILO- International Labour Organization

IQMS- Integrated Quality Management System



ISPFTED- Integrated Strategic Planning Framework for Teacher Education and Development

MDGs- Millennium Development Goals

MEC- Member of the Executive Council

NPFTED- National Policy Framework for Teacher Education and Development

OHS- Occupational Health Services

PCK- Pedagogical Content Knowledge

PLC- Professional Learning Community

PM- Performance Management

POPIA- Protection of Personal Information Act

PWF- Psychology of Working Framework

PWT- Psychology of Working Theory

SACE- South African Council of Educators

SADC - Southern African Development Community

SDGs- Sustainable Development Goals

SCT- Sociocultural Theory

SDT- Self-Determination Theory

SEM- Structural Equation Model

STEM- Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths

TPD- Teacher Professional Development

TPDWS- Teacher Professional Development at Work Survey

UN- United Nations

UNDP- United Nations Development Programme

UREC- University of Fort Hare Research Ethics Committee

WNSS- Work Need Satisfaction Scale

WOPP- Work, Organisational and Personnel Psychology

WSE- Whole School Evaluation

ZPD- Zone of Proximal Development



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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1. Chapter Overview

This chapter sets the scene by first highlighting the importance of work in people's lives. Work is regarded as a crucial activity for human survival, allowing cultural development, professional fulfilment, and the satisfaction of the needs of life (Blustein, 2019). Alongside the idea of work is decent work, which involves ensuring that men and women can work productively, have equal rights, and have a safe work-based environment (International Labour Organisation, 2012). Decent work ensures that all employees are entitled to basic workplace conditions (Blustein et al., 2023), even though the significance of decent work may be linked to the subjective experiences of how significant and valuable people find their work to be (Both-Nwabuwe et al., 2017; Martela, Gómez et al., 2021; Martela & Pessi, 2018). Decent work has set a precedent in determining the quality of work-life (Allan et al., 2021) by addressing all work-related issues (Ferraro et al., 2021a). Moreover, decent work promotes factors that are to be cultivated in navigating contextual constraints that may impede career-decision making and career development (Duffy et al., 2022; Kenny et al., 2022; Zammiti et al., 2021). As a result, it has become a topic of interest among scholars and practitioners in recent years due to growing concerns about how work should be experienced.

In this introductory chapter, the introduction and background to the study acknowledge the significance of decent work in addressing all aspects of work life, particularly highlighting the importance of decent work in one's life. The focus is on understanding the impact of decent work on the career pathing of teachers working in rural schools. Thaba-Nkadimene et al. (2022) stated that there is an education crisis in South Africa's rural schools that is linked to challenges associated with work conditions and neglect of career development for teachers. These challenges affect teachers role as change agents in implementing inclusive education in rural schools (Themane & Thobejane, 2019). To implement this educational change successfully, it is important to prioritise the knowledge and teaching skills needed to educate learners effectively.

Therefore, this chapter discusses work within the context of teaching in rural schools in South Africa. Mapping from the wide recognition of decent work in addressing all aspects of work, it will be interesting to understand its dynamics in assisting rural teachers in navigating their call of duty. Moreover, the researcher has observed that there is a limited number of studies that specifically examine teachers' working conditions based on the criteria of decent work

(Çolakoğlu & Toygar, 2021; Koekermoer & Masenga, 2023). The problem statement, research question, objectives and rationale of the study are provided in this chapter. The study offers definitions of key concepts used in the study, a brief overview of the study's theoretical framework, and an overview of the methodology adopted. At the end of the chapter, the organisation of the thesis is presented.

1.1.Introduction and Background of the Study

As a central feature in people's lives, work represents a primary source of identity, meaning, and belongingness for today's employees (Lips-Wiersma, Haar et al., 2020; Wang & Xu, 2019). Through work, individuals can fulfil their human needs and access adequate financial resources that contribute to their physical and mental health, personal control, and a sense of purpose (Eshelman & Rottinghaus, 2019). Research positions work as a mechanism that improves the quality of living by lifting people out of poverty (Carr et al., 2018; Searle & McWha-Hermann, 2021). The International Labour Organisation (ILO) noted that work protects and promotes human rights by offering freedom, equity, safety, and human dignity (ILO, 2008). Those who work find meaning, fulfilment, and growth through work and work-related contexts. Given the meaningful and balanced life that work provides, it is crucial for all employees to have full access to work that ensures their rights to survival, personal well-being, and social well-being (Blustein et al., 2019). They should have access to a work environment that offers opportunities for both personal and professional growth, allowing them to engage in productive and fulfilling activities (Ferraro et al., 2018).

While acknowledging the significance of work in people's livelihoods, it is common for individuals to work under conditions that hinder their ability to live fulfilling lives. The rapid pace of innovation, advanced production methods, and technological advancements have impacted how people experience work worldwide (ILO, 2018; Hirschi, 2018; Xu et al., 2018). Consequently, many employed individuals are unable to meet the minimum requirements for adequate living conditions (Olabiyi, 2022). In effect, advancements in the 21st century have resulted in the increase of physically and psychologically insecure working conditions. These conditions have a negative impact on the well-being of both individuals and society (Blustein et al., 2019; Duffy et al., 2021). Over the years, scholars have increasingly focused on studying the effects of unfavourable workplace conditions on the health and well-being of workers (Di Fabio et al., 2016; Kalleberg & Vallas, 2018; Vallas & Christin, 2018). These studies have created a clear and compelling pathway for current scholars to continuously promote healthy work environments. The ILO (2018) has underscored the critical need to address the context of work conditions, asserting that merely providing jobs does not resolve the underlying

challenges associated with labour conditions. Instead, there is an urgent need for improvements in work conditions.

The concept of decent work has been gaining considerable traction in recent years as an aspirational statement about the context of work and conditions (Di Fabio & Kenny, 2019; Dodd et al., 2019; Duffy et al., 2017; Masdonati et al., 2019; Nam & Kim, 2019; Ribeiro et al., 2019; Vignoli et al., 2020). The ILO introduced the concept of decent work as a crucial element in empowering marginalised individuals and promoting sustainable development (ILO, 1999). It is grounded on the ILO's proposal to respond to universal human needs and express people's aspirations in their working lives (Dos Santos, 2019; ILO, 2018). The decent work concept has been accepted to address all aspects of work, including those that extend beyond the satisfaction of survival needs (Çolakoğlu & Toygar, 2021; Tchonda et al., 2020). According to the ILO (2016), decent work is a job that provides job security and social protection for employees, fair income, personal development and social cohesion, equal opportunities for women and men, and participation in the decision making. Decent work consists of psychological, economic, and contextual factors that contribute to individuals' career development (Buyukgoze-Kavas & Autin, 2019; Duffy et al., 2017; Duffy et al., 2019; Işık et al., 2019).

Since the publication of the Decent Work Agenda (DWA) in 2008, research in various fields endorsing the efforts of the ILO to mainstream decent work intensified (Bangura et al., 2022; Fabry et al., 2022; Maree, 2017; Mehta, 2016; Winchenbach et al., 2019). These studies specifically advocated for inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all (Frey, 2017). In light of the growing interest in promoting decent work as a human right, some scholars suggested a psychosocial understanding of the concept and characteristics of decent work (Blustein et al., 2016; Di Fabio & Kenny, 2016; Guichard, 2013). This enables a more subjective understanding of the components of decent work. Some studies have noted that decent work offers the opportunity to develop professionalism and productivity (Tchonda et al., 2020). Others have noted that engaging in interesting tasks, having the opportunity to grow, and enjoying employment security are key components of decent work (Blustein et al., 2016; Masdonati et al., 2019). Several scholars have also found that decent work is associated with general well-being, mental and physical health, and work fulfilment (Blustein et al., 2019; Chinyamurindi et al., 2023; Dodd et al., 2019; Duffy et al., 2019, 2021; Ferraro et al., 2018).

Despite the significant role that decent work plays in individuals' lives (Cooke et al., 2019), there are few studies directly examining decent work among teachers, especially those based

in rural settings (Atitsogbe et al., 2021; Çolakoğlu & Toygar, 2021). Studies note that access to decent work and its impact concern all employees within the public and private services in an organisational setting (Kazima et al., 2020). This study focuses on the teaching profession, which is classified as part of the public service (Barling et al., 2009). The South African public service is noted to be in a state of flux (Fihla & Chinyamurindi, 2018), with employees being the most affected.

The South African education system has undergone numerous policy changes since 1994 to shed the system of the remnants of the apartheid education system. By implication, teachers are to play a huge role in implementing these policies and transformation (Okeke & Mtyuda, 2017). Over the past two decades, several policy frameworks in South Africa have sought to regulate and evaluate teaching practices (Kimathi & Rusznyak, 2018). In so doing, the South African education policy and the Department of Basic Education (DBE) have called for the formation of professional support for teachers and the need for accessibility of enhanced professional development opportunities at the local level (DBE, 2017). A study by Sancar et al. (2021) supported the formation of enhanced professional development received by teachers to improve and extend their knowledge and skills, teaching content, methods and approaches.

Professional development refers to the ongoing process of continuous professional learning in the workplace, focusing on enhancing skills, knowledge, and competencies (Evers et al., 2016 a,b; Jansen in de Wal et al., 2020). This process is particularly important for teachers, as it starts during their initial teacher education program and continues throughout their careers. Various factors, such as educational reforms, school environments, curricula, collaborations, and support activities, contribute to this ongoing learning process (Sancar et al., 2021). In South Africa, teachers participate in various professional development workshops and in-service training throughout their careers (Abakah et al., 2022). Through these teacher-professional development (TPD) processes, teachers acquire effective classroom practices that have a positive impact on student learning and outcomes (Sancar et al., 2021). It is widely acknowledged that TPD is a continuous learning process that teachers engage in to enhance their professional competencies (Njenga, 2023). This development is essential for improving the quality of education and boosting learner's academic performance (Hursen & Islek, 2017; Joubert & Hay, 2019; Tack et al., 2018; Tack & Vanderlinde, 2019). Due to its significant role, continuing professional development is central to many educational reforms and initiatives aimed at ensuring quality education (Abakah, 2019).

Nevertheless, there is minimal reporting on the positive outcomes of progressive policies that aim to enhance TPD in South Africa (Hasha & Wadesango, 2020; Raluswinga, 2018). Studies

note that their implementation is hampered by overwhelming challenges (Bernadine, 2019; Budeli et al., 2022; Mamabolo et al., 2022) that stem from teachers' attitudes and the conditions of their work environment. Much of the existing literature indicates that some of these policies have no effect on developing and enhancing TPD (Johns & Sosibo, 2019; Mamabolo et al., 2022; Mollo, 2022). Although many education laws and policies regulate and guide TPD in South Africa, these laws and policies have not yet been translated into practice (Mollo, 2022). Research still shows that professional development has not been able to change teachers' classroom practices and that teachers are mostly dissatisfied with the professional development offered to them (Mphahla et al., 2021; Nakidien et al., 2022; Zide & Mokhele, 2018).

Furthermore, research indicates that most existing TPD programmes do not adequately address the professional needs of teachers (Ajani, 2020; Dlamini & Mbatha, 2018; Gumbo, 2020). Teachers do not frequently participate in these programmes, citing inconvenient timing for training and workshops (Chigonga & Mutodi, 2019; Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; Gumbo, 2020) and a lack of awareness of reflective teaching practices (Lamb, 2017; Van et al., 2022). The non-compliance with such interventions is rooted in the misalignment between schools' goals and the professional development needs of teachers (Lushaba & Proches, 2022). Nakidien et al. (2022) concluded that the context and internal dynamics of the school significantly influence the implementation of TPD practices.

The South African education system still has significant gaps in terms of TPD. The gap is even more evident in rural school contexts (Mphahla et al., 2021). Ramnarain and Hlatwayo (2018) confirmed that the education system in rural environments in SA is not at par with the education systems in other regions. As such, Mpahla and Okeke (2015b) suggested that the TPD needs in rural schools should be addressed differently.

1.1.1. The rural dimension of TPD in South Africa

Rural areas in South Africa are characterised as impoverished (Zulu, 2021). These areas often have limited access to services and quality education, low population density, low levels of economic activity (resulting in high poverty and unemployment rates), and inadequate infrastructure (DBE, 2017). Teachers in rural schools work under unique conditions that reflect the inequalities within the education system (Hartell & Steyn, 2019; Nkambule & Amsterdam, 2018). Kubow (2018) argues that the unequal South African schooling system is evident through geographical demarcation, citizen well-being and knowledge preference. The Draft Rural Policy (DBE, 2017) confirms the division within the school system in South Africa. Schools in rural areas are often associated with isolation, disconnection, shame, distrust, and a lack of development. As a result, rural teachers perceive their schools as unsafe and uninviting

as they become more vulnerable to work-related stress and burnout (Asoba & Mefi, 2020; Mohangi et al., 2016; Okeke & Mtyuda, 2017; Rothmann & Redelinghuys, 2020). Subsequently, rural schools continue to offer and experience substandard education compared to their urban counterparts (Myende & Hlalele, 2018).

In South Africa, rural schools face numerous contextual and organisational challenges that negatively impact the provision of quality education (Mohangi et al., 2016; Mokoena & Hlalele, 2021; Okeke & Mtyuda, 2017; du Plessis & Mestry, 2019; Shikalepo, 2020). Challenges related to a lack of resources, overcrowded classrooms, isolation, and the failure to implement education policy frameworks successfully (du Plessis & Letshwene, 2020; Hartell & Steyn, 2019; Mpahla & Makena, 2020) negatively impact the provision and execution of quality education in rural schools. They limit the effectiveness of TPD (Ajani, 2021b; Ngema, 2021; Osman & Kriek, 2021). These challenges hinder those responsible for supporting, monitoring, evaluating, and managing TPD programmes from performing their duties effectively (Ajibade & Bertram, 2020). Consequently, they struggle to adhere to the principles outlined in these policy frameworks (Sigudla, 2019).

An unsupportive environment (Zilka et al., 2022), poor planning and monitoring of policy frameworks (Zide & Mokhele, 2018), and neglect by the DBE (Thaba et al., 2022) all have a negative impact on TPD. The low pass rates, poor quality of teaching and learning, and lack of teacher participation in professional development activities all indicate the failure to implement and manage TPD programs effectively (John, 2019; Mabena et al., 2021; Roux & Sakala, 2020). This calls for the need to understand and address factors that affect teachers' delivery of adequate knowledge (Thornhill & Van Dijk, 2018) and inhibit the effective implementation of TPD activities (du Plessis & Letshwene, 2020; Mpahla & Makena, 2020).

Limited literature emphasises the importance of recognising and promoting teacher needs (Harris & Jones, 2017). Much of the research on professional development experienced by teachers today still fails to connect with their everyday needs and satisfactions. Instead, studies conclude that the work environment affects how teachers experience work and professional development (Admiraal et al., 2016; Czerniawski et al., 2017; Mokoena & Hlalele, 2021; Rothmann et al., 2019). This implies that, for teachers to benefit from professional development, attention must be given to both environmental factors and the satisfaction of rural teachers' needs (Saleem, 2020).

1.2. Problem Statement

Over the years, the DBE has introduced policies and interventions that prioritise education quality for all schools by implementing TPD. The aim was to improve learner-teacher practices and learners' academic performances (DBE, 2017). The South African education system has undergone constant curricular changes in the aftermath of apartheid, which increased the need for teachers to engage in continuous TPD (Bernadine, 2019; Nkambule & Amsterdam, 2018). However, despite several reforms and approaches to implementing TPD, studies indicate that the South African education system is still in crisis due to the ineffectiveness of TPD in classroom practices (Mpahla et al., 2021; Thaba-Nkadimene et al., 2022). Emerging evidence indicates that teachers in rural schools do not find professional development programmes organised by their schools effective in advancing teaching practice and improving teaching and learning (Lushaba & Proches, 2022; Makoa & Segalo, 2021; Thaba-Nkadimene et al., 2022). Consequently, they do not participate, as they perceive these programmes to be misaligned with their needs.

This calls for a rethink among the education ministry and stakeholders to adopt strategies that can yield the best results. Extant research (Ajani, 2021; Ngema, 2021; Osman & Kriek, 2021) has indicated that contextual factors have an important impact on TPD. Decent work is acknowledged for addressing the contextual work challenges that significantly impact individuals' lives (Douglass et al., 2017; England et al., 2020; Tokar & Kaut, 2018). An increasing body of research discusses the impact of decent work in different national contexts (Atitsogbe et al., 2021; Buyukgoze-Kavas & Autin, 2019; Chen et al., 2020; Vignoli et al., 2020). However, little is known about its impact on the teaching profession, especially in the African context (Tchonda et al., 2020). No previous research has explored the relationship between decent work and TPD in South Africa. Therefore, this study aims to explore the mechanism by which decent work would encourage the participation of teachers in professional development activities.

Considering the research problem mentioned above, the study's research question is: How does decent work, with a significant focus on needs satisfaction, impact the participation of rural teachers in professional development programmes?

1.3. Research objectives

The primary objective of this study is to evaluate a decent work, needs-professional development model of rural teachers to determine the effect of decent work on teacher professional development.

The specific objectives were:

- To examine if decent work contributes to rural teacher's professional development.
- To assess whether decent work contributes to the satisfaction of rural teachers' needs.
- To test the mediating effect of needs satisfaction on the relationship between decent work and teacher professional development.

1.4. Research hypotheses

Guided by these objectives, the current study proposes that higher levels of decent work attainment among rural teachers will lead to a greater focus on satisfying teachers' needs (specifically, survival, social contribution, and self-determination needs) and, subsequently, promote professional development. These three types of needs satisfaction are posited to predict professional development directly. Finally, drawing from the logic of the Psychology of Working Theory (PWT), this study positions needs satisfaction as a mediator between decent work and professional development. The hypotheses are empirically examined in Chapter Four of this study.

1.5. The significance of the study

The practice of TPD in South Africa is guided and supported by several policies to ensure that teachers continually enhance their teaching and learning competencies. The effective implementation of these policies promotes quality teaching practice, which in turn leads to improved student learning outcomes. While they are progressive and effective to a certain extent, research conducted within rural schools reveals numerous challenges that hinder schools from implementing and managing their TPD programs effectively. This negatively impacts teacher participation as they do not perceive their transformative influence on their teaching practices (Mabasa & Singh, 2020; Mpahla & Makena, 2020; Nhlumayo & Chikoko, 2022). Studies (Mabasa & Singh, 2020; Nhlumayo, 2022) also suggest that TPD programmes should be developed to empower and accommodate rural teachers. The literature states that South Africa has comprehensive policy frameworks for TPD. However, the effectiveness of these programs in achieving the desired results is still uncertain due to low teacher participation.

This study's literature review shows that contextual factors have a notable role in influencing TPD. These factors determine the extent to which teachers participate in professional development activities. Given that rural teachers face challenges related to poor work

conditions in their daily professional duties, it is crucial to understand how the dimensions of decent work attainment relate to professional development. In a press article, Chinyamurindi and Dlaza (2023) suggest that focusing on teachers' working conditions, which meet their needs, is crucial for creating empowered and re-skilled teachers who can drive the professional learning community of practice. Therefore, this motivated the carrying out of a study that would provide recommendations for alternative interventions aimed at encouraging teacher participation in professional development programs. By generating this knowledge, it is hoped various stakeholders will be mindful of teachers' needs and the specific contexts of rural schools when implementing and managing TPD.

Moreover, the significance of this study stems from the calls other researchers have made. Academics, practitioners and policymakers should work towards promoting decent work and economic growth as part of the Sustainable Development Goals (ILO, 2012; Lee et al., 2020). SDG 8 promotes decent work and economic growth through holistic approaches and processes (United Nations, 2012). Guided by the research findings, this study supports the need to prioritise promoting decent work within the teaching profession.

1.6. An overview of the theoretical framework

Various theories will be examined to facilitate the basis of the current study. Analysing these theories enables a fundamental understanding of how decent work impacts rural teachers' professional development. Therefore, The Psychology of Working Theory (PWT) (Duffy et al., 2016), Sociocultural Theory (SCT) (Vygotsky, 1978) and Self-Determination Theory (SDT) (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Ryan & Deci, 2017) formed the basis of the discussion in this study.

The PWT is chosen for its broad and multidisciplinary perspective, making it a valuable tool for understanding inequalities in access to decent work across different social contexts and identities (Duffy et al., 2016). The PWT holds the belief that decent, dignified, and stable work is a fundamental human right, crucial for a person's ability to survive, connect with others and society at large, and thrive in a meaningful and purposeful life (Blustein, Kenny, Di Fabio, et al., 2019). Given these assumptions, PWT holds potential for researchers and practitioners seeking to promote considerable efforts that challenge ideas and systems perpetuating work disparities. Furthermore, the PWT can significantly advance decent work and professional development, as it illustrates the role of social class in the experiences of diverse groups of workers navigating the career landscape (Duffy et al., 2016).

The SCT points out that environmental and social factors may influence teachers' professional development. According to Vygotsky (1978), humans develop their perception of the world based on language and culture. This framework provides a solid basis for context-specific professional development that is responsive to culture and relevant to teachers' needs. The SCT is used in this research as a contextualised approach to professional development that engages knowledge and the cultural assets of the local community, acknowledging that schools in rural areas are not entities separated from the cultural community. In addition, the SCT suggests that in order to understand why teachers do what they do, it is important to consider the context in which the professional development experience or interaction occurs. The SCT is founded on the belief that learning is a social process that is influenced and structured by cultural artefacts, activities, and concepts. Within the learning environment, there are various artefacts, activities, and ideas that facilitate the process of mediating learning. Therefore, the SCT highlights the significance of creating opportunities for learners to receive support from their immediate environment during the learning process.

The SDT is a broad framework for understanding factors that affect intrinsic motivation, autonomous extrinsic motivation, and psychological wellness in an educational context (Ryan & Deci, 2020). Embedded within SDT is the idea that humans have particular psychological needs, in which their satisfaction leads to well-being, growth and meaningfulness (Ryan & Deci, 2017a; Vansteenkiste et al., 2020). When the learning content effectively addresses these needs, students are motivated to engage in learning tasks (Hsu et al., 2019), thereby positively impacting student performance (White et al., 2021). Various contextual factors influence student motivation and engagement in learning tasks (Chiu, 2022), which are also found to influence TPD (Abonyi et al., 2020). This implies that, although SDT has been widely used to optimise student learning, this theory can also explain the effects of needs satisfaction on teachers' motivation, participation, and learning.

The rationale for using these theoretical frameworks is that there is empirical evidence suggesting they will help in understanding the dynamics of the work environment as rural teachers navigate their professional development. The following chapters will present the central principles of PWT, SCT, and SDT, providing an understanding of how contextual factors can influence the pursuit of decent work.

1.7. An overview of the methodology

The researchers adopted a quantitative research approach to examine the relationship between the variables (decent work and professional development) (Creswell, 2013; Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Kumatongo & Muzata, 2021) and to obtain the accurate and reliable

measurements that allow statistical analysis around generated numerical data (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Queirós et al., 2017). Further, an explanatory research design allowed for an opportunity through which the causal relationship between decent work and professional development is explained. A cross-sectional survey permitted the once-off of data collection and simultaneous measurement of both dependent and independent variables (Rahi, 2017).

The study focuses on rural school teachers, including principals, in the Raymond Mhlaba Local Municipality of the Eastern Cape. It employed a cluster sampling strategy, dividing the municipality's seven regions into clusters, from which schools were randomly selected. Convenience sampling was then used to gather data from readily available participants, with a target sample size of 384 approved by the Eastern Cape Department of Basic Education (DBE). Questionnaires were the primary data collection tool, with sections on demographic information and scale items that measured decent work, needs satisfaction, and professional development. The Decent Work Scale (DWS) (Duffy et al., 2017), Work Need Satisfaction Scale (WNSS) (Autin et al., 2019), and Teacher Professional Development at Work Survey (TPDWS) (Evers et al., 2016) were used, although these scales, widely validated internationally, have seen limited use in African settings. Reliability, assessed through Cronbach's Alpha, and validity, tested through confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), were integral to ensuring the quality of the instruments.

Both primary and secondary data were collected, with secondary data sourced from journal databases and books. Primary data came from self-administered questionnaires completed by participants after informed consent was obtained. Data analysis included coding, editing, and cleaning, followed by statistical analysis using SPSS. Descriptive statistics summarised demographic data, while inferential statistics explored relationships between the study's key constructs: decent work, needs satisfaction, and professional development. The study applied Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) and hierarchical regression to analyse direct and indirect effects, specifically testing the mediation role of needs satisfaction. Ethical considerations, including participant anonymity and informed consent, were addressed, with clearance granted by the University of Fort Hare. The study's focus on rural teachers in Raymond Mhlaba Municipality, the sampling strategy, and the use of closed-ended questions for data analysis helped achieve the research goals but may limit the broader applicability of its findings.

1.11.Chapter Outline

The dissertation is divided into seven different chapters.

Chapter One provides the setting of the study by offering background information and an introduction to the primary contents. This chapter summarises the study's problem statement, research question, objectives, and significance. It also presents a brief overview of the theoretical framework, and the methodology adopted. Towards the end of the chapter, ethical considerations and delimitations of the study are discussed. Finally, it outlines the organisation of the dissertation.

Chapter two establishes a theoretical grounding and conceptualisation of decent work and needs satisfaction. The PWT is utilised as a theoretical framework to understand the concept of decent work and its outcome, which needs satisfaction. The SDT further expands the understanding of needs satisfaction. This chapter explores these theories as the foundation for understanding the outcomes of access to decent work.

Chapter three provides a theoretical framework for understanding and conceptualising TPD. This chapter highlights the significance of TPD and its importance in the teaching profession. It advocates for the involvement of teachers in planning, conducting, and evaluating their learning while considering their needs. Lastly, this chapter paves the way for understanding the impact of decent work, mediated by needs satisfaction, on TPD, which is further discussed in the following chapter.

Chapter four empirically examines the study's conceptual frameworks. This chapter presents the empirical analysis, revealing the differences and similarities in the body of literature and identifying where the current study may fit. The chapter demonstrates that decent work is a global agenda and priority.

Chapter five discusses the research methodology of the study in detail. This chapter identifies and justifies the research design, data collection methods, sampling technique, sample size, and data analysis.

Chapter six provides a comprehensive analysis report that outlines the statistical analyses conducted and offers a detailed explanation of the results. The chapter discusses these findings in easily understandable terms and presents an overview of the associated hypotheses. It concludes by addressing the hypotheses and includes a summary section.

Chapter seven discusses the results in relation to the study's objectives and hypotheses. It then outlines the contributions of the study, followed by the implications for theory and practice.

The chapter concludes with a discussion of the limitations and recommendations for future research.



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CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW ON DECENT WORK

2. Introduction

Decent work, as a central aspect of life, has sparked a broader array of discussions among several authors. The ILO (2012) considers decent work as a fundamental human right and one of the significant challenges the world is facing today. According to Blustein et al. (2016), decent work is a subjective human experience in which people believe they can have a fair and dignified work life. Another perspective highlights the importance of social recognition across cultures as a key aspect of decent work (Rossier & Ouedraogo, 2021). Di Fabio and Kenny (2019) found in their study on university students that decent work was characterised by reasonable remuneration and positive relations at work. On the other hand, it is argued that the concept of decent work revolves around promoting individuals' personal and professional lives (Kozan et al. (2019). Masdonati et al. (2019) suggest that the conceptualisation and understanding of decent work could be enhanced by including dimensions related to job security and opportunities for personal and professional development. While these definitions and findings indicate the need for further exploration of the concept of decent work, they all advocate for the importance of ensuring access to decent work. Furthermore, decent work appears to be the central aspect of the PWT (Duffy et al., 2016).

The PWT focuses on decent work as the primary precursor of needs satisfaction. Decent work promotes well-being by satisfying these needs, which integrate survival, social contribution, and self-determination needs. Therefore, this study conceptualised decent work and needs satisfaction drawing from the PWT. In this study, the SDT (Deci & Ryan, 2008) is also explored to unpack self-determination needs involving autonomy, competence and relatedness (Duffy et al., 2016). This chapter discusses decent work within the existing theoretical and empirical literature.

2.1. The Psychology of Working Theory

2.1.1. The Origin of PWT

The development of PWT stemmed from the Psychology of Working Framework (PWF), established a decade ago (Blustein, 2001, 2006; Blustein & Fouad, 2008). The aim of developing PWF was to complement existing vocational theories, which emphasised the role of individual-level and internal factors such as motivation and self-efficacy on career decision-making and work fulfilment. Vocational scholars and practitioners were more grounded in the idea of assisting individuals in making career choices based on the point of privilege.

According to Duffy et al. (2016), these vocational theories did not consider the effects of contextual and structural factors, such as economic constraints, marginalisation, and racial and gender discrimination.

Therefore, the PWF aimed to advocate for inclusivity and social justice in research, policy, and practice. The focus was on understanding the impact of work, privilege, and social power in meeting human needs, such as survival, social connection, and self-determination. This included demonstrating the role of sociocultural factors in understanding the elements of career development and work experiences, particularly for previously unemployed individuals, the working poor, migrant workers, and marginalised and oppressed workers (Blustein et al., 2019; Duffy et al., 2016). The fundamental premise was to highlight and examine work-related issues in relation to the broader psychological, social, and economic context.

Building on this overview, Blustein et al. (2019, p. 5) summarised the core assumptions of the PWF as follows: a) work functions as a major context for individual well-being and the welfare of communities; b) work shares psychological space with other significant life domains (e.g., cultural background, family context, and social identities), with mutual and recursive impacts; c) access to work is constrained by powerful social, economic, political, and historical forces; d) work encompasses efforts in both the marketplace and caregiving contexts; and e) psychological and systemic interventions must include those who work and those who wish to work. Consequently, the inclusion of individuals with work-based experiences who have limited privileges and volition has enhanced the focus on public policy collaborations with the UN and the ILO (Blustein et al., 2014, 2017).

Moreover, the promotion of inclusive psychological practice within the PWF created a clear and compelling pathway to maximise the diversity of work and the formation of policies that will stimulate efforts to enhance work as a human right (Blustein, Kenny, Di Fabio, et al., 2019). Since then, scholars have been increasingly paying attention to contextual factors that may inhibit individuals' access to opportunities. To make it a testable model as it was not previously, Duffy and colleagues expanded the core elements of PWF and the current vocational psychology perspectives to develop the PWT (Duffy et al., 2016). The PWT receives attention next.

2.1.2. Core tenets of PWT

The PWT aims to explain the effects of psychosocial factors such as economic difficulties, willingness to work, career expectations, and job quality on individuals' well-being (Duffy et al., 2016). Thus, the priority of the PWT is to emphasise the importance of work in overall psychosocial well-being, particularly focusing on decent work. Duffy and colleagues adopted the concept of decent work from the ILO's criteria to assess work contexts and promote good working conditions for all (Duffy et al., 2016; ILO, 1999). The ILO's characteristics of decent work include (a) opportunities for productive work that delivers a fair income; (b) security in the workplace and social protection for families; (c) prospects for personal development and social integration; (d) freedom for individuals to express their concerns, organise, and participate in decisions that affect their lives; and (e) equality of opportunity and treatment for all women and men (ILO, 1999). Based on these criteria, the ILO underscores the importance of sustainable working conditions and contexts.

Therefore, the PWT enriches the ILO definition of decent work to include more subjective and psychosocial indicators (Cohen-Scali et al., 2018; Duffy et al., 2017; Pouyaud, 2016). It advances the concept of decent work into an empirically testable model. Accordingly, five aspects that adequately reflect an individual's access to decent work are (a) safe working conditions, both interpersonal and physical; (b) hours that allow for rest and leisure; (c) values that align with family and social values; (d) fair compensation; and (e) access to health care (Duffy et al., 2016). In this context, decent work is understood to focus more on the worker's perception of their current jobs. The PWT asserts that for work to be considered decent, it must fulfil three core human needs: survival and power, social connection, and self-determination (Blustein, 2006; Duffy et al., 2016). Within this framework, need satisfaction is positioned as a primary mediator of the relationship between work fulfilment and well-being. It further posits that contextual variables affect work opportunities, either limiting or expanding access to work that meets one's needs and values. Subsequently, Duffy et al. (2017) developed the DWS, a 15-item self-report scale that assesses the five domains of decent work mentioned above.

The model of decent work in the PWT is divided into predictors and outcomes. The first part includes the predictors of decent work, which are economic constraints, marginalisation, work volition, and career adaptability (Duffy et al., 2016). Four moderators—proactive personality, critical consciousness, social support, and economic conditions—may strengthen or weaken work volition and career adaptability (Duffy et al., 2016). The second part of the model consists of outcomes of decent work, namely needs satisfaction, which in turn predicts work fulfilment and well-being (Duffy et al., 2016). Figure 1 illustrates the core propositions of the PWT.

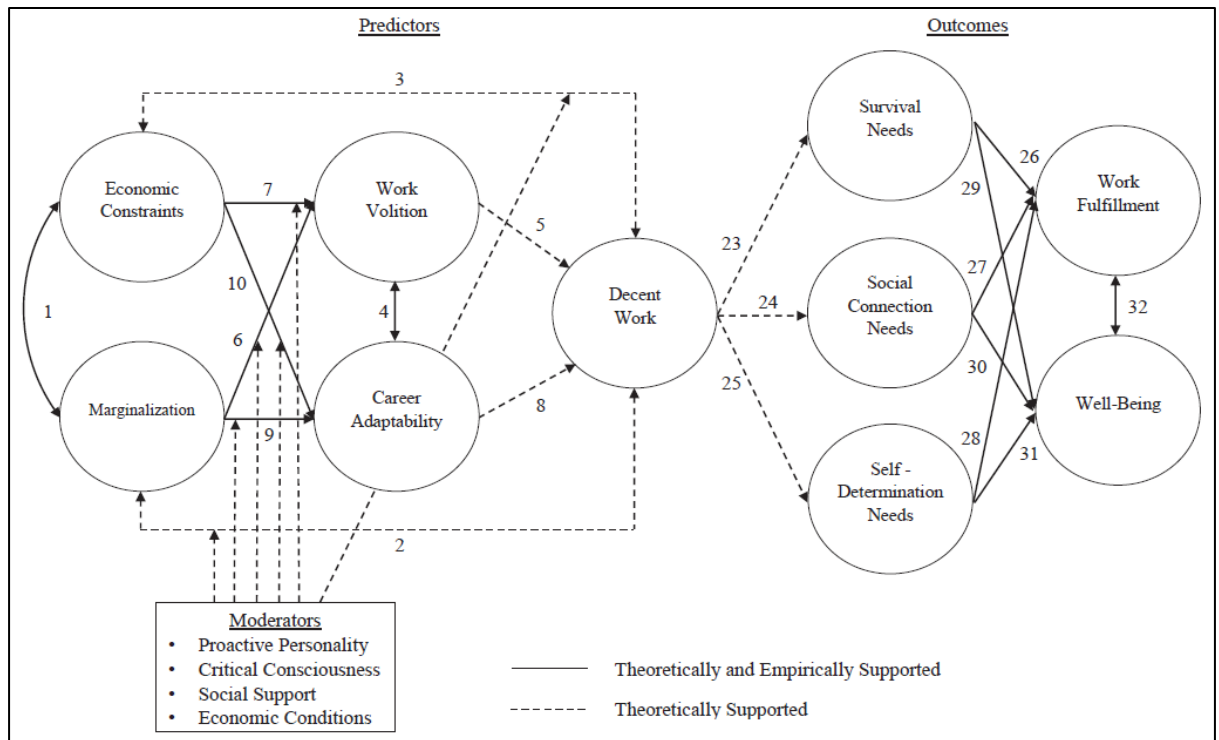


Figure 1: The Psychology of Working Theory model

Source: Duffy et al. (2016).

To depict the process explicitly, the PWT proposes that contextual factors like economic constraints and marginalised status are predictors of diminished work volition and career adaptability, as they negatively impact individuals' chances of finding decent work and achieving overall well-being. Additionally, the PWT proposes proactive personality, critical consciousness, social support, and economic conditions are among the factors that moderate the effects of economic constraints and marginalisation on work volition and career adaptability. Access to decent work predicts positive career-related outcomes and well-being through satisfying survival, social, and self-determination needs (Allan et al., 2019; Duffy et al., 2016). In this regard, decent work plays a significant role in individuals' well-being, as it can affect them directly and indirectly by fulfilling these basic human needs.

2.1.3. Predictors of decent work

The PWT posits that economic constraints and social marginalisation affect access to decent work. A growing body of empirical research provides initial evidence supporting the predictive utility of the PWT (Wang et al., 2019). This research affirmed the negative relationship between economic constraints and marginalisation with decent work (Douglass et al., 2020; Duffy, Gensmer et al., 2019; Smith et al., 2020). A recent study examining the predictors and outcomes of the PWT among Korean working adults found a direct effect of economic

constraints on decent work, job satisfaction, and life satisfaction through work volition and career adaptability (Kim & Kim, 2022). Economically disadvantaged individuals are more likely to secure part-time or low-skilled labour jobs, opting for positions that are easily accessible rather than those that offer quality, which diminishes their chances of experiencing decent work.

Moreover, economic constraints not only hinder the attainment of decent work but also undermine educational and career expectations, as well as hopes for the future among youth (Kenny et al., 2022; Masdonati et al., 2021). This, in turn, limits academic motivation and achievement. Economic difficulties limit students' career choices (Duffy et al., 2022). Research by Cheung et al. (2020) and Ma et al. (2020) has demonstrated that economic constraints can diminish work volition and career adaptability. Consequently, individuals with limited resources, such as family income, wealth, or social capital, often find themselves enrolled in low-quality academic and work settings with restricted access to career development opportunities. Studies indicate that without adequate training or post-secondary education, young people face greater challenges in attaining decent work (Kenny et al., 2019a, 2022; McWhirter et al., 2019). To further explore the connection between educational experiences and access to decent work, Duffy and colleagues introduced the term “decent education” within the PWT framework (Duffy et al., 2022).

Marginalisation is the categorisation of individuals or groups based on factors such as social class, gender, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, disability, and migration status. Generally, marginalised individuals occupy less powerful or influential positions in society. Duffy et al. (2016) have shown that such experiences limit opportunities and hinder access to decent work. Various studies (Douglass et al., 2019; Duffy, Gensmer, et al., 2019; Duffy et al., 2018) have confirmed the direct link between marginalisation and decent work. The PWT was examined by Choi et al. (2022) among employed Asian American women. Their findings, similar to Duffy et al. (2018), indicated that experiences of ethnic discrimination in the workplace, which measures marginalisation, negatively affected the experience of decent work among racially and ethnically diverse employed adults. Choe et al. (2022) found that gendered racial microaggression had a negative impact on the accessibility to decent work for Asian American women. Additionally, women of colour in the United States face unique forms of oppression in the workplace compared to both white women and men of colour (Kim et al., 2022). These lifetime experiences of marginalisation, directly and indirectly, influence the attainment of decent work through the work volition of women of colour. Since the inception of the PWT,

numerous studies have been conducted on various marginalised populations, providing empirical support for the theoretical model (Kozan et al., 2019; Tokar & Kaut, 2018).

Work volition and career adaptability are psychological factors that influence the ability to obtain decent work. Work volition refers to the capacity to choose one's job despite environmental constraints (Duffy et al., 2012). Research indicates that work volition is a strong predictor of career satisfaction, meaningful work, and overall life well-being, all of which contribute to the attainment of decent work (Kim & Kim, 2022; Lan et al., 2022). On the other hand, career adaptability pertains to an individual's flexibility in addressing various workplace demands (Marques et al., 2022). Studies have shown a positive correlation between career adaptability and the achievement of decent work (e.g., Douglass et al., 2019; Duffy, Gensmer, et al., 2019; England et al., 2020; Tokar & Kaut, 2018). A growing body of research supports the PWT model by examining the roles of work volition and career adaptability as mediators in the relationship between experiences of marginalisation and decent work (Allan et al., 2019; Duffy et al., 2018; England et al., 2020).

2.1.4. Moderators of decent work

Moderators are variables that can change the direction or strength of a relationship between predictors and outcomes. In their study on PWT, Duffy and colleagues (2016) identified proactive personality, critical consciousness, social support and economic conditions as potential moderators of decent work. Proactive personality refers to an individual's willingness to take initiative. Duffy et al. (2016) suggested that a proactive personality could moderate the associations between contextual variables and work volition, career adaptability, and decent work. Additionally, a proactive personality may serve as a protective factor against the negative effects of economic constraints and experiences of marginalisation. Studies have examined proactive personality in working adults (Douglass et al., 2020), college students and youth (Wei et al., 2022). However, these studies did not find significant evidence supporting a proactive personality as a moderator for marginalisation, work volition, and career adaptability.

