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## ABSTRACT

Because the quality of teachers determines the quality of the school system, teachers must be provided with high-caliber inservice programs. During the 1980s, responsibility for the provision of professional development in Australia shifted to local schools. Under the current National Professional Development Program (NPDP), the Australian Commonwealth Department of Employment, Education and Training (DEET) provided funding over a 3-year period (1994-96) to enhance professional development activities for teaching staff in Australian schools. This paper presents findings of a study that evaluated a commercially provided inservice program, "Teaching for Effective Learning." The study examined the program's impact on teacher practices in classrooms and identified factors that influenced the transfer of skills and knowledge learned in the workshops. Data on three groups of teachers were gathered through document analysis, interviews, observation, a questionnaire, and a review of teacher journals. A conclusion is that an inservice program will not bring about change on its own. Success was affected by practical and adaptable content (which teachers could adapt to their classrooms), interpersonal relationships, and use of a language to describe their practices. Barriers to success included lack of clear documentation and inattention to the change process within the workshops. The major obstacle to vertical transfer was the lack of clear articulation of support from senior staff in schools and minimal principal commitment. Despite devolution of management to schools, little had changed in terms of responsibility for ensuring that implementation occurred. It is recommended that more funds be allocated to the implementation process. (Contains 26 references.) (LMI)

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# Professional Development which Provides an Icing on the Pedagogical Cake

by

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## Introduction

Since the quality of teachers determines the quality of the school system (Coulter & Ingvarson, 1985), it is imperative that high calibre inservice programs are provided for teachers to assist them in maintaining their professional competence. Professional development for teachers, which appropriates a large slice of educational funding in Australia, needs to be cost effective. For professional development to be cost effective, the transfer of skills and knowledge acquired in inservice programs must occur.

Responsibility for the provision of professional development in Australia, like many other aspects of schooling, changed throughout the 1980s when educational systems became part of major structural, industrial and political changes occurring at state and national levels. These reforms reflected a trend in many countries. Levacic (1995, p1) pointed out that, "despite differences in political and social context, there are striking parallels in contemporary educational reforms adopted by English-speaking countries, in particular Australia, New Zealand, the UK and the USA." Beare (1995) identified the trend throughout the Western world as "consistent, towards deregulation of schools, freeing them to act as self-contained entities loosely linked in a network of schools" (p143). That schools in control of their own decision making, "must provide a better quality education than a school run by a centralized bureaucracy", is "a truth universally acknowledged" (Levacic, 1995, p1) by the number of governments and their agencies who have endorsed the idea.

This trend towards devolution in Australia has made each school a 'free-standing entity', required to have a local policy making council, and has given considerable autonomy over an allocated budget, while the de-zoning of schools put enrolment on a competitive basis (Beare, 1995). As self-management occurred, state education systems have reduced their professional consultant services, so that schools are in a position to choose from any available satisfactory source of services that they may require. Education Support Services have increasingly provided services, but have been "forced to operate like free-standing firms, not as units controlled within a hierarchical framework, surviving on the quality of the service they gave" (Beare, 1995, p142).

Under the current National Professional Development Program (NPDP), the Australian Commonwealth Department of Employment, Education and Training (DEET) is providing \$60 million over a three year period from 1994-1996 to "enhance professional development activities for teaching staff in Australian schools" (National Professional Development Program Guidelines for Funding, 1995, p1). These funds are aimed at professional development which is "additional to that being undertaken by school authorities and teachers" (p1). Under the NPDP scheme, outside providers may apply, along with education department personnel, for funds to deliver professional development programs which address specified priority areas. The Commonwealth uses a competitive selection process in decisions regarding funding.

Decisions regarding expenditure of resources on inservice programs for teachers in the context of school based management may be critical to a school budget. Policy direction towards school based management means that inservice programs are budgeted for, and managed by, the school. Principals, in conjunction with colleagues, can make decisions regarding provision of inservice programs for the professional development of their teachers. As noted earlier, many states in Australia have reduced their professional and consultative services, leaving schools to choose from the available market of inservice providers. Such providers may come from government agencies, or private education consultants. There is a growing trend in Australia for schools to 'buy in' private consultants for their professional development programs, the value of which may only be known through teacher and principal professional associations, social networks or the first-hand experience of individuals. Questions therefore can be asked about who examines these commercially offered programs. How are they judged to be suitable, given a school's limited budget and an array of competing claims on that budget?

There is no published research in Australia into the effectiveness of any commercially