Critical consciousness (CC) refers to individuals' ability to critically analyse the social and structural factors contributing to inequalities. By engaging in reflection, examining individual beliefs, and taking collective action, individuals develop an understanding of the role these factors play in social power relations and political effectiveness (Diemer et al., 2017; Shin et al., 2016). Few studies have examined the moderating effect of critical consciousness between contextual factors and decent work, and those that have generally supported the propositions of the PWT (Autin, Williams, et al., 2022). However, other studies reported findings of the moderating effect that are inconsistent with the PWT expectations (Autin et al., 2022; Kenny

et al., 2022; Kim & Allan, 2021). These findings suggest that some dimensions of CC may have moderating effects on certain aspects of marginalisation or economic constraints but not others. Therefore, further investigation is needed to understand the role of CC in PWT and the factors that facilitate access to decent work.

Within the PWT, social support refers to the degree to which individuals feel supported by their family, friends, and broader community. This personal-level factor can potentially mitigate the effects of marginalisation experiences and economic constraints on perceived work volition, career adaptability, and the ability to attain decent work. Moreover, social support can serve as a focal point in career decision-making and development. The existing literature provides support for the moderating effect of social support in the relationship between marginalisation based on academic status and work volition (Song & Lee, 2023). By fostering a supportive network, individuals may be better equipped to navigate the challenges of marginalisation and economic constraints, ultimately enhancing their work volition, career adaptability, and prospects for securing decent employment.

Finally, socioeconomic conditions can significantly affect access to decent work. The PWT posits that workers' experiences related to socioeconomic status may influence their ability to secure decent work (Duffy et al., 2016). Consequently, the PWT acknowledges the buffering role of strong macroeconomic conditions in mitigating the negative effects of marginalisation experiences and economic constraints on work volition, career adaptability, and engagement in decent work. While many studies have primarily focused on the mediation hypotheses when examining the application of PWT, the moderation hypotheses, particularly those related to socioeconomic status, have not received sufficient emphasis (Han et al., 2022). This highlights the need for further research into how socioeconomic factors can moderate the relationships outlined in the PWT model, ultimately enhancing our understanding of access to decent work.

2.1.5. Outcomes of decent work

The PWT model posits that decent work satisfies work fulfilment and well-being by meeting three primary needs: survival, social connection, and self-determination. Drawing from the work of Blustein (2006), work has been established as a means to ensure that people have access to essential resources such as food, shelter, clothing, safety, housing, and other necessities. Individuals can meet their most fundamental human needs by working and earning money. The need for survival is closely connected to the desire for psychological, economic, and social power, which can be satisfied through decent work. Work offers individuals an opportunity to engage and build relationships within their social and cultural contexts (Blustein, 2019). A significant aspect of work is its opportunity for social contact and connection with

others. The PWT perspective emphasises the crucial role that relationships play in the work experience. Supportive and nurturing work relationships provide individuals with a valuable support system, helping them manage work-related challenges and demands. In the PWT framework, decent work outcomes are centred around the fulfilment of self-determination needs, which in turn predict work fulfilment and overall well-being (Duffy et al., 2016). Working as a means of self-determination can foster a sense of autonomy, authenticity, and achievement that only optimal working can provide (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

The achievement that only optimal work can provide (Ryan & Deci, 2000) has been empirically validated in previous studies, which demonstrated that life and job satisfaction are linked to needs satisfaction as outcomes of decent work (Autin et al., 2019; Di Fabio & Kenny, 2019; Nam & Kim, 2019; Wang et al., 2020). These studies proposed decent work outcomes as outlined in the PWT model. Their findings revealed positive correlations between decent work and the satisfaction of survival, social contribution, and self-determination needs, all of which predict job and life satisfaction. Similarly, research by Duffy, Kim, et al. (2019) affirmed that decent work predicts the fulfilment of survival needs, social contribution needs, self-determination needs, and physical and mental health indirectly through needs satisfaction. Drawing from the PWT as a theoretical framework, decent work has also been shown to predict meaningful work among the sexual minority population (Allan, Tebbe, et al., 2019). In the study by Buyukgoze-Kavas and Autin (2019), decent work was found to have a positive relationship with job satisfaction. Furthermore, other studies indicated a positive correlation between job satisfaction and life satisfaction (Kozan et al., 2019).

Based on the empirical support outlined above, the PWT is a suitable framework for evaluating issues related to decent work (Blustein, Kenny, Autin, et al., 2019; Chen et al., 2020). Many scholars have applied the PWT to encompass interventions related to career counselling (Blustein, Kenny, Autin, et al., 2019; Massengale et al., 2020); unemployment (Kossen & McIlveen, 2018); economic constraints (Kim et al., 2019), and racial and ethnic diversity (Duffy et al., 2018). Additionally, the PWT promotes equity in distributing resources, contributing to decent and dignified work (Blustein, Kenny, Di Fabio et al., 2019; Kenny et al., 2019b). As noted by Blustein et al. (2019), understanding the processes that facilitate decent work across diverse contexts is essential, mainly since well-being within the PWT framework is fundamentally determined by factors such as life satisfaction and physical health (Duffy et al., 2021). Therefore, assessing additional variables, such as professional development, is essential to better understand the significance of decent work through the lens of needs satisfaction on a broader spectrum.

2.1.6. Needs satisfaction as a mediator of decent work

Need satisfaction refers to an individual's satisfaction with their job. It specifically measures the extent to which the job fulfils their needs for survival, connection to society, and self-determination (Autin et al., 2019; Duffy et al., 2016, 2020). The PWT links the concept of “need” to various social and contextual factors in the workplace. It suggests that when these contextual constraints limit the ability to meet needs, resources, and the freedom to make career decisions, employees' well-being becomes negatively affected (Blustein, 2006; Duffy et al., 2016). However, decent work can help meet these needs (Duffy et al., 2017). Empirical evidence demonstrates that decent work provides sufficient resources to satisfy employees' basic needs (Huang et al., 2020a) and helps them realise the meaning of their work (Allan et al., 2020a). Blustein et al. (2020) examined the profiles of decent work and precarious work in the United States, revealing that needs satisfaction significantly contributes across these profiles. A recent study affirmed the significance of needs satisfaction in facilitating effective access to decent work (Blustein et al., 2023). Additionally, a qualitative study conducted in seven countries linked decent work to the extent to which it allows for the fulfilment of survival needs and fosters positive social relationships in the workplace (Cohen-Scali et al., 2022).

To validate the assumptions of PWT, Autin et al. (2019) designed the WNSS to measure the satisfaction of survival, social contribution, and self-determination needs. Developing a reliable and valid WNSS was essential to examine needs satisfaction as conceptualised in the PWT (Autin et al., 2019). The WNSS has been validated in different cultural contexts as an instrument for testing theoretical links between decent work, need satisfaction, and well-being outcomes (Autin, Shelton, et al., 2022; Xu, Li, et al., 2022). Since its development, many studies have examined decent work outcomes as hypothesised in PWT, including need satisfaction as a mediator of the relationship between decent work and well-being (Duffy et al., 2019, 2021; Wan & Cao, 2022). In the validation of WNSS for Korean working adults, Kim et al. (2021) found that those who regarded their work as decent reported greater satisfaction of needs from work. However, many struggle to make ends meet to access decent work and often fall into dangerous and precarious life circumstances (Blustein, 2019).

2.1.6.1. Survival needs

Survival needs refer to basic human needs essential for survival, such as food, secure housing, and health-related resources (Duffy et al., 2016). In the PWT, decent work offers physical and psychological safety and adequate compensation and can satisfy a person's survival needs. Studies attest that the satisfaction of individuals' survival needs could be met through reliable income and safe working conditions, thus contributing to meaningful work and well-being

(Allan et al., 2020; Autin et al., 2019; Kim et al., 2018). Meeting one's survival needs via work may help one have the time to live in an environment that allows access to a healthy lifestyle (Duffy et al., 2021).

However, labour markets and societies globally have been characterised by significant inequalities. This calls into question the idea that access to work alone can sufficiently meet basic survival needs (ILO, 2020). The recent emergence of the COVID-19 crisis has exacerbated this situation, with unemployment, uncertainty, and precariousness becoming defining features of work (Cubrich & Tengesdal, 2021; ILO, 2020). The rise in precarious employment is predicted to lead to a lower fulfilment of survival needs over time (Allan & Blustein, 2022). Without the financial security many jobs provide, individuals are left fearful for survival. In South Africa, the government has implemented a relief package of R350 for unemployed individuals during this period; however, this support is temporary and unsustainable for most who are out of work. As the labour market becomes increasingly challenging, a growing number of economic disparities are emerging, particularly those related to the struggle for decent work (Blustein & Guarino, 2020; Thompson & Dahling, 2019).

2.1.6.1. Social contribution needs

Social contribution needs reflect the fundamental human desire to connect with others and feel a sense of belonging within one's community (Duffy et al., 2016). Decent work enables individuals to meet their social contribution needs by allowing them to engage in meaningful activities for their community (Autin et al., 2019; Duffy et al., 2016). Work provides a platform for social connections and enables individuals to participate actively in society's economic structure. Ultimately, work offers individuals a sense of belonging and connection to the broader social world (Blustein, 2019). Kim (2017) and Rothstein (2017) summarised that employees who feel they fit in and have strong relationships with their colleagues are generally more satisfied, productive, and committed. Research conducted in six rural primary schools in the Eastern Cape, South Africa, found that social connectedness fostered resilience among teachers (Ebersöhn et al., 2020). Other studies have highlighted that leadership support and positive relationships with colleagues significantly impact teachers' retention and job satisfaction (Lee et al., 2017; Zavelevsky & Lishchinsky, 2020). Furthermore, studies indicate that the extent to which one's work contributes to society is crucial for promoting well-being and life satisfaction among workers (Blustein, 2019; Kim et al., 2021; Wan & Cao, 2022).

2.1.6.2. Self-determination needs

Self-determination needs encompass fundamental psychological needs such as autonomy, relatedness, and competence. Autonomy refers to an individual's innate longing to exercise

freedom and maintain a sense of control over their choices. (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Relatedness is an individual's desire to feel a sense of intimacy with others in a community, caring for them, and feeling cared for by them (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). In healthy and safe working conditions, assurance of belonging generates personal connections, satisfying the need for relatedness (Autin et al., 2019). Finally, competence is an individual's desire to develop mastery and skills within a given environment. These three basic psychological needs are regarded as critical precursors to self-regulation, psychological growth, and overall well-being (Duffy et al., 2016; Ryan & Deci, 2017). Therefore, the PWT scholars extended this concept to suggest that decent work is a pathway to accessing these needs, allowing optimal functioning both within and outside the workplace.

The satisfaction of the needs for competence, autonomy, and relatedness is proposed to be a core motivational factor influencing the interaction between individuals and their contexts (Ryan et al., 2019). In a work setting, these needs have been associated with outcomes such as meaningful work (Autin et al., 2021; Martela et al., 2021) and autonomous work motivation (Olafsen et al., 2018). Basic psychological needs not only empower workers by providing them with a sense of control over their work, but they also play a crucial role in learning outcomes (Alamer, 2022) and academic engagement (Karimi & Sotoodeh, 2020). Studies have identified a direct link between the satisfaction of teachers' psychological needs and their perceived professional development support (Lee et al., 2020; Tack & Vanderlinde, 2019). Furthermore, the varying effects of basic psychological needs have been instrumental in explaining the motivation behind teacher innovation (Cai & Tang, 2022).

2.2. The Self-Determination Theory

2.2.1. The origin and core tenets of SDT

The SDT is a macro theory of human motivation that has been used to predict human behaviour in various fields (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Ryan & Deci, 2017). This theory describes the impact of social environments on employees' motivation, behaviour and well-being by focusing on fundamental aspects of personality development, self-regulation and basic psychological needs (Deci & Ryan, 2008; Schutte et al., 2018). The SDT works from the premise that people are naturally internally motivated, which determines their thoughts, feelings and behaviour (Deci & Ryan, 2008; Ryan & Deci, 2020). In doing so, SDT focuses on how a person might use and act upon their skills, knowledge, and beliefs in an environment where achieving goals and desired outcomes is valued. Deci et al. (2017) suggested that SDT is a valuable theory that work organisations can use to create policies, practices, and environments that promote wellness and high-quality employee performance.

The SDT consists of five mini-theories: Cognitive Evaluation Theory, Organismic Integration Theory, Causality Orientations Theory, Basic Psychological Need Theory, and Goal Content Theory (Taylor, 2015). This study focuses on Basic Psychological Need Theory (BPNT (Ryan & Deci, 2017b). BPNT posits that humans have a set of basic psychological needs, the satisfaction of which is essential for well-being and a sense of meaning (Martela & Sheldon, 2019; Vansteenkiste et al., 2020). Conversely, when these needs are unmet, it results in an even more intense and distressing experience (Ryan & Deci, 2017). Therefore, the BPNT considers the satisfaction and frustration of these three needs. The three basic psychological needs, competency, autonomy and relatedness, were formally identified by Deci and Ryan (2000).

Autonomy is defined as “the need to self-regulate one’s experiences and actions” (Ryan & Deci, 2017, p. 10). In other words, it encompasses the experience of volition and willingness. Others describe autonomy as the ability to make decisions and feel that those decisions, made independently, are within one’s control, which is crucial for motivation (Sheldon et al., 2017). When one’s actions, thoughts, and feelings are self-endorsed and authentic, it fosters a sense of integrity and satisfaction. Studies have demonstrated the predictive effect of autonomy on meaningful work (Martela et al., 2021). The satisfaction of autonomy needs has been shown to directly predict autonomous motivation among working adults (Autin, Herdt, et al., 2021). It also assisted students in handling academic pressure and experiencing contentment with school environments (Martinek et al., 2022). On the other hand, when the autonomy need is frustrated, individuals may experience a sense of pressure and conflict, such as feeling pushed in an unwanted direction. For example, a decline in autonomy satisfaction during the COVID-19 lockdown in Germany led to increased anxiety and depressive symptoms, thereby decreasing well-being (Schwinger et al., 2020).

Competence is defined as the “basic need to feel effectance and mastery” (Ryan & Deci, 2017, p. 11). To be considered competent, individuals must demonstrate effectiveness and a sense of mastery within their environment. This need is satisfied when one engages capably in activities and has opportunities to use and extend their skills and expertise. In a sample of public workers, Battaglio et al. (2022) found that the fulfilment of the need for competence positively impacted job satisfaction. Conversely, when this need is frustrated, individuals may experience feelings of ineffectiveness, failure, or helplessness.

Relatedness refers to “feeling socially connected” as an integral member of a social group (Ryan & Deci, 2017, p. 11). It involves the ability to contribute to others and to feel cared for by them. Relatedness encompasses the experiences of warmth, bonding, and care and is satisfied by connecting with others and feeling significant to them. When relatedness needs are

frustrated, individuals may experience social alienation, exclusion, and loneliness (Ryan & Deci, 2017).

The authors of BPNT argue that through the satisfaction of the needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness, a wide range of phenomena across developmental stages, cultural contexts, and personality differences can be understood (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Vansteenkiste et al., 2020). Promoting the satisfaction of these needs fosters autonomous work motivation, positive work attitudes and behaviours, and employee well-being (Deci et al., 2017; Olafsen & Deci, 2020). Indeed, recent research has shown a significant role of BPNT satisfaction in physical and online education Chiu, 2022; White et al., 2021), well-being during the COVID-19 pandemic era (Cantarero et al., 2021; Martela et al., 2021), and social policies (Yu et al., 2018). As BPNT specifies, these varied positive developmental outcomes would be enabled by the support and satisfaction of needs.

Huyghebaert-Zouaghi et al. (2021) advanced the conceptualisation and measurement of psychological needs as embedded in SDT. Based on their findings, the authors suggested that the SDT framework on needs processes may also be expanded to address the impact of the socio-contextual environment on individual functioning. Hence, BPNT and SDT appear applicable in explaining the effect of decent work on teacher professional development, as determined by need satisfaction.

2.3. The conceptualisation of decent work

The decent work concept was first introduced by the ILO in 1919. However, it emerged as a central agenda of the ILO in 1999 to combat the degradation of the labour market and improve the situation of human beings in the world of work (Ferraro et al., 2016; Nizami & Prasad, 2017). The ILO's decent work agenda focuses primarily on defining the baseline of acceptable working conditions concerning human rights (Blustein et al., 2019). In 1999, the ILO described the decent work concept as "opportunities for women and men to obtain decent and productive work in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity" (ILO, 1999, p. 3). According to Anker et al. (2003), this definition denotes the importance of the availability of work, its acceptability, and how it is considered "decent." In 2008, the ILO further advanced the notion of decent work to define the minimum acceptable standards for workers across the globe. Following the ILO's proposition, Ferraro et al. (2021b) coined decent work as an integrated concept encompassing different aspects of labour. The authors argue that decent work defends and promotes human rights by providing productive and fulfilling work maintained with social dialogue.

On the other hand, empirical evidence suggests that decent work is a broadly defined concept. Many scholars associate it with subjective experiences related to the quality of work (Mackett, 2020; Macnaughton & Frey, 2018; Mramba & Mhando, 2020a). Numerous studies conducted on the conceptualisation of decent work nationwide have concluded that decent work is a context in which individuals should experience work (Di Fabio & Kenny, 2019; Dodd et al., 2019; Duffy et al., 2017; Masdonati et al., 2019; Nam & Kim, 2019; Ribeiro et al., 2019; Vignoli et al., 2020). Others note that decent work constitutes the essence of psychological, economic, and contextual factors in individuals' career development (Buyukgoze-Kavas & Autin, 2019; Duffy, Gensmer et al., 2019; Işık et al., 2019). Moreover, doing interesting tasks, having opportunities for growth, and benefiting from employment security have also been regarded as constituents of decent work (Blustein et al., 2016; Masdonati et al., 2019). According to Winchenbach et al. (2019), decent work ensures the worker's dignity beyond employer-employee respect, including freedom of speech and the right to be heard. Psychologists argue that the ILO's concept of decent work can be enhanced by considering the meaning and purpose of work from the lived experience of individual workers (Brill, 2021a).

Throughout the historical development of decent work, its conceptualisation has represented a global international forum encompassing the world as a whole (Dos Santos, 2017; Ferraro et al., 2016). Studies conducted worldwide have assessed the availability of decent work in various contexts (Di Fabio & Kenny, 2019; Dodd et al., 2019; Ferreira et al., 2019; Masdonati et al., 2019; Nam & Kim, 2019; Ribeiro et al., 2019; Vignoli et al., 2020). Numerous countries have embraced the concept of decent work as a strategy to direct their efforts toward improving working conditions by establishing desirable work characteristics (Dos Santos, 2019; Ferraro et al., 2021; Pereira et al., 2019). At the same time, some argue that the breadth and inclusiveness of the decent work concept have opened up space for the recognition of women on the margins of the global economy (Christie et al., 2021; Hauf, 2015), as decent work has been relatively infrequent and traditionally scarce for many populations (Ferraro et al., 2021).

In South Africa, the ILO's Decent Work Agenda (DWA) was implemented through Decent Work Country Programmes (DWCPs) (Cohen & Moodley, 2012). The DWCPs were established to promote decent work as a key component of national development strategies and serve as a programming tool to address a limited number of priorities over a defined period. They ensure that the ILO's strategic objectives align with the country's policies and development agenda. Despite the establishment of the DWCPs, Webster and Ludwig (2020) contend that the concept of decent work in the government's policy discourse is still relatively new. Consequently, they argue that there is a need to rethink the concept of decent work, not

merely as a diagnostic tool to measure progress toward its realisation, but also as a means of facilitating worker organisation and their struggles for decent work (Webster & Ludwig, 2020). A recent study measuring decent work in South Africa noted that democratising work and emphasising workers' needs and preferences could help operationalise the notion of decent work (Mackett, 2020).

2.3.1. Measurements of decent work

Since the introduction of the concept of decent work, numerous scholars and international organisations in the fields of politics, economics, and law have proposed measures for its operationalisation (Burchell et al., 2014; Pereira et al., 2019). These measures were developed through indicators and indexes, focusing on poverty reduction and international alignment with the ILO's development agenda. This included labour market indicators such as the unemployment rate, job insecurity, workplace harassment and discrimination, income inequality, and average working hours (Allan et al., 2017; Blustein et al., 2016; Pereira et al., 2019). Others have created these instruments for various industries as diagnostic tools to monitor progress toward decent work and to develop strategies for overcoming decent work deficits (Webster et al., 2015). However, these measures have often been criticised for their inability to directly assess the objective, as they rely on indirect measures instead (Dos Santos, 2019; Ferraro et al., 2018). Although they have contributed to guiding decent work national policies in several countries, they have lacked a focus on individuals' experiences in their working lives (Blustein et al., 2016; Duffy et al., 2017; Ferraro et al., 2016). To address this gap, some scholars have dedicated themselves to constructing and measuring decent work at the individual level (Duffy et al., 2017; Ferraro et al., 2018).

In recent years, research on decent work has increased within the fields of vocational and organisational psychology as researchers seek to integrate social, economic, and psychological factors to conceptualise decent work (Blustein et al., 2016; Chen et al., 2020a; Duffy et al., 2017). Consequently, a psychological perspective on decent work, grounded in the world of work, is beginning to be conceptually developed (Duffy et al., 2017; Ferraro et al., 2018, 2021). A psychological perspective on the concept of decent work was proposed by Duffy et al. (2017), who developed and validated a DWS within the framework of PWT (Blustein et al., 2016; Duffy et al., 2016). According to this measurement, decent work refers to the degree to which a job possesses qualities such as (a) physical and interpersonal safety in working conditions, (b) access to self-care, (c) adequate compensation, (d) hours that allow for rest and personal time, and (e) organisational values that align with family and social values. Although the DWS has been explored and validated across different nations (Di Fabio & Kenny, 2019;

Duffy et al., 2020), there are growing concerns that this scale does not encompass the full range of the decent work concept as proposed by the ILO.

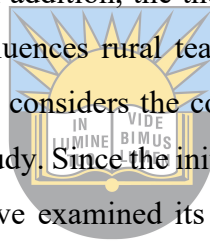
As criticism of the DWS advances, Ferraro et al. (2018) developed the Decent Work Questionnaire (DWQ), a 31-item tool that measures seven key dimensions aligned with the ILO's Decent Work Agenda. These dimensions include fundamental workplace principles and values, appropriate working hours and workload, fulfilling and productive work, fair compensation for citizenship efforts, social protection, opportunities for growth, and health and safety. The DWQ is grounded in seminal studies on decent work from the Work, Organisational and Personnel Psychology (WOPP) perspective, measuring how employees perceive and evaluate their work content (Ferraro et al., 2021). It appears to be an instrument enabling international research on decent work, as it has been validated in Brazil, Italy, and Portugal (Ferraro et al., 2018, 2021a). Furthermore, a growing number of studies have investigated the effects of decent work on psychosocial variables using the DWQ. For instance, Graça et al. (2021) identified four different decent work profiles associated with varying levels of work engagement in a sample of academic personnel, while Bolito (2020) found that different decent work profiles were related to distinct levels of psychological capital in university professors. On the other hand, Dinis (2020) discovered that decent work profiles were associated with differing levels of burnout in higher education teachers. All the dimensions of decent work measured by the DWQ were found to promote job and life satisfaction (Cipriani et al., 2021) and innovative work behaviour (Xu et al., 2022).

Regardless of the different dynamics of these two validated decent work measures, assessing decent work in various work settings remains essential to protect and promote human rights in the workplace. This is especially important given that scientific research on decent work from psychology and related fields is still in its early stages (Pereira et al., 2019). To date, only these two existing measures of decent work have been applied in different cultural and national contexts (Duffy et al., 2020), as well as among privileged occupations such as academic personnel (Bolito, 2020; Graça et al., 2021) and physicians (Ferraro et al., 2020). This highlights the need to further assess the effects and accessibility of decent work for all individuals (ILO, 2008; Xu et al., 2022), regardless of whether they are privileged or less privileged (Seubert et al., 2021). By expanding the application of decent work measures to a wider range of occupations and contexts, researchers can gain a more comprehensive understanding of the challenges and opportunities related to decent work.

Scholars regard rural teachers as less privileged than their counterparts in urban settings as they experience numerous challenges emanating from contextual and organisational conditions that

affect their work needs (Ekpoh, 2018; Mohangi et al., 2016; Nkambule et al., 2011; Okeke & Mtyuda, 2017a). Furthermore, an objective gap between urban and rural teacher salaries has been reported as one of the factors influencing the teaching discourse in China (Xuehui, 2018). There are calls for efforts to improve rural teachers' teaching experiences to focus on work conditions and adequate compensation (DeFeo et al., 2018). Although teaching is often recognised as a privileged profession, the working conditions for rural teachers diminish their opportunities to meet decent work aspirations (Lawrence, 2020). Decent work aspirations involve creating opportunities for both men and women to secure productive employment that offers sufficient income, freedom, fairness, security, and preserves their human dignity (ILO, 2018). Therefore, since decent work is a global goal, it is essential to ensure that rural teachers have the same decent work aspirations as any other workforce.

Given the ILO's statement that decent work encapsulates the aspirations of people in their working lives (ILO, 2019), the five dimensions of decent work proposed by Duffy et al. (2016) need further development, as they focus on the individual level in understanding workers' experiences (Blustein et al., 2016). In addition, the theoretical basis for the effects of decent work and how needs satisfaction influences rural teachers' work experiences has yet to be explored. Consequently, this research considers the conceptualisation of decent work within the DWS as the main subject of this study. Since the initial validation of the DWS in the United States, many international studies have examined its measurement properties (Duffy et al., 2020).



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2.3.2. Components of Decent Work Scale

Physical and interpersonal safe working conditions: safe working conditions measure how individuals' work environments are physically and emotionally secure (Duffy et al., 2017; Wyganowska & Tobór-Osadnik, 2018). Previous investigations highlight the importance of both psychological and physical safety in the workplace for employees' well-being. These studies reveal that health and safety conditions affect job stress levels, interpersonal conflicts, organisational commitment, and turnover intentions (Liu et al., 2019; Palancı et al., 2020; Yavuz & Akca, 2018). It is argued that fear and uncertainty regarding workplace health and safety drive employees into interpersonal conflicts and lead to poor teamwork outcomes (Edmondson et al., 2016; Yavuz & Akca, 2018). Employees may become unwilling to help and cooperate with others if they perceive a lack of interest from the organisation in their safety, resulting in heightened job stress and turnover intentions. Conversely, a safe work environment enables employees to share common values and fosters interpersonal trust and productivity (Bouraoui et al., 2018; Edmondson et al., 2016; Wyganowska & Tobór-Osadnik, 2018).

However, physical and interpersonal safety in working conditions was not found to be significantly related to work engagement in higher education institutions in India (Kashyap et al., 2021).

New, unanticipated hazards, such as the residual effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, the impact of technology, globalisation, demographic transitions, and climate change, are likely to arise (Schulte, 2022). For this reason, ILO Convention 161 on Occupational Health Services (OHS), which aims for universal occupational health coverage, should be promoted, ratified, and implemented (Rantanen et al., 2020). In accordance with the Occupational Health and Safety Act 85 of 1993, South Africa has established a framework to assist employers in providing safe and healthy work environments for all employees, addressing physical, environmental, and psychological aspects. Emphasising health and safety will provide insights into understanding employees' experiences of fulfilling work that extends beyond the workplace to their lives (Prentice et al., 2018). Numerous studies link safe working conditions to job satisfaction (Atitsogbe et al., 2021; Di Fabio & Kenny, 2019; Ferreira et al., 2019; Ribeiro et al., 2019).

Access to healthcare: Access to healthcare refers to the extent to which healthcare services are available through one's workplace (Duffy et al., 2017). Prior to 1994, the healthcare system in South Africa was characterised by racial segregation and systematic fragmentation. Only the white minority benefited from a highly resourced system, while the under-resourced system was designed for the black majority (Coovadia et al., 2009; Kilbourne et al., 2006; Owusu-Addo et al., 2018). Deliberate efforts to improve overall population health emerged in post-apartheid South Africa. The government, researchers, and policymakers enacted policies and reforms aimed at addressing health inequalities and their social determinants (Omotoso & Koch, 2018; Owusu-Addo et al., 2018). Among other goals, these reforms aimed to reduce or eliminate health disparities based on gender, geography, race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status (Balaj et al., 2017; Devaux, 2015; Hu et al., 2016). In light of this, the South African government is committed to the health of its citizens by ensuring equitable access to healthcare services (Omotoso & Koch, 2018).

Nevertheless, evidence suggests that not much has changed despite various policy interventions aimed at reducing socioeconomic disparities and healthcare inequalities in post-apartheid South Africa (Du Plessis et al., 2019; Gordon et al., 2020; Ndwandwe et al., 2021; Omotoso & Koch, 2018). There is a spatial hierarchy in how healthcare services are organised, with the most private and specialised systems concentrated in urban areas. Access to these systems is primarily determined by an individual's socioeconomic status. Individuals may either pay out-

of-pocket or purchase private insurance to receive treatment at private hospitals and health clinics, whereas those who cannot afford this must rely on the underfunded and understaffed public sector (Du Plessis et al., 2019; Omotoso & Koch, 2018). Researchers confirm that health outcomes in South Africa depend on individuals' living arrangements, socioeconomic status, and level of urbanisation (Biney et al., 2020). Consequently, some employers include medical aid benefits or coverage as part of their employees' compensation packages to ensure they can access private healthcare.

South Africa has a dual health system comprising of the public and private health sectors. Public healthcare provides most of its services and care for free to all citizens. This includes providing pharmaceuticals, wheelchairs, crutches, and home care visits. However, public healthcare is often characterised by problems such as long waiting times, rushed appointments, outdated facilities, poor disease control and prevention practices, and lower quality of care compared to private healthcare (Burger & Christian, 2020). This is most evident in rural South Africa. Researchers have used a qualitative approach to examine healthcare access in rural areas of the country (Neely & Ponshunmugam, 2019). The findings of this study revealed that access to healthcare is primarily determined by a lack of resources, transportation, and kinship networks rooted in South Africa's economy and long history of racial segregation. Previous research supports these findings by pointing out that living in a rural area makes accessing healthcare more difficult (Burger & Christian, 2020; Towne et al., 2017; Trani et al., 2011).

Free time and adequate rest. Free time and adequate rest assess how much individuals have time for leisure and relaxation outside their work commitments (Duffy et al., 2017). An alternative perspective on providing free time and rest outside work involves balancing work (professional) and non-work (personal) activities. Employees in South Africa are entitled to 21 consecutive days of yearly leave, or one day for every 17 days worked, under the Basic Conditions of Employment Act 75 of 1997. Workers are limited to 45 hours per week; if they work five days or fewer, they may work nine hours per day; if they work more than five days, they may work eight hours per day. Individuals with free time and rest outside of work can engage in personal activities that contribute to their growth and development (Maldrine & Kiplangat, 2020; Nganzi, 2014). Additionally, research points out that flexible work policies ensuring adequate time off benefit employees' mental and physical health (Cooper et al., 2019; Duffy et al., 2019; Wang et al., 2019). The lack thereof is associated with work fatigue (Di Fabio et al., 2021).

On the contrary, free time and rest significantly negatively impacted what a sample of school teachers considered meaningful work (Atitsogbe et al., 2021). The authors of this study

suggested that free time and rest may lead people to engage less in occupational activities, resulting in feelings of unfulfillment at work. Ferreira et al. (2019) also reported a negative relationship between free time, rest, and meaningful work. Conversely, these findings support previous studies that demonstrated a positive correlation between work engagement and meaningful work (Allan, Batz-Barbarich, et al., 2019; Steger et al., 2013).

Adequate compensation: Adequate compensation considers people's opinions about how acceptable their income is (Duffy et al., 2017). As part of efforts to promote decent work, the South African government established a minimum wage to ensure a decent standard of living (Carr et al., 2018). The estimated wage is approximately R12,000 per month, which translates to an hourly living wage of around R67 based on a 45-hour work week (Carr et al., 2018). However, despite some employees earning the minimum wage, a significant number of South African workers still struggle to earn enough to maintain a decent standard of living. According to Reeves et al. (2017), these minimum wages are insufficient to guarantee a decent standard of living for workers and their families due to the rising cost of living in many parts of the world.

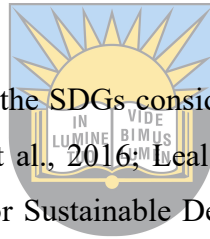
Research emphasises that living wages must complement decent employment and working conditions to facilitate capability development in and through work (Carr et al., 2018; Searle & McWha-Hermann, 2021). In studies conducted by De Carlo et al. (2019) and Minghui et al. (2018), adequate compensation was found to enhance well-being and prevent work-family conflict among teachers, as it helped them manage their household financial expenses. However, few studies conducted in South Africa on teacher job satisfaction have found that teachers are generally dissatisfied with their salaries and benefits (Matla & Xaba, 2019). Compared to other professions, teachers' salaries are perceived as incompatible with their qualifications (Lloyd, 2013; Okeke & Mtyuda, 2017; Wheeler, 2017).

Complementary values are when an individual's work values align with their family and community (Duffy et al., 2017). Personal and organisational values impact an individual's priorities and actions, and when these values are aligned, they can increase job engagement (Duffy et al., 2019). On the other hand, when values are not aligned, employees may feel dissatisfied in the workplace, try to change the values of the workplace, or ultimately decide to leave their jobs (Dodd et al., 2019).

2.3.3. Decent work on the Agenda for Sustainable Development

Over the past few years, the means to achieve sustainable development in both developed and developing countries has become a global agenda (Anholon et al., 2022; Kuzmina et al., 2021).

Even today, implementing and sustaining development methods remain central to international debates and research interests. In 2015, the United Nations General Assembly established a set of 17 global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that address environmental, political, and economic challenges affecting both developed and developing nations (Fenner & Cernev, 2021; Leal Filho et al., 2019). The SDGs were designed to improve upon the shortcomings of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which initiated a global effort in 2000 and reached their deadline in 2015. The MDGs aimed to eradicate poverty, improve health conditions, and prioritise education for all children in developing countries. Although the MDGs did not fully achieve their objectives due to a lack of financial support, mechanisms for measuring progress and visibility in international discussions were established (Leal Filho, 2020). Despite this, the MDGs led to significant advancements in several important areas, including reducing poverty in some countries, improving access to water and sanitation, and decreasing child mortality rates (United Nations, 2015). Therefore, the MDGs provided valuable lessons and experiences for the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to assist governments in integrating the SDGs into national plans and policies (Kuzmina et al., 2021).



To achieve sustainable development, the SDGs consider human development, human rights, and equity in all countries (Kumar et al., 2016; Leal Filho et al., 2019). Among the issues addressed in the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is SDG 8, which promotes inclusive economic growth, employment, and decent work conditions for all. This goal emphasises that sustainable economic growth at the national level is linked to individual work dignity. According to Halkos and Gkampoura (2021) SDG 8 prioritises achieving high productivity and growth while promoting policies that support productivity, job creation, entrepreneurship, and innovation. Additionally, it advocates for the sustainable production and consumption of resources to ensure that economic growth does not harm the environment. The core of SDG 8 includes full and productive employment, decent work for everyone, the eradication of forced labour, and the protection of labour rights.

Since sustainable development is a global initiative encompassing all areas of life, researchers from various fields have explored SDG 8 in different contexts and its implications. For instance, Scheyvens et al. (2021) examined the opportunities for sustainable employment in the tourism sector, while Jianu et al. (2021, p.1) investigated European Union (EU) labour market inequalities, directly referencing “sustained, inclusive and sustainable growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all.” The importance of labour rights for everyone, as emphasised in SDG8, led Rai et al. (2019) to investigate the inclusiveness of

SDG8 concerning gender equality. Building on feminist debates regarding gender and work, the authors explored whether the growth indicators for SDG 8 targets consider the value and costs of social reproduction.

Peláez (2021) analysed the impact of SDG 8 on the Mexican economy, noting that the implementation of SDG 8 encouraged measures aimed at addressing Mexico's economic challenges and generating decent jobs by increasing productivity. In pursuit of understanding the role of SDG8 in meeting the goals of Agenda 2030, Kreinin and Aigner (2022) proposed that while there is a focus on social outcomes of decent work, long-term social-ecological sustainability should not be overlooked. Chaleta et al. (2021) examined how higher education institutions map their curricula to align with SDG 8 and other goals. The effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on SDG8 has drawn the attention of many scholars (Anholon et al., 2022; Fenner & Cernev, 2021; Lucas & Landman, 2021). Drawing from the scientific literature mentioned above, one can deduce that SDG 8 is a widely discussed topic. The breadth and depth of this discussion demonstrate the relevance and significance of SDG 8 (Skvarciany & Astikè, 2022).

Moreover, countries have embraced SDG 8 as a global concern (Anholon et al., 2022). Studies tracking the progress in implementing 17 SDGs revealed that economy-related targets, such as decent work and economic growth, are close to being achieved in developed countries (Halkos & Gkampoura, 2021). The authors reviewed the 2020 World Bank report on countries' economic growth. The 2019 data showed that the world's annual growth rate of GDP per capita was 1.4%. However, negative growth rates were observed in Sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean in 2019. The highest growth rate was observed in South Asia, while the growth rates of East Asia, the Pacific, and North America were higher than the world's average in 2021 (Halko & Gkampoura, 2021; World Bank, 2020). In addition, Liu et al. (2020) link the achievement of these SDGs to education and formative itineraries in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics. According to Liu et al. (2020), STEM will improve employability driven by innovation and ultimately support economic prosperity. In fact, Palomares et al. (2021) reported employment growth in STEM jobs as they are considered resilient against economic crises (Palomares et al., 2021).

Notwithstanding the awareness and the momentum built by the SDGs in taking collective action (Kreinin & Aigner, 2022), the specificities of each national context pose challenges in achieving SDG 8 (Anholon et al., 2022). The delivery of these goals varies and is influenced by the socio-political and economic arrangements of each context (Leal Filho, 2020). For instance, (Skvarciany & Astikè, 2022) assessed decent work and economic growth in the EU, and their results indicated that the most advanced countries in implementing SDG 8 are

Germany, with 100 points, and France, with 91 points. Aiginger (2021) noted that most EU countries are competitive and able to respond quickly to changing markets due to the efficiency of their economies.

In contrast, an analysis of the contribution of the SDGs to economic empowerment in Serbia revealed that there is still a long way to go in achieving SDG 8 (Leal Filho et al., 2019). In India, Bisht and Pattanaik (2021) investigated the degree of inclusiveness in the labour market, finding that gender inequality significantly contributes to the lack of access to decent work among youth. Social and cultural dimensions, among others, are reasons for gender inequality in India's labour force (Banerjee, 2019). Within the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region, decent work and economic growth align with existing government policies and regional integrations (Maphiri et al., 2021). Nevertheless, studies indicate that Africa lacks effective strategies to meet the SDGs outlined in the 2030 Agenda (Muswere, 2020). Leal Filho et al. (2021) highlight the importance of acknowledging local perceptions and practices in promoting sustainable development in Africa.

Although the agenda has received significant attention, inequalities within the context of developing countries remain a reality (Dhakal & Burgess, 2021). In most countries, the SDGs have been incorporated into national development frameworks. Consequently, implementation is influenced by each nation's socio-political and economic aspects (Anholon et al., 2022; Cheng et al., 2021). A lack of strategic direction, stemming from structural instability and policy incoherence, has been identified as the biggest challenge in implementing the SDGs (Dhakal & Burgess, 2021; Horvath et al., 2022). According to Allen et al. (2018), there is a gap in the assessment of interlinkages, trade-offs, and synergies between targets, which undermines effective implementation and the transformative potential of the SDGs. This issue is particularly prevalent in the least-developed countries of sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia (Cheng et al., 2021). In addition to political, economic, and socio-cultural specificities, the COVID-19 pandemic has increased the uncertainty surrounding the achievement of the SDGs, including those related to SDG 8 (Anholon et al., 2022; Clemente-Suárez et al., 2022; Fenner & Cernev, 2021). In particular, the 2021 Sustainable Development Report indicates that South Africa is one of the developing countries stagnating in its efforts to achieve economic growth and decent work for all (Sachs et al., 2021).

2.3.4 Decent Work and Economic Growth in the Covid-19 Pandemic Era

The COVID-19 pandemic has influenced economic and social systems globally (Anholon et al., 2022; Cheng et al., 2021; Fenner & Cernev, 2021; Sachs et al., 2021). ILO reports indicate that, due to COVID-19, work hours declined by 14%, leading to an increase in temporary,

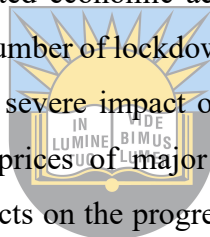
precarious, low-wage work and poverty (Allan et al., 2021; Autin et al., 2020; Blustein, Allan, et al., 2022; Leal Filho et al., 2020), with 400 million jobs lost (ILO, 2021). Moreover, social distancing measures affected the labour market and reduced the placement of workers (Fenner & Cernev, 2021). As a result of these drastic changes, workers accumulated debts due to the closure of some companies and the prevalence of low-wage work (Bárcena & Cimoli, 2021; Sprague et al., 2020). Informal work became a survival option (Rocha et al., 2021). Thus, the pandemic has impacted many economic areas, including employment and decent work (Lucas & Landman, 2021; Vitenu-Sackey & Barfi, 2021). According to the Global Economic Prospects report (World Bank, 2020), the COVID-19 pandemic has destroyed human capital due to the loss of schooling and work, lower investment, and the disintegration of global supply and trade linkages.

Since the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic, several studies have shown greater attention to the economic changes brought about by the crisis. For instance, Ibn-Mohammed et al. (2021) explored the pandemic's effect on the global economy, explicitly discussing the barriers and opportunities in the circular economy. The study established a risk of over-reliance on pandemic-related funding in achieving SDG8 (Ibn-Mohammed et al., 2021). The pharmaceutical industry, digital intelligence, digital infrastructure, and service-based innovations are among the sectors where the COVID-19 pandemic accelerated support and funding (Arner et al., 2021). However, humanitarian programs supported by major donors like the United States, Germany, the United Kingdom, and the European Commission were severely affected as these countries experienced an economic dip caused by COVID-19 (Kabir et al., 2020). The World Health Organisation (WHO) (2020) reported that approximately 65,000 lives of people living in extreme poverty were lost due to this economic downturn.

In China, Norouzi et al. (2020) investigated the effects of the pandemic on the country's economy by examining the demand for petroleum and electricity. Their research uncovered that the COVID-19 pandemic has had both direct and indirect impacts on the demand for electricity and petroleum, causing harm to the regional economy in the short and long term. Fortunately, recent reports suggest that China has made substantial progress in its economic recovery by increasing its consumption of renewable energy (Wang & Zhang, 2021). The pandemic has resulted in a 32% decrease in aggregate weekly working hours and a 15% decrease in jobs in the Canadian labour market (Lemieux et al., 2020). In 2020, Pakistan's economy experienced negative growth (-0.05%) for the first time in 60 years, leading to a significant financial crisis (Wang et al., 2021).

Although the pandemic had consequences for different world regions, it significantly impacted low- and middle-income countries (Leal Filho et al., 2020; Sprague et al., 2020). In Africa, the adverse effects of the COVID-19 pandemic are exacerbated by hunger (Ekwebelem et al., 2021). Despite pre-existing food insecurity, COVID-19 posed a severe threat to SDG8. In the first two months of the pandemic in Ghana, 42,000 people lost their jobs. The tourism and hospitality sector alone suffered a loss of 171 million dollars in the past three months due to partial lockdowns and the closure of tourism facilities (Aduhene & Osei-Assibey, 2021). A study examining the socio-economic impact of COVID-19 on four African countries (Ethiopia, Malawi, Nigeria, and Uganda) reported that an estimated 258 million people, constituting 80% of the population of the four countries, have lost their livelihoods due to COVID-19 (Josephson et al., 2020).

Furthermore, the financial markets have been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. South Africa, Morocco, and Kenya saw a decline in their share indexes after the announcement of their first coronavirus cases (Ozili, 2020). In a recent study, Ozili and Arun (2023) examined how social distancing policies impacted economic activities and stock market indices. The findings revealed that the increasing number of lockdown days, monetary policy decisions, and international travel restrictions had a severe impact on economic activities and the closing, opening, lowest, and highest stock prices of major stock market indices. Therefore, the pandemic is having catastrophic impacts on the progress of SDG8 in various ways (Arner et al., 2021).



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Notably, the COVID-19 pandemic created unprecedented disruptions in the global labour market, including job losses and declines in income. The greatest challenge arising from these labour market changes is the difficulty in accessing decent work (Masdonati et al., 2019). The pandemic has highlighted inequities in access to decent work (Kantamneni, 2020; Ravenelle et al., 2022). While some professionals were able to work from home during the pandemic, vulnerable workers faced unsafe working conditions (Anholon et al., 2022; Ravenelle et al., 2022). In the EU, the most affected individuals were temporary employees, young workers, and those with low levels of education. Trade, transport, and recreation activities were particularly impacted (Anderton et al., 2021). In India, women were forced to exit the workforce, while men could negotiate across industries and employment arrangements (Abraham et al., 2021). Using the NIDS-CRAM (2020) survey, which sampled over 6,000 adults aged 18 to 59, Ranchhod and Daniels (2021) found a substantial decrease in employment during the lockdown period in South Africa. Many studies suggest that the world will emerge from this crisis with higher levels of unemployment, inequality, poverty, debt, and political

frustration (Lee et al., 2020). Undoubtedly, these drastic changes impact the labour market and contemporary careers (Blustein et al., 2018), as workers often already operate under precarious conditions (Cubrich & Tengesdal, 2021; Kantamneni, 2020). Precarious work is characterised by employment insecurity, low wages, and inadequate workplace protections (Benach et al., 2016).

On the other hand, the COVID-19 pandemic has positively impacted certain industries. It has influenced various efforts to build better infrastructure within technology and innovation (Arner et al., 2021). For instance, since 2020, digital finance has shown resilience in reinforcing and driving forward the pre-existing trends of digitisation of finance, economic activities, and communication (Arner et al., 2022). Digital subscriptions, online sales, and marketing have gained momentum (Marianne, 2021). Additionally, the adoption of the work-from-home methodology as a new form of employment (teleworking) has gained attention and is estimated to continue in the post-COVID-19 future (Djankov & Panizza, 2020; Ljungholm & Olah, 2020). In this way, more approaches that increase employment and enhance decent work could be adopted (Clemente-Suárez et al., 2022). Djankov and Panizza (2020) echo the same sentiments that the acceleration of digitalisation could soon create more employment opportunities as economic growth remains the main element for the well-being of countries and the viability of their political systems. Moreover, the COVID-19 pandemic has positively impacted the natural environment by inducing lockdowns, which have drastically reduced environmental pollution worldwide (Khan et al., 2021).

2.4. The overview of decent work

For decades, there has been an acknowledgement of the rapid change in work literature. Numerous changes can be linked to neoliberal policies. These changes have led to decreased worker protections, a decline in the influence and prevalence of labour unions, deindustrialisation, and the emergence of the gig economy (Blustein, 2019; Brill, 2021). The lack of decent work is a global issue that researchers have highlighted (Brill, 2021b; Pereira et al., 2019). This problem is especially evident in the increasing uncertainty in the labour market, the rise of precarious employment, and the continued disregard of the ILO's DWA (Blustein et al., 2022; ILO, 2022). These forces have intensified the challenges of job insecurity, wage stagnation, and reduced social protection among workers (ILO, 2018; Van Hootegeem et al., 2019). Moreover, the Covid-19 pandemic has greatly decreased access to decent work (ILO, 2022). On an individual level, this lack of decent work has been shown to lead to physical and mental health problems, challenges in meeting basic work-related and survival needs, and

limited opportunities for meaningful work (Blustein et al., 2020; Brill, 2021; Duffy et al., 2019a, 2019b; Pereira et al., 2019).

The consequences of poor working conditions extend beyond the workplace, impairing individual health, well-being, family formation, and social life in general (Kalleberg & Vallas, 2018). In addition to being identified as the number one challenge in the world of work, workers are affected by "insufficient paid work", especially in developing countries where access to decent work has traditionally been scarce (ILO, 2019; 2020; McWha-Hermann et al., 2021; Seubert et al., 2021). The shortfall in meeting the living wage makes it difficult for people to build better lives through work (Reeves et al., 2017). The living wage is generally defined as a wage that allows workers to meet their basic needs while also participating meaningfully in society beyond mere survival (Yao et al., 2017). Therefore, low remuneration leaves workers more vulnerable to external shocks and hinders their career development efforts, keeping them trapped in a cycle of poverty (Searle & McWha-Hermann, 2021). The ILO has noted that poverty, child labour, gender-based discrimination, and unsafe workplaces are linked to the lack of decent work (ILO, 2019). Recognising the role of work in securing a living and lifting people out of poverty, the concept of decent work becomes particularly relevant as it promotes and protects human rights in the workplace (Ferraro et al., 2021b; Xu et al., 2022). Theoretical and policy debates advocate for the inclusion of decent work in the landscape of contemporary careers (Hughes et al., 2021 a, b).

Evidence indicates that securing work that provides individuals with decent working conditions enhances their job fulfilment and well-being, as this type of work meets their needs for survival, social connection, and self-determination (Blustein et al., 2016; Duffy et al., 2021; Wang et al., 2019). Recent literature has found that the attainment of decent work predicts work volition and career adaptability among various groups, including employed Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) adults (Douglass et al., 2017), individuals with chronic illnesses (Tokar & Kaut, 2018), and working women (England et al., 2020). Career adaptability is a crucial factor that helps individuals cultivate positive attitudes towards their current and future careers (Autin et al., 2017; Duffy et al., 2016). Individuals with higher levels of career adaptability are more likely to experience greater job satisfaction, career success, improved performance, and better fit within their work environment (Autin et al., 2017; Douglass et al., 2017; Nguyen et al., 2021).

Other scholars found decent work to predict general well-being, as well as mental and physical health (Blustein et al., 2019; Duffy et al., 2019, 2021; Dodd et al., 2019; Ferraro et al., 2018). Additionally, research has affirmed a direct association between decent work, work

engagement, and job satisfaction (Graça et al., 2021; McIlveen et al., 2021; Navajas-Romero et al., 2019). Furthermore, Masdonati et al. (2021) posit that decent working conditions facilitate a favourable transition from school to work, highlighting that a successful school-to-work transition may be hindered by contextual factors, which expose young adult workers to a lack of career adaptability and employability. Despite these insights, the aspiration of attaining decent work as a global standard has not yet been fulfilled (Blustein, Allan, et al., 2022).

2.5. Conclusion

This chapter discusses the conceptualisation of decent work and the need for satisfaction. The PWT, serving as the theoretical underpinnings of these constructs, explains the relationship between decent work and its outcomes. The empirical support presented an overview of the importance of understanding the factors that affect access to decent work.



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CHAPTER THREE

LITERATURE REVIEW ON TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

3. Introduction

Professional development has been widely recognised as one of the most effective ways to improve teaching and learning practices (Eun, 2008, 2019; Johns & Sosibo, 2019; Kennedy, 2016; Shabani, 2016). However, despite this widespread acknowledgement of its importance, there have been few attempts to ground professional development within a theoretical framework. Consequently, the mechanisms by which professional development fosters teacher learning and translates into teaching practice have not been well understood (Eun, 2008, 2019). To better understand the underlying mechanisms of teachers' professional development, scholars have grounded their work in the sociocultural theories of development proposed by Vygotsky (Eun, 2019; Newman & Latifi, 2021a; Shabani, 2016a; Vygotsky, 1978). The Sociocultural Theory (SCT) posits that the ways in which students learn in school also apply to teachers' professional development (Shabani, 2016). As a result, several studies supported the use of Vygotsky's work as a theoretical foundation for teacher learning and development (Castro-Félix & Daniels, 2018; Fani & Ghaemi, 2011; Ghassemzadeh, 2009; Smagorinsky, 2012).

Therefore, this chapter discusses the construct of teacher professional development (TPD). It begins by outlining the theoretical framework that forms the conceptualisation of TPD, along with its benefits and related issues.

3.1. The Sociocultural Theory

3.1.1. The origin and tenets

The SCT is a theory of development that originated from the work of the late Russian and Soviet scholar Lev Vygotsky. It emphasises the social and cultural aspects of human comprehension and learning rather than individuality (Vygotsky, 1978). Vygotsky's approach is premised on an interactional view of individuals and their environment (Eun, 2019). Walqui (2006, p.160) summarises the fundamental assumptions underlying the core tenets of Vygotsky's SCT: a) learning precedes development, b) language is the primary vehicle (tool) of thought, c) mediation is central to learning, d) social interaction is the basis of learning and development. Learning is a process of apprenticeship and internalisation in which skills and knowledge are transformed from the social into the cognitive plane, and e) the zone of proximal development (ZPD) is the primary activity space in which learning occurs. Vygotsky argues that mental activity in humans is a mediated process in which symbolic and sociocultural

constructed objects, such as language, play an important role. Mediation is the mechanism by which external forms of social interaction become internalised mental functions, as internalisation requires extensive reflection and self-monitoring (Eun, 2008, 2019; Shabani, 2016).

Within the SCT, learning is a process mediated by social interaction, which becomes individualised through linguistic exchanges between children and more experienced members of society, such as parents, teachers, and peers (Vygotsky, 1978). By emphasising the social origin of mental functions, the SCT recognises the role of social interaction in acquiring higher cognitive abilities before individuals can internalise them. People develop their understanding of reality through interactions with the material world and other humans. Empirical studies support the assertion of SCT that learning occurs as individuals repeatedly interact within social spaces such as peer groups, schools, and professional learning communities (Jeong et al., 2022). This social interaction between people with varying levels of knowledge fosters effective human development. From this perspective, development is a process by which behaviours used in social interactions are transformed into individual mental processes (Eun, 2008). The SCT posits that human development occurs on two levels: the inter-psychological plane and the intra-psychological plane. In the inter-psychological plane, social interaction occurs between two or more individuals, where the more capable person guides the development of the less experienced individual. The knowledge and skills negotiated in the inter-psychological plane are then internalised to support individual cognitive functions in the intra-psychological plane (Vygotsky, 1978).

In addition, the SCT captures the construct of the ZPD as the primary activity space in which learning occurs. Within the ZPD, learning activates various internal development processes that can operate only when a child interacts with people in their environment and collaborates with peers (Shayer, 2003; Wertsch, 1985). Once these processes are internalised, they become part of the child's independent development achievement. Explicitly defined, ZPD is "the distance between a child's actual development level, as determined by independent problem-solving, and the level of potential development, as determined through problem-solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers" (Wertsch, 1985, p.60). Vygotsky's theory, as noted by Shayer (2003), asserts that the ZPD is not merely a matter of instruction but also involves developmental factors, whereby a child operates within limits determined by their developmental stage and intellectual capabilities. In Vygotsky's view, effective instruction should precede development; it should awaken a whole set of functions that exist in the

maturation stage and within the ZPD (Vygotsky, 1978). Accordingly, the SCT claims that instruction plays a crucial role in development (Turuk, 2008).

Drawing on the principles of SCT, scholars argue that the way students learn in an educational setting also applies to how teachers develop professionally in their workplaces. Applying the knowledge of SCT to understand TPD, these studies found that the ZPD construct emerged as the most effective tool for understanding collaborative knowledge development. This contributed to teachers' engagement in and understanding of professional development content (Anderson, 2021; Kuusisaari, 2014; Potgieter & Walt, 2022). Moreover, the ZPD facilitated TPD through feedback, reflection and self-monitoring, leading to internalisation (Eun, 2019). Collaboration practices and tools to support teachers' learning and development increased their enthusiasm for and engagement in teaching (Dutt et al., 2020). Shabani (2016) concluded that the core tenets of SCT can assist in understanding how professional growth takes place in the workplace.

They further noted the superiority of SCT when linked to professional development compared to other existing theories of development due to its ability to consider cognitive, affective, social and contextual factors as essential for a teacher's development. Others (Burner & Svendsen, 2020) believe that TPD, from the perspective of SCT, emphasises the avoidance of isolating schools from society and everyday life. In that, the school context needs to change into conducive ways to enable teachers to incorporate their professional learning into classrooms (Eun, 2008, 2019). The SCT assumes reciprocal cause-and-effect relationships between individuals and their environment. Moreover, the SCT approach has also been effective in identifying how participation in continuing professional development inspires changes on the individual professional level and organisational learning (Campbell-Meier & Goulding, 2021).

3.1.2. Teacher professional development within Sociocultural Theory

TPD is a process through which teachers acquire new subject knowledge by participating in training workshops, seminars, and feedback practices (Ha, 2022; Pham et al., 2023; Tran et al., 2022). Teachers' knowledge, skills, attitudes, and methods of teaching and learning are essential components of changes in the classroom and improvement in students' academic performance. The knowledge acquired through these activities is intended to equip teachers to meet the constant new requirements and demands that rise as knowledge advances and new educational policies are implemented (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017).

From the SCT perspective, TPD occurs regularly in the working environment through interactions among learners, colleagues, and stakeholders. It incorporates three interconnected features: collaboration, situatedness and self-directedness. From this viewpoint, teachers learn best through social interactions, with two major factors being collaboration and collegiality, playing a crucial role in their success (Guskey 2002). In this context, teachers construct their knowledge and skills in teaching by actively engaging in social and professional interactions with others. These interactions become internalised psychological tools, enabling them to think critically, construct, and reconstruct teaching practices that are appropriate for their students. This internalisation process is mediated by teachers' participation in meaningful social activities (Shi, 2017). Such meaningful activities have been identified as models of TPD, which scholars have grounded in SCT (Eun, 2008; Newman & Latifi, 2021; Shabani, 2016).

According to Guskey (2002), there are seven major professional development models. The following discussion explores these models and their connections to SCT as outlined by Eun (2019):

Training: Training is one of the most prevalent models of professional development in an educational setting (Nouri & Kaouache, 2021). It can take various forms, such as presentations, discussions, workshops, seminars, colloquia, exhibitions, role-playing, simulations, and microteaching. Although these forms may differ, they share the common goal of creating learning opportunities that will enhance teachers' professional knowledge and skills, provide support, and offer avenues for professional development. From the perspective of SCT, the interaction that occurs during training, involving presenters, workshop leaders, and teacher participation, is a process that facilitates development (Eun, 2019).

Observation/Assessment and Mentoring: Observation and assessment, along with mentoring, are two models of professional development that involve pairing two teachers to collaborate on various classroom practices, such as instruction, assessment, and classroom management. Typically, more experienced and competent teachers are paired with less experienced or novice teachers. In the context of observation, the observer gains new insights by watching the teaching performance of another teacher. Following the observation, both the observer and the observed have the opportunity to engage in discussion and provide feedback. Consequently, mediation and internalisation are the developmental mechanisms that SCT suggests are relevant to observation and mentoring models. As described by Vygotsky (1978), development is driven by interactions between the more competent and less competent. The strategies, feedback, and discussions that occur on the inter-psychological plane become internalised over time through repeated interactions.

Involvement in a development/improvement process and study groups: Involvement in development and improvement processes, as well as study groups, serves as a professional development model that offers teachers the opportunity to acquire new knowledge and skills while collaborating with peers on research and discussions to address common issues. A key concept derived from SCT is collective scaffolding (Newman & Latifi, 2021b). Collective scaffolding describes how group members support each other's learning and development until the group's goals are achieved through social interaction (Shabani, 2016b). The social guidance and group results are internalised, enabling individuals to apply these insights to their own problem-solving in the future (Guskey, 2002).

Inquiry/Action research and individually guided activities: Inquiry/action research and individually guided activities represent the final two professional development models, primarily relying on individually directed efforts. Both models begin by identifying a problem that is of pressing concern to an individual teacher's practice (Shabani, 2016). The next step in the improvement process involves researching and studying relevant literature. Effectiveness is assessed by incorporating these methods into classroom practice. These models provide teachers with opportunities for self-initiated and self-directed learning, contributing to their development as reflective professionals and thoughtful decision-makers (Eun, 2008, 2019). From the perspective of SCT, internalisation is the ultimate goal of development, with self-regulation serving as the endpoint of this process. By interacting with more competent individuals, teachers acquire the ability to recognise areas of improvement and discover methods to achieve their own goals (Eun, 2019; Newman & Latifi, 2021a; Shabani, 2016a; Vygotsky, 1978).

It is argued that grounding professional development models with the SCT provides theoretical implications for effectively implementing professional development in teachers (Eun, 2008, 2019; Shabani, 2016). Table 2 summarises how the key concepts of SCT are translated into TPD practices.

Table 2. Professional development within a Vygotskian theoretical framework

Key theoretical concepts	Related professional development practices
Social interaction	Workshops, colloquia, seminars, mentoring, and/or study
Internalisation	Individually guided activities (video self-assessment; journal writing)
Mediation	Continuous follow-up support that includes the three types of mediators: Tools (material resources); signs (newsletters and journals); and other humans (professional networks)
Psychological systems	Development of professional development programs that focus on changing teachers' attitudes as well as instructional practices

Source: Eun (2008, p. 144)

In addition, the SCT emphasises that TPD occurs within specific settings or contexts (Johnson & Golombek, 2016). This perspective suggests that teachers are the agents of change and transformation, responsible for imparting relevant knowledge that aligns with their social and teaching environments. For TPD programs to be successful, teachers must engage in learning activities that mirror those they use in their classrooms (Burner & Svendsen, 2020). Johnson and Golombek (2016) argue that professional development opportunities should be socially, culturally, and politically situated, responding to the teachers, students and the community's needs. Essentially, teachers construct knowledge in response to the particular social, cultural, and political context in which they instruct a specific group of learners. This means the knowledge prescribed in the TPD programs must be relevant to the context in which teaching occurs (Pham et al., 2023).

The implication of the above perspective is that effective implementation of professional development depends on a conducive school context. Studies conducted on professional development from the SCT perspective have found that a key factor guiding TPD activities is the consideration of existing contextual factors (Mansour et al., 2014; Shabani, 2016). Teachers' psychological functions, skills, competencies, knowledge, and attitudes toward students are shaped by their teaching context. According to Burner and Svendsen (2020), the SCT perspective enhances the understanding of TPD by placing a strong emphasis on social interaction, participation, feedback, and collaborative discussions as primary development

mechanisms for teachers (Vygotsky, 1978). The connection between contextual work conditions and professional development highlighted by the SCT makes it applicable for this study, which seeks to understand how decent work conditions can impact the rural professional development of teachers.

In addition, within the SCT, teachers are positioned as active agents of their professional development (Johnson & Golombek, 2020). This is regarded as self-directed teacher learning, whereby they decide what and how to learn to teach effectively. Teachers actively judge, evaluate, and determine how to improve their teaching behaviours (Ha, 2022). As they enquire about the ways to enhance their teaching, they can be more focused and motivated to learn. This premise suggests that TPD should not be limited to once-off training courses or workshops but should be open to other social contexts within the school and wider communities. Studies show that these one-size-fits-all knowledge and skills do not always work for everyone.

3.2. Teacher Professional Development

The TPD refers to all intensive, continuous, and systematic activities that can enhance teaching, learning and the school environment (Ajani, 2020). It reflects the behavioural (work performance), attitudinal, and intellectual (professional-related knowledge) orientation of teachers (Evans, 2014). TPD is characterised as a process whereby teachers learn (knowledge and skills), then learn about learning (pedagogical content knowledge) to transform this knowledge into practice that benefits their learners, ultimately allowing teachers to become better at what they do (Avalos, 2011, DeMonte, 2013; Yoonet al., 2007). Various scholars have coined the concept of TPD based on different theories of how teachers learn. According to Bubb (2004), TPD refers to any professional development activities that aim to improve knowledge and skills to enhance teaching and learning quality by improving teacher attitudes and approaches. Similarly, Njenga (2023) defines TPD as learning that teachers undertake in the workplace to enhance their professional competencies and overall teaching quality.

Others define TPD as an ongoing practice that builds on initial teacher training and provides opportunities for growth and development throughout a teacher's career (Tyagi & Misra, 2021). It is argued that TPD should commence with training for the role of a teacher and be sustained throughout the teachers' professional service. TPD informs a teacher's professional identity, as numerous innovations and developments are constantly introduced in their fields of expertise over time (Kuijpers et al., 2010; Noonan, 2019). Moreover, TPD encompasses all the activities teachers engage in during their careers, which are designed to enhance their work (Eun, 2019).

Accordingly, this study conceptualises TPD based on previous research that identifies TPD as continued professional learning in the workplace (Ajani, 2020; Bernadine, 2019; Saleem, 2020). Professional learning in the workplace can take the form of workshops, training, mentorship programs, and collaborative practices (Admiraal et al., 2016; Ajani, 2020; Bantwini, 2019). This study focuses on TPD as conceptualised by Evers and colleagues, which includes five theoretical categories: (1) keeping up to date (acquiring new knowledge and insights), (2) experimenting with new methods of teaching in the classroom), (3) reflecting and seeking feedback, (4) collaborating with colleagues to improve lessons, and (5) collaborating with colleagues to enhance school development (Evers et al., 2016).

3.2.1. Categories of Teacher Professional Development

3.2.1.1. Keeping up to date

Professional development is essential in strengthening the teaching profession by equipping teachers with new techniques and approaches that enable them to keep pace with the demands of the 21st century (Bernadine, 2019; Goldhaber et al., 2020; Kraft et al., 2018; Serin, 2017). The 21st century is characterised by globalisation, rapid innovation, advanced production, and technological advancement (ILO, 2018; Hirschi, 2018; Xu et al., 2018). Given the rapid changes in the work environment (Blustein et al., 2019), it is imperative for teachers to stay current with developments in practice. To address this challenge, researchers advocate for continuous professional training and workshops to help teachers acquire new skills (Chigonga & Mutodi, 2019; Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; Dlamini & Mbatha, 2018). Thus, through participation in work-related training and reading, teachers can stay up to date with the ongoing educational developments within their profession.

Research conducted in South African schools found that teachers participate in various workshops, training, and meetings to enhance their pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) (Ajani, 2020; Dasoo & Van, 2020; Gumbo, 2020; Tsotetsi & Mahlomaholo, 2015; Vaughn & de Beer, 2020). Training and workshops assist teachers in effectively delivering the curriculum effectively (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; Gumbo, 2020). In their longitudinal study, Darling-Hammond et al. (2017) affirm that teachers need these professional development activities to achieve and sustain quality education. Therefore, the research supports the use of regular training to improve teachers' skills and knowledge in their fields of work (Ajani, 2018). Several authors have established that training, skills development, and other TPD programmes enhance teacher competency and facilitate meaningful day-to-day teaching activities (Bantwini, 2019; Tulu, 2019; Ulubey et al., 2017).

3.2.1.2. Experimenting

Building upon the consensus that teachers engage in training and workshops to keep up to date with the development in their profession, research indicates that the lessons learnt during this process should be experimented within a classroom. Experimenting is an intentional effort by teachers to undertake something new within the classroom (Evers, Kreijns et al., 2016). According to Evers et al. (2017), experimenting facilitates teacher learning. Many researchers regard experimenting as an effective channel through which learning takes place. Beisiegel et al. (2018) conducted a study on video-based professional development, where teachers watched and analysed videos to improve their understanding of instruction. The findings show that experimenting is one of the best practices for TPD. Additionally, a study exploring a TPD programme using experiential learning (Wang et al., 2021) found that experiential learning enhanced the teachers' motivation to adopt learner-centred approaches in their teaching.

3.2.1.3. Reflecting and asking for feedback

There is a global recognition of reflection as a skill that benefits learning, work and life (Brownhill, 2022; Chalkiadaki, 2018; Hidayati, 2018). Several studies within the teaching profession regard reflection as an integral part of teachers' professional growth (Brownhill, 2022; Hussain & Khurshid, 2020; Maksimovic & Osmanovic, 2018; Walshe & Driver, 2019). It facilitates teaching, learning, and understanding, playing a central role in teachers' professional development (Mathew et al., 2017). By engaging in reflective activities, teachers take responsibility for improving their professional practices (Farrell & Kennedy, 2019). Walshe and Driver (2019) define reflection as a process of self-critique that leads to pedagogical improvement and teaching practices. Furthermore, it is recognised as a crucial factor for improving teaching quality, representing a continuous process that helps teachers break away from routine behaviour (Maksimovic & Osmanovic, 2018).

By using new teaching strategies based on feedback, teachers enhance their teaching competencies and become more self-aware of their attitudes in teaching (Slade et al., 2019). Reflection has helped English as a foreign language (EFL) teachers evaluating their teaching activities and understanding how these activities have impacted their professionalism (Riyanti, 2021). The findings indicated that their reflective practices helped them identify their strengths and weaknesses in teaching, which motivated them to become better teachers (Riyanti, 2021). Reflecting is considered an essential component of both teaching and learning for teachers (Habib, 2017).

3.2.1.4. Collaborating with colleagues to improve lessons

Teacher collaboration involves group activities in which teachers engage, resulting in learning that enables them to develop and enhance their professional knowledge (Chauraya & Brodie, 2018). There is a consensus that collaborative work and learning allow teachers to transfer knowledge, clarify misunderstandings and develop effective teaching lessons (Admiraal et al., 2021; Goodyear, 2017; Sims & Fletcher-Wood, 2021). Several authors affirm that sharing ideas and practices with colleagues opens up new possibilities for learning (Evers, Kreijns, et al., 2016; Leeferink et al., 2019; Zulu, 2021). To strengthen teacher professionalism, the DBE (2015) supported the establishment of collaborative practices among teachers, as these provide the necessary learning support, foster critical thinking, and bring new challenges and ideas (Evers, Kreijns et al., 2016). In some studies, collaborative teaching has been found effective in helping teachers respond to their student's learning needs and making their teaching effectiveness (Goodyear, 2017; Zulu & Bertram, 2019).

3.2.1.5. Collaborating with colleagues to improve school development

Collaborative and Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) have been established as effective forms of TPD that empower teachers to take charge of their learning and enhance their teaching effectiveness (Zulu & Bertram, 2019; Zulu, 2021). The literature also supports the notion that collaborative work, receiving feedback from colleagues, active involvement, and application of new knowledge in the classroom are among the most effective models of TPD (Abu-Tineh & Sadiq, 2018; Keiler et al., 2023; Zhang et al., 2021).

3.2.2. Teacher professional development from a global perspective

Teachers' ongoing professional development is a major focus for policy and practice in education worldwide. It is recognised as a crucial aspect of educational reforms and student performance (Haug & Mork, 2021; Martin et al., 2019). As educational reforms set ambitious goals for student learning, it is essential that students are prepared to navigate the complexities of 21st-century skills (Kennedy & Sundberg, 2020). Consequently, teachers play a vital role in the implementation of these reforms. Research emphasises that teachers require professional development support to stay current with the evolving teaching methods introduced by educational reforms (Haug & Mork, 2021; Korsager et al., 2022). TPD is designed to help teachers improve their professional knowledge, competence, skills, and the delivery of high-quality education (Lander et al., 2022; Schlosser et al., 2021). In this context, TPD aims to enhance and maintain high teaching standards. The UN has called for international education systems that ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and access to lifelong learning for all (Boeren, 2019). Based on the premise that quality education stems from teachers'

competence, studies suggest that effective TPD is necessary to support the achievement of this goal (SDG 4) (Nakidien et al., 2021; Nketsia et al., 2020).

The targets of SDG 4 emphasise quality, equity, inclusion and lifelong learning. Therefore, achieving this goal for all learners ultimately depends on the sustainable training and supply of qualified teachers. In particular, the UNESCO Position Paper on Education suggests that well-trained and motivated teachers should be recruited and retained, providing pedagogical approaches and content relevant to learners and their environment to ensure effective learning (Global Education Monitoring, 2020). The framework for SDG 4 indicates that teachers and educators should be empowered and supported within well-resourced, efficient, and effectively governed systems. Following SDG 4, countries around the globe are striving to ensure that teachers receive continuous training and learn to understand the educational implications of sustainable development (Nakidien et al., 2021; Nketsia et al., 2020). Chin et al. (2022) noted that TPD initiatives are essential for sustaining the teaching profession and maintaining its standards. Through education for sustainable development, individuals can acquire knowledge, skills, and values that contribute to an equitable lifestyle, leading to long-term positive social change (Joseph & Said, 2019). Thus, the role of teachers in the promotion of higher-quality education has a significant history in the context of sustainable development education (Heasley et al., 2020; Sunthonkanokpong & Murphy, 2019).

The global education system faces an unprecedented challenge due to the rapidly changing learning environment. This challenge has become even more apparent during the COVID-19 pandemic (Chin et al., 2022; Global Education Monitoring, 2020). Research indicates that, during the pandemic, teaching methods were significantly impacted, leading to teachers struggling to support all students effectively (Akour et al., 2020; Chiu et al., 2021; Kulikowski et al., 2021). Among the professional requirements teachers must fulfil, they are tasked with addressing students' specific needs, managing classrooms efficiently, and collaborating with other educational professionals (Keller-Schneider et al., 2020). Consequently, the lack of access to effective learning environments intensified the demand for continuous TPD to address academic challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic (Ancho & Arrieta, 2021; Santos & Miguel, 2021). For instance, during the pandemic in the Philippines, teachers participated in webinars and training focused on online teaching methodologies, technological skills, and mental health awareness (Ancho & Arrieta, 2021).

Given the potential benefits of offering professional development opportunities for teachers, some view it as a solution to various educational issues. As a result, governments around the world allocate billions of dollars every year towards TPD programs aimed at enhancing

teachers' knowledge and practice (Bowe & Gore, 2017). In the United States, the Department of Education established a federal policy focusing on teacher effectiveness, which required highly qualified teachers in every school as mandated by the No Child Left Behind Act in 2002. This Act emphasised ensuring effective instruction and teaching quality and allocating significant resources toward professional development for teachers (Jacob & McGovern, 2015). In Vietnam, the government is implementing educational reforms that meet the country's requirements for industrialisation and modernisation (Le et al., 2022; Reimers et al., 2022). This includes implementing professional activities to improve the professional capacity of teachers (Pham et al., 2023). Across the EU, TPD is governed by well-defined policy guidelines, which include providing a funded national-level programme throughout a teacher's career.

By emphasising the importance of subject knowledge, attitudes, and skills and by providing opportunities for teachers to engage in classroom-based research and reflect on their learning (Tannehill et al., 2021), TPD can be supported through various means such as providing financial compensation, substitution, reimbursing teachers for any expenses incurred, offering salary incentives, and providing opportunities for promotion. The above depiction reveals that countries across the globe are committed to achieving high-quality teaching and learning. Despite these efforts, studies indicate that remote and rural areas continue to encounter difficulties in providing all students with access to quality education and opportunities for academic achievement (Mitchell, 2018).

3.2.3. Implementation of Teacher Professional Development in South Africa

The past two decades mark a global movement of education reform initiatives in many countries worldwide, with South Africa being one of the countries undergoing major education reform initiatives. Amongst these efforts to reform the education system is the prioritisation of TPD. The TPD is widely used to advance teaching practices and improve teaching and learning (Bantwini, 2019; Nzarirwehi & Atuhumuze, 2019; Ulubey et al., 2017). International studies claim that professional development training improves classroom lesson preparation, equips teachers with pedagogical content knowledge and assessment practices, and supports teacher-teacher collaboration (Obiero, 2020). Research acknowledges TPD as a crucial driver of schooling excellence (Tulu, 2019), with programmes that are effective in enhancing teaching quality and teacher morale (Gore et al., 2017; Kennedy, 2016) and in achieving educational mandates and outcomes (Ajani, 2018; Ayvaz-Tuncel & Çobanoğlu, 2018; Nzarirwehi & Atuhumuze, 2019). The consistent evidence demonstrates that TPD is key to competency

development in teaching practice (Keller-Schneider et al., 2020; Li et al., 2019; Thannimalai & Raman, 2018). It is not surprising that the Department of Education (DoE) (2007) recommended yearly professional development activities to improve performance and develop teachers' critical competencies to manage teaching and learning.

The DoE established this initiative by launching a policy that aimed at equipping teachers to undertake their essential and demanding tasks while enabling them to enhance their professional competence and performance continually. Studies report that the successful implementation of TPD relies on the effective execution of professional development policy (Steyn, 2009; Phorabatho, 2013; Ajibade, 2016). Therefore, it is imperative to explain some policies that support and guide the implementation of TPD in South African schools. To understand the circumstances under which teachers acquire new knowledge and enhance skills, the following policies are explored:

- The Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS), 2003.
- Integrated Strategic Planning Framework for Teacher Education and Development (ISPFTED), 2011.
- Continuing Professional Teacher Development (CPTD), 2014.



3.2.3.1. The Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS), 2003

In 2003, the Education Labour Relations Council resolved to establish the Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS) as a policy to ensure continuity in TPD (Resolution 8 of 2003). Mthembu (2017) regards IQMS as an appraisal tool that was introduced to improve TPD. The IQMS aims to enhance the delivery of quality education (Malepe, 2017; Sigudla, 2019). According to the DBE (2009), the IQMS comprises three programmes: Developmental Appraisal, Performance Management, and Whole-School Evaluation. The Development Appraisal System (DAS) aims to appraise individual teachers transparently, where teachers evaluate themselves and discuss the outcomes with the Development Support Group. The Whole School Evaluation (WSE) evaluates the school's overall effectiveness, while Performance Management (PM) evaluates individual teachers for salary progression (DBE, 2009). Overall, the IQMS involve teachers in hands-on tasks and provides opportunities to observe, evaluate, and reflect on new teaching practices. TPD within the context of IQMS implementation is positively influenced by collaborative learning and reflection among teachers (Hanfstingl & Pflaum, 2022).

However, it should be noted that since the introduction of the IQMS in South Africa in 2003, studies continue to report challenges related to the effective implementation of this system.

These studies indicate a lack of knowledge regarding the processes of IQMS implementation (Budeli, 2021), which is attributed to inadequate training and support (Malepe, 2017; Mthembu, 2017; Ngakane, 2021). A study examining the challenges of implementing performance appraisal for educators in the Shiluvana Circuit of the Mopani District, Limpopo Province, reported inadequate commitment from teachers, a lack of interest, and backlogs in teachers' remuneration (Masetla, 2018). Others have noted that some schools implement the IQMS merely to comply with department requirements and to ensure that their educators receive salary increments based on the IQMS (Sigudla, 2019). In comparison, Tachie and Mancotywa (2021) found that the lack of enthusiasm by school principals to drive the process of IQMS presented a greater challenge. Researchers believe that, despite the establishment of educational laws and programs, challenges in implementing these policies persist (Mantshiu, 2017).

3.2.3.2. Integrated Strategic Planning Framework for Teacher Education and Development (ISPFTED), 2011

The ISPFTED was launched by the DBE and the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) in 2011. The ISPFTED intended to improve the quality of teacher education and development within a 15-year time frame by establishing PLCs in schools to enhance professional development at the local level (DBE, 2011). This initiative responded to the limited professional development opportunities available to teachers in their local areas. Zulu (2021) pointed out that this particularly applies to teachers in rural areas, who face even greater challenges in accessing professional development opportunities. Bantwini (2019) notes that the failure of TPD opportunities to reach marginalised members of society affects teaching and learning and can no longer be overlooked. In particular, teachers in rural areas have limited access to TPD programmes (du Plessis & Mestry, 2019; Mokoena & Hlalele, 2021a; Mtsi & Maphosa, 2017; Tsotetsi & Mahlomaholo, 2015). As a result, the DBE (2011) developed PLCs to allow classroom teachers, school managers, and subject advisors to determine their own paths for growth and organise activities that support their development. The essence of these activities lies in fostering a culture of collaborative work and reflection (Admiraal et al., 2021; Bush, 2019).

3.2.3.3. Continuing Professional Teacher Development

Continuing Professional Teacher Development (CPTD) is a policy introduced as an outcome of ISPFTED. The CPTD aims to enhance the professionalism and competence of school teachers, regardless of whether the school is public or private (Raluswinga, 2018). In line with Section 53 of the National Policy Framework for Teacher Education and Development

(NPFTED), the South African Council of Educators (SACE, 2014) was mandated to oversee the implementation of the CPTD management processes. This includes approving professional development providers, activities, and programmes and creating each teacher's CPTD account to record the earned professional development points. Teachers are required to accumulate 150 professional development points from three forms of professional development activities in every three-year cycle (Republic of South Africa, 2014). These activities should encompass personal, school-based and SACE-approved professional development programmes. The CPTD management system is compulsory for all teachers in South Africa, and they are expected to engage in professional development twice a year and report their engagement to SACE (SACE, 2015). Reporting can be done manually using a form provided by SACE or electronically through the CPTD self-service portal.

Despite a formal structure for the CPTD management system, its implementation still presents challenges. As an electronic system, the implementation of the CPTD at the school level remains a challenge, particularly in rural areas where teachers are reported to be technophobic (Bernadine, 2019; du Plessis & Mestry, 2019). The SACE (2018/19) annual report revealed that few teachers were uploading their professional development activities. Some teachers view the system as unnecessary because they do not understand how it relates to academic matters (Mofolo & Mosala, 2019). Previous findings indicate that strategies for implementing CPTD programs did not impact the teachers' classroom practices (Mpahla & Okeke, 2015a). This is why teachers perceive the CPTD as a compliance activity rather than a tool for growth and development (Johns & Sosibo, 2019). Additionally, some believe that the one-size-fits-all and one-off workshops recommended by the DBE and SACE for CPTD are not yielding the intended results (Govender, 2018; Simelane & Mutambara, 2022). Researchers argue that when TPD policies are well-intentioned and effectively executed, they are more likely to produce impactful outcomes (Mokhele & Jita, 2012). A study investigating the role of CPTD on learners' achievement in Mathematical Literacy in the Vhembe District in South Africa found that CPTD improves learner achievement and teacher skills and knowledge (Raluswina, 2018).

3.2.4. Characteristics of effective TPD

TPD is a critical component of a comprehensive teaching and learning system that supports students in developing the competencies necessary to thrive in a world characterised by exponential and systematic change (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; Evans, 2019). For this reason, the focus should be on improving classroom instruction through effective TPD practices (Geletu et al., 2021). Desimone and Garet (2015) suggested five features that make

TPD effective and hold promise for increased student achievement : (1) content focus, that is, activities focused on subject matter content and how students learn that content; (2) active learning by offering opportunities for teachers to observe, receive feedback, analyse and reflect on their practices; (3) collective participation, this speaks to groups of teachers from the same grade, subject, or school participate in professional development activities together to build a learning community; (4) coherence, involves content, goals and activities that align with the school curriculum, teacher knowledge and beliefs, the needs of students, school, municipalities and State policies; and (5) sustained professional development activities throughout the year. These features attribute effective TPD to networking, collaborative, and active learning opportunities, such as observation, receiving feedback, and analysing the context of learning (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; Desimone & Garet, 2015).

A substantial body of research acknowledges the impact of a dynamic approach (DA) in supporting teacher learning and student achievement (Christoforidou & Kyriakides, 2021; Darling-Hammond & Oakes, 2021; de Vries et al., 2022). The DA is based on the assumption that TPD efforts should focus on improving teaching skills while considering the individual professional needs of teachers, as they differ in their competencies (de Vries et al., 2022). Adjusting the TPD program to meet the varying needs of teachers allows for content that is more closely aligned with their practice (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017). Findings regarding teacher perceptions of effective TPD indicate that teachers consider programs that address their personal development needs to be effective (Zhang et al., 2021). Empirical evidence supports the notion that personalised TPD programs can build the knowledge and skills required to improve student learning as they address the individual professional needs of teachers (Affouneh et al., 2020; Hunt et al., 2020; Sprott, 2019).

The DA encourages teachers to take responsibility for their own learning and development through self-assessment, reflection, and action planning. The effectiveness of the DA in improving generic teaching skills and student achievement is well-supported by research (de Vries et al., 2022). A study investigating the impact of the DA on TPD found that it positively promoted the assessment skills of teachers and improved student learning outcomes (Christoforidou & Kyriakides, 2021; Darling-Hammond & Oakes, 2021). Within this context, more researchers have examined the important factors that indicate the effectiveness of TPD (Christoforidou & Kyriakides, 2021; de Vries et al., 2022; Zhang et al., 2021) and further established that TPD is key in enhancing teacher competencies (Apriliyanti, 2020). Effective TPD is attentive to reforms, context, curriculum, and collaboration (Sancar et al., 2021). Different models of TPD that support teachers and student development suggest that TPD

increase teachers' knowledge and teaching skills, encourages collaboration, and attends to teachers' classroom practical needs (Bachtiar, 2020; Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; Sims & Fletcher-Wood, 2021).

While TPD is widely accepted as the key to improving student outcomes and achieving greater equity (Gore et al., 2021; Kennedy, 2016), the evidence of its effect is often inconsistent (Sims & Fletcher-Wood, 2021; Zhang et al., 2021). Guskey (2021) identified a lack of evidence demonstrating that professional development consistently leads to the intended improvements in student performance. This may be because some of the TPD programmes organised have less relevant content and have little to do with the professional development of teachers (Taddese & Rao, 2022). Nevertheless, Eun (2019) suggested that successful TPD should go beyond sharing ideas that have proven to improve student learning and should also eliminate any obstacles to classroom implementation. Similarly, Patfield et al. (2021) argued that before measuring the effectiveness of TPD, greater emphasis must be on understanding and supporting successful implementation within and across diverse school contexts. At the same time, Zhang et al. (2021) maintain that the effectiveness of TPD programmes depends on the teachers' motivation to participate.

3.2.5. The factors that influence teachers' participation in TPD

Despite the availability of policies that guide the professional development of teachers, studies indicate that these policy frameworks may have little impact if teachers and schools do not actively participate. Various political, economic, and social factors influence teachers' participation in TPD activities (Bayly et al., 2022; Njenga, 2022; Taddese & Rao, 2022; Tyagi & Misra, 2021). McChesney and Aldridge (2021) highlighted the importance of contextual influences, noting that teachers are more likely to engage in TPD activities if the content aligns with student needs, as well as the school and broader cultural contexts. The internal dynamics and the context in which a school is located can inhibit the efficacy of TPD programmes (Nakidien et al., 2022), thereby hampering participation (Tyagi & Misra, 2021). This is especially true for many rural schools in South Africa, which often lack basic infrastructure, essential amenities, and necessary physical resources (du Plessis & Mestry, 2019). As a result, TPD programmes organised at the school level face significant challenges related to discontinuity due to a lack of or inadequate training resources (Makoa & Segalo, 2021). Given the environmental conditions associated with rurality, teachers may be discouraged from teaching and learning, prompting them to leave rural schools in search of better opportunities (du Plessis & Mestry, 2019; Mlambo & Adetiba, 2020).

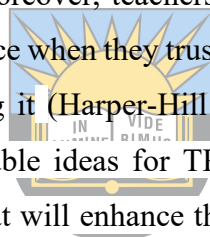
Comparative studies investigating factors that influence the professional development of teachers in rural and urban contexts indicate significant differences in how these teachers experience their work (Başturan & Görgü, 2020; Hartell & Steyn, 2019). School, teacher, and student-related factors determine the degree to which teachers participate in professional development in rural schools (McChesney & Aldridge, 2021). Researchers have outlined that the working conditions for rural teachers do not provide them with the opportunities and experiences necessary to meet the professional development standards set by assessment instruments like the IQMS (Budeli et al., 2022; Thaba-Nkadimene et al., 2022). Given the unique challenges faced by rural schools, professional development needs for teachers in rural contexts should be addressed differently from those in urban contexts. In support of this, du Plessis and Mestry (2019) recommended improving the working conditions of rural teachers and educational standards to improve learners' achievement throughout rural South Africa. According to Mokoena and Hlalele (2021), rural schools can thrive in an environment conducive to teaching and learning.

Qualitative research indicates that heavy workloads, financial constraints, and a lack of professional development opportunities are significant barriers to TPD (Chin et al., 2022; Eroglu & Donmus Kaya, 2021). Many teachers report low-income levels as the primary factor impacting their development (Kasapoglu, 2020). Rural teachers in South Africa share a similar perspective, expressing a lack of interest in engaging in professional development activities due to the absence of monetary incentives (Bernadine, 2019). Another study conducted using a mixed-method approach in the Northern Region of Ghana strongly revealed that TPD activities in that district did not align with the working needs of participating teachers (Mahama et al., 2022). Kennedy (2022) observed that the misalignment between training outcomes and teachers' needs leads to poor performance. Derakhshan et al. (2020) emphasised the importance of planning professional development programs that address the real needs of teachers within their educational context rather than presenting them with theory-based universal programs. Often, teachers are required to attend professional development programmes due to administrative mandates, where the delivered content does not suit the needs or interests of those in attendance (Lander et al., 2022; Schlosser et al., 2021). Teachers may express a high need for TPD activities, yet schools often fail to meet these reported needs (Liu & Du, 2022).

Moreover, the process of TPD is also affected by characteristics such as teacher age, years of experience, and different stages of career (Keller-Schneider et al., 2020; Sancar et al., 2021). Notable, young teachers with fewer years of service are more likely to engage in long-term and collaborative TPD activities (Brandisauskiene et al., 2020). A study examining the TPD needs

of beginning and experienced teachers in Sweden found that teachers aged 29 years and below, with up to five years of teaching experience, reported a higher need for technology-enhanced TPD programmes compared to those with more experience and older teachers (Karlberg & Bezzina, 2022). Krasniqi (2022) suggested offering TPD programmes that are compatible with contemporary methods, such as online professional development (Ansyari et al., 2022). Technology-mediated TPD can narrow inequalities and enhance the agency to address educators' lack of training opportunities (Hennessy et al., 2022; Zindi & Sibanda, 2022). This points to the need to adapt the TPD system to teachers' particular needs according to their career cycle (Avidov-Ungar et al., 2023).

Lastly, the involvement of teachers in planning and evaluating professional development contributes to successful implementation (Ajani, 2021). When teachers are not empowered to decide how they want to be supported in their professional development, they may become reluctant to participate (Bernadine, 2019). Studies indicate that professional development can be effective if teachers are encouraged to engage in these programmes (Bernadine, 2019; Geldenhuys & Oosthuizen, 2015). Moreover, teachers are more likely to participate in TPD activities that lead to changes in practice when they trust the credibility and authenticity of both the content and the person delivering it (Harper-Hill et al., 2022). Findings such as these suggest that teachers generate valuable ideas for TPD based on their experience as adult learners and recommend activities that will enhance their practice (Dasoo & Van der Merwe Muller, 2020).



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3.3. Conclusion

The changing educational environment underscores the need for teachers to participate in TPD activities continually. When designed and implemented effectively, TPD can lead to positive changes in practice. In South Africa, policies advocating for TPD are in place; however, schools, as the centres of implementation, still face numerous challenges that make the execution of TPD arduous. The empirical evidence presented in this chapter emphasises the need to address the working conditions that impede TPD in South Africa.

The theoretical framework outlined in this chapter is appropriate for framing the discussion by highlighting the significant role of context in the realisation of TPD. A key feature of effective TPD emphasised in this chapter is the involvement of teachers in planning, conducting, and evaluating their learning while considering their specific needs. Lastly, this chapter lays the groundwork for understanding the impact of decent work on TPD, as mediated by needs satisfaction, which will be further discussed in the following chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR

DECENT WORK, NEEDS SATISFACTION AND TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

4. Introduction

This chapter reviews the empirical literature on decent work and professional development as mediated by needs satisfaction. The significance of decent work remains valuable for scholarly investigation due to its varying interpretations and understandings across nations (Dhakal & Burgess, 2021). The literature suggests that providing a decent work environment is a precursor for effective performance and organisational success. As a result, governments are increasingly focused on fostering a constructive work environment that ensures everyone has the right to work and the freedom to choose a job with favourable conditions. This includes the right to adequate pay proportional to work, safe and healthy working conditions, and opportunities for self-development (Rantane et al., 2020).

4.1. The overview of work in South Africa

South Africa has a diverse and complex economy encompassing a wide range of industries and sectors, including the minerals-energy complex, industrialisation, finance, tourism, and technology (Fine, 2018; Rogerson & Rogerson, 2020; Sutherland, 2020). South Africa's labour market currently consists of formal and informal employment. Formal sector employment is typically standardised and regulated, created by businesses or governments through established working agreements for employees (Alenda-Demoutiez & Mügge, 2020; Quain, 2018). In contrast, informal sector employment often involves unregulated and sometimes hazardous work, such as street vending and domestic labour. Individuals with limited resources and lower skills in low-income countries can find employment through street vending (Mramba & Mhando, 2020). However, the formal economy remains the largest source of employment, with the government, manufacturing, and service sectors being the largest employers. There are ongoing concerns about the South African economy's inability to provide adequate employment for the increasing number of job seekers (Mkhize, 2019). Research indicates that the South African government continues to face significant economic challenges, particularly regarding the rising unemployment rates among professionals and youth (Francis & Webster, 2019; Hlayisi, 2022).

The South African government has made efforts to address the country's high unemployment rate and improve the labour market. A key focus has been on creating initiatives and interventions that enhance access to and the quality of education, particularly among the youth,

to ensure they are skilled according to the demands of the labour market (Du Toit et al., 2018). This includes initiatives such as the National Minimum Wage Act, which establishes a minimum wage for workers across all sectors, and the Employment Tax Incentive, which provides tax incentives for employers who hire young workers (Francis & Valodia, 2021). Despite these efforts, the country continues to face significant challenges in its labour market. Statistics South Africa (2022) reported an unemployment rate exceeding 35%, the highest since 2008, which includes individuals who are capable of working (Statistics South Africa, 2022).

One factor that cannot be overlooked is that South Africa remains a highly unequal society in terms of wealth despite the end of apartheid (Kirsten et al., 2023). The World Bank report indicates that 10% of the population holds 71% of the wealth, while the bottom 60% possess only 7% (Sulla et al., 2022). Wealth inequality exacerbates labour market challenges by limiting access to education and training opportunities for most of the population. As a result, a skills gap may develop between the needs of the labour market and the available workforce, leading to limited job opportunities and lower wages. Addressing wealth inequality through policies that promote greater access to education, training, and job opportunities can help mitigate these challenges (Areba & Ngwacho, 2020; Walker et al., 2019). Overall, the literature on work and employment in South Africa remains fragmented in scale, scope, and ability to reach distinct scholarly communities (Wood & Bischoff, 2022).

By incorporating decent work imperatives into national development policies that support socioeconomic development and the eradication of poverty, the South African government has vowed to fulfil its goal of establishing decent work and sustainable livelihoods for all workers (Olabiyi, 2022). This has led to increased efforts by the government to facilitate access to productive, decent, and sustainable work (Mramba & Mhando, 2020).

4.2. Government policies in promoting Decent work

The essence of decent work sums up all the principles and standards of work that all workers must be provided, as they have a right to a job that allows them to live a dignified life. To support countries in achieving this, the ILO established the DWCP as a primary vehicle for implementing these international labour standards. The DWCP promotes the pursuit of decent work goals as a key component of national development strategies and the commitment of the ILO's constituents (governments, employer organisations, and labour unions) to achieve this goal. As such, the design and implementation of DWCPs are responsive to the needs and interests of constituents. Moreover, DWCPs were designed to be harmonised at the country level with other programs aimed at improving work-life balance. Although the DWCP was

introduced in 2004, its preparation and implementation entered a new phase in September 2015 after adopting the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which requires the ILO's actions to be a visible part of the inclusive UN efforts (ILO, 2019).

To facilitate the preparation of DWCP, the ILO developed guidelines that provide a comprehensive, well-informed, and concise assessment of the decent work situation, trends, productive employment, and growth for every country. These guidelines offer ILO constituents and other national stakeholders coherent data and analysis on the situation and progress associated with decent work in every country while acknowledging the nation's significant decent work challenges. The process of creating DWCPs often begins with a series of discussions with the government and other stakeholders. The country diagnostic process, which usually entails extensive data collection and analysis, is the second phase that aids in establishing priorities. The third phase includes a context overview, a declaration of priorities, identifying key results and their measurement, and budgetary information. Finally, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation procedures are essential to the country programme (ILO, 2015).

Adopting DWCP in every country demonstrates the government's commitment to achieving decent work for all. Furthermore, it has created unity among workers, governments, and employers (Mackett, 2020). Baldasare (2019) assessed how DWCPs address the issue of internal migration and found that child labour is linked to the incidence of poverty in both rural and urban areas. In South Asia, the DWCP assisted in bridging the inequalities of decent work (Sinha, 2019). Duy Binh et al. (2021) evaluated the relevance and coherence of the design of the DWCP in Vietnam, as well as its efficiency in implementation, effectiveness of operations, sustainability, and results. According to the authors, this review will provide ILO Vietnam with better insights to enhance the design, implementation, monitoring, and assessment of future country programmes. It also identified priorities for the next DWCP for 2022-2026 based on input from constituents. A recent study developed a multidimensional index of decent work in five countries (Bahrain, China, Egypt, Jordan, and Nigeria) that have implemented DWCPs (Elmetwally, 2022). The results revealed that this index enables policymakers to identify and focus on the most vulnerable workers in the labour market. Additionally, it can be used to measure progress in achieving decent work in these countries (Elmetwally, 2022).

In South Africa, the concept of decent work gained prominence when the ruling party used it in their campaign for the 2009 general elections (Mackett, 2020). In 2010, the Member of the Executive Council (MEC) for the Gauteng Department of Economic Development (GDED) commissioned the Society, Work and Politics Institute (SWOP) at the University of

Witwatersrand to develop a policy framework for the realisation of decent work in Gauteng. The terms of reference were to create a decent work diagnostic tool that focuses on individual workers at the industry level rather than conditions at the country level (Webster et al., 2015). The authors argue that this approach can help monitor decent work progress and assist key industry actors in developing evidence-based strategies to improve decent work conditions. Their research aimed to propose a plan for the progressive realisation of decent work (Webster et al., 2015). Selwyn (2018) also echoed the same sentiments that for decent work to be progressively realised, it must be integrated into an alternative development path.

Despite the South African government's pledge to attain decent work and sustainable livelihoods for all workers (Cohen & Moodley, 2012), there are still significant challenges in realising this goal. Webster et al. (2015) proposed a strategy for the GDED to develop a decent work diagnostic tool that focuses on individual workers at the industry level. However, Ludwig and Webster (2020) discovered a lukewarm response from the government to this tool, indicating the need to rethink the meaning of decent work, especially in an economy with large inequalities like South Africa (Mackett, 2022). Additionally, Mackett argued that the government should carefully consider how macroeconomic policy changes impact the achievement of decent work and economic growth (Mackett, 2022). South Africa's priority in achieving decent work reflects on the unfulfilled constitutional obligation on the part of the government and employers at large (Mackenzie, 2021). Mokofe (2022) explored the prospects of achieving decent work among digital platform workers in South Africa. The study found that temporary employment and platform labour are becoming more prevalent, with insufficient evidence that trade unions have successfully adapted their approaches towards workers' rights to decent and dignified work.

4.3. Decent Work in the public and private sector

In many developing countries, the public sector is the largest employer, providing decent and equitable employment (Massiah & Vermuyten, 2017; Stecy-Hildebrandt et al., 2019). However, work experiences in the public and private sectors differ in many ways (Başturan & Görgü, 2020). The wage distribution mainly reflects this difference (Bonaccolto-Töpfer et al., 2022). Studies that compare the outcomes and predictors of decent work between the public and private sectors in certain regions in China supported the prominent effect of wages on workers' career development (Chen et al., 2020; Wang et al., 2019). These studies further highlighted that public employees enjoyed a better life in terms of life satisfaction compared to their non-public counterparts. Çolakoğlu and Toygar (2021) examined the dimension of decent work on public and private school teachers in Turkey. The results revealed that adequate compensation

significantly impacted access to health services for both public and private school teachers. However, teachers working in public schools had a higher level of decent work perceptions than teachers working in private schools. A sample of private sector employees experienced a decline in mental and psychological stability due to the fear of economic crisis and perceived job insecurity brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic (Rehman et al., 2022). Thus, the uniformity of decent work between jobs and workplaces cannot be assumed, as the level of each element of decent work may vary according to different contexts.

Notably, there is a scarcity of empirical studies documenting the differences in the experiences of decent work between the public and private sectors. Pereira et al. (2019) concluded that the scarcity of empirical evidence indicates that the subject of decent work is still in the early stages of development within psychology. Interventions centred on improving decent work are needed more, especially in the South African public service terrain, which has a notable challenging environment that poses threats to the physical health of employees (Chigbu et al., 2024).

4.4. Decent Work in the Teaching Profession

Robust research focuses on factors that inhibit the job satisfaction of rural teachers, explicitly emphasising the role of poor working conditions (Mitchell, 2018; Okeke & Mtyuda, 2017b; Wachuka, 2021). In addition to hindering job satisfaction, poor working conditions have also been found to impede teachers' career development (Mtsi & Maphosa, 2017; Okeke & Mtyuda, 2017). Many studies report that job satisfaction is related to safe working conditions (Di Fabio & Kenny, 2019; Ferreira et al., 2019; Ribeiro et al., 2019). Previous research acknowledges that work environment, low income levels, teaching facilities and workload are among the factors that significantly affect teachers' professions (Kasapoglu, 2020; Maldrine, 2020; Safizawati, 2019).

Since the emergence of decent work as an explicit goal of the 2030 Agenda of the SDG in 2015, research linking decent work with academic outcomes, such as performance, satisfaction and career development, has gained momentum (Bolito, 2020; Dinis, 2020; Ma et al., 2021; Wei et al., 2022). These studies provide insights into the factors to consider in promoting jobs that meet all the elements of decent work. By promoting decent work characteristics beyond merely satisfying survival needs and basic conditions, workers can access jobs that enable them to develop their professionalism through training and vocational education (Tchonda et al., 2020). Sustainable career, education and lifelong learning have been established as goal 4 of the 2030 Agenda (UN, 2015). This positions decent work as a prerequisite for sustainable careers and fulfilling lives (Urbanaviciute et al., 2019).

Although decent work plays a crucial role in an individual's professional and life development, studies examining rural teachers' career development and decent work are scarce. Prominent studies in the literature have analysed the employment patterns of teachers. For instance, Atitsogbe et al. (2021b) found that macro-level factors (such as job insecurity) and micro-level factors (such as subjective salary conditions) were related to certain decent work features, which in turn were linked to well-being outcomes. Another study investigated the dimensions of decent work in teachers in private and public schools in Turkey (Çolakoğlu & Toygar, 2021a). This research revealed that adequate income is an important factor in achieving decent work goals, although it is not sufficient on its own. Income levels significantly contribute to workers' access to healthcare services (Andreyeva & Ukert, 2018; Sherman et al., 2017), as well as to free time, rest, and productivity (Yildirim & Güngör, 2019). Given this, research studies also support the claims that low-income levels are among the factors affecting the teaching profession (Başturan & Görgü, 2020; Kasapoglu, 2020).

It is interesting to note that previous investigations relating to the promotion of a decent work agenda have focused more on academic personnel (Bolito, 2020; Dinis, 2020; Graça et al., 2021), students (Ma et al., 2021; Wei et al., 2022), and other professions (Ferraro et al., 2020). Decent work was introduced into career guidance and counselling psychology in 2016 (Blustein et al., 2016; Duffy et al., 2016; Pouyaud, 2016) and spread among employees working in retail engineering companies (Futagami & Muramoto, 2017). Studies have supported the importance of promoting decent work to improve the personal and working lives of low-income employees (Kozan et al., 2019), as well as public and non-public employees from diverse economic and occupational backgrounds (Chen et al., 2020b; Douglass et al., 2020; Kim, 2017; McIlveen et al., 2021).

Over the past years, the emphasis has been on understanding the role of career counselling in stimulating new ideas and initiatives that inform and enhance decent work in contemporary careers and the evolving labour markets (Autin, Shelton et al., 2021; Kenny et al., 2019c; McMahon & Watson, 2020). Debates regarding the changing dynamics of the work environment in relation to career development underscore the importance of decent work (Gutowski et al., 2021). Therefore, further investigations aimed at raising decent work standards for teachers are necessary to drive effective work and improve the quality of education (Habaci et al., 2013). This research has yet to establish the key aspects of decent work that predict TPD.

4.5. The effects of decent work on Teacher Professional Development

Decent work plays a vital role in the well-being of individuals navigating their working lives (Dodd et al., 2019; Ferraro et al., 2018). It has been found to have a significant positive relationship with organisational learning and work engagement (Sanhokwe & Takawira, 2022). In some instances, workers consider their jobs decent when they enable them to develop professionally and be productive at work (Tchoda et al., 2020). Professional opportunities enhance workers' engagement with their tasks (Graça et al., 2019). Empirical evidence demonstrates the significant impact of decent work on work-related outcomes across several professional groups (Bolito, 2020; Dinis, 2020; Ferraro et al., 2020; Graça et al., 2021). These studies indicate that promoting decent work among individuals from diverse cultural, economic, and social backgrounds, as well as among qualified professionals, is crucial for advancing overall social well-being (Blustein et al., 2019; Han et al., 2022) and facilitating professional advancement (Ferraro et al., 2018; Masdonati et al., 2019).

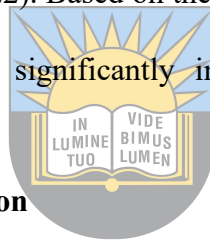
Studies that illustrate how professional development activities impact teaching and learning indicate that favourable workplace conditions significantly enhance teachers' teaching knowledge and practice (Gaikhorst et al., 2019; Tran et al., 2022). A study examining the effects of school conditions on TPD in China found a significant positive impact of certain aspects of work conditions on teacher learning (Huang et al., 2020). In Ghana, school working conditions, such as support by the school management (principals) through the provision of the required teaching and learning resources, facilitated the transfer of learning for teachers (Abonyi et al., 2020). However, this may not be true for South African rural school teachers, who experience difficult working conditions (Nkambule, 2022). Many teachers are reluctant to remain in rural schools, citing a lack of access to professional development opportunities and the burden of multiple duties without adequate financial compensation (Bantwini, 2019; Bernadine, 2019; Du Plessis & Mestry, 2019).

In South Africa, research indicates that teachers work in environments characterised by excessive demands and limited supportive resources (Bernstein & Batchelor, 2022), violence from learners perpetuated by substance abuse (Hunter, 2021; Mkhize & Shembe, 2022; Sedibe & Hendricks, 2021), and poor management coupled with a lack of collegiality (John & Segalo, 2021). According to Bernstein and Batchelor (2022), such school environments become a breeding ground for bullying among teachers, negatively impacting teacher well-being and professional development. These conditions are particularly pronounced and more intense in rural or under-resourced schools (Nkambule, 2022). Nevertheless, the South African education landscape presents similar workplace adversities teachers face elsewhere. For instance,

teachers in Egypt reported that school conditions, classroom supplies, class size and rest periods hindered their professional growth (Başturan & Görgü, 2020). In Nigeria, poor planning in the implementation of TPD programmes, lack of employer support, and unstable educational policies serve as barriers to effective teaching and access to quality education (Isma'il et al., 2022; Ogunode et al., 2023; Ossai et al., 2022).

Overall, decent work is determined by the conditions and environment in which individuals perform their jobs (Kekana et al., 2022). Each component of decent work has a varying effect on how individuals experience professional development. For instance, adequate income has been reported as crucial for achieving professional development goals by both public and private school teachers in Turkey (Çolakoğlu & Toygar, 2021b). Additionally, having time for rest from teaching allows teachers to engage in collaborative practices that stimulate professional development interventions (Admiraal et al., 2016; Evers, Kreijns, et al., 2016; Evers, van der Heijden, et al., 2016). Overall, decent work and its dimensions enable workers to balance their professional and personal responsibilities while also providing opportunities for professional growth (Shrestha, 2022). Based on the presented literature, it is expected that

H1a1: Decent work positively and significantly influences rural teachers' professional development.



4.6. Decent work on needs satisfaction

The attainment of decent work has consistently shown a strong correlation with the satisfaction of survival, social contribution, and self-determination needs (Blustein & Duffy 2020, Duffy et al. 2020a, Kim et al. 2021). In line with the perspective of SDT (Deci et al., 2017), work-related environments where employees feel positively supported facilitate satisfying their basic needs. A series of empirical studies have demonstrated that achieving decent work is associated with a greater sense of need satisfaction and, in turn, higher well-being (Smith et al., 2023; Tokar et al., 2023; Wan & Cao, 2022). Decent work has been confirmed to positively and significantly influence the needs satisfaction of various groups of employees (Duffy et al., 2019; Kozan et al., 2019). Given this, decent work can promote need satisfaction of survival needs, social connection needs and self-determination needs (Autin et al., 2019). It is expected that:

H1b1: Decent work amongst rural teachers positively and significantly influences survival needs satisfaction.

4.7. Needs Satisfaction and Teacher Professional Development

Research conducted within the organisational context demonstrates that human needs' satisfaction significantly impacts employees' well-being, job attitudes, and job behaviours (Autin et al., 2019; Deci et al., 2017; Ryan & Deci, 2017). However, if the contextual constraints limit the potential to satisfy these needs, employees' career decision-making processes may be restricted (Blustein, Kenny, Di Fabio, et al., 2019; Duffy et al., 2016). The PWT framework proposed that survival, social contribution, and self-determination need satisfaction reflect what work should provide for employees. Researchers found that ensuring reliable income and safe working conditions could help individuals meet their survival needs, ultimately contributing to meaningful employment and a feeling of well-being (Allan et al., 2020; Autin et al., 2019; Kim et al., 2018). Despite the importance of survival needs satisfaction, there is little research into how it affects professional development.

Nevertheless, studies conducted on professional development within the teaching profession found that the willingness of teachers to engage in professional development activities is related to the satisfaction of survival needs such as accommodation, transportation, and monetary incentives (Bernadine, 2019; Nawab & Bissaker, 2021; Tsoetsi & Mahlomaholo, 2015). In other studies, teachers reported being reluctant to remain in rural schools due to a lack of access to professional development opportunities and taking on multiple duties without adequate financial compensation (Bantwini, 2019; Bernadine, 2019; du Plessis & Mestry, 2019). Furthermore, dissatisfaction with remuneration and the working environment has been identified as barriers that hinder rural teachers' professional development (Ajani, 2020; SACE, 2019). Therefore, based on the presented literature, it can be expected that:

H2₁: Survival needs as part of needs satisfaction positively and significantly influence rural teachers' professional development.

Little research links the PWT's concept of social contribution needs with professional development within the teaching profession. However, the available studies demonstrate that professional development relates to mutual support, collaborative learning, and teamwork (Akinyemi et al., 2019; Bantwini, 2019; Mustafa & Paçariz, 2021). By allowing teachers to engage in productive and fulfilling activities, professional development not only contributes to their personal growth but is also an essential factor in improving the quality of education in schools (Dunn et al., 2019; Evans, 2019; Zein, 2017). Notably, the contribution of teachers is not only limited to transferring knowledge of a specific curriculum but also extends to shaping learners socially and culturally (Mulder, 2016). Cognisant of their role in the development and transformation of society, teachers express enthusiasm to share their practices, collaborate and

reflect upon their teaching practices (Admiraal et al., 2016; Evers, Kreijns, et al., 2016; Evers, van der Heijden, et al., 2016). Based on the presented literature, it can be expected that:

H3₁: Social contribution as part of needs satisfaction amongst rural teachers positively and significantly influences professional development.

The need for self-determination in the workplace is enhanced when employees feel positive support (Deci et al., 2017; Ryan & Deci, 2017). Several studies report a positive relationship between the experiences of psychological needs and work behaviour (Autin et al., 2021; Huang et al., 2020; Wang et al., 2020). A study examining the relationship between teachers' experienced work pressure and opportunities for professional growth through the satisfaction of psychological needs (autonomy, competence, and relatedness at work) found a significant relationship between opportunities for professional development and fulfilment of psychological needs (Tack & Vanderlinde, 2019). In other studies, teachers expressed that support from school leadership and being valued as professionals would motivate them to engage in professional development activities (Bantwini, 2019; Johns & Sosibo, 2019). Based on the presented literature, it can be expected that:

H4₁: Self-determination as part of needs satisfaction amongst rural teachers positively and significantly influences professional development.



4.7. Needs satisfaction as a mediator between decent work and professional development

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Emerging evidence suggests that need satisfaction is crucial in connecting decent work and well-being. For instance, Duffy and colleagues (2019, 2021) studied the mediating effect of need satisfaction in the relationship between decent work and health outcomes. Their 2019 study discovered that decent work was significantly associated with meeting all three anticipated needs. Furthermore, meeting all three needs was linked to better mental health, while meeting survival needs specifically was associated with improved physical health. In a subsequent study (Duffy et al., 2021), the researchers found that meeting survival needs mediated the relationship between decent work and positive health behaviours. According to the PWT (Duffy et al., 2016), the satisfaction of survival, social contribution, and self-determination needs mediate the relationship between decent work outcomes. A plethora of research has examined the effects of decent work (Di Fabio & Kenny, 2019; Işık et al., 2019; Masdonati et al., 2019; Ribeiro et al., 2019); however, few studies have examined the effects of securing decent work through needs satisfaction as initially proposed by PWT framework (Duffy et al., 2021; Duffy, Kim, et al., 2019).

The literature links the mediation effect of psychological needs between perceived professional learning and organisational commitment (Lee et al., 2020). Organisational commitment becomes evident when employees experience a decent work environment (Mbasinge, 2019; Nabuwembo, 2019). Another study examined the relationship between career development, career needs satisfaction, and career commitment within an organisation, finding that perceived career needs acted as a mediating variable (Ismail et al., 2017). Although these studies (Ismail et al., 2017; Lee et al., 2020) did not specifically measure decent work or include needs satisfaction as conceptualised in this study, it is clear that needs satisfaction plays a significant role in the effects of securing decent work. Several studies have supported these propositions, identifying some or all components of need satisfaction as mediators in the relationship between decent work and various work-related and well-being outcomes (Duffy et al., 2019; Wan & Cao, 2022).

Therefore, the current study will add to the limited empirical literature by exploring how need satisfaction mediates the relationship between decent work and professional development. Further, it proposes that decent work will positively influence professional development through needs satisfaction, specifically drawing upon the need's conceptualisation offered by the PWT. The following hypotheses are expected:

H5₁₋₇: Needs satisfaction (survival, social contribution, and self-determination needs) amongst rural teachers mediates the relationship between decent work and professional development.

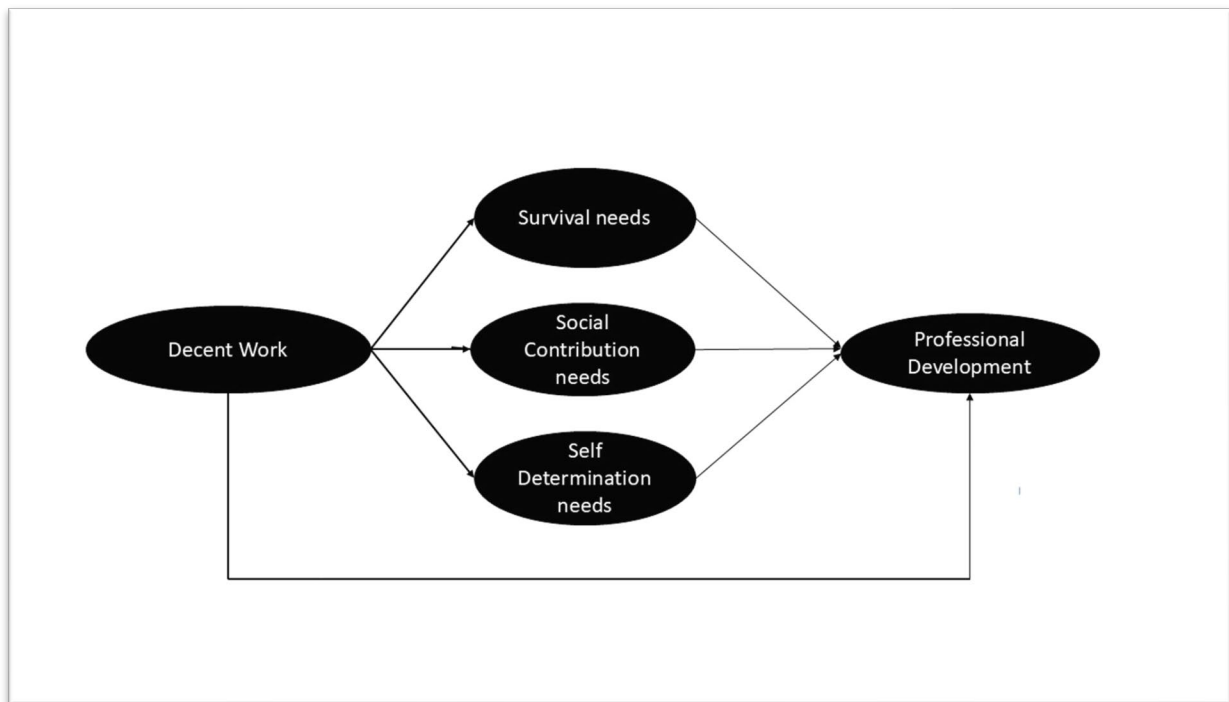
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4.8. Conceptual Framework

The literature review chapters in this thesis show that workers who encounter more contextual barriers are less likely to find and maintain decent work. These barriers restrict a person's sense of choice in their career decisions. Various psychological factors can impact the strength and direction of these effects. Although some empirical evidence supports these findings, whether these assumed relationships apply to rural teachers remains unclear.

Therefore, the current study proposes that higher levels of decent work attainment among rural teachers will lead to a greater focus on satisfying their needs (survival, social contribution and self-determination needs), thereby promoting professional development. It is posited that satisfaction with these three types of needs will directly predict professional development. Finally, drawing from the logic of PWT, this study positions needs satisfaction as a mediator between decent work and professional development. The hypotheses are tested empirically, as outlined in Chapter Five (Methodology). The conceptual framework is depicted in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Research Model



Source: Developed for this study

4.19. Conclusion

This chapter focused on the empirical literature to explain the relationship between decent work and its outcomes. It has shown that decent work is a global agenda and priority; however, its formulation and implementation in developing countries remain underexplored subjects. Furthermore, it demonstrated that access to decent work is still an ongoing struggle in South Africa, particularly within the teaching profession. The following chapter will present the methods employed to examine the impact of decent work on rural teachers' professional development.

CHAPTER FIVE

RESEARCH DESIGN & METHODOLOGY

5. Introduction

This chapter discusses the research procedures and strategies used in conducting this study. First, it describes and justifies the research design and methodology, enabling the reader to understand the entire research project. This includes an overview of the research paradigm, design, approach, and the criteria for selecting participants for the study. The chapter also discusses how the data is analysed, including the methods used to test its validity and reliability. Toward the end of the chapter, ethical issues are addressed.

5.1. Research Paradigm

Research paradigms guide scientific discoveries in understanding and addressing problems through shared assumptions and principles (Park et al., 2020). In other words, paradigms shape how researchers experience and conceptualise the world (Kankam, 2019). Through the application of paradigms, researchers can respond to questions of ontology (the nature of reality), epistemology (knowledge), and methodology (how the researcher goes about finding out what they believe needs to be known) (Niewenhuis, 2016). The most common classifications of research paradigms are positivism, post-positivism, pragmatism, and interpretivism, which differ in their ontological, epistemological, and methodological aspects (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Zukauskas et al., 2018).

Pragmatism underpins the mixed method philosophical paradigm as it embraces both quantitative and qualitative designs (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The interpretivist paradigm focuses on tacit knowledge, seeking to understand the subjective world of human experiences (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017; Turyahikayo, 2021). The positivist paradigm measures reality from an objective point of view (Acharyya & Bhattacharya, 2020; Slife et al., 2016). Post-positivism represents a shift in thinking after positivism. This paradigm allows researchers to identify and assess the causes that influence outcomes, particularly in experimental settings (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

This study has adopted the positivist paradigm. This paradigm allowed the researcher to measure reality from an objective point of view, as it prioritises control and systematisation in methodologies (Kumatongo & Muzata, 2021; Maarouf, 2019). The researcher has worked independently from personal opinions that may affect respondents' points of view, which makes it objective and quantifiable (Kumatongo & Muzata, 2021). Furthermore, the theory can

be utilised to predict and control outcomes. The positivist approach provides a rigorous framework for examining the relationships between variables and generating objective findings that can inform theory and practice in this domain. Given these characteristics, the researcher applies the positivist paradigm in this study, as it is a scientific investigation that tests the hypotheses and proposed model of decent work and TPD among rural teachers.

5.2. Research Approaches

The nature of the research problem influences the selection of research approaches, the researcher's experience, and the target audience of the study (Ishtiaq, 2019). These approaches include qualitative, quantitative, and mixed research methodologies. The qualitative research approach is a form of social inquiry that focuses on how individuals interpret and make sense of their experiences to understand their social reality (Mohajan, 2018). In this approach, researchers explore individuals' perceptions of a social phenomenon. In contrast, quantitative research aims to test theories, establish facts, demonstrate relationships between variables, and predict outcomes. Quantitative research employs statistical methods to test predetermined hypotheses regarding potential associations between identified variables. The mixed methods approach combines the strengths of both qualitative and quantitative research methodologies (Berman, 2017). Mixed methods research aims to verify data; thus, data collected through quantitative methods is validated by qualitative data and vice versa. Ultimately, researchers select a research method that aligns with the objectives and conditions of their study (Rubin & Babbie, 2016).



As mentioned in the previous section, this study adheres to the positivist paradigm, which advocates for quantitative research methods. Therefore, the quantitative research approach is the primary methodology employed. This approach examines relationships between variables, tests hypotheses, and generalises findings. The quantitative research approach is suitable for this study as it allows the researcher to generate precise, statistically significant, and generalisable results (Wiid & Diggines, 2020). Since quantitative research is typically deductive in nature, it informs the data collection and analysis processes (Elkatawneh, 2016).

5.3. Research designs

The research design refers to the overall strategy or plan that the researcher follows to address the research problem (Dannels, 2018). It outlines the structure of the study, including the research objectives, hypotheses, methods of data collection, sampling techniques, data analysis procedures, and the process of drawing meaningful conclusions. Creswell (2019) emphasises that a well-designed research plan helps ensure valid, reliable results that are free from bias

and maximally generalisable. In this case, a cross-sectional design was employed to collect data at a specific point in time. Data collection occurred over a period of six months. The cross-sectional design facilitated the examination of differences or relationships between variables.

Research design is classified into three categories: exploratory, descriptive, and explanatory (Sreejesh et al., 2014). These categories serve distinct purposes and represent different approaches to conducting research. Exploratory research design is used when the objective is to understand better a research problem or phenomenon that is still unclear (Chun Tie et al., 2019). It helps researchers explore new topics, identify research questions, and define a research problem more precisely (Iacobucci & Churchill, 2018). Exploratory research typically involves qualitative methods such as interviews, focus groups, or observational studies.

Descriptive research design aims to provide a detailed and accurate description of a specific research problem or phenomenon (Wiid & Diggins, 2020). It involves collecting data to answer questions about who, what, when, where, and how. The common methods used in descriptive research include surveys, questionnaires, observations, and existing data analysis. A descriptive study portrays the state of the current situation by identifying patterns, trends, and associations.

Explanatory research goes beyond describing a phenomenon and seeks to establish causal relationships between variables. It involves hypothesis testing, statistical analysis, and rigorous methodology to conclude the underlying processes. This design helps researchers understand the predictive effects of variables on one another. Given that this research seeks to evaluate the proposed predictive model, the explanatory research design enables the researcher to show the relationship between causes and outcomes based on theoretical arguments, as presented in the previous literature chapters. The choice of research design depends on the nature of the phenomenon being studied and the specific research questions and objectives. There are several common research designs, each suited for different research purposes.

5.4. Population

Population refers to the entire group of individuals, events, or objects that exhibit the behaviours or possess the specific characteristics in which the researcher is interested (Kumar, 2018). This study's population of interest consists of teachers employed in rural schools within the Raymond Mhlaba Local Municipality in the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa. The focus is specifically on teachers and principals working in rural primary and high schools.

5.5. Sampling Method

The sampling method involves selecting a subgroup from the population that will be included in the study. Sampling methods can be classified as either probability or non-probability (Berndt, 2020; Tyrer & Heyman, 2016). Probability sampling methods utilise strategies that ensure every element in the population has an equal chance of being included in the sample, allowing for statistical determination of results (Mweshi & Sakyi, 2020). In contrast, non-probability sampling involves selecting a sample based on the researcher's subjective judgment rather than through random selection (Elfil & Negida, 2017). In this study, the researcher employs the probability sampling method to ensure a representative sample from the population.

Common strategies for probability sampling methods include simple random sampling, systematic sampling, stratified sampling, and cluster sampling (Berndt, 2020; Elfil & Negida, 2017; Mweshi & Sakyi, 2020; Tyrer & Heyman, 2016). In simple random sampling, everyone in the population has an equal chance of being selected. Similarly, in systematic sampling, all elements have equal probabilities of inclusion; however, the selection is based on a systematic algorithm. In this method, every member of the population is assigned a number, and selections are made at regular intervals. Stratified sampling involves dividing the population into smaller segments, called strata, based on common characteristics or differences. A selection is then made from each stratum in proportion to its size relative to the overall population.

Cluster sampling is considered an appropriate strategy for selecting the sample for this study. It allows the researcher to derive a sample from a geographically widespread population (Pace, 2021; Rahi, 2017). In this case, the population of interest consists of teachers working in rural schools within the Raymond Mhlaba Local Municipality. The municipality comprises seven regions: Adelaide, Alice, Bedford, Fort Beaufort, Hogsback, Middledrift, and Seymour. Thus, these different regions (rural areas) form a cluster cohort. Every school within each cluster has an equal chance of being selected. However, the focus is on individuals who are most accessible to the researcher and can provide the required information.

Once the population of interest is identified, Mweshi and Sakyi (2020) emphasise the importance of determining the total number of elements within that population to select a representative sample (sample size). Sample size selection depends significantly on how the population is organised or divided into segments. However, it can also be influenced by resource constraints (Lakens, 2022), such as research time limitations or financial restrictions (Althubaiti, 2023; Berndt, 2020).

Hair et al. (2014) emphasise that while no universal rule applies, researchers should consider model complexity, estimation method, desired power, and robustness of estimates when determining an appropriate sample size for SEM. This implies that to determine the required sample size, the researcher can rely on the power analyses. This study determined the sample size based on the Eastern Cape Department of Basic Education (DBE) requirement to collect data from five schools per region. Due to COVID-19 pandemic restrictions still in place during this process, which limited accessibility and face-to-face contact with individuals, the researcher targeted schools with a number of teachers ranging from 5 to 10 for primary schools and from 10 to 30 for high schools. This approach led to an estimated sample size of 384. The process was rigorously conducted through internet research to identify the number of rural schools in each cluster and to gather information about the number of teachers.

5.6. Research instrument

The research instrument used for data collection was self-administered questionnaires. Researchers frequently use questionnaires to collect primary data (Yaddanapudi & Yaddanapudi, 2019). Given the limited time available for data collection, questionnaires were appropriate as they are economical to administer and can cover a sizable population within a short period. The study's instrument is structured to capture rural teachers' demographic profiles and measure decent work, needs satisfaction, and TPD. Section A includes questions about the respondents' demographic information, such as gender, age, and ethnic group. Section B consists of scales adopted from previous studies that measure decent work, needs satisfaction, and TPD. Below are brief descriptions of the measures utilised in the study, and the overall measurement scales are indicated in Table 2.

Table 2: Measuring Instrument

Scale	Indicators	Number of items	Cronbach Alpha	Source
Decent Work	Physically and Interpersonally Safe Working Conditions	3	0.82	(Duffy et al. (2017)
	Access to Health Care	3	0.97	
	Adequate Compensation	3	0.85	
	Hours that Allow for Free Time and Rest	3	0.87	
	Organisational Values Complement Family and Social Values	3	0.96	

Needs Satisfaction	Survival Needs	4	0.93	Autin et al. (2019)
	Social Contribution Needs	4	0.89	
	SDT Competence Needs	4	0.93	
	SDT Relatedness Needs	4	0.94	
	SDT Autonomy Needs	4	0.85	
Professional Development	Experimenting	5	0.80	Evers et al. (2016)
	Collaborating school	4	0.73	
	Keeping up-to date: work related training	2	0.72	
	Reflecting and asking for feedback	4	0.67	
	Keeping up-to-date: reading	3	0.73	
	Collaborating lessons	3	0.67	

5.6.1. Decent Work

Respondents' perceptions of their decent work are measured using the 15-item Decent Work Scale (DWS) developed by Duffy et al. (2017). The DWS assesses the five dimensions of decent work: safe working conditions, access to healthcare care, adequate compensation, free time, and rest, as well as complementary values. Participants were asked to rate each item using a seven-point Likert-type scale, where 1 indicates "strongly disagree," 2 indicates "disagree," 3 indicates "somewhat disagree," 4 indicates "neutral" (neither agree nor disagree), 5 indicates "somewhat agree," 6 indicates "agree," and 7 indicates "strongly agree." Sample items from each subscale include: "I feel emotionally safe interacting with people at work", "I get good healthcare benefits from my job", "I am rewarded adequately for my work", "I have free time during the work weeks", and "The values of my organisation match my family values". Regarding development, the internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha) for the total scale was reported as 0.86. Confirmatory factor analysis demonstrated that a 5-factor bifactor model provided the best fit for the data (Duffy et al., 2017).

In recent studies, the scale demonstrated strong and reliable psychometric properties (Lee et al., 2021; Ma et al., 2023; Sanhokwe & Takawira, 2023). Additionally, research across various contexts has also confirmed the invariance of the DWS while retaining all 15 items of the DWS (Di Fabio & Kenny, 2019; Ferreira et al., 2019; Masdonati et al., 2019; Ribeiro et al., 2019; Vignoli et al., 2020). However, it is noteworthy that some studies, such as that by Attitsogbe

et al. (2021), which involved a sample of primary school teachers in sub-Saharan Africa, retained only 13 items, exhibiting sub-optimal fit indices for the bifactor model. Another study conducted in sub-Saharan Africa failed to confirm the five-factor structure of the DWS according to its underlying theoretical specifications (Sanhokwe & Takawira, 2023). Few studies conducted in South Africa, focusing on a white-educated female sample, confirmed a four-factor structure for decent work (Malan, 2019). In contrast, a different study exploring decent work among a South African sample of blue-collar workers confirmed the five-factor structure of decent work (Koekemoer & Masenge, 2023). Moreover, these South African studies reported internal consistency reliabilities ranging from 0.81 to 0.92. Nevertheless, since the DWS is a reflective measure, Zhang et al. (2021) argue that an indicator is not a defining characteristic of a reflective construct. Therefore, removing an indicator does not impact the conceptual domain of the reflective construct. These findings suggest that the items measuring decent work share a common underlying factor while loading onto their respective subfactors, consistent with a bifactor model (Duffy et al., 2017).

5.6.2. Needs Satisfaction

The study measures need satisfaction using the 20-item Work Need Satisfaction Scale (WNSS; Autin et al., 2019). The development and validation of the WNSS are consistent with the PWT framework, which hypothesises that primary need satisfaction mediates the relationship between decent work and well-being. The WNSS measurement includes the following subscales: survival needs, social contribution needs, competence needs, relatedness needs, and autonomy needs. Participants were asked to rate each item on a seven-point Likert-type scale, ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7), with the options: disagree (2), somewhat disagree (3), neutral (neither agree nor disagree) (4), somewhat agree (5), and agree (6). Participants were presented with the statement, “My work allows me,” followed by items corresponding to each subscale, such as “Have the resources to provide nutritious food for myself and my family,” “Make a contribution to the greater social good,” “Feel like I fit in,” and “Do tasks the way I want.” Each of the five subscales demonstrated high internal consistency reliability, with an alpha value ranging from 0.85 to 0.94 (Autin et al., 2019). Four different structural models were tested using confirmatory factor analysis, and no significant differences were identified.

The WNSS has been recently validated in Korean (Kim et al., 2021) and Chinese contexts (Xu, Li, et al., 2022). Furthermore, since its publication, the scale has been found to have reliable scores correlated with measured variables (Autin & Allan, 2020; Duffy, Kim, et al., 2019) and

support needs satisfaction as a mediating mechanism (Autin, Shelton, et al., 2022). Therefore, this scale is appropriate for the study, which positions needs satisfaction as a mediator between decent work and TPD, aligning with the PWT perspective.

5.6.3. Teacher Professional Development

Rural teacher's professional development is measured using the Teacher Professional Development at Work Survey (TPDWS), developed and validated by Evers and colleagues (Evers et al., 2016). The TPDWS is a 21-item self-report measure that uses a 4-point rating scale: hardly ever (1), sometimes (2), fairly often (3), and often (4). The purpose of the instrument is to raise awareness among teachers, school leaders and other stakeholders regarding the extent to which teachers engage in learning at work (Evers et al., 2016). The TPDWS assesses teachers' participation in professional development activities with six subscales: 1) reflecting and asking for feedback; 2) keeping up to date through reading; 3) collaborating with colleagues to improve school development; 4) keeping up to date through participation in work-related training; 5) experimenting; and 6) collaborating with colleagues to enhance lesson quality. The internal consistency scores for subscales ranged from 0.67 to 0.80 during development. Although the TPDWS was validated in the Dutch context, several studies have examined teachers' experiences with professional development using TPDWS in various contexts (de Jong et al., 2019; Hallinger et al., 2019; Piyaman et al., 2017).

5.7. Method of Data Collection

Different data collection methods can be utilised in quantitative research, including surveys, observations, interviews, and experiments (Creswell, 2013). There are two categories of data collection: primary and secondary. Primary data entails gathering information that isn't easily accessible to provide precise solutions to a research question (Kumar, 2019; Wiid & Diggines, 2021). In contrast, secondary data consists of historical information sources originally collected for a specific investigation (Ledford & Gast, 2018). Secondary data is obtained through an extensive literature review of online journal databases, books, websites, and newspapers. This study's empirical and theoretical literature reviews use secondary data collection (Kumar, 2019). Subsequently, the primary data required for this study was collected using a standardised self-administered questionnaire, which participants completed without the interference of the researcher.

The questionnaire included a cover letter that provided all the necessary information regarding the purpose of the study. This letter assured participants that their shared information would only be used for academic purposes. Participants were also informed that the study had received

approval from the University of Fort Hare's Ethics Committee and the Eastern Cape Department of Education (ECDoE). A letter of approval from the ECDoE accompanied the questionnaire. The cover letter also sought informed consent from participants for the study. Additionally, the questionnaire contained clear instructions on how it should be completed, minimising direct contact with participants. The principals served as the point of contact for distributing the questionnaires, which were distributed and later collected. Due to limited access to certain schools, the researcher created an online questionnaire using Survey Monkey as a supplement to reach schools that could not be physically accessed. A total of 384 questionnaires were distributed, and only 330 were eligible for measurement. The data collection process lasted over six months.

5.8. Method of Data Analysis

Data analysis can be defined as the process of analysing and interpreting collected data (Wiid & Diggins, 2021). Before the analysis, the collected needs to be coded, edited, entered, and cleaned (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Data was prepared for analysis by coding responses into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet, with each item in the questionnaire assigned a number. This process allowed the researcher to ensure the data collected was accurate and valid. The researcher checked each questionnaire's completeness, omissions, illegibility, and inaccuracies before deciding to include or discard it for analysis. Verifying the correctness of the data is considered best practice during the data preparation stage, following collection and before analysis (Aguinis et al., 2021). Subsequently, the researcher conducted reliability and validity tests to ensure the instrument was error-free.

5.8.1. Reliability and validity of the instrument

The study established the reliability and validity of the questionnaire. Reliability and validity are two critical factors that determine the quality of quantitative research. When assessing the reliability of a research instrument, it is essential to ensure that the items are consistent, minimising redundancy and ensuring accurate results (Taber, 2018). Researchers recommend using the Cronbach Alpha Coefficient to test the consistency of the research instrument (Queirós et al., 2017; Taber, 2018). According to Mohajan (2017), Cronbach's Alpha value ranges from 0 to 1, with a value closer to 1 indicating more reliability. A value of 0.70 is generally considered sufficient for assessing an instrument's internal consistency and strength of dependence (Taber, 2018).

Validity determines whether the research instrument measures what it is intended to measure and performs as designed (Mohajan, 2017). Confirmatory factor analysis was used to assess

whether the research scale items accurately measured the intended constructs (Queiros et al., 2017). Specifically, factor loading, composite reliability (CR), and average variance extracted (AVE) are analysed. CR should be higher than 0.7 when measuring internal consistency reliability. Additionally, if both the factor loading and AVE values are greater than 0.5, the data can demonstrate good convergent validity (Fornell & Larcker, 1981).

Furthermore, a pilot study was conducted to pre-test the questionnaire among a small sample of rural teachers not included in the main study. This pilot study aimed to evaluate the questionnaire's clarity and effectiveness. Since no ambiguous questions or items that required correction were identified, the scale items were retained in their original form as developed.

5.8.2. Descriptive and inferential analysis

The IBM Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 29 was used to conduct descriptive and inferential analyses of the primary data collected. Descriptive analysis employs statistical techniques to model and transform data into meaningful information (Cooksey, 2020). This process involves using frequency percentages, distributions, graphs, and measures of central tendency (mode, median and arithmetic mean). The researcher utilised these descriptive statistics tools to quantify the characteristics of variables of interest. The descriptive analysis was performed to describe the respondents' profiles.

After that, the researcher conducted an inferential analysis to determine the relationships between decent work, needs satisfaction, and TPD. Inferential statistics explain conditions or occurrences, allowing researchers to reject or accept the formulated hypotheses. Consequently, Pearson product-moment correlation and structural equation modelling (SEM) using AMOS version 22 were employed to draw informed conclusions regarding the support or rejection of the hypotheses. In the SEM, the researcher established links between constructs through a set of paths, which typically reflect the hypotheses (Ringle et al., 2020). SEM is an estimation and multivariate technique (Bairagi & Mousami, 2019; Cooper et al., 2019) that combines various aspects of confirmatory factor analysis, path analysis, and multiple regression analysis to assess interrelated variables simultaneously (Mcquitty, 2018; Shi et al., 2020). Moreover, SEM allows for the testing of the hypothesised direct and indirect effects.

To understand the mediation effect of needs satisfaction between decent work and TPD. The researcher followed the suggestions from Baron and Kenny (1986). According to their framework, establishing a mediating effect requires that the first regression model demonstrates that the independent variable is a significant predictor of the outcome variable ($X \rightarrow Y$) to establish an effect to mediate. The second regression model must show that the

independent variable significantly predicts the mediator ($X \rightarrow Me$) to establish the mediation chain. Both the independent variable and the mediator should be entered simultaneously in the third regression model ($X, Me \rightarrow Y$) (Baron & Kenny, 1986). Therefore, the three steps outlined above were followed.

5.9. Ethical Considerations

According to Babbie (2016), ethics demonstrates an individual's morality, as a person can act ethically wrong or ethically correct. Research ethics refers to abiding by the conduct standards established by a particular profession. These standards include voluntary participation, participant safety, confidentiality and anonymity maintenance, and obtaining informed consent (Babbie, 2016). The researcher applied for ethical clearance from the ethics committee to ensure the research aligned with expected ethical standards. The data collection took place after receiving approval from the University of Fort Hare Research Ethics Committee (UREC), and an ethical clearance certificate was obtained with the reference number CHI021SDLA01. No risk or harm was anticipated in this study, as the researcher also obtained a letter of permission from the Department of Education in Bisho.

Respondents were required to provide informed consent, which was achieved by giving them sufficient information to make an informed decision on whether or not to participate. They also had the right to withdraw from the study at any time. Participants were given an informed consent letter outlining the research focus, methodology, and anticipated use of the findings. They were asked to sign this letter before completing the questionnaire.

In compliance with the Protection of Personal Information Act (POPIA), personal information collected, such as the name of the schools, through completing the questionnaire, was treated as confidential. Ensuring the protection of participants' personal information is essential in respecting their rights and integrity (Fotrousi et al., 2017). To maintain confidentiality, the researcher created a password-protected folder to store the personal data. Participants were assured of their confidentiality and anonymity. However, it is important to note that the validity, reliability, and findings of the collected data should be made public (Wiid & Diggines, 2020). The researcher responsibly shared the data with the units associated with this study, including supervisors and statisticians. Once the study is completed, the study results will be shared with the public, policymakers, and industrial psychologists within the field of work psychology. The study involved primary data, and anonymity and confidentiality were carefully considered.

Anonymity

Anonymity refers to the practice of ensuring that a given response cannot be linked to a specific respondent (Babbie, 2016). This study maintained anonymity by instructing respondents not to write their names on the questionnaires or discuss their responses with the researcher, thereby establishing confidentiality and privacy.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality must be guaranteed for all respondents in any research investigation (Babbie, 2016). This study ensured confidentiality by not disclosing the participant's information to persons not directly involved in the investigation. Furthermore, respondents were required to sign an informed consent form before participating in the study. No harm was placed on the respondents should they choose to withdraw or decline to participate in the study.

5.10. Conclusion

This chapter presents the research plan for this study, including the approaches used to collect and analyse the primary data. Guided by the positivist paradigm, the study employed a quantitative approach and utilised previously validated measures to collect data. Various techniques were implemented before and after data collection to ensure data quality. The data was collected from teachers and school principals working in the rural school of Raymond Mhlaba Local Municipality in the Eastern Cape. A cluster sampling strategy was employed, resulting in a sample of 330 participants, which provided sufficient data for the study. Additionally, this chapter discusses the analysis techniques used to assess the relationships among the variables, as well as the mechanisms and pathways through which they influence each other. The chapter also highlights the importance of ethical behaviour in the research process. The subsequent section will focus on the presentation of the results.

CHAPTER SIX

DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

6. Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to present the study findings. It provides a data analysis report on the tested hypotheses and the objectives that guide the research. SPSS version 29 and the Analysis of Moment Structures (AMOS) statistical software were used for the analysis. The initial part of this chapter presents the measurement of validity and reliability for the measurement scales (decent work, needs satisfaction, and TPD). A confirmatory factor analysis using AMOS was conducted to determine the items that load onto specific factors for the measurement scales.

The Cronbach's alpha coefficient and Jöreskog's rho were used to assess the reliability and composite reliability of the established factors. Descriptive analysis was employed to describe the demographic features of the data collected and to establish theoretical variables and constructs. A Friedman's two-way ANOVA test was conducted to identify the dominant construct among the variables. Subsequently, an independent samples t-test was used to compare the study's theoretical constructs with demographic variables. The Kruskal-Wallis H test, a rank-based nonparametric test, was used to determine if there were statistically significant differences between multilevel groups of independent demographic variables on the theoretical variables. Finally, the Pearson correlation coefficient was employed to examine the nature, strength, and direction of the correlations that exist between the study's major theoretical variables.

Path analysis using SEM was utilised to quantify the direct effects of the hypothesised frameworks. The mediation effects were examined by assessing the significance of the indirect effect in the established structural models. A bootstrapped maximum likelihood estimation procedure was employed for the measurement and structural models. Additionally, all necessary assumptions were examined. Table 3 summarises the model fit indices for the most important parameters, along with their accepted values according to the literature. These indices were used to assess the fitness of the confirmatory factor analysis, as well as the full measurement and structural models.

Table 3: Model fit indices summary of the most important parameters and their accepted values according to the literature

Name of index	Cut-off points	Comment	Reference
CMIN/DF	< 3	Good fit	Hu & Bentler (1999)
	< 5	Acceptable fit	Hu & Bentler (1999)
SRMR	≤ 0.05	Good fit	Diamantopoulos & Siguaw (2000)
	$0.05 < \text{SRMR} \leq 0.09$	Acceptable fit	Hu & Bentler (1999)
RMSEA	≤ 0.05	Good fit	Hu & Bentler (1999)
	$0.05 < \text{RMSEA} \leq 0.10$	Acceptable fit	Hu & Bentler (1999)
CFI	1	Perfect fit	Hu & Bentler (1999)
	≥ 0.95	Good fit	Hu & Bentler (1999)
	$0.90 \leq \text{CFI} < 0.95$	Acceptable fit	Hu & Bentler (1999)
	> 0.80	Mediocre	Hu & Bentler (1999)
NFI	1	Perfect fit	Daire Hooper, et al. (2008)
	≥ 0.95	Good fit	Daire Hooper, et al. (2008)
	$0.90 \leq \text{NFI} < 0.95$	Acceptable fit	Daire Hooper, et al. (2008)

CMIN/DF = Discrepancy/Chi-square divided by degree of freedom. **SRMR** = The Standardized Root Mean Square Residual. **RMSEA** = The Root Mean Square Error of Approximation. **CFI** = The Comparative Fit Index. **NFI** = The (Non) Normed Fit Index. *Source: Data Analysis*

6.1 Validity and Reliability Analysis

As indicated in Chapter 5, the study assessed the data quality by following the principles of validity and reliability. The following section presents the measurement of validity and reliability for the measurement scales (decent work, needs satisfaction, and TPD).

6.1.1 Factor and reliability analysis for needs satisfaction (Mediating variables)

A CFA and a reliability analysis were conducted to assess the validity and reliability of needs satisfaction as a measurement scale. The literature served as a guide for the empirical factors of the needs satisfaction scale. The most parsimonious model was achieved, with all 20 initial items loading onto five factors. Consequently, a total of four items were retained for each factor. Table 4 shows that all factor loadings were above 0.60, indicating a highly acceptable fit for these loadings. The average variance extracted (AVE) for all constructs exceeded 0.50, with the following values: survival needs satisfaction (AVE = 0.668), social contribution needs satisfaction (AVE = 0.592), self-determination competence needs satisfaction (AVE = 0.627), self-determination relatedness needs satisfaction (AVE = 0.578), and self-determination autonomy needs satisfaction (AVE = 0.591). A minimum cut-off point of 0.50 is recommended; therefore, the convergent validity of the needs satisfaction tool is deemed adequate.

The Cronbach alpha was used to measure internal consistency, with values exceeding 0.80 for all constructs: survival needs satisfaction (alpha = 0.889), social contribution needs satisfaction (alpha = 0.850), self-determination competence needs satisfaction (alpha = 0.867), self-determination relatedness needs satisfaction (alpha = 0.838), and self-determination autonomy needs satisfaction (alpha = 0.849). The overall Cronbach coefficient for needs satisfaction was 0.908, indicating good reliability for needs satisfaction as a measurement tool. When assessing Jöreskog's rho for measuring composite reliability (CR), the values also exceeded 0.80 for all established factors: survival needs satisfaction (CR = 0.889), social contribution needs satisfaction (CR = 0.852), self-determination competence needs satisfaction (CR = 0.870), self-determination relatedness needs satisfaction (CR = 0.844), and self-determination autonomy needs satisfaction (CR = 0.852). Composite reliability was achieved for the established model, indicating a highly acceptable level of construct reliability. Figure 2 illustrates the path diagram for the CFA of the needs satisfaction tool.

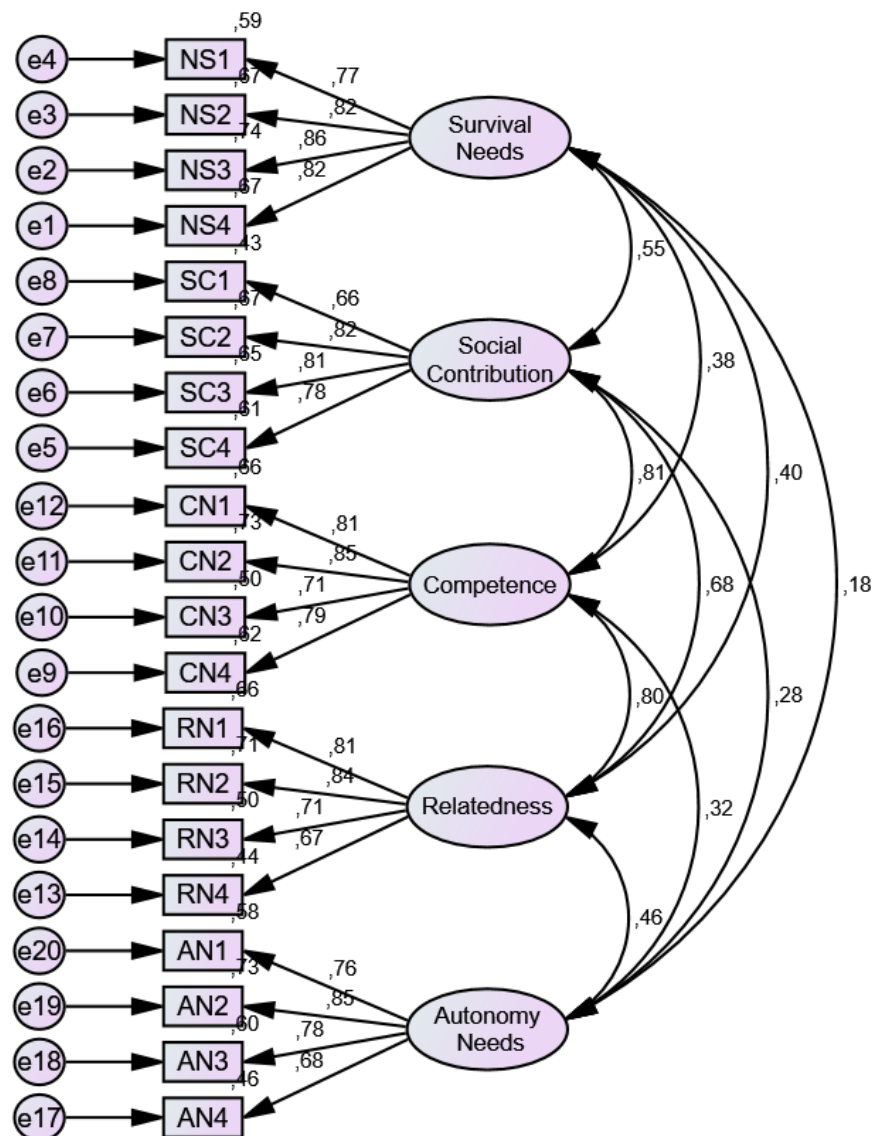


Figure 2: The path diagram for the CFA measurement model for needs satisfaction

Table 4 shows that all factor loadings were above 0.60, indicating a highly acceptable fit for these loadings.

Table 4: The needs satisfaction confirmatory factor analysis and internal consistency output

Factors and respective items	CODE	CFA Loading	Alpha if Item
Factor 1. Survival needs satisfaction			
My work allows me to have the resources to provide	NS1	0.766	0.872
My work allows me to have the resources to pay for adequate...	NS2	0.820	0.851
My work allows me to have the resources to pay for utilities,	NS3	0.862	0.843
My work allows me to have the resources to maintain the	NS4	0.818	0.860
<i>Cronbach's Alpha = 0.889; Joreskog rho = 0.889; Average Variance Extracted (AVE) = 0.668</i>			
Factor 2. Social contribution needs satisfaction			
My work allows me to make a contribution to the greater	SC1	0.659	0.844
My work allows me to feel like I am doing something	SC2	0.822	0.791
My work allows me to feel a part of something greater by	SC3	0.805	0.791
My work allows me to feel like I am making a difference.	SC4	0.782	0.808
<i>Cronbach's alpha = 0.850; Joreskog rho = 0.852; Average Variance Extracted (AVE) = 0.592</i>			
Factor 3. Self-determination competence needs satisfaction			
My work allows me to feel like I am good at my job	CN1	0.812	0.828
My work allows me to feel like I am good at what I do.	CN2	0.852	0.807
My work allows me to feel like I know what I'm doing.	CN3	0.709	0.856
My work allows me to feel competent.	CN4	0.788	0.830
<i>Cronbach's Alpha = 0.867; Joreskog rho = 0.870; Average Variance Extracted (AVE) = 0.627</i>			
Factor 4. Self-determination relatedness needs satisfaction			
My work allows me to feel like I fit in.	RN1	0.812	0.779
My work allows me to feel like I belong.	RN2	0.840	0.772
My work allows me to feel understood by others.	RN3	0.708	0.802
My work allows me to feel supported by others.	RN4	0.667	0.830
<i>Cronbach's Alpha = 0.838; Joreskog rho = 0.844; Average Variance Extracted (AVE) = 0.578</i>			
Factor 5. Self-determination autonomy needs satisfaction			
My work allows me to do tasks the way I want.	AN1	0.761	0.822
My work allows me to feel free to do things my own way.	AN2	0.852	0.783
My work allows me to take actions that promote my real needs.	AN3	0.777	0.796
My work allows me to choose whether or not I have to do	AN4	0.676	0.833
<i>Cronbach's Alpha = 0.849; Joreskog rho = 0.852; Average Variance Extracted (AVE) = 0.591</i>			

Note: Overall Cronbach Alpha = 0.908. Source: Data Analysis

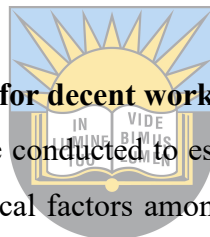
Table 5 presents the goodness of fit indices values that meet the required criteria. The CMIN/DF value of 2.903 is below 3, suggesting a good model fit. On the other hand, the SRMR

value of 0.053 falls between 0.05 and 0.09, indicating an acceptable model fit. Furthermore, the RMSEA is 0.076 with a 90% confidence interval of [0.068, 0.084], suggesting an acceptable model fit. The Comparative Fit Index (CFI) is 0.922, exceeding the threshold of 0.90, while the Normed Fit Index (NFI) is 0.889, which is close to 0.90. The measurement model has satisfied all the model fit requirements. Therefore, the assessment results of the fitness indices for the needs satisfaction measurement model indicate that the established model is adequate.

Table 5: The goodness-of-fit measures assessment for the needs satisfaction model

Name of index	Index value	Cut-off points	Comments
CMIN/DF	2.903	< 3	Good fit
SRMR	0.053	$0.05 < \text{SRMR} \leq 0.09$	Acceptable fit
RMSEA [90% CI]	0.076 [0.068; 0.084]	$0.05 < \text{RMSEA} \leq 0.10$	Acceptable fit
CFI	0.922	$0.90 \leq \text{CFI} < 0.95$	Acceptable fit
NFI	0.886	> 0.80	Mediocre fit

CMIN/DF = Discrepancy/Chi-square divided by degree of freedom. **SRMR** = The Standardized Root Mean Square Residual. **RMSEA** = The Root Mean Square Error of Approximation. **CFI** = The Comparative Fit Index. **NFI** = The (Non) Normed Fit Index. *Source:* Data Analysis.



6.1.2 Factor and reliability analysis for decent work (Independent variable)

A CFA and a reliability analysis were conducted to establish the measurement model for the DWS. The CFA identified the empirical factors among the 15 items related to decent work. Items with poor loadings were removed to create a measurement model with good and acceptable fit indices. The most parsimonious model was achieved with 13 items retained. Table 6 shows that all factor loadings were above 0.50. The established factor structure reveals that 3 items load onto safe working conditions (Factor 1), 3 items load onto access to health care (Factor 2), 2 items load onto adequate compensation (Factor 3), 2 items load onto free time and rest (Factor 4), and 3 items load onto organisational values (Factor 5). The value of the AVE for all the established factors is greater than the required minimum of 0.50, i.e., safe working conditions (AVE = 0.574), access to health care (AVE = 0.645), adequate compensation (AVE = 0.680), free time and rest (AVE = 0.571), and organisational values (AVE = 0.643). Since the minimum cut-off point for AVE is 0.50, the convergent validity for all the factors is deemed adequate.

Furthermore, the Cronbach alpha coefficient was used to measure the internal consistency of these factors. Upon assessing these coefficients, most of the values were at least 0.70, except for free time and rest (alpha = 0.679), which is close to 0.70. The reliability of the established factors suggests good and satisfactory reliability. For measuring composite reliability, the

values of Jöreskog's rho were greater than 0.70 for all constructs, indicating that composite reliability is adequate for the established measurement model. Consequently, there is a highly satisfactory level of construct reliability. The measurement model demonstrated an acceptable fit when examining the overall assessment criteria for model fitness. Figure 3 illustrates the path diagram for the CFA measurement model for decent work.

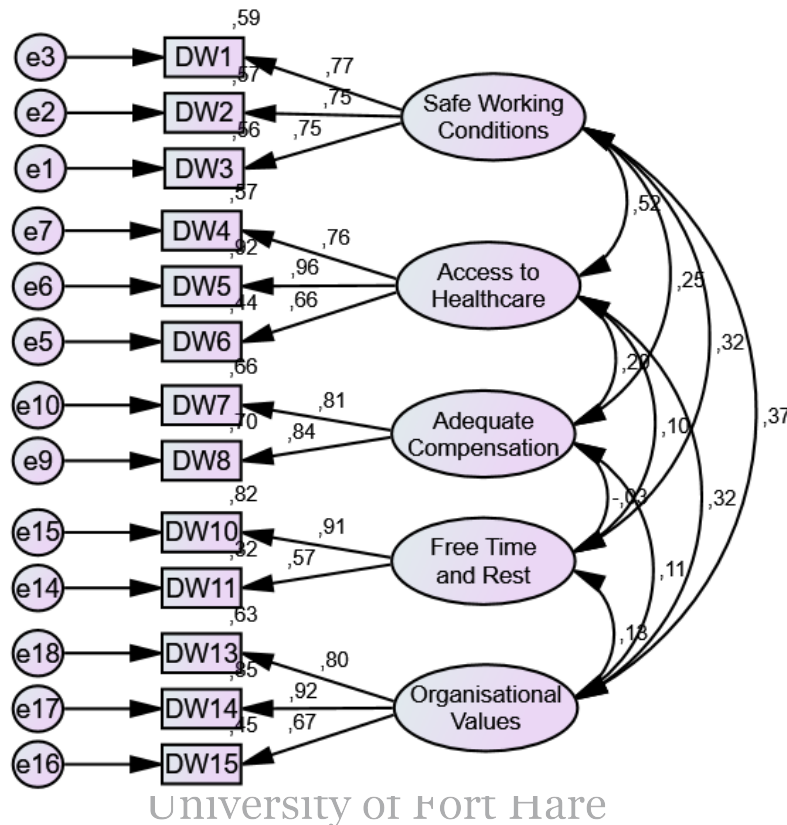


Figure 3: The path diagram for the measurement model of decent work

Source: Data Analysis

Table 6 shows that all factor loadings were above 0.50.

Table 6: Decent work confirmatory factor analysis and internal consistency output.

Factors and respective items	CODE	CFA Loading	Alpha if Item
Factor 1. Safe working conditions			
I feel emotionally safe interacting with people at work.	DW1	0.770	0.686
At work, I feel safe from emotional or verbal abuse of any kind.	DW2	0.755	0.749
I feel physically safe interacting with people at work.	DW3	0.746	0.740
<i>Cronbach's Alpha = 0.798; Joreskog rho = 0.801; Average Variance Extracted (AVE) = 0.574</i>			
Factor 2. Access to health care			
I get good healthcare benefits from my job.	DW4	0.758	0.781
I have a good healthcare plan at work.	DW5	0.960	0.639
My employer provides acceptable options for healthcare.	DW6	0.662	0.842
<i>Cronbach's Alpha = 0.826; Joreskog rho = 0.842; Average Variance Extracted (AVE) = 0.645</i>			

Factor 3. Adequate compensation

I am not properly paid for my work. DW7 0.812 n/a

I do not feel I am paid enough based on my qualifications and... DW8 0.837 n/a

Cronbach's Alpha = 0.809; Joreskog rho = 0.809; Average Variance Extracted (AVE) = 0.680

Factor 4. Free time and rest

I do not have enough time for non-work activities. DW10 0.905 n/a

I have no time to rest during the work week. DW11 0.568 n/a

Cronbach's Alpha = 0.679; Joreskog rho = 0.717; Average Variance Extracted (AVE) = 0.571

Factor 5. Organisational values

The values of my organisation match my family values. DW13 0.796 0.762

My organisation's values align with my family values. DW14 0.921 0.678

The values of my organisation match the values within my ... DW15 0.669 0.848

Cronbach's Alpha = 0.831; Joreskog rho = 0.842; Average Variance Extracted (AVE) = 0.643

Overall Cronbach's Alpha = 0.796. Source: Data Analysis

The results showed that the CMIN/DF value of 2.680 is below 3, suggesting a good model fit (see Table 7). Furthermore, the SRMR value of 0.048 is less than 0.05, which also indicates a good model fit. However, the RMSEA is 0.071 with a 90% confidence interval of [0.058, 0.086], suggesting an acceptable model fit. In addition, the CFI is 0.945 > 0.90 threshold, and the NFI is 0.916, which is also greater than > 0.90. These measures both surpassed the minimum recommended value of 0.90 for an acceptable fit. The measurement model has fulfilled all the model fit requirements. Therefore, the results of the fitness index assessment for the model show that the established model is adequate.

Table 7: The goodness-of-fit measures assessment for decent work measurement model.

Name of index	Index value	Cut-off points	Comments
CMIN/DF	2.680	< 3	Good fit
SRMR	0.048	≤ 0.05	Good fit
RMSEA [90% CI]	0.071 [0.058; 0.086]	0.05 < RMSEA ≤ 0.10	Acceptable fit
CFI	0.945	0.90 ≤ CFI < 0.95	Acceptable fit
NFI	0.916	0.90 ≤ NFI < 0.95	Acceptable fit

CMIN/DF = Discrepancy/Chi-square divided by degree of freedom. **SRMR** = The Standardized Root Mean Square Residual. **RMSEA** = The Root Mean Square Error of Approximation. **CFI** = The Comparative Fit Index. **NFI** = The (Non) Normed Fit Index. *Source: Data Analysis*

6.1.3 Factor and reliability analysis for teacher professional development (Dependent variable)

Finally, a CFA and a reliability analysis were also conducted to establish the measurement model for the professional development tool. The most parsimonious CFA model was achieved with 16 items retained from an initial 21 items. All factor loadings were above 0.60 (see Table 6). The established factor structure shows that 3 items load onto experimenting (Factor 1), 3

items also load onto collaborating with the school (Factor 2), 2 items load onto keeping up to date with work-related training (Factor 3), 3 items load onto reflecting and asking for feedback (Factor 4), 2 items load onto reading (Factor 5), and 3 items onto collaborating on lessons (Factor 6). The AVE for the majority of the established factors is close to the required minimum of 0.50: experimenting (AVE = 0.516), collaborating with the school (AVE = 0.481), keeping up to date with work-related training (AVE = 0.547), keeping up-to-date with reading (AVE = 0.506), and collaborating on lessons (AVE = 0.526). The minimum cut-off point for AVE is 0.50. Therefore, the convergent validity for all factors is deemed adequate.

Furthermore, the Cronbach alpha coefficient was used to measure the internal consistency of these factors. The values are at least 0.60 for all constructs, indicating that the reliability of the established factors is good and satisfactory. For measuring composite reliability, the values of Jöreskog's rho are also greater than 0.60 for all constructs, which confirms that the composite reliability is adequate for the established measurement model. Thus, there is a highly satisfactory level of construct reliability. The measurement model demonstrated a somewhat acceptable fit when examining the overall assessment criteria for model fitness. Figure 4 illustrates the path diagram for the CFA measurement model for professional development.

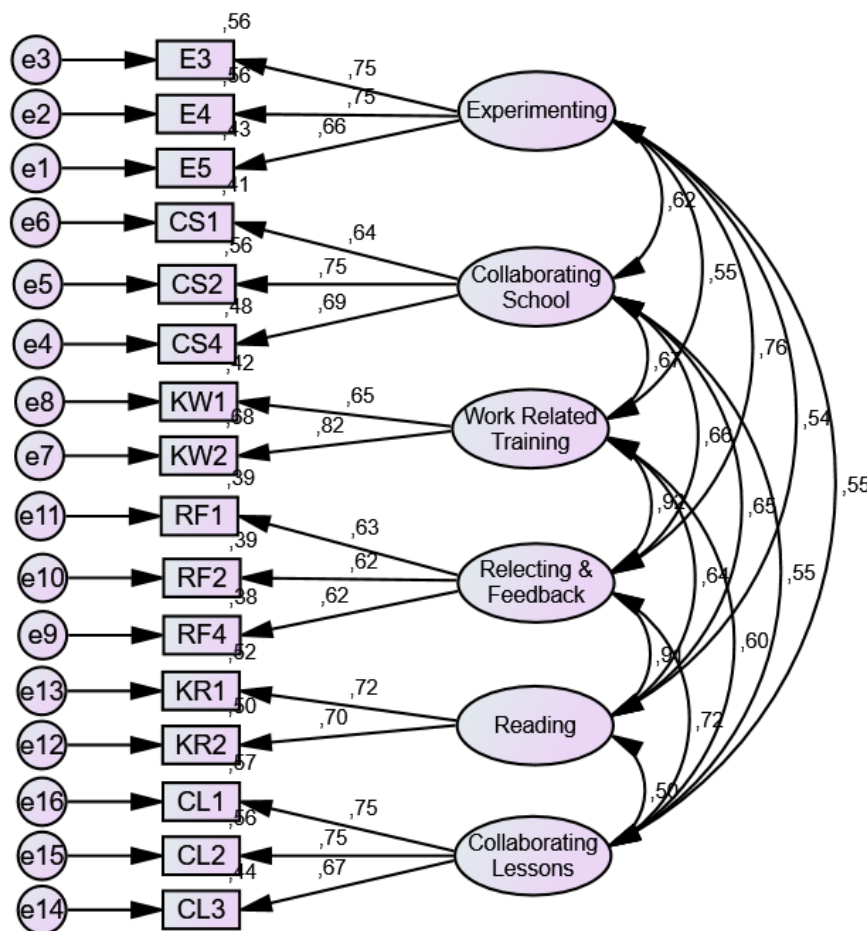


Figure 4: The path diagram for confirmatory factor analysis of the professional development scale

Source: Data Analysis

Table 8 shows that all factor loadings for teacher professional development.

Table 8: Professional development confirmatory factor analysis and internal consistency output.

Factors and respective items	CODE	CFA Loading	Alpha if Item
Factor 1. Experimenting			
Applying and evaluating other forms of assessments.	E3	0.751	0.631
Inquiring about new teaching methods in class	E4	0.745	0.658
Trying out new teaching methods in my lesson.	E5	0.655	0.734
<i>Cronbach's Alpha = 0.758; Joreskog rho = 0.761; Average Variance Extracted (AVE) = 0.516</i>			
Factor 2. Collaborating school			
Giving an opinion together with colleagues about school...	CS1	0.639	0.674
Assembling a school working group or committee with	CS2	0.748	0.550
Discussing ideas about educational improvement and	CS4	0.690	0.696
<i>Cronbach's Alpha = 0.729; Joreskog rho = 0.735; Average Variance Extracted (AVE) = 0.481</i>			
Factor 3. Keeping up to date with work related training			
Participating in a training course that centres around subject...	KW1	0.645	n/a
Participating in a one day conference or study day that	KW2	0.823	n/a
<i>Cronbach's Alpha = 0.694; Joreskog rho = 0.704; Average Variance Extracted (AVE) = 0.547</i>			
Factor 4. Reflecting and asking for feedback			
Reflecting on my strong and weak points.	RF1	0.626	0.551
Adapting my teaching methods in response to pupils' reactions.	RF2	0.622	0.486
Inviting colleagues to attend my lesson.	RF4	0.619	0.626
<i>Cronbach's Alpha = 0.653; Joreskog rho = 0.655; Average Variance Extracted (AVE) = 0.387</i>			
Factor 5. Keeping up-to-date with reading			
Studying subject matter literature.	KR1	0.719	n/a
Reading educational/ subject matter pedagogical literature.	KR2	0.704	n/a
<i>Cronbach's Alpha = 0.672; Joreskog rho = 0.672; Average Variance Extracted (AVE) = 0.506</i>			
Factor 6. Collaborating lessons			
Preparing lessons with colleagues.	CL1	0.754	0.679
Making agreements with colleagues about the pedagogical	CL2	0.751	0.625
Discussing the teaching approaches I use in class with	CL3	0.667	0.742
<i>Cronbach's Alpha = 0.765; Joreskog rho = 0.768; Average Variance Extracted (AVE) = 0.526</i>			
<i>Overall Cronbach's Alpha = 0.891. Source: Data Analysis</i>			

In Table 9, the results indicate that the value of CMIN/DF = 3.565 is greater than 3 but below 5, suggesting an acceptable model fit. Similarly, the value of SRMR (SRMR = 0.055) falls between 0.05 and 0.09, which also indicates an acceptable model fit. Furthermore, the RMSEA

is 0.088 with 90% confidence interval of [0.078, 0.099], suggesting an acceptable model fit. However, CFI is $0.884 > 0.80$ threshold, and NFI is 0.849, which is also greater than > 0.80 . These measures both surpass the minimum recommended value of 0.80 for an acceptable fit. The model has fulfilled all the fit requirements. Therefore, the results of the fitness index assessment for the measurement model show that the established model is adequate.

Table 9: The goodness-of-fit measures assessment for the professional development measurement model.

Name of index	Index value	Cut-off points	Comments
CMIN/DF	3.565	< 5	Acceptable fit
SRMR	0.055	$0.05 < \text{SRMR} \leq 0.09$	Acceptable fit
RMSEA [90% CI]	0.088 [0.078; 0.099]	$0.05 < \text{RMSEA} \leq 0.10$	Acceptable fit
CFI	0.884	> 0.80	Mediocre fit
NFI	0.849	> 0.80	Mediocre fit

CMIN/DF = Discrepancy/Chi-square divided by degree of freedom. **SRMR** = The Standardized Root Mean Square Residual. **RMSEA** = The Root Mean Square Error of Approximation. **CFI** = The Comparative Fit Index. **NFI** = The (Non) Normed Fit Index. *Source:* Data Analysis

6.2 Demographic data of respondents

Before conducting a detailed data analysis, a basic summary of the study's demographic profile was established. A descriptive approach was employed to outline the demographic variables of the study (see Table 10).

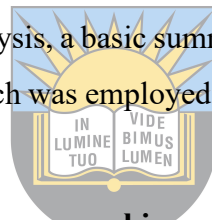


Table 10: Descriptive summary of demographic variables

Variable	Levels	df	f	Valid %
Gender	Female	1	189	57,3
	Male		141	42,7
Ethnicity	Black	3	291	88.2
	Coloured		33	10.0
	White		1	0.3
	Other		5	1.5
Age	18 to 24 years	5	19	5.8
	25 to 34 years		94	28.5
	35 to 44 years		79	23.9
	45 to 54 years		90	27.3
	55 to 64 years		46	13.9
	65 years and older		2	0.6
Qualifications	Grade 12	4	22	6.7
	Diploma		66	20.0
	Bachelor's Degree		134	40.6
	Honours Degree		63	19.1
	Post Graduate Degree		45	13.6
Employment status	Full-time employee	2	234	70.9
	Part-time employee		19	5.8
	Contract employee		77	23.3

Position	Principal	2	36	10.9
	Deputy Principal		31	9.4
	Educator		263	79.7
School	High School	1	150	45.5
	Primary School		180	54.5
CPD	Yes	2	131	39.7
	No		126	38.2
	Not Sure		73	22.1

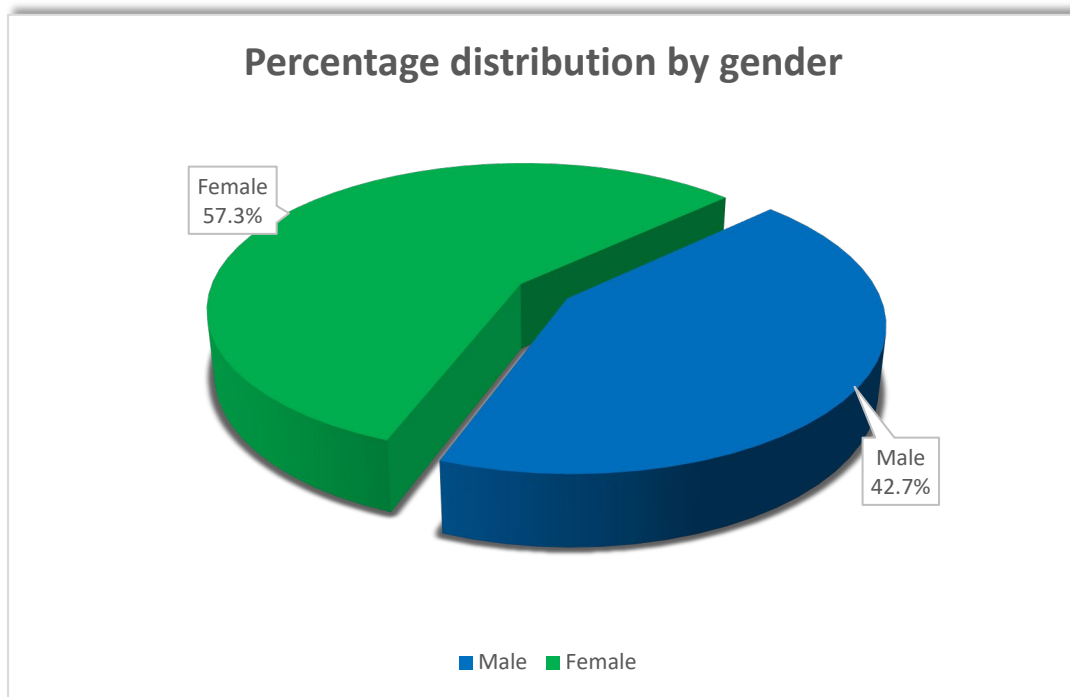
Source: Data Analysis

Table 10 indicates that the sample comprised 189 participants who identified as females (57.3%) and 141 as males (42.7%), with a mean age of 45 to 54 years. The participants were teachers employed in different rural public schools, recruited voluntarily and granted permission for research in their setting. Regarding race, 291 participants were identified as Black (88.2%) and 33 as Coloured (10.0%). Only 1 participant (0.3%) identified as White, while 5 (1.5%) were of other ethnicities. Most participants reported that their highest level of education was a Bachelor's Degree (n=134, 40.6%), followed by 66 with a Diploma (20.0%), 63 with an Honours Degree (19.1%), 45 with a Postgraduate degree (13.6%), and 22 with a Grade 12 (6.7%). The employment status of participants ranged from full-time employment (n=234, 70.9%), part-time employment (n=19, 5.8%), and contract employment (n=77, 23.3%). Finally, the participants' work positions involved being an educator (n=263, 79.7%), deputy principal (n=31, 9.4%), and principal (n=36, 10.9%), with 180 (54.5%) working in primary schools and 150 (45.5%) in secondary schools.

6.2.1 Percentage distribution by gender

Figure 5 shows the gender distribution of respondents. The majority of participants were female (57.3%, n = 189), while 42.7% (n = 141) were male.

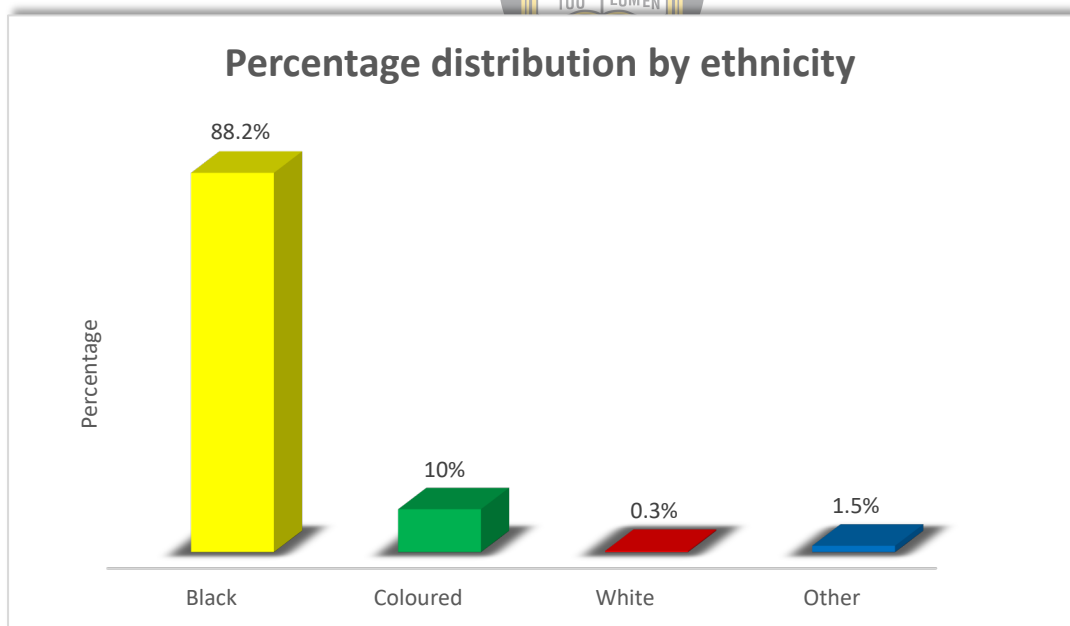
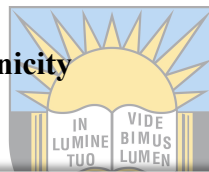
Figure 5: Percentage distribution by gender



Source: Data Analysis

6.2.2 Percentage distribution by ethnicity

Figure 6: Distribution by ethnicity



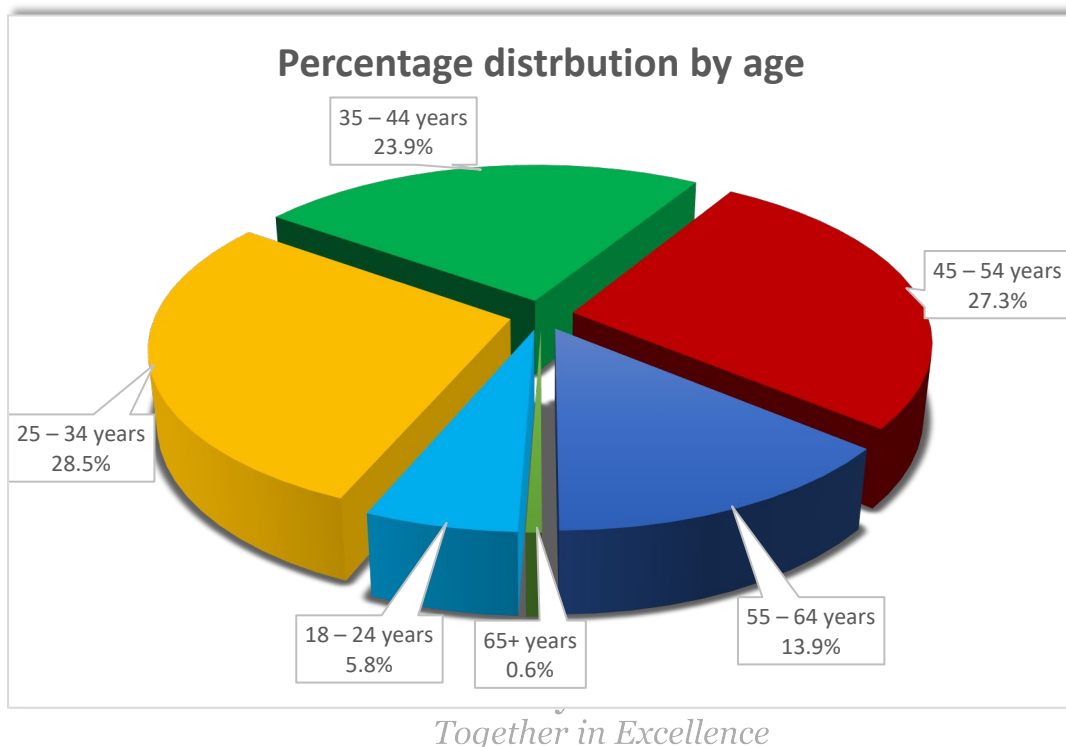
Source: Data Analysis

Figure 6 depicts the distribution of respondents by ethnicity. Black Africans (88.2%, $n = 291$) represented the majority of respondents, followed by Coloureds (10.0%, $n = 33$). Only one respondent (0.3%) was identified as White, whilst five respondents (1.5%) were identified as other ethnicities.

6.2.3 Percentage distribution by age

Figure 7 shows that most of the respondents (28.5%, $n = 94$) were in the age group of 25 to 34 years. Additionally, 27.3% ($n = 90$) of the respondents were in the 45 to 54-year age group, while 23.9% ($n = 79$) were aged 35 to 44 years. Forty-six respondents (13.9%) were in the 55 to 64-year category, and 5.8% ($n = 19$) were in the 18 to 24-year age group, while only two respondents (0.6%) were 65 years or older.

Figure 7: Percentage distribution by age

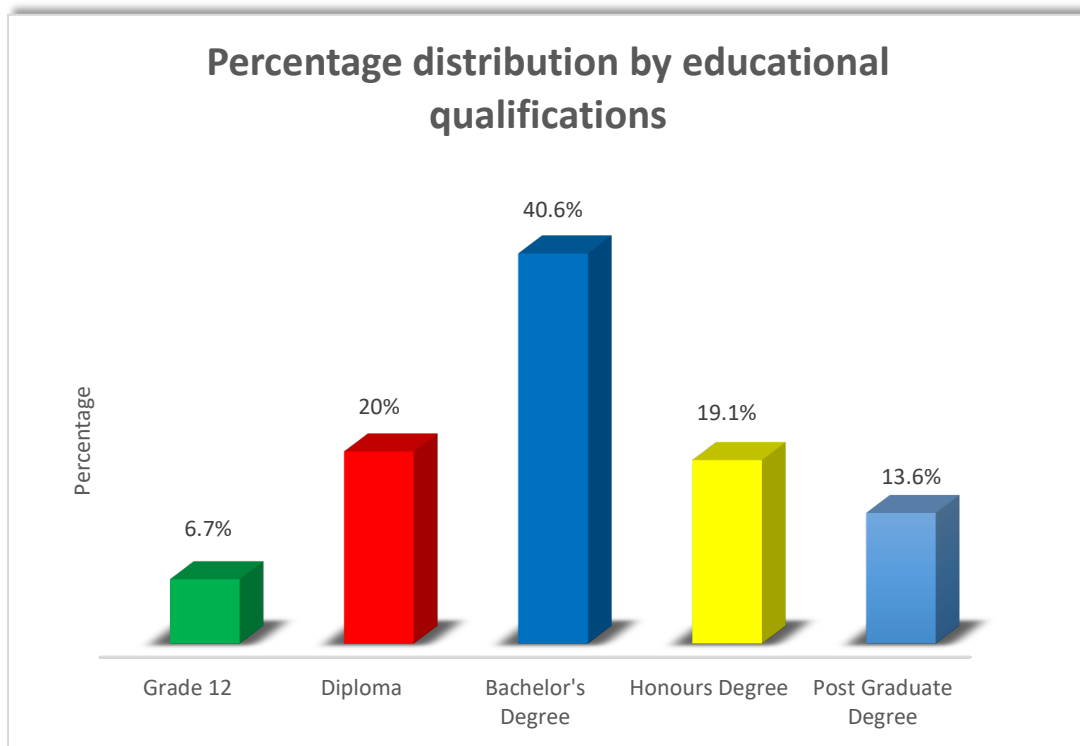


Source: Data Analysis

6.2.4 Percentage distribution by highest educational qualifications

Figure 8 presents the highest educational qualifications of respondents. It can be noted that most of the respondents (40.6%, $n = 134$) had a Bachelor's degree, while 20.0% ($n = 66$) had a diploma as their highest educational qualification. Those with an Honours degree constituted 19.1% ($n = 63$) of the sample, while those with a Grade 12 matric certificate made up 6.7% ($n = 22$) of the sampled participants. Forty-five respondents (13.6%) had a Postgraduate degree as their highest educational qualification.

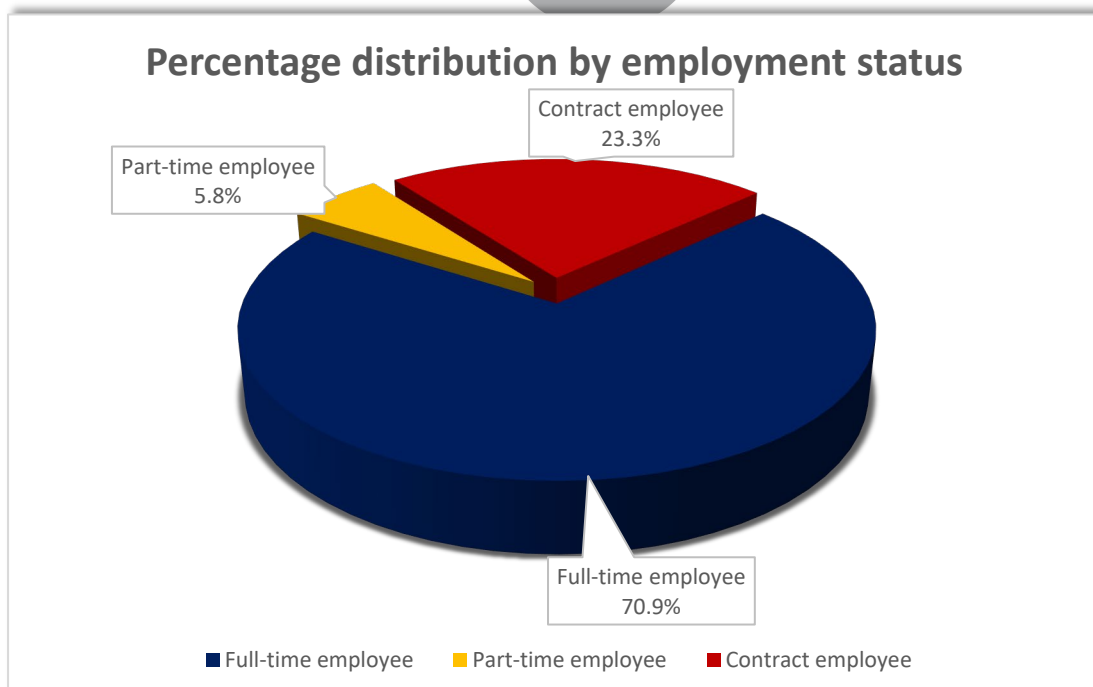
Figure 8: Distribution by highest educational qualifications



Source: Data Analysis

6.2.5 Percentage distribution by employment status

Figure 9: Distribution by employment status

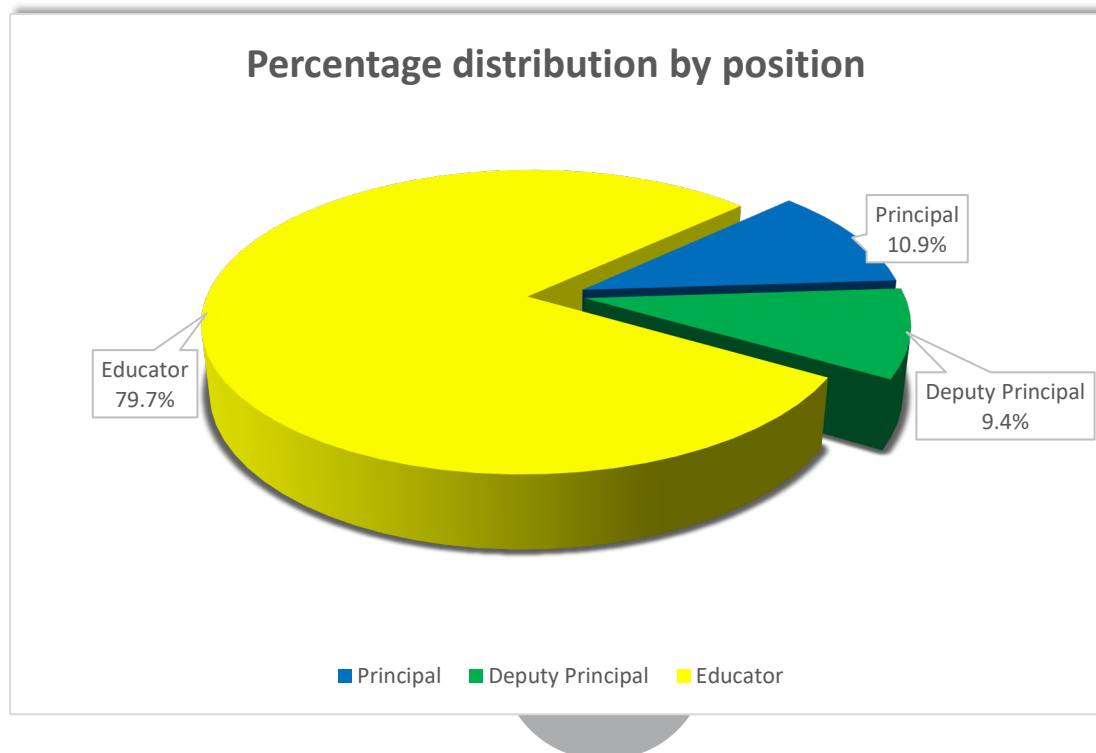


Source: Data Analysis

Figure 9 presents the percentage distribution of the respondents by their employment status. The graph shows that most respondents (70.9%; $n = 234$) are full-time employees, 5.8% ($n = 19$) are part-time employees, and 23.3% ($n = 77$) are employed on a contract basis.

6.2.6 Percentage distribution by position within the organisation

Figure 10: Distribution by position within the organisation



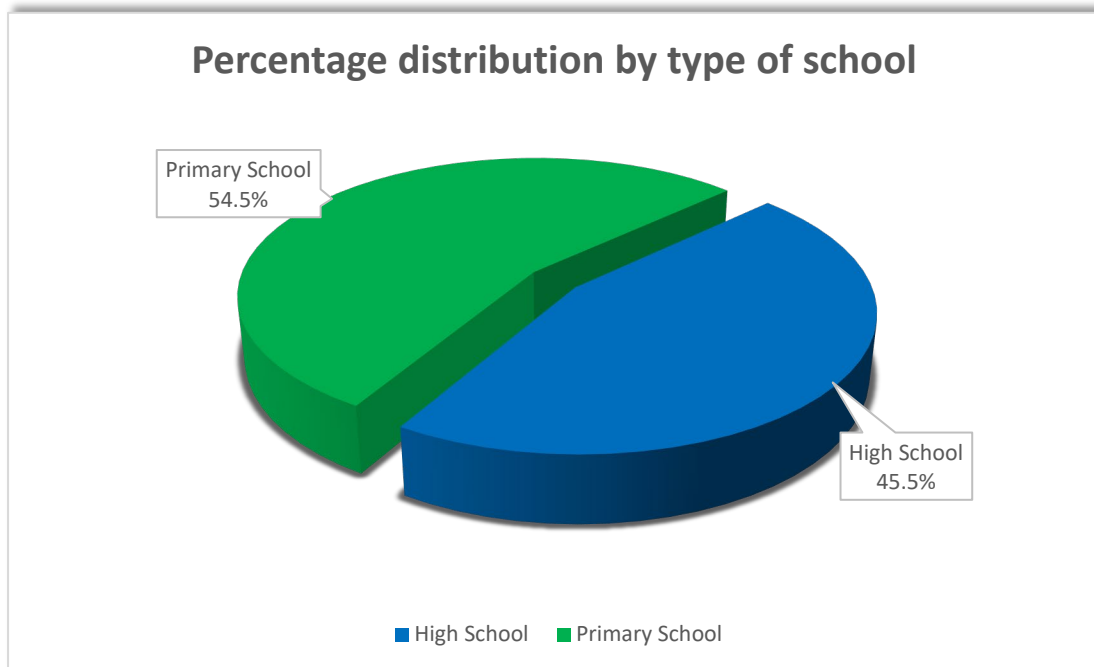
Source: Data Analysis

Figure 10 illustrates the number of respondents by their positions in the sampled organisation. Employees who were employed as educators constituted the majority of the respondents (79.7%, $n = 263$), while those employed as Principals accounted for 10.9% ($n = 36$) of the total sample. Employees employed as deputy Principals constituted 9.4% ($n = 31$) of the sample.

6.2.7 Percentage distribution by type of school

Figure 11 depicts the distribution of respondents based on the type of school. Most respondents (54.5%, $n = 180$) worked at primary schools, while 45.5% ($n = 150$) worked at high schools.

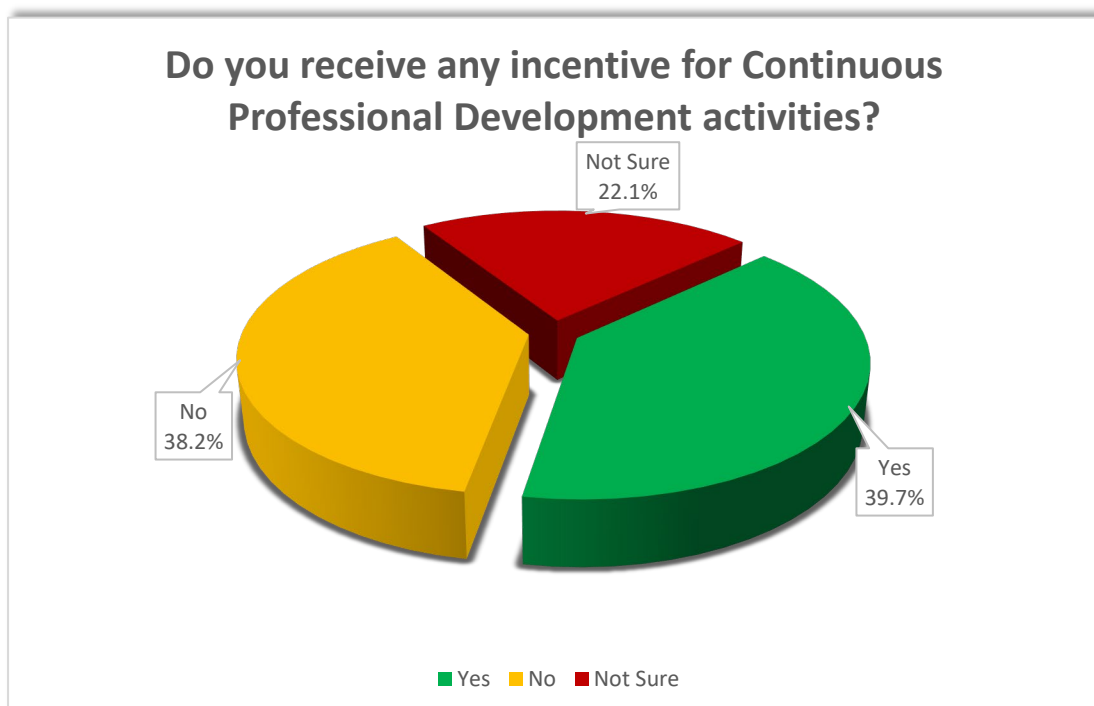
Figure 11: Distribution by school



Source: Data Analysis

6.2.8 Percentage distribution by incentive for continuous professional development activities

Figure 12: Distribution by incentive for continuous professional development activities



Source: Data Analysis

In Figure 12, respondents were asked whether they have received an incentive for continuous professional development activities. The results show that most respondents (39.7% (n = 131) reported receiving some incentives for these activities. In contrast, 38.2% (n = 126) did not receive any incentive for ongoing professional development activities, while 22.1% (n = 73) were unsure.

6.3 Descriptive analysis of major theoretical variables and constructs

A descriptive approach was employed to assess the mean levels of the variables and constructs. This section conducts a descriptive analysis of the theoretical variables and constructs established from the CFA. It was essential to perform a means analysis of the respondents' perceptions regarding the study's theoretical variables and constructs. The scales for decent work and needs satisfaction were measured using a 7-point Likert scale, where 1 represents "Strongly Disagree," 2 represents "Disagree," 3 represents "Somewhat Disagree," 4 represents "Neither Agree nor Disagree," 5 represents "Agree," 6 represents "Somewhat Agree," and 7 represents "Strongly Agree." In contrast, the professional development tool was measured using a 4-point Likert scale, with 1 indicating "Hardly Ever," 2 indicating "Sometimes," 3 indicating "Fairly Often," and 4 indicating "Often."

The results (see Table 10) indicate that the reported mean level of survival needs satisfaction was generally moderate (Mean = 4.3129; SD = 1.31828). This differed from the other constructs of needs satisfaction, which showed higher moderate levels within the sample: social contribution needs satisfaction (Mean = 4.9530; SD = 1.12602) and self-determination needs satisfaction (Mean = 4.8624; SD = 0.89188). Regarding decent work, the sample reported a moderate level (Mean = 4.3928; SD = 0.79532). Safe working conditions (Mean = 4.8182; SD = 1.19831) and adequate compensation (Mean = 4.6045; SD = 1.30366) received the highest ratings among the constructs. Access to health care (Mean = 4.2192; SD = 1.42614) and organisational values (Mean = 4.3768; SD = 1.16596) received moderate ratings, while free time and rest had the lowest rating (Mean = 3.8273; SD = 1.32104). Lastly, professional development and all its respective constructs had moderate ratings. The skewness and kurtosis coefficients, along with the Shapiro-Wilk test, indicate that the respective variables and theoretical constructs are inconsistent with a normal distribution.

Table 11: Summary of descriptive statistics of main variables.

Variable	Mean	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis	SW. Sig
Needs satisfaction					
1. Survival needs	4.3129	1.31828	-0.482	0.190	<0.0001
2. Social contribution needs	4.9530	1.12602	-0.404	0.954	<0.0001
3. Self-determination needs	4.8624	0.89188	-0.245	1.092	<0.0001
Decent Work	4.3928	0.79532	-0.005	0.813	<0.0001
1. Safe working conditions	4.8182	1.19831	-0.328	0.490	<0.0001
2. Access to healthcare	4.2192	1.42614	-0.295	-0.258	<0.0001
3. Adequate compensation	4.6045	1.30366	-0.328	0.151	<0.0001
4. Free time and rest	3.8273	1.32104	0.354	-0.046	<0.0001
5. Organizational values	4.3768	1.16596	-0.489	0.274	<0.0001
Professional development	2.6835	0.54818	0.346	0.379	<0.0001
1. Experimenting	2.6960	0.74160	0.255	-0.734	<0.0001
2. Collaborating school	2.5808	0.72424	0.177	-0.176	<0.0001
3. Work-related training	2.7000	0.78705	-0.078	-0.331	<0.0001
4. Reflecting and feedback	2.7434	0.68330	0.138	-0.373	<0.0001
5. Reading	2.7758	0.76275	0.010	-0.579	<0.0001
6. Collaborating lessons	2.6414	0.71721	0.123	-0.182	<0.0001

Source: Data Analysis

6.4 Friedman's two-way ANOVA tests for establishing dominant factors

6.4.1 Friedman's two-way ANOVA tests for needs satisfaction constructs

A Friedman's two-way ANOVA test was conducted to establish the dominant needs satisfaction constructs present within the sample. The results in Tables 12 and 13 provide significant evidence to conclude that the respondents rated the needs satisfaction constructs differently ($p = <0.001$). The mean rankings indicated that social contribution needs satisfaction (Mean rank = 2.22) and self-determination needs satisfaction (Mean rank = 2.17) were the statistically significant dominant needs satisfaction construct, whilst survival needs satisfaction (Mean rank = 1.61) received the lowest rating.

Table 12: Related samples Friedman's two-way ANOVA by ranks for needs satisfaction constructs.

Variable	Mean Rank	N	Test Statistic	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Needs satisfaction					
1. Survival	1.61	330	85.009	2	<0.001
2. Social contribution	2.22				
3. Self-determination	2.17				

Source: Generated by Author

Table 13: Friedman's two-way ANOVA pairwise comparisons for needs satisfaction constructs.

Sample 1 – Sample 2	Test Statistic	Std. Test Statistic	Sig	Adj.Sig
Survival needs - Self-determination needs	-0.561	-7.201	<0.001	<0.001
Survival needs - Social contribution needs	-0.603	-7.746	<0.001	<0.001
Self-determination needs - Social contribution	0.042	0.545	0.586	1.000

Statistically significant differences (* $p < 0.05$). Each row tests the null hypothesis that the Sample 1 and sample 2 distributions are the same. Asymptotic significances (2-sided tests) are displayed. Significance values have been adjusted by the Bonferroni correction for multiple tests.

Source: Data Analysis

6.4.2 Friedman's two-way ANOVA tests for decent work constructs

To identify the dominant decent work constructs within the sampled organisation, a Friedman's two-way ANOVA test was conducted. The results in Tables 14 and 15 provide significant evidence to conclude that decent work constructs were rated differently by the respondents ($p = <0.001$). The mean rankings suggest that safe working conditions (mean rank = 3.48) and adequate compensation (mean rank = 3.31) were the significantly dominant decent work constructs, while the others received lower ratings

Table 14: Related samples Friedman's two-way ANOVA by ranks for decent work constructs.

Variable	Mean Rank	N	Test Statistic	d	Sig. (2-tailed)
Decent work constructs					
1. Safe working conditions	3.48	330	132.377	4	<0.001
2. Access to healthcare	2.88				
3. Adequate compensation	3.31				
4. Free time and rest	2.23				
5. Organizational values	3.10				

Source: Data Analysis

Results in Table 14 shows significantly dominant constructs of decent work.

Table 15: Pairwise results for the Friedman's two-way ANOVA pairwise comparisons for decent work constructs.

Sample 1 – Sample 2	Test Statistic	Sig.	Adj. Sig.
Free time & rest - Access to healthcare	0.653	<0.001	<0.001*
Free time & rest - Organisational values	-0.871	<0.001	<0.001*
Free time & rest - Adequate compensation	1.080	<0.001	<0.001*
Free time & rest - Safe working conditions	1.252	<0.001	<0.001*
Access to healthcare - Organisational values	-0.218	0.076	0.763
Access to healthcare - Adequate compensation	-0.427	<0.001	0.005*
Access to healthcare - Safe working conditions	0.598	<0.001	<0.001*
Organisational values - Adequate compensation	0.209	0.089	0.894
Organisational values - Safe working conditions	0.380	0.002	0.020*
Adequate compensation - Safe working conditions	0.171	0.164	1.000

Statistically significant differences (* $p < .05$). Each row tests the null hypothesis that the Sample 1 and sample 2 distributions are the same. Asymptotic significances (2-sided tests) are displayed. Significance values have been adjusted by the Bonferroni correction for multiple tests.

Source: Data Analysis

6.4.3 Friedman's two-way ANOVA tests for professional development constructs

A Friedman's two-way ANOVA test was conducted to identify the dominant professional development constructs within the sampled organisation. The results in Tables 16 and 17 provide significant evidence to conclude that the respondents rated professional development constructs differently ($p = <0.001$). The mean rankings indicate that “collaborating school” (mean rank = 3.09) was the significantly least rated construct.

Table 16: Related samples Friedman's two-way ANOVA by ranks for professional development constructs.

Variable	Mean Rank	N	Test Statistic	d	Sig. (2-tailed)
Professional development					
1. Experimenting	3.38	330	31.006	5	<0.001
2. Collaborating school	3.09				
3. Work-related training	3.56				
4. Reflecting and feedback	3.60				
5. Work-related reading	3.77				
6. Collaborating lessons	3.60				

Source: Data Analysis

Table 17: Pairwise results for the Friedman's two-way ANOVA pairwise comparisons for professional development constructs.

Sample 1 – Sample 2	Test Statistic	Sig.	Adj. Sig.
Collaborating School-Experimenting	1.977	0.048	0.721
Collaborating School-Work Related Training	-3.256	0.001	0.017*
Collaborating School-Collaborating Lessons	-3.506	<0.001	0.007*
Collaborating School-Reflecting and Feedback	-3.516	<0.001	0.007*
Collaborating School-Work Related Reading	-4.661	<0.001	0.000*
Experimenting-Work Related Training	-1.280	0.201	1.000
Experimenting-Collaborating Lessons	-1.529	0.126	1.000
Experimenting-Reflecting and Feedback	-1.540	0.124	1.000
Experimenting-Work Related Reading	-2.684	0.007	0.109
Work Related Training-Collaborating Lessons	-0.250	0.803	1.000
Work Related Training-Reflecting and Feedback	-0.260	0.795	1.000
Work Related Training-Work Related Reading	-1.404	0.160	1.000
Collaborating Lessons-Reflecting and Feedback	0.010	0.992	1.000
Collaborating Lessons-Work Related Reading	1.155	0.248	1.000
Reflecting and Feedback-Work Related Reading	-1.144	0.252	1.000

Statistically significant differences (* $p < .05$). Each row tests the null hypothesis that the Sample 1 and sample 2 distributions are the same. Asymptotic significances (2-sided tests) are displayed. Significance values have been adjusted by the Bonferroni correction for multiple tests.

Source: Data Analysis

6.5 Mean comparisons of major theoretical variables by demographic characteristics

6.5.1 The independent sample T-Test mean comparisons by gender

Table 18 summarises the mean levels for the major theoretical variables by gender and the respective p-values from independent samples T-Tests for mean comparisons. According to the findings, significant mean differences between males and females were observed only in self-determination needs satisfaction ($p = 0.025$). Males (4.974 ± 0.858) reported a significantly higher mean level of self-determination needs satisfaction than their female counterparts (4.779 ± 0.909).

Table 18: Summary mean levels with respective independent samples T-Test mean comparisons for major theoretical variables by gender.

By Gender	Females (n = 189) Mean $\pm$ SD	Males (n = 141) Mean $\pm$ SD	p-value
<i>Survival needs</i>	4.274 $\pm$ 1.385	4.365 $\pm$ 1.227	0.267
<i>Social contribution needs</i>	4.937 $\pm$ 1.167	4.975 $\pm$ 1.073	0.379
<i>Self-determination needs</i>	4.779 $\pm$ 0.909	4.974 $\pm$ 0.858	0.025*
<i>Decent work</i>	4.344 $\pm$ 0.801	4.458 $\pm$ 0.786	0.098
<i>Professional development</i>	2.653 $\pm$ 0.551	2.725 $\pm$ 0.544	0.119

Statistically significant differences (* p -value < 0.05). Source: Data Analysis

6.5.2 The independent sample T-Test mean comparisons by ethnicity

Table 19 shows the summary results for the mean levels for the major theoretical variables by ethnicity, along with the respective p-values from independent samples t-tests for mean comparisons. Due to insufficient samples in other categories only the categories for Blacks and Coloureds were considered for the comparisons. According to the findings, significant differences in means between Coloureds and Black Africans were observed only in survival needs satisfaction ($p = 0.002$) and mean levels for decent work ($p = 0.002$). Regarding mean ratings for survival needs satisfaction, Coloureds (4.742 ± 0.769) reported significantly higher mean levels than Black Africans (4.269 ± 1.369). Similarly, for the mean ratings for decent work, Coloureds (4.709 ± 0.595) also reported significantly higher mean levels than Black Africans (4.356 ± 0.808).

Table 19: Summary mean levels with respective independent samples T-Test mean comparisons for major theoretical variables by ethnicity.

By Ethnicity	Black Africans (n = 291) Mean $\pm$ SD	Coloureds (n = 33) Mean $\pm$ SD	p-value
<i>Survival needs</i>	4.269 $\pm$ 1.369	4.742 $\pm$ 0.769	0.002*
<i>Social contribution needs</i>	4.967 $\pm$ 1.141	5.023 $\pm$ 0.944	0.393
<i>Self-determination needs</i>	4.848 $\pm$ 0.916	4.990 $\pm$ 0.609	0.193
<i>Decent work</i>	4.356 $\pm$ 0.808	4.709 $\pm$ 0.595	0.002*
<i>Professional development</i>	2.699 $\pm$ 0.552	2.547 $\pm$ 0.464	0.066

Statistically significant differences (* p -value < 0.05). *Source:* Data Analysis

6.5.3 The non-parametric Kruskal-Wallis mean comparisons by age

A non-parametric Kruskal-Wallis's test was conducted to determine the differences in the theoretical variables that exist by age. Only results of significant cases are presented. According to the findings (see Tables 20 and 21), significant differences in mean ratings by age were observed only for social contribution needs satisfaction ($p = 0.015$) and mean levels for decent work ($p = 0.025$). Regarding social contribution needs satisfaction, the Kruskal-Wallis's test and its post hoc pairwise comparisons revealed that the mean levels for the 18 to 24 years, 25 to 34 years and 55 to 64 years were significantly higher. In contrast, the 35 to 44 years and 45 to 54 age groups had the lowest mean social contribution needs satisfaction levels. On the other hand, in terms of decent work, older employees (35 years and older) reported higher perceived mean levels of decent work compared to younger employees.

Table 20: Summary of the independent-samples Kruskal-Wallis test for differences of the mean rankings of social contribution needs satisfaction by age.

Age categories	N	Mean	Mean Rank	Test Statistic	Sig.
18 to 24 years	19	5.3816	200.39 ^a	12.393	0.015*
25 to 34 years	94	5.1968	185.79 ^a		
35 to 44 years	79	4.7911	147.94 ^b		
45 to 54 years	90	4.7944	149.28 ^b		
55 to 64 years	46	4.8641	164.39 ^a		

The significance level is 0.050. The significance value has been adjusted by the Bonferroni correction for multiple tests. (a, b) represent statistically different groups. *Source:* Data Analysis

Table 21 shows significant differences in mean ratings of decent work by age.

Table 21: Summary of the independent samples Kruskal-Wallis test for differences of the mean rankings of decent work by age.

Age categories	N	Mean	Mean Rank	Test Statistic	Sig.
18 to 24 years	19	4.3846	153.00 ^{a,b}	11.104	0.025*
25 to 34 years	94	4.1890	140.20 ^b		
35 to 44 years	79	4.4547	172.68 ^a		
45 to 54 years	90	4.4479	171.71 ^a		
55 to 64 years	46	4.6455	190.76 ^a		

The significance level is 0.050. Significance value has been adjusted by the Bonferroni correction for multiple tests. (a, b) represent statistically different groups. *Source:* Data Analysis

6.5.4 The non-parametric Kruskal-Wallis mean comparisons by highest educational qualifications

A non-parametric Kruskal-Wallis's test was also used to determine the differences in the theoretical variables based on the highest educational qualifications. Only results of significant cases are presented. According to the findings (see Table 22), significant differences in mean ratings were observed only for self-determination needs satisfaction ($p = 0.028$). The results of the Kruskal-Wallis post hoc pairwise comparisons indicate both the least and most educated individuals reported significantly higher perceived levels of self-determination needs satisfaction.

Table 22: Summary of the independent-samples Kruskal-Wallis test for differences of the mean rankings of self-determination needs satisfaction by highest educational qualifications.

Qualifications categories	N	Mean	Mean Rank	Test Statistic	Sig.
Grade 12	22	5.2083	203.09 ^a	10.883	0.028*
Diploma	66	4.6136	138.85 ^b		
Bachelor's Degree	134	4.8476	164.62 ^{a,b}		
Honours Degree	63	4.8876	166.88 ^{a,b}		
Post Graduate Degree	45	5.0667	186.91 ^a		

The significance level is 0.050. The significance value has been adjusted by the Bonferroni correction for multiple tests. (a, b) represent statistically different groups. *Source: Data Analysis*

6.5.5 The non-parametric Kruskal-Wallis mean comparisons by position

A non-parametric Kruskal-Wallis's test was conducted to assess the mean differences in the theoretical variables based on the positions of respondents. Statistically significant differences were observed only in the mean levels of self-determination needs satisfaction ($p = 0.040$) and decent work ($p = 0.009$) by position (see Tables 23 and 24). Regarding self-determination needs satisfaction, the results of the Kruskal-Wallis post-hoc pairwise comparisons indicate that Principals had significantly higher mean levels than Educators. Furthermore, in assessing the mean differences for decent work, the post-hoc pairwise comparisons revealed that both Principals and Deputy Principals reported significantly higher levels than Educators.

Table 23: Summary of the independent-samples Kruskal-Wallis test for differences of the mean rankings of self-determination needs satisfaction by position within the organisation.

Position categories	N	Mean	Mean Rank	Test Statistic	Sig.
Principal	36	5.1343	193.81 ^a	6.438	0.040*
Deputy Principal	31	5.1398	189.47 ^{a,b}		
Educator	263	4.7925	158.80 ^b		

The significance level is 0.050. The significance value has been adjusted by the Bonferroni correction for multiple tests. (a, b) represent statistically different groups. *Source: Data Analysis*

Table 24 shows significant differences in mean ratings of decent work.

Table 24: Summary of the independent-samples Kruskal-Wallis test for differences of the mean rankings of decent work by position within the organisation.

Position categories	N	Mean	Mean Rank	Test Statistic	Sig.
Principal	36	4.5919	194.10 ^a	15.259	0.009*
Deputy Principal	31	4.6675	194.79 ^a		
Educator	263	4.3331	158.13 ^b		

The significance level is 0.050. The significance value has been adjusted by the Bonferroni correction for multiple tests. (a, b) represent statistically different groups. *Source: Data Analysis*

6.6 Correlation analysis

A correlational analysis was conducted using a two-tailed Pearson's correlation coefficient to examine the existing linear relationships between the study's main theoretical variables. Table 24 presents the results of the Pearson correlation coefficients (r) for the relationships among the various theoretical variables. The cut-off point suggested by Cohen (1988) was utilised to determine the strength of the established linear relationships. According to Cohen, the value of the correlation coefficient is classified into three categories: weak (0.10 to 0.29), moderate (0.30 to 0.49), and strong (0.50 to 1.00). Additionally, the effect size was used to decide on the practical significance of the findings. The effect size is considered low if the value of the correlation coefficient is around the absolute value of 0.10, medium if it is around 0.30, and large if it exceeds 0.50 (Cohen, 1988, 1992).

From Table 25, it is evident that there is sufficient evidence to conclude that weak, positive, and statistically significant correlations exist between professional development and decent work ($r = 0.224$), survival needs satisfaction ($r = 0.293$), social contribution needs satisfaction ($r = 0.194$), and self-determination needs satisfaction ($r = 0.186$), all suggesting a low effect size. Decent work exhibited a somewhat moderate, positive, and significant correlation with social contribution needs satisfaction ($r = 0.295$). In contrast, decent work demonstrated a highly moderate, positive, and significant correlation with survival needs satisfaction ($r = 0.454$), and self-determination needs satisfaction ($r = 0.428$). The practical significance of these established correlation coefficients indicates a medium effect size. Furthermore, survival needs satisfaction had a positive, significant, and somewhat moderate correlation with social contribution needs satisfaction ($r = 0.498$). There was also a moderate and significant relationship between survival needs satisfaction, and self-determination needs satisfaction ($r = 0.377$). Lastly, a strong, positive, and significant relationship existed between social contribution needs satisfaction and self-determination needs satisfaction ($r = 0.605$).

According to Cohen (1988), the effect size of the relationship between social contribution needs satisfaction and self-determination needs satisfaction is considered large.

Table 25: Pearson correlation coefficients (r) for relations between the various main theoretical variables.

Variables	Decent work	Survival needs	Social contribution needs	Self-determination needs
	r	r	r	r
Professional development	0.224**	0.293**	0.194**	0.186**
Decent work	1	0.454**	0.295**	0.428**
Survival needs		1	0.498**	0.377**
Social contribution needs			1	0.605**
Self-determination needs				1

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). *Source: Data Analysis*

6.7 Hypotheses testing using structural equation modelling in AMOS

To test the hypothesised frameworks, SEM was conducted using AMOS version 22 was conducted. SEM is a widely used technique to study relationships based on structures, and it is known to be effective in measuring latent constructs. A full measurement model was first established before developing the structural model. The section below presents the full measurement model.

6.7.1 Full measurement model

Establishing the full measurement model was necessary to determine the linkage between all the factors measuring different variables and constructs. The maximum likelihood estimation procedure using 1000 bootstrap replications was used for both the full measurement and structural models. Firstly, the resultant full measurement model (see Figure 13) shows high factor loadings (all above 0.60), suggesting a good and satisfactory fit for the respective items and constructs. It is important to note that four decent work constructs were eliminated from the final measurement model. Table 26 shows the goodness of fit indices for the measurement model before elimination of decent work factors. The results showed that the initial model suggests a poor model fit. To improve the model fitness, factors with poor loading (i.e., <0.40) were eliminated. This process was done until a reasonable goodness of fit measure was

achieved with “safe working conditions” as the only retained factor. Thus, only a safe working condition construct was retained for decent work. This means other decent work factors/constructs were not reflective indicators; hence, the factor structure analyses are not appropriate for these factors. For the mediating variables, all the survival and social contribution needs satisfaction items were retained in the full measurement model.

Table 26: The goodness-of-fit indices assessment for the structural model before elimination of decent work factors.

Name of index	Index value	Cut-off points	Comments
CMIN/DF	3.343	> 3	Acceptable fit
SRMR	0.099	> 0.09	Poor fit
RMSEA [90% CI]	0.084 [0.081; 0.088]	$0.05 < \text{RMSEA} \leq 0.10$	Acceptable fit
CFI	0.713	< 0.80	Poor fit
NFI	0.638	< 0.80	Poor fit

CMIN/DF = Discrepancy/Chi-square divided by degree of freedom. **SRMR** = The Standardized Root Mean Square Residual. **RMSEA** = The Root Mean Square Error of Approximation. **CFI** = The Comparative Fit Index. **NFI** = The (Non) Normed Fit Index. *Source:* Data Analysis

On the other hand, autonomy was not retained in measuring self-determination needs satisfaction. Lastly, for professional development, five of the six dimensions were retained. The full measurement model generally showed an acceptable fit when examining the overall assessment criteria for model fitness.

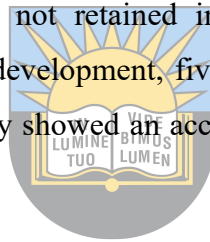


Table 27: The goodness-of-fit measures assessment for the full measurement model.

Name of index	Index value	Cut-off points	Comments
CMIN/DF	1.989	< 3	Good fit
SRMR	0.052	$0.05 < \text{SRMR} \leq 0.09$	Acceptable fit
RMSEA [90% CI]	0.055 [0.049; 0.060]	$0.05 < \text{RMSEA} \leq 0.10$	Acceptable fit
CFI	0.918	$0.90 \leq \text{CFI} < 0.95$	Acceptable fit
NFI	0.849	> 0.80	Mediocre

CMIN/DF = Discrepancy/Chi-square divided by degree of freedom. **SRMR** = The Standardized Root Mean Square Residual. **RMSEA** = The Root Mean Square Error of Approximation. **CFI** = The Comparative Fit Index. **NFI** = The (Non) Normed Fit Index. *Source:* Data Analysis

The results in Table 27 showed that the value of CMIN/DF = 1.989 is below three (3), suggesting a good model fit. On the other hand, SRMR (SRMR = 0.052) is between 0.05 and 0.09, suggesting an acceptable model fit. Further, the RMSEA is 0.055 with 90% CI [0.049, 0.060], indicating an acceptable model fit. In addition, CFI is 0.918 > 0.90 for incremental fitness, whilst NFI is 0.84, which is greater than > 0.80 . The model has fulfilled all the requirements for fit. Thus, the fitness indexes assessment results for the full measurement model show that the established model is adequate. The full measurement model was then used to establish the structural model proposed in the study’s conceptual model.

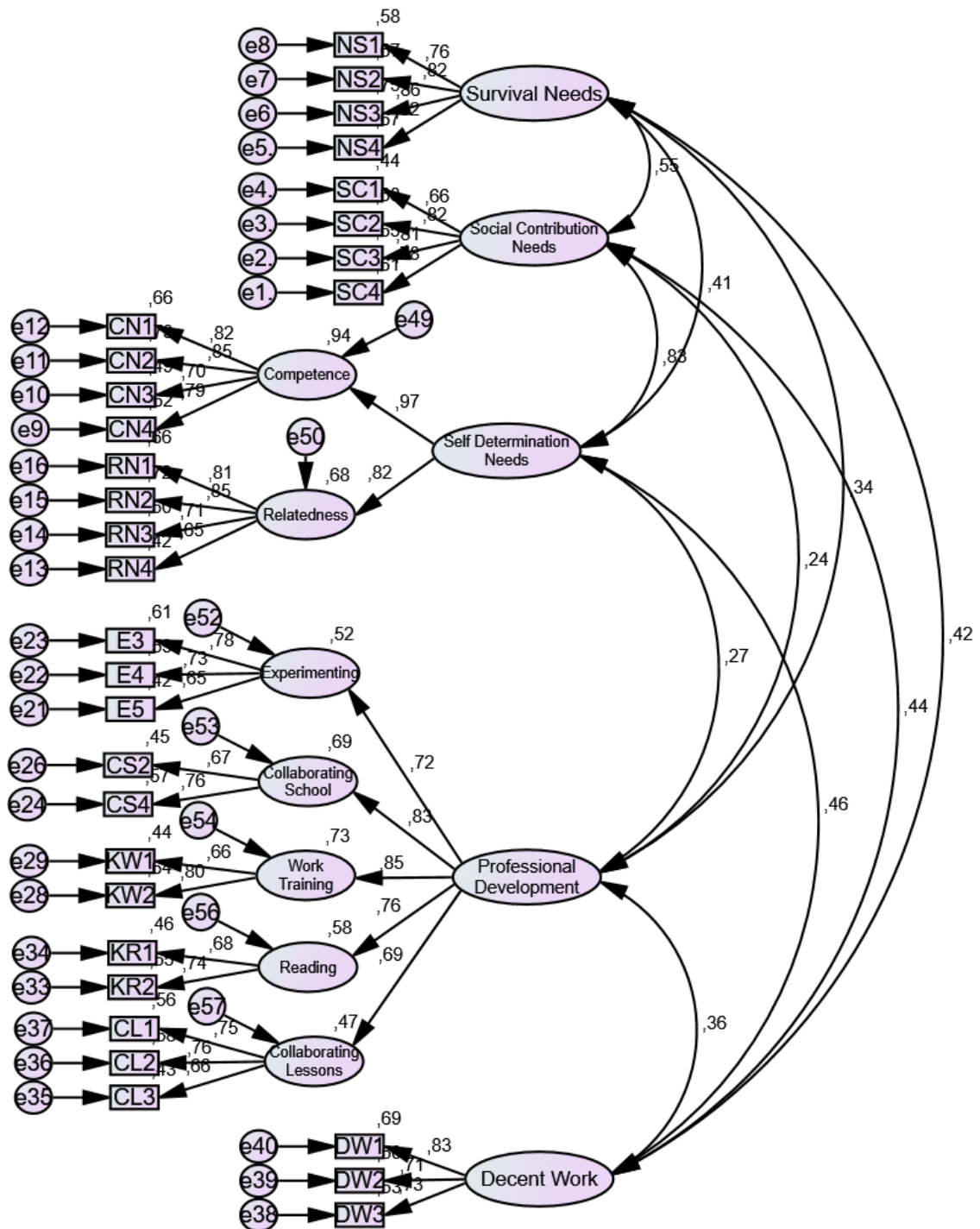


Figure 13: The path diagram for confirmatory factor analysis of the full measurement model. *Source: Data Analysis*

6.7.2 Full measurement model

A structural model was formulated from the established measurement model. This established structural model (see Figure 14) was used to test for the hypothesised frameworks from the conceptual model. The significance of the direct effects between variables was established through the significance of the respective path coefficients. The mediation effects were assessed using the significance of the indirect effects using a maximum likelihood-based bootstrap procedure.



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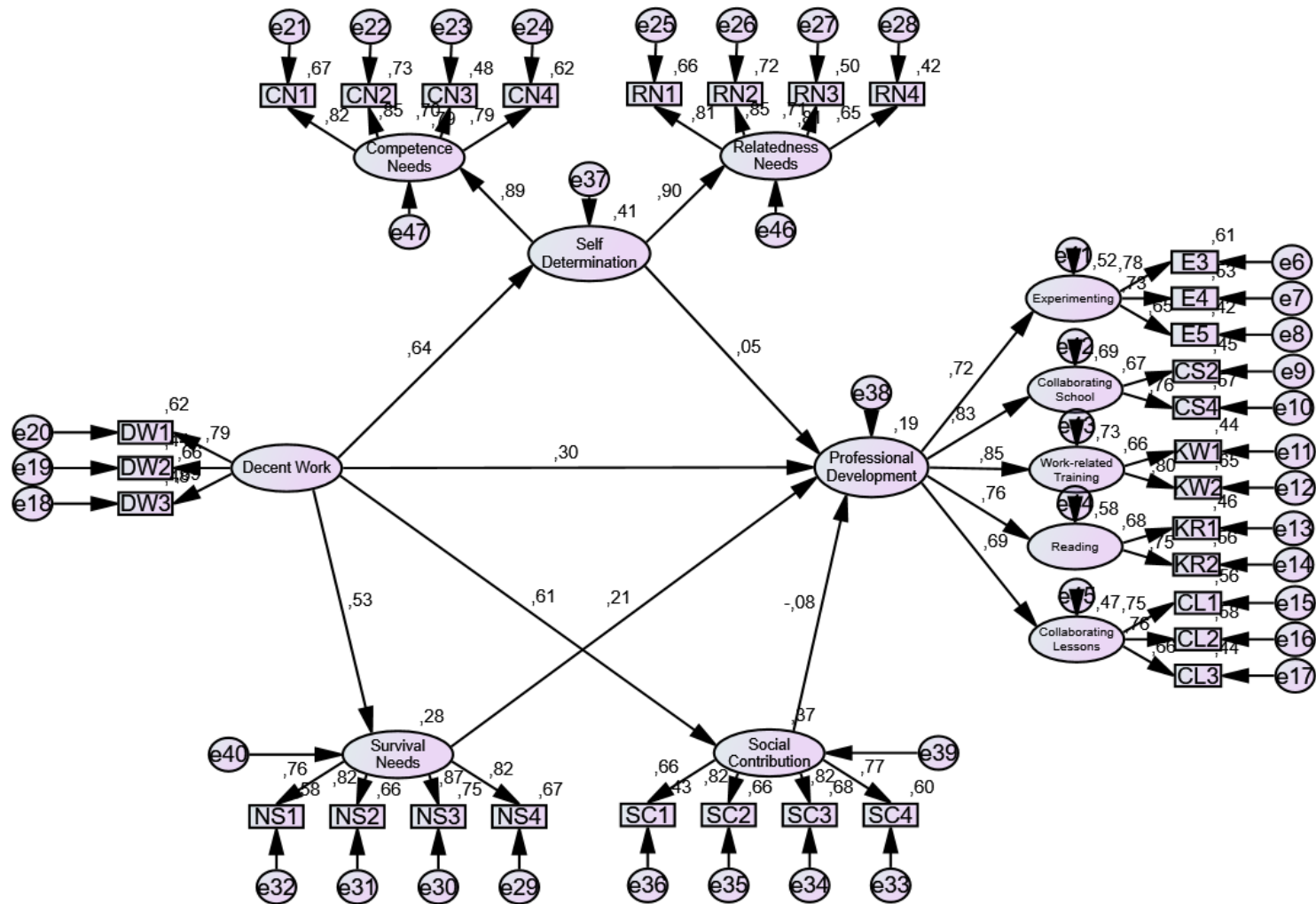


Figure 14: The path diagram for the structural model.

Table 28: The goodness-of-fit indices assessment for the structural model.

Name of index	Index value	Cut-off points	Comments
CMIN/DF	2.467	< 3	Good fit
SRMR	0.089	$0.05 < \text{SRMR} \leq 0.09$	Acceptable fit
RMSEA [90% CI]	0.067 [0.062; 0.072]	$0.05 < \text{RMSEA} \leq 0.10$	Acceptable fit
CFI	0.877	> 0.80	Mediocre
NFI	0.811	> 0.80	Mediocre

CMIN/DF = Discrepancy/Chi-square divided by degree of freedom. SRMR = The Standardized Root Mean Square Residual. RMSEA = The Root Mean Square Error of Approximation. CFI = The Comparative Fit Index. NFI = The (Non) Normed Fit Index. *Source:* Data Analysis

Table 28 shows the goodness of fit indices for the established measurement model. It is paramount to assess the model fit indices before establishing the significance of the predictive effects. The results showed that the CMIN/DF = 2.467 value is below 3, suggesting a good model fit. On the other hand, SRMR (SRMR = 0.089) is between 0.05 and 0.09, suggesting an acceptable model fit. Further, the RMSEA is 0.067 with 90% CI [0.062, 0.072], indicating an acceptable model fit. In addition, CFI is $0.877 > 0.80$ for incremental fitness, and NFI is 0.811, which is also greater than > 0.80 . Assessing these measures, they both exceeded 0.80, which is the minimum recommended for an acceptable fit. The model has nearly fulfilled all the requirements for fit. Thus, the results of the fitness indexes assessment for the structural model show that the established models seem acceptable. The sections below present the hypotheses testing for the proposed frameworks.

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6.7.3 Hypothesis testing for the direct predictive effects

Hypothesis 1a: The influence of decent work on professional development

H1a1: Decent work positively and significantly influences rural teachers' professional development.

The established structural model (see Figure 14) was used to determine the predictive effect of decent work on professional development amongst rural teachers in the Eastern Cape Province. In the path diagram, the latent exogenous variable, i.e. decent work, is measured using three observed items, which all reported good factor loadings (all loadings > 0.65). The latent endogenous variable, i.e., professional development, was measured using twelve observed items loading on five of its six dimensions. The single-headed arrow pointing towards the endogenous variable was used as the predictive path for decent work on professional development. Table 29 presents the standardised estimates and respective bootstrapped 95% bias-corrected confidence intervals for the regression weights of the structural model. Focusing on the decent work-to-professional

development path, the results reveal a positive but non-significant predictive effect of decent work on professional development ($\beta = 0.295$; $SE = 0.786$; $95\% CI = [-0.080, 1.975]$; $p = 0.127$). Based on the non-significance of the beta parameter for the predictive path of decent work on professional development, the hypothesis is rejected. Thus, there is sufficient evidence at a 5% level of significance not to accept the hypothesis and conclude that decent work does not positively and significantly influence rural teachers' professional development.

Table 29: Structural equation estimates and bootstrapped 95% bias-corrected confidence intervals for the regression weights for the influence of decent work on professional development.

Path effects for structural model		Standardised Beta Estimates	Bias-Corrected 95% CI	<i>p</i> -value
		Estimate (SE)	[LL ; UL]	
Professional development	← Decent work	0.295 (0.786)	[-0.080 ; 1.975]	0.127
Experimenting	← Professional development	0.724 (0.057)	[0.612 ; 0.831]	0.002*
Collaborating school	← Professional development	0.832 (0.067)	[0.695 ; 0.955]	0.002*
Work-related training	← Professional development	0.854 (0.051)	[0.744 ; 0.953]	0.002*
Work-related reading	← Professional development	0.759 (0.063)	[0.633 ; 0.876]	0.002*
Collaborating lessons	← Professional development	0.687 (0.054)	[0.576 ; 0.789]	0.002*
DW1	← Decent work	0.786 (0.112)	[0.460 ; 0.868]	0.002*
DW2	← Decent work	0.660 (0.117)	[0.366 ; 0.766]	0.001*
DW3	← Decent work	0.695 (0.112)	[0.395 ; 0.790]	0.001*

(*) Statistically significant effects. S.E. is the standard error for the structural regression estimates. LL and UL represent the lower and upper limits of the Bias-corrected confidence intervals using 1000 replications. *Source:* Data Analysis

Hypothesis 1b: The influence of decent work on survival needs satisfaction

H1b₁: Decent work amongst rural teachers positively and significantly influences survival needs satisfaction.

The established structural model was examined to determine the predictive influence of decent work on survival needs satisfaction among rural teachers in the Eastern Cape Province. Three items were used to measure the exogenous latent variable, whilst 8 items loading on 2 dimensions were used to measure the endogenous latent variable. Table 30 shows the structural equation estimates and bootstrapped 95% bias-corrected confidence intervals for the regression weights for the influence of decent work on survival needs satisfaction. The beta estimate for the decent work-to-survival needs satisfaction path is positive and statistically significant ($\beta = 0.525$; $SE = 0.078$; $95\% CI = [0.364, 0.668]$; $p = 0.003$). That is, the regression weight for decent work in predicting survival needs

satisfaction is significantly different from zero at the 5% significance level. In conclusion, since the beta parameter for the decent work-to-survival needs satisfaction path is statistically significant, this result supports the hypothesis. Thus, there is sufficient statistical evidence to accept the hypothesis and conclude that decent work amongst rural teachers positively and significantly influences survival needs satisfaction.

Table 30: Structural equation estimates and bootstrapped 95% bias-corrected confidence intervals for the regression weights for the influence of decent work on survival needs satisfaction.

Path effects for structural model		Standardized Beta Estimates	Bias-Corrected 95% CI	p-value
		Estimate (SE)	[LL ; UL]	
Survival needs	← Decent work	0.525 (0.078)	[0.364 ; 0.668]	0.003*
NS1	← Survival needs satisfaction	0.762 (0.041)	[0.658 ; 0.824]	0.004*
NS2	← Survival needs satisfaction	0.815 (0.031)	[0.742 ; 0.866]	0.003*
NS3	← Survival needs satisfaction	0.867 (0.023)	[0.821 ; 0.911]	0.001*
NS4	← Survival needs satisfaction	0.821 (0.030)	[0.758 ; 0.875]	0.002*
DW1	← Decent work	0.786 (0.112)	[0.460 ; 0.868]	0.002*
DW2	← Decent work	0.660 (0.117)	[0.366 ; 0.766]	0.001*
DW3	← Decent work	0.695 (0.112)	[0.395 ; 0.790]	0.001*

(*) Statistically significant effects. S.E. is the standard error for the structural regression estimates. LL and UL represent the lower and upper limits of the Bias-corrected confidence intervals using 1000 replications. *Source:* Data Analysis

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Hypothesis 1c: The influence of decent work on social contribution needs satisfaction

H1c1: Decent work amongst rural teachers positively and significantly influences social contribution needs satisfaction.

To establish the predictive influence of decent work on social contribution needs satisfaction, the structural model in Figure 14 was examined. Examining the structural equation estimates and bootstrapped 95% bias-corrected confidence intervals, the results show that the loadings for decent work and social contribution needs were all satisfactory and statistically significant (see Table 31). The parameter of interest is the path for the predictive influence of decent work on social contribution needs satisfaction, which is positive and statistically significant ($\beta = 0.609$; $SE = 0.154$; $95\% CI = [0.417, 0.937]$; $p = 0.002$). In conclusion, the hypothesis is accepted since the beta parameter for a decent work-to-social contribution needs satisfaction path is statistically significant. That is

decent work among rural teachers positively and significantly influences social contribution needs satisfaction.

Table 31: Structural equation estimates and bootstrapped 95% bias-corrected confidence intervals for the regression weights for the influence of decent work on social contribution needs satisfaction.

Path effects for structural model		Standardized Beta Estimates	Bias-Corrected 95% CI	<i>p</i> -value
		Estimate (SE)	[LL ; UL]	
Social contribution needs	← Decent work	0.609 (0.154)	[0.417 ; 0.937]	0.002*
SC1	← Social contribution needs	0.655 (0.050)	[0.534 ; 0.741]	0.003*
SC2	← Social contribution needs	0.815 (0.033)	[0.734 ; 0.872]	0.003*
SC3	← Social contribution needs	0.824 (0.028)	[0.767 ; 0.874]	0.001*
SC4	← Social contribution needs	0.773 (0.035)	[0.687 ; 0.827]	0.004*
DW1	← Decent work	0.786 (0.112)	[0.460 ; 0.868]	0.002*
DW2	← Decent work	0.660 (0.117)	[0.366 ; 0.766]	0.001*
DW3	← Decent work	0.695 (0.112)	[0.395 ; 0.790]	0.001*

(*) Statistically significant effects. S.E. is the standard error for the structural regression estimates. LL and UL represents the lower limit and upper limit of the Bias-corrected confidence intervals using 1000 replications. *Source:*

Data Analysis

Hypothesis 1d: The influence of decent work on self-determination needs satisfaction

H1d₁: Decent work positively and significantly influences rural teachers' self-determination needs satisfaction.

The established structural model (see Figure 14) was used to determine the predictive effect of decent work on self-determination needs satisfaction amongst rural teachers in the Eastern Cape Province. In the path diagram, the latent exogenous variable, i.e. decent work, is measured using three observed items, which all reported good factor loadings. The latent endogenous variable, i.e. self-determination needs satisfaction, was measured using eight observed items loading on two dimensions. Table 32 presents the standardised estimates and respective bootstrapped 95% bias-corrected confidence intervals for the regression weights of the predictive effect of decent work on self-determination needs satisfaction. The results reveal a positive and significant predictive effect of decent work on self-determination needs satisfaction ($\beta = 0.636$; $SE = 0.147$; $95\% CI = [0.408, 0.922]$; $p = 0.003$). Based on the significance of the beta parameter for the predictive path of decent work on self-determination needs satisfaction, the hypothesis is accepted. Thus, there is sufficient evidence at a 5% level of significance to

accept the hypothesis and conclude that decent work positively and significantly influences rural teachers' self-determination needs satisfaction.

Table 32: Structural equation estimates and bootstrapped 95% bias-corrected confidence intervals for the regression weights for the influence of decent work on self-determination needs satisfaction.

Path effects for structural model		Standardized Beta Estimates	Bias-Corrected 95% CI	<i>p</i> -value
		Estimate (SE)	[LL ; UL]	
Self-determination needs	← Decent work	0.636 (0.147)	[0.408 ; 0.922]	0.003*
Competence needs	← Self-determination needs	0.891 (0.066)	[0.707 ; 0.986]	0.009*
Relatedness needs	← Self-determination needs	0.898 (0.058)	[0.798 ; 1.035]	0.001*
DW1	← Decent work	0.786 (0.112)	[0.460 ; 0.868]	0.002*
DW2	← Decent work	0.660 (0.117)	[0.366 ; 0.766]	0.001*
DW3	← Decent work	0.695 (0.112)	[0.395 ; 0.790]	0.001*

(*) Statistically significant effects. S.E. is the standard error for the structural regression estimates. LL and UL represent the lower limit and upper limit of the Bias-corrected confidence intervals using 1000 replications. *Source:* Data Analysis

Hypothesis 2: The influence of survival needs satisfaction on professional development

H2₁: Survival needs satisfaction positively and significantly influences rural teachers' professional development.

The established structural model was also assessed to examine the predictive effect of survival needs satisfaction on professional development amongst rural teachers in the Eastern Cape Province. From this model, the path of interest was the survival needs satisfaction to professional development. Figure 14 shows the resultant path diagram of the established structural model where four observed items measured the exogenous variable, i.e. survival needs satisfaction. On the other hand, the endogenous variable (professional development) was measured using 12 observed items loading on five constructs. Table 33 shows that the factors loadings of all the items loading on survival needs satisfaction and professional development were high (all loadings > 0.60) and significant. The results show that the path coefficient is statistically significant when examining the standardised estimates and bootstrapped 95% bias-corrected confidence intervals for the regression weights for the predictive effect of survival needs satisfaction on professional development. Thus, the predictive effect of survival needs satisfaction on professional development is positive and statistically significant ($\beta = 0.210$; SE = 0.093; 95% CI = [0.033, 0.386]; $p = 0.026$). In conclusion, the hypothesis is accepted

since the beta parameter for the survival needs satisfaction-to-professional development path is positive and statistically significant. Thus, survival needs satisfaction positively and significantly influences rural teachers' professional development.

Table 33: Structural equation estimates and bootstrapped 95% bias-corrected confidence intervals for the regression weights for the influence of survival needs satisfaction on professional development.

Path effects for structural model		Standardized Beta Estimates	Bias-Corrected 95% CI	<i>p</i> -value
		Estimate (SE)	[LL ; UL]	
Professional development	← Survival needs	0.210 (0.093)	[0.033 ; 0.386]	0.026*
Experimenting	← Professional development	0.724 (0.057)	[0.612 ; 0.831]	0.002*
Collaborating school	← Professional development	0.832 (0.067)	[0.695 ; 0.955]	0.002*
Work-related training	← Professional development	0.854 (0.051)	[0.744 ; 0.953]	0.002*
Work-related reading	← Professional development	0.759 (0.063)	[0.633 ; 0.876]	0.002*
Collaborating lessons	← Professional development	0.687 (0.054)	[0.576 ; 0.789]	0.002*
NS1	← Survival needs	0.762 (0.041)	[0.658 ; 0.824]	0.004*
NS2	← Survival needs	0.815 (0.031)	[0.742 ; 0.866]	0.003*
NS3	← Survival needs	0.867 (0.023)	[0.821 ; 0.911]	0.001*
NS4	← Survival needs	0.821 (0.030)	[0.758 ; 0.875]	0.002*

(*) Statistically significant effects. S.E. is the standard error for the structural regression estimates. LL and UL represent the lower and upper limits of the Bias-corrected confidence intervals using 1000 replications. *Source:* Data Analysis

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Hypothesis 3: The influence of social contribution needs satisfaction on professional development

H3₁: Social contribution needs satisfaction amongst rural teachers has a positive and significant influence on professional development.

The established structural model was examined to determine the underlying predictive influence of social contribution needs satisfaction on professional development among rural teachers in the Eastern Cape Province. Four items were used to measure the exogenous latent variable, whilst 12 items were used to measure the endogenous latent variable. Table 34 shows the structural equation estimates and bootstrapped 95% bias-corrected confidence intervals for the regression weights for the influence of social contribution needs satisfaction on professional development. The path beta estimate for the social contribution needs satisfaction to professional development path is negative and not statistically significant ($\beta = -0.083$; $SE = 0.517$; $95\% CI = [-0.924, 0.201]$; $p = 0.778$). Thus, the regression weight for social contribution needs satisfaction in the

prediction of professional development is not significantly different from zero at the 5% significance level. In conclusion, since the beta parameter for the social contribution needs satisfaction-to-professional development path is not statistically significant, this result does not support the hypothesis. Therefore, there is sufficient statistical evidence to reject the hypothesis and conclude that social contribution needs satisfaction amongst rural teachers does not have a positive and significant influence on professional development.

Table 34: Structural equation estimates and bootstrapped 95% bias-corrected confidence intervals for the regression weights for the influence of social contribution needs satisfaction on professional development.

Path effects for structural model			Standardised	Bias-Corrected	<i>p</i> -value
			Beta Estimates	95% CI	
			Estimate (SE)	[LL ; UL]	
Professional development	←	Social contribution	-0.083 (0.517)	[-0.924 ; 0.201]	0.778
Experimenting	←	Professional development	0.724 (0.057)	[0.612 ; 0.831]	0.002*
Collaborating school	←	Professional development	0.832 (0.067)	[0.695 ; 0.955]	0.002*
Work-related training	←	Professional development	0.854 (0.051)	[0.744 ; 0.953]	0.002*
Work-related reading	←	Professional development	0.759 (0.063)	[0.633 ; 0.876]	0.002*
Collaborating lessons	←	Professional development	0.687 (0.054)	[0.576 ; 0.789]	0.002*
SC1	←	Social contribution	0.655 (0.050)	[0.534 ; 0.741]	0.003*
SC2	←	Social contribution	0.815 (0.033)	[0.734 ; 0.872]	0.003*
SC3	←	Social contribution	0.824 (0.028)	[0.767 ; 0.874]	0.001*
SC4	←	Social contribution	0.773 (0.035)	[0.687 ; 0.827]	0.004*

(*) Statistically significant effects. S.E. is the standard error for the structural regression estimates. LL and UL represent the lower and upper limits of the Bias-corrected confidence intervals using 1000 replications. *Source:* Data Analysis

Hypothesis 4: The influence of self-determination needs satisfaction on professional development

H4₁: Self-determination needs satisfaction amongst rural teachers positively and significantly influences professional development.

The predictive influence of self-determination needs satisfaction on professional development, as examined by the structural model in Figure 14. Figure 13 shows the path diagram of the structural model where self-determination needs satisfaction to the professional development path exists. In Table 35, examining structural equation estimates and bootstrapped 95% bias-corrected confidence intervals, the results show that the loading for self-determination needs satisfaction and professional development were all satisfactory and statistically significant. Of particular interest, the path for the

predictive influence of self-determination needs satisfaction on professional development is positive but not statistically significant ($\beta = 0.051$; $SE = 0.363$; 95% CI = $[-0.735, 0.385]$; $p = 0.622$). In conclusion, since the beta parameter for self-determination needs satisfaction-to-professional development path is not statistically significant, the hypothesis is rejected. That is, self-determination needs satisfaction amongst rural teachers does not have a positive and significant influence on professional development.

Table 35: Structural equation estimates and bootstrapped 95% bias-corrected confidence intervals for the regression weights for the influence of self-determination needs satisfaction on professional development.

Path effects for structural model		Standardised Beta Estimates	Bias-Corrected 95% CI	<i>p</i> -value
		Estimate (SE)	[LL ; UL]	
Professional development	← Self-determination needs	0.051 (0.363)	[-0.735 ; 0.385]	0.622
Experimenting	← Professional development	0.724 (0.057)	[0.612 ; 0.831]	0.002*
Collaborating school	← Professional development	0.832 (0.067)	[0.695 ; 0.955]	0.002*
Work-related training	← Professional development	0.854 (0.051)	[0.744 ; 0.953]	0.002*
Work-related reading	← Professional development	0.759 (0.063)	[0.633 ; 0.876]	0.002*
Collaborating lessons	← Professional development	0.687 (0.054)	[0.576 ; 0.789]	0.002*
Competence needs	← Self-determination needs	0.891 (0.066)	[0.707 ; 0.986]	0.009*
Relatedness needs	← Self-determination needs	0.898 (0.058)	[0.798 ; 1.035]	0.001*

(*) Statistically significant effects. S.E. is the standard error for the structural regression estimates. LL and UL represent the lower and upper limits of the Bias-corrected confidence intervals using 1000 replications. *Source:* Data Analysis

Table 36 and Figure 15 summarise the hypotheses testing for the predictive influence of decent work and mediator variables on professional development among rural teachers in the Eastern Cape Province.

Table 36: Summary results for the hypotheses testing for the direct predictive effects.

Description (Hypothesis)	Test Statistic	<i>p</i> -value	Decision
H1a₀ Decent work positively and significantly influences rural teachers' professional development.	$\beta = 0.295$	$p = 0.127$	Reject H1a₀
H1b₀ Decent work amongst rural teachers positively and significantly influences survival needs satisfaction.	$\beta = 0.525$	$p = 0.003^*$	Accept H1b₀
H1c₀ Decent work amongst rural teachers positively and significantly influences social contribution needs satisfaction.	$\beta = 0.609$	$p = 0.002^*$	Accept H1c₀
H1d₀ Decent work amongst rural teachers positively and significantly influences rural teachers' self-determination needs satisfaction.	$\beta = 0.636$	$p = 0.003^*$	Accept H1d₀
H2₀ Survival needs satisfaction positively and significantly influences rural teachers' professional development.	$\beta = 0.210$	$p = 0.026^*$	Accept H2₀
H3₀ Social contribution needs satisfaction amongst rural teachers has a positive and significant influence on professional development.	$\beta = -0.083$	$p = 0.778$	Reject H3₀
H4₀ Self-determination needs satisfaction amongst rural teachers positively and significantly influences professional development.	$\beta = 0.051$	$p = 0.622$	Reject H4₀

(*) Statistically significant effects. The beta coefficients are standardised estimates of the structural default model.

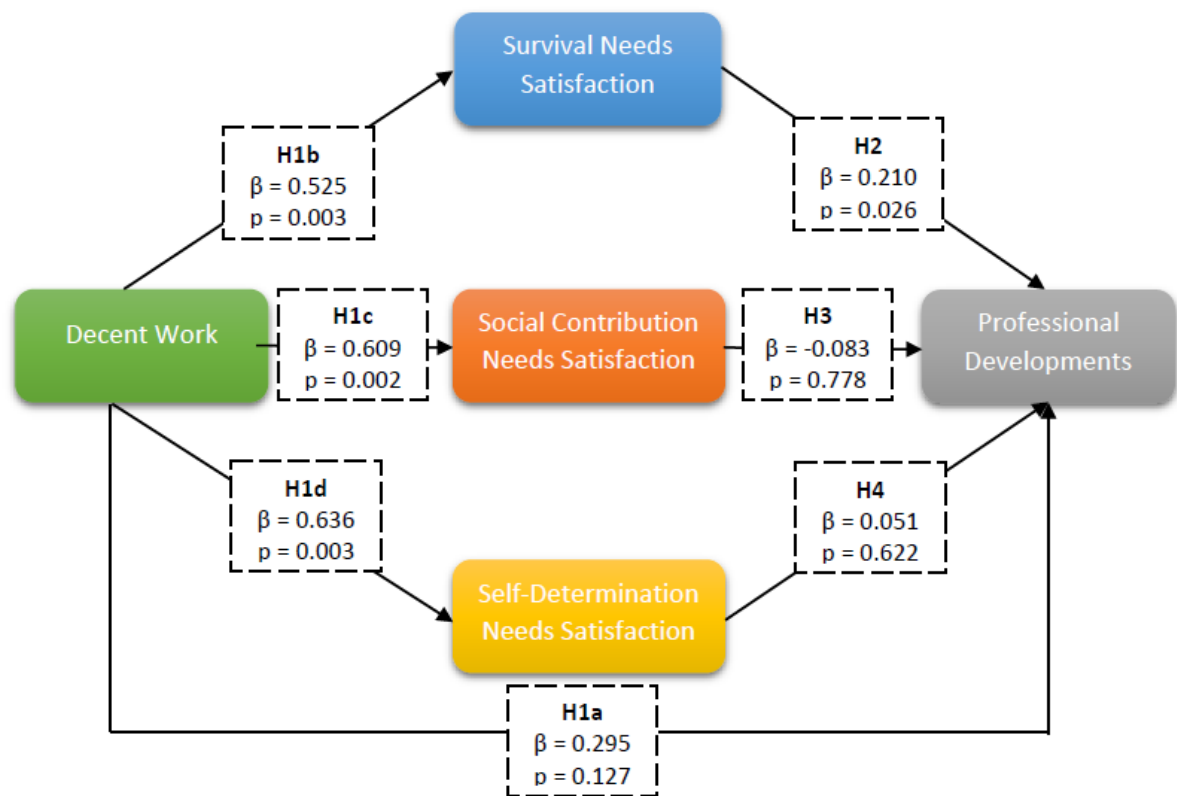


Figure 15: The summary conceptual model for direct effects.

Source: Data Analysis

6.7.4 Hypothesis testing for the mediation hypotheses

Hypothesis 5: The mediating effect of survival needs satisfaction on the relationship between decent work and professional development amongst rural teachers in the Eastern Cape Province

H5₁: Survival needs satisfaction amongst rural teachers mediates the relationship between decent work and professional development.

The structural model in Figure 14 was also used to examine and determine whether survival needs satisfaction significantly mediates the relationship between decent work and professional development. The mediation effects and respective path estimates to determine the mediating effect of survival needs satisfaction on the relationship between decent work and professional development are presented in Table 37. Assessing the regression estimates, decent work had a significant, direct and positive effect on survival needs satisfaction ($\beta = 0.525$; $SE = 0.078$; 95% CI [0.408, 0.922]; $p = 0.003$). Further, survival needs satisfaction had a significant, direct and positive effect on professional development ($\beta = 0.210$; $SE = 0.093$; 95% CI [0.033, 0.386]; $p = 0.026$). These results

support the mediational hypothesis. While controlling for survival needs satisfaction, the results indicated that decent work had a positive but non-significant influence on professional development ($\beta = 0.295$; $SE = 0.786$; 95% CI [-0.080, -0.145]; $p = 0.127$). This result is consistent with full mediation. The total effect of decent work on professional development is positive and statistically significant ($\beta = 0.192$; $SE = 0.644$; 95% CI [0.056, 1.310]; $p = 0.013$). The indirect effect was examined to establish the mediating effect of survival needs satisfaction. The results indicated that the indirect effect was positive and statistically significant ($\beta = 0.052$; $SE = 0.029$; 95% CI [0.013, 0.111]; $p = 0.036$). Since the indirect effect is significant, thus there is sufficient statistical evidence to reject the null hypothesis and conclude that survival needs satisfaction significantly mediates the relationship between decent work and professional development among rural teachers in the Eastern Cape Province.

Table 37: Mediation effects and respective path estimates to determine the mediating effect of survival needs satisfaction on the relationship between decent work and professional development.

Path and Effects	Beta Estimates		Bias and Bias-Corrected			<i>p</i> -value
	95% Confidence Interval					
	Estimate	SE	SE-Bias	Lower	Upper	
Specific Direct Effects						
SN (M) ← DW (X)	0.525	0.078	0.002	0.408	0.922	0.003*
PD (Y) ← SN (M)	0.210	0.093	0.003	0.033	0.386	0.026*
PD (Y) ← DW (X)	0.295	0.786	0.025	-0.080	1.156	0.127
Total Effect						
	0.192	0.644	0.020	0.056	1.310	0.013*
Indirect Effect						
DW (X) → SN (M) → PD (Y)	0.052	0.029	0.001	0.013	0.111	0.036*

(*) Statistically significant effects. S.E. is the standard error for the respective estimates. Bias-corrected 95% Confidence Intervals using 1000 replications are presented.

Predictor variable (X): Decent work (DW)

Response variable (Y): Professional development (PD)

Mediator variable (M): Survival needs satisfaction (SN)

Source: Data Analysis

Hypothesis 6: The mediating effect of social contribution needs satisfaction on the relationship between decent work and professional development amongst rural teachers in the Eastern Cape Province

H61: Social contribution needs satisfaction amongst rural teachers mediates the relationship between decent work and professional development.

To determine whether social contribution needs satisfaction significantly mediates the relationship between decent work and professional development, the structural model in Figure 14 was examined. The mediation effects and respective beta estimates to determine the mediating effect of social contribution needs satisfaction on the relationship between decent work and professional development are presented in Table 38. Assessing the regression estimates, decent work had a significant, direct and positive predictive effect on social contribution needs satisfaction ($\beta = 0.609$; $SE = 0.154$; 95% CI [0.417, 0.937]; $p = 0.002$). On the other hand, social contribution needs satisfaction had no significant predictive effect on professional development ($\beta = -0.083$; $SE = 0.517$; 95% CI [-0.924, 0.201]; $p = 0.778$). When controlling for social contribution needs satisfaction, the findings showed that decent work had no significant influence on professional development ($\beta = 0.295$; $SE = 0.786$; 95% CI [-0.080, 1.156]; $p = 0.127$). On the other hand, the total effect of decent work on professional development is positive and statistically significant ($\beta = 0.116$; $SE = 0.290$; 95% CI [-0.014, 0.596]; $p = 0.137$). The indirect effect was examined to determine the mediating effect of social contribution needs satisfaction. The results indicated that the indirect effect was not statistically significant ($\beta = -0.024$; $SE = 0.424$; 95% CI [-0.464, 0.040]; $p = 0.667$). Since the indirect effect is not statistically significant, thus there is sufficient statistical evidence not to reject the null hypothesis and conclude that social contribution needs satisfaction amongst rural teachers does not mediate the relationship between decent work and professional development among rural teachers in the Eastern Cape Province.

Table 38: Mediation effects and respective path estimates to determine the mediating effect of social contribution needs satisfaction on the relationship between decent work and professional development.

Path and Effects	Beta Estimates		Bias and Bias-Corrected			<i>p</i> -value
			95% Confidence Interval			
	Estimate	SE	SE-Bias	Lower	Upper	
Specific Direct Effects						
SC (M) ← DW (X)	0.609	0.154	0.005	0.417	0.937	0.002*
PD (Y) ← SC (M)	-0.083	0.517	0.016	-0.924	0.201	0.778
PD (Y) ← DW (X)	0.295	0.786	0.025	-0.080	1.156	0.127
Total Effect						
	0.116	0.290	0.009	-0.014	0.596	0.137
Indirect Effect						
DW (X) → SC (M) → PD (Y)	-0.024	0.424	0.013	-0.464	0.040	0.667

(*) Statistically significant effects. S.E. is the standard error for the respective estimates. Bias-corrected 95% Confidence Intervals using 1000 replications are presented.

Predictor variable (X): Decent work (DW)

Response variable (Y): Professional development (PD)

Mediator variable (M): Social contribution needs (SC)

Source: Data Analysis

Hypothesis 7: The mediating effect of self-determination needs satisfaction on the relationship between decent work and professional development amongst rural teachers in the Eastern Cape Province

H7₁: Self-determination needs satisfaction amongst rural teachers mediates the relationship between decent work and professional development.

Lastly, the structural model was utilised to establish whether self-determination needs satisfaction significantly mediates the relationship between decent work and professional development. The mediation effects and respective beta estimates for establishing the mediating effect of self-determination needs satisfaction on the relationship between decent work and professional development are presented in Table 39. Examining the beta estimates, decent work had a positive, significant and direct effect on self-determination needs satisfaction ($\beta = 0.636$; $SE = 0.147$; 95% CI [0.408, 0.922]; $p = 0.003$). On the other hand, self-determination needs satisfaction had no significant effect on professional development ($\beta = 0.051$; $SE = 0.363$; 95% CI [-0.735, 0.385], $p = 0.622$). In addition, when controlling for self-determination needs satisfaction, the findings showed that decent work had no significant influence on professional development ($\beta = 0.295$; $SE = 0.786$; 95% CI [-0.080, 1.156]; $p = 0.127$). However, the total effect of decent work on professional development is positive and statistically significant ($\beta = 0.155$, 95% CI

[0.021, 1.271], $p = 0.025$). The indirect effect was examined to determine the mediating effect of self-determination needs satisfaction. The results indicated that the indirect effect was not statistically significant ($\beta = 0.015$; $SE = 0.221$; 95% CI [-0.243, 0.105]; $p = 0.579$). Since the indirect effect is not statistically significant, thus there is sufficient statistical evidence not to reject the null hypothesis and conclude that self-determination needs satisfaction amongst rural teachers does not mediate the relationship between decent work and professional development among rural teachers in the Eastern Cape Province.

Table 39: Mediation effects and respective path estimates to determine the mediating effect of self-determination needs satisfaction on the relationship between decent work and professional development.

Path and Effects	Beta Estimates		Bias and Bias-Corrected 95% Confidence Intervals			<i>p</i> -value
	Estimate	SE	SE-Bias	Lower	Upper	
Specific Direct Effects						
SD (M) ← DW (X)	0.636	0.147	0.005	0.408	0.922	0.003*
PD (Y) ← SD (M)	0.051	0.363	0.011	-0.735	0.385	0.622
PD (Y) ← DW (X)	0.295	0.786	0.025	-0.080	1.156	0.127
Total Effect						
	0.155	0.489	0.015	0.021	1.271	0.025*
Indirect Effect						
DW (X) → SD (M) → PD (Y)	0.015	0.221	0.007	-0.243	0.105	0.579

(*) Statistically significant effects. S.E. is the standard error for the respective estimates. Bias-corrected 95% Confidence Intervals using 1000 replications are presented.

Predictor variable (X): Decent work (DW)

Response variable (Y): Professional development (PD)

Mediator variable (M): Self-determination (SD)

Source: Data Analysis

Table 40 shows the summary results of the mediating effects of needs satisfaction on the relationship between decent work and professional development.

Table 39: Summary results for the mediating effect hypotheses.

Description (Hypotheses)	Test Statistic	<i>p</i> -value	Decision
H5₀ Survival needs amongst rural teachers mediate the relationship between decent work and professional development.	$\beta = 0.052$	$p = 0.036^*$	Accept H5₀
H6₀ Social contribution needs amongst rural teachers mediate the relationship between decent work and professional development.	$\beta = -0.024$	$p = 0.667$	Reject H6₀
H7₀ Self-determination needs satisfaction amongst rural teachers mediates the relationship between decent work and professional development.	$\beta = 0.015$	$p = 0.579$	Reject H7₀

(*) Statistically significant effects. The beta coefficients are standardised estimates of the structural default model.

Source: Data Analysis

6.8. Conclusion

This chapter presented the findings of the study. The validity and reliability of the instrument were measured using CFA and Cronbach's alpha coefficient. All the constructs and dimensions proved to be valid, with an overall reliability of 0.908 for needs satisfaction, 0.796 for decent work and 0.891 for TPD. Both the full measurement and structural models suggested good and satisfactory fit indices. Significant relationships were found between decent work and needs satisfaction and between survival needs satisfaction and teacher professional development. Therefore, it is concluded that survival needs satisfaction significantly mediates the relationship between decent work and professional development among rural teachers in the Eastern Cape Province. The following chapter will continue with the discussion and implications of the findings of the current study.

CHAPTER SEVEN

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7. Introduction

The study aimed to examine the impact of decent work on rural teacher's professional development. It was conducted to explore the hypothetical evidence of the indirect effects of the satisfaction of survival, social contribution, and self-determination needs on the relationship between decent work and TPD. The literature indicated a scarcity of research on decent work in grasping the career development of public sector employees, particularly those in the teaching profession. In South Africa, the teaching profession is considered a crucial contributor to societal development and transformation (Okeke & Mtyuda, 2017). Teachers' roles extend beyond ensuring that learners achieve academic success; they also play a vital part in implementing education policies that address the imbalances of South Africa's apartheid past (Odell et al., 2020). Consequently, the effectiveness of education restructuring depends on the quality of teachers. As such, the formation of professional support for teachers and the accessibility of enhanced professional development opportunities became the central focus. This highlighted the need for an investigation to determine the role of decent work in supporting teachers within the dynamics of nation-building. Therefore, the study proposed and tested a Decent Work, Needs-Professional Development Model (see Figure 14).

This chapter is organised into seven chapters. Previous chapters presented the setting of the study and the research problem and provided a foundation for conducting this research. They further discussed the determinants of decent work, needs satisfaction and TPD. The theories associated with the study, specifically the PWT, SCT, and SDT, were also examined, including exploring the relevant hypotheses. A detailed description of the study design and methodology was provided, which included an explanation of the research instrument used to collect data and a conclusion on data analysis. Chapter Six presented the findings from the descriptive and inferential statistics used to evaluate the hypotheses.

The current chapter aims to discuss the results by relating them to the study's objectives and exploring their connection with the empirical literature. Moreover, this chapter concludes the study and offers recommendations for future research, addressing the identified research gaps.

7.1. Discussion

The primary objective of this study is to evaluate a decent work, needs-professional development model of rural teachers to determine the effect of decent work on teacher professional development.

The following specific objectives were examined:

- To examine if decent work contributes to rural teacher's professional development.
- To assess whether decent work contributes to the needs satisfaction of rural teachers.
- To test the mediating effect of needs satisfaction on the relationship between decent work and teacher professional development.

7.1.1. Decent work on rural teacher's professional development

The first objective of this study was to determine the effect of decent work on rural teacher's professional development. Firstly, it should be noted that the results of the full measurement model revealed that only safe working conditions were a measure of decent work. This finding contradicts a few studies examining decent work outcomes in South Africa. Malan (2019) confirmed a four-factor structure for decent work amongst a sample of White educated females, while Koekemoer and Masenge (2023) confirmed the five-factor structure of decent work among a South African sample of blue-collar workers. Although these studies were conducted in South Africa, the context of rurality in the current study provides a different perspective on the results. Additionally, the descriptive analysis demonstrated that safe working conditions and adequate compensation were the most highly rated constructs.

The evidence provided by the literature indicates that South African rural schoolteachers experience challenging working conditions that affect their work experiences (Admiraal et al., 2016; Czerniawski et al., 2017; Mokoena & Hlalele, 2021; Rothmann et al., 2019). These difficult conditions create a breeding ground of excessive demands, lack of access to professional development opportunities, bullying, and experience of violence perpetuated by their learners (Hunter, 2021; Mkhize & Shembe, 2022; Sedibe & Hendricks, 2021). As a result, teachers perceive their work environment as unsafe and uninviting (Asoba & Mefi, 2020; Bernstein & Batchelor, 2022; Nkambule, 2022; Rothmann & Redelinghuys, 2020). In this study, the sub-factor of decent work, namely safe working conditions, was confirmed through factor analysis. Safe working conditions

in a school environment are essential for effective learning and development. This includes safety rules and norms, physical safety, and social-emotional safety (Belay et al., 2021). This finding indicates that teachers who feel physically, socially, and emotionally safe at school engage in learning activities and share knowledge with colleagues, which in turn impacts their engagement in professional development. How one experiences their work is determined by their environment and conditions (Kekana et al., 2022). Therefore, it appears that this sample of rural teachers perceives decent work as being defined by the dimensions that are most relevant to their contextual factors.

This study has further hypothesised that decent work will positively and significantly influence rural teachers' professional development. The results revealed a positive but non-significant predictive effect of decent work on professional development. This finding should be comprehended by considering the study setting and participant's perspective of decent work. It is not surprising that decent work does not significantly impact teachers' professional development, as in this setting, its promotion is still linked to addressing the labour market issues and reversing the structural inequality denoted by the apartheid history (Mokofe, 2022; Nel, 2022). South Africa is one of the countries with the highest unemployment rate in the world (Statistics South Africa, 2022). As a result, the focus has been on job creation, regardless of the work conditions. This probably explains why promoting the holistic idea of decent work is compromised. Although the government has pledged its commitment to the attainment of decent work, it remains unclear what decent work means, especially in an economy with large inequalities where the majority live in poverty (Ludwig & Webster, 2020; Ngepah et al., 2023). Hence, the meaning of decent work within the South African context still needs to be greatly reconsidered (Mackett, 2022). While much focus has been on job creation, it is equally important for an economy to have the capacity to create high-quality jobs that offer decent work conditions (Nourafkan & Tanova, 2023).

In addition, this finding indicates that the prospects of achieving decent work should extend beyond viewing work solely as a source of income. Instead, it should also encompass non-wage dimensions of job quality that are expected in all workplaces for adults (Blustein et al., 2023; Fabry et al., 2022). Decent work should enable workers to develop professionally and be productive (Atitsogbe et al., 2021; Tchoda et al., 2020), improve their physical and mental health (Duffy et al., 2021; Sönmez et al., 2023), and have a wide-range effects (Duffy et al., 2023). Several studies have linked the attainment of decent work to various work-related outcomes, such as job satisfaction (Koekemoer

& Masenge, 2023; Nourafkan & Tanova, 2023), meaningful work (Allan et al., 2020b; Blustein et al., 2023), and withdrawal or turnover intentions (Wan & Duffy, 2023). Duffy et al. (2023) suggested that attaining decent work has a broader range of impacts that can enhance one's overall work experience.

Even though this finding contradicts what was expected and observed in previous studies regarding the significance of decent work in various work outcomes, it supports the calls made by research. While decent work is ideal for addressing acceptable work standards, in a context such as South Africa, it should be operationalised to incorporate the needs and preferences of workers (Mackett, 2022; Webster & Ludwig, 2020).

7.1.2. The relationship between decent work, needs satisfaction and teacher professional development

The study followed the proposition of PWT that access to decent work has a positive and significant effect on the satisfaction of three core human needs (survival, social contribution, and self-determination needs). Indeed, the findings of this study have confirmed this proposition, as they revealed that decent work amongst rural teachers has a positive and significant influence on the satisfaction of their survival, social contribution, and self-determination needs. Numerous studies provide evidence of the predictive utility of PWT on decent work and needs satisfaction Wang et al., 2019). Recent empirical research also affirmed that decent work directly and positively predicts employees' survival, social contribution, and self-determination needs (Smith et al., 2023; Tokar et al., 2023; Wan & Cao, 2022). In line with other studies (Nourafkan & Tanova, 2023), the current study also confirms that the satisfaction of needs is an important outcome of decent work.

Furthermore, the study hypothesised that the satisfaction of survival, social contribution, and self-determination needs positively and significantly influence rural teachers' professional development. The results of the SEM analysis revealed that the satisfaction of survival needs has a positive and significant effect on rural teachers' professional development. In contrast, no significant influence was found for the satisfaction of social contribution and self-determination needs. This finding aligns with previous investigations into the role of needs satisfaction in decent work outcomes (Duffy et al., 2019, 2021). The results indicated that only the satisfaction of survival needs significantly and directly predicted physical health and health behaviours. In the study by Wan and Cao (2022), it was found that only the satisfaction of social contribution and self-determination needs positively and significantly influence employee well-being.

These studies generally suggest that different sets of needs satisfaction may have varying effects on the outcomes of decent work, with some being more predictive than others.

On the other hand, the positive effect of survival needs satisfaction in this study may be linked to the overwhelming challenges confronting teachers in their work environment, influencing the degree to which they participate in professional development activities. Research shows that the willingness of teachers to engage in professional development activities was related to the satisfaction of survival needs such as accommodation, transportation, and monetary incentives (Bernadine, 2019; Nawab & Bissaker, 2021; Tsotetsi & Mahlomaholo, 2015). In contrast, the dissatisfaction (with the remuneration) hinders rural teachers' participation in professional development (Ajani, 2020; SACE, 2019). Considering the environment in which rural teachers work which is characterised by impoverishment, lack of access to resources and low-economic activities. This study firmly accepts this finding and further alludes that ensuring that the survival needs of rural teachers are met will lead to improved engagement in TPD.

7.1.3. The mediating effect of needs satisfaction on decent work and teacher professional development

The mediating effect of needs satisfaction on the relationship between decent work and professional development amongst rural teachers in the Eastern Cape Province was tested. The study hypothesised that the satisfaction of survival, social contribution, and self-determination needs mediate the relationship between decent work and TPD. The SEM analysis revealed that survival needs satisfaction significantly mediates the relationship between decent work and professional development among rural teachers in the Eastern Cape Province. At the same time, no direct and significant mediating effect was found for social contribution and self-determination needs.

The PWT posits that need satisfaction mediates the outcomes of decent work. However, few studies have examined the mediating effects of needs satisfaction on the outcomes of decent work as initially designed by PWT. The literature links the mediating effect of needs satisfaction to professional learning, organisational commitment (Lee et al., 2020), and improved physical and mental health (Duffy et al., 2021; Duffy, Kim et al., 2019). Duffy et al. (2021) found that decent work indirectly predicted health behaviours by fulfilling survival needs. A recent evaluation of the mediating effects of needs satisfaction on the relationship between decent work and trauma-related mental health found that decent work significantly and indirectly affected post-traumatic stress disorder through needs satisfaction (Seol et al., 2023). Therefore, the findings of this study support

the evidence provided by previous research that needs satisfaction plays a significant role in the effects of securing decent work, particularly noting that survival needs to mediate the relationship between decent work and the TPD of rural teachers.

7.2. Contribution of the study

7.2.1. Model for Decent Work on Rural Teachers

The current study proposes that higher levels of decent work attainment among rural teachers will promote a greater focus on satisfying the needs of teachers (survival, social contribution, and self-determination needs) and subsequently enhance professional development. The three types of needs satisfaction are proposed to predict professional development directly. Finally, drawing from the logic of PWT, this study positions needs satisfaction as a mediator between decent work and professional development. The specific hypotheses are outlined as follows:

H1: Decent work will positively and significantly influence rural teachers' professional development.

H2: Survival needs satisfaction will positively influence rural teachers' professional development.

H3: Social contribution needs satisfaction amongst rural teachers positively influence professional development.

H4: Social determination needs satisfaction amongst rural teachers positively influence professional development.

H5: Survival needs satisfaction amongst rural teachers mediate the relationship between decent work and professional development.

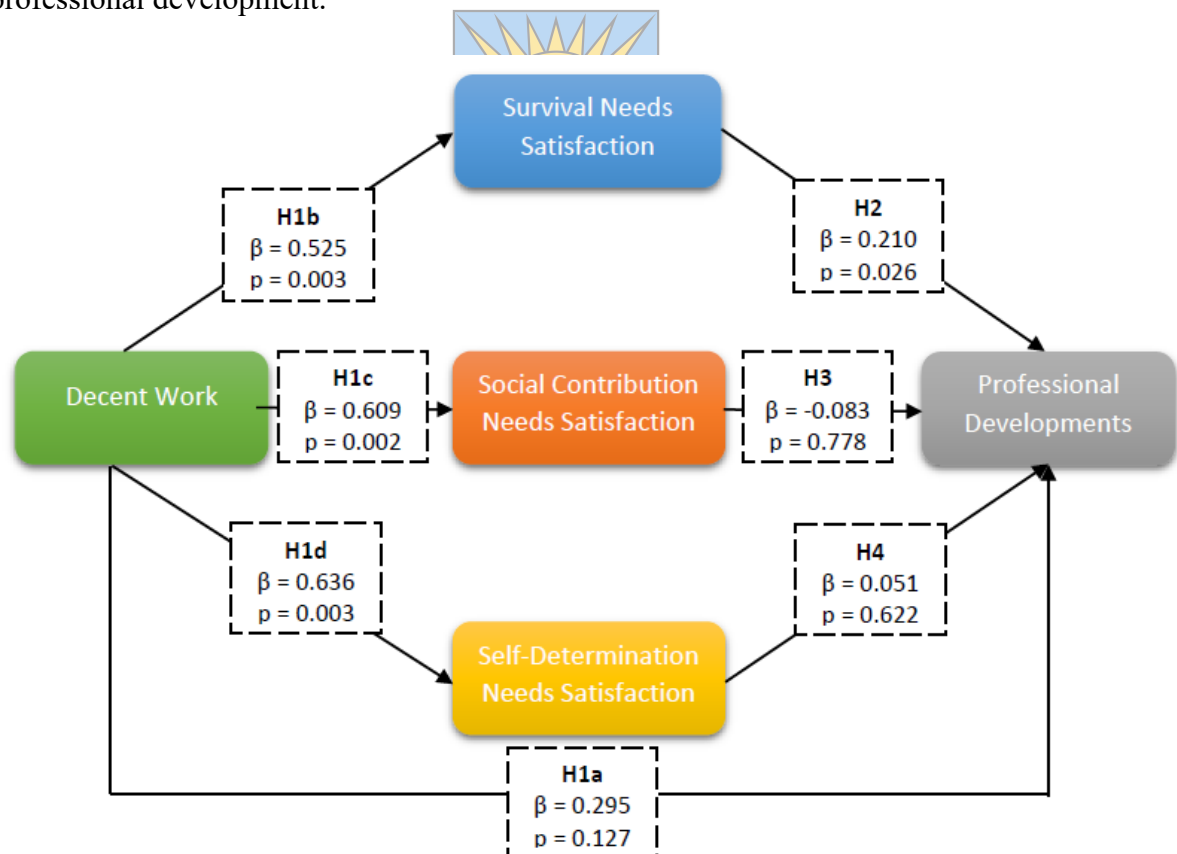
H6: Social contribution needs amongst rural teachers mediate the relationship between decent work and professional development.

H7: Self-determination needs satisfaction amongst rural teachers mediates the relationship between decent work and professional development.

Therefore, the hypothetical model was tested through SPSS and AMOS statistical software. The result supported three predictive hypothetical effects of decent work and needs satisfaction and two mediating hypothetical effects of needs satisfaction. For the direct paths, decent work had a positive and significant relationship with the survival,

social contribution, and self-determination needs of rural teachers in the Eastern Cape. Regarding needs satisfaction, survival needs satisfaction had a positive and significant relationship with TPD. In contrast, social contribution and self-determination needs satisfaction did not demonstrate a positive and significant predictive effect on TPD. Additionally, decent work had a positive but non-significant relationship with TPD.

Lastly, the indirect effects of the relationship through which decent work attainment positively relates to TPD via the satisfaction of needs were analysed. The results demonstrated that only survival needs satisfaction significantly mediated the relationship between decent work and TPD. Therefore, the findings of the SEM strongly suggest that providing decent work conditions that fulfil the survival needs of employees positively influences their engagement in ongoing professional development in the workplace. Based on the findings of the Decent Work, Needs-Professional Development Model, this study offers an empirical contribution to understanding the positive impact of decent work conditions, such as guaranteeing safety in the workplace, on rural teachers' professional development.



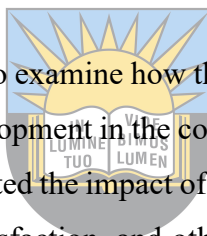
7.2.2. Theoretical Implications

The finding that decent work predicted TPD through the satisfaction of survival needs empirically supports the hypothetical path of the PWT framework (Duffy et al., 2016, 2019). This study contributes to the research investigating the mediating effect of needs satisfaction on decent work outcomes as proposed in the PWT. Consistent with the current study, previous research that has tested the direct and indirect effects of securing decent work has shown a full mediation effect of all three types of needs satisfaction (Duffy et al., 2019; Seol et al., 2023). However, the findings of the current study demonstrate that satisfaction of survival, social contribution, and self-determination needs each have distinct roles in the relationship between decent work and its outcome (TPD). Blustein et al. (2019) suggested that PWT provides valuable insights into how individuals can achieve decent work and well-being in diverse contexts. Therefore, this study extends the application of PWT in the rural setting and enriches research on decent work outcome variables.

In addition, the study was the first to examine how the experience of decent work relates to rural teacher's professional development in the context of Eastern Cape, South Africa. Previous studies that have investigated the impact of decent work have primarily focused on linking it to well-being, life satisfaction, and other work outcomes such as turnover intentions, job satisfaction, and meaningful work (Allan et al., 2020; Anlesinya et al., 2020; Kashyap & Arora, 2020; Kozan et al., 2019; Wan & Cao, 2022). All these studies consistently affirm that decent work attainment contributes to general well-being and greater work fulfilment. Therefore, unlike the previous and few current studies (Blustein et al., 2023; Tokar et al., 2023), this study examined the importance of decent work beyond work satisfaction outcomes and explored the possibilities of continuous professional growth in one's work experience. In this way, this study broadened the PWT framework to address specific career development dimensions that were not sufficiently explored in prior studies grounded in PWT and further responded to the call by Duffy et al. (2023) for researchers to examine the wide-ranging effects of attaining decent work.

7.2.3. Practical Implications

The practical implication of the present study is the understanding that attaining decent work through survival needs satisfaction enhances rural teachers' professional development. This finding emphasises the need for relevant stakeholders to consider contextual factors that influence rural teachers' professional development in South



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Africa. Through the factor analysis, rural teachers in this study confirmed that safe working conditions were a component of decent work. These findings suggest that their involvement in professional development activities depends on meeting their basic needs for shelter, transportation, reliable income, and a secure workplace. Additionally, practices that promote both the physical and emotional safety of teachers are crucial for sustaining their engagement in TPD. Consequently, the government should regularly evaluate and address safety needs, ranging from infrastructure improvements to safety measures, to enhance teachers' professional growth.

This study has noted the economic disparities and inequalities surrounding South Africa and argues that access to work that can support survival needs cannot be assumed in this context. For instance, it is noted that while Coloured respondents were more consistent in their responses to need satisfaction and decent work, the responses from Black African respondents were more dispersed, especially in terms of Survival Needs (Table 19). Most respondents (291) were Black African and, as such, fostering a more inclusive and supportive environment that supports both need satisfaction and professional development across diverse demographic groups. Therefore, the researcher hopes that through the findings of this study, the DoE and relevant stakeholders will be mindful of the survival needs of rural teachers when implementing and managing TPD. Moreover, stakeholders should consider work conditions that would encourage a continuous professional learning community of practice.

Furthermore, the practice of TPD in South Africa is guided and supported by several policies to ensure that teachers continually improve their teaching-learning competencies. The effective implementation of these policies promotes quality teaching practice, leading to improved student learning outcomes. While they are progressive and effective to a certain extent, research conducted within the rural school context in South Africa reveals that poor work conditions make it seem impossible for schools to manage their TPD programmes effectively. Instead, they become a compliance tool that does not result in any change in their professional growth. As indicated, South Africa is rich in policy frameworks that guide TPD programmes. However, policymakers should devise effective policy interventions encouraging rural teachers' participation in professional development programmes. This includes designing tools that can assess the effectiveness of TPD along with organisational factors and economic conditions that support the implementation of TPD practices. Subsequently, this study offered a model that can be beneficial for identifying specific features of work context that can promote TPD.

Finally, this model would assist practitioners in work psychology and career development scholars in developing interventions that enhance the experience of working in rural schools in South Africa. This includes interventions that prioritise the promotion of decent work not only within the teaching profession but also in the public sector at large. There has been a notable scarcity of empirical studies documenting the differences in the experiences of decent work in public sectors. Therefore, the findings of this study hold a great promise of providing viable and flexible tools for promoting decent work and economic growth through holistic approaches and processes (Lee et al., 2020). Thus, practitioners and scholars can collaborate to design needs assessment tools that can be used to implement TPD programmes that fit specific contexts. By so doing, understanding the needs and expectations of rural teachers can be a precursor to developing interventions that significantly enhance their teaching knowledge and practice. With this new knowledge, this study aims to encourage scholars, practitioners, and government officials to take an increasingly active role in promoting decent work standards for rural teachers that would foster efficiency and improve the quality of education.

7.3. Limitations and directions for future research

This study has some limitations that need to be addressed in the future. Firstly, the study used a DWS that was developed and validated in contexts different from that of the study. The use and applicability of this scale within African contexts still appear to be under-researched (Tchonda et al., 2020). Research on decent work in the African context is still in the early stages of development. Therefore, the self-administered questionnaire might have limited the participants' understanding of decent work and how it affects their professional development. Future research should follow a mixed-method approach to expand the meaning of decent work in this context.

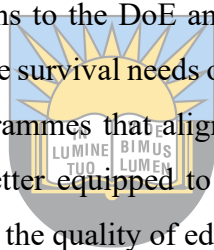
Secondly, this study focused on measuring decent work as a holistic variable and did not examine the relationship of each component with other variables. As a result, the mechanisms by which the components of decent work link to professional development within the teaching profession were not established. While the findings of this study indicate that rural teachers consider safe working conditions to be an important aspect of decent work, future studies should explore the influence of each component on TPD to make results more persuasive.

Thirdly, the hypothetical model of this study focused on the pathways through which decent work predicted TPD via needs satisfaction and did not explore moderating factors

such as school leadership, teacher age, and years of experience, which are equally important in determining the involvement in TPD programmes (Keller-Schneider et al., 2020; Sancar et al., 2021; Tachie & Mancotywa, 2021). Therefore, it is necessary to consider potential moderating variables that may influence the links between decent work and TPD. Finally, the study population was limited to rural teachers in Raymond Mhlaba Local Municipality in the Eastern Cape. Future studies should be conducted in all regions of the Eastern Cape to enhance the generalisability of the findings.

7.4. Conclusion

The study examined the indirect effects of needs satisfaction in the relationship between decent work and TPD. Decent work satisfied all three basic psychological needs of rural teachers. Among the three basic needs, survival needs satisfaction is an encouraging factor for participation in TPD. Furthermore, the study theoretically supported the PWT perspective and offered practical implications that emphasise the importance of addressing the work needs of rural teachers as a strategy to enhance teaching practices. The study extends recommendations to the DoE and government to consider not only decent work conditions that fulfil the survival needs of rural teachers when implementing TPD but also to design TPD programmes that align with their professional needs. By doing so, rural teachers will be better equipped to engage in continuous professional development, ultimately improving the quality of education in rural schools.



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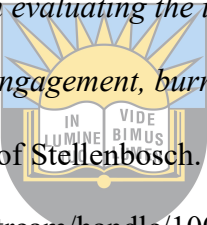
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Annexures

1. Questionnaire:



Questionnaire.pdf

2. Ethics letter from the University of Fort Hare:



Ethics letter_UFH.pdf

3. Approval letter from the Department of Education



Approval
letter_DoE.pdf

4. Proof of language editing



Proof Of Editing
Certificate.pdf



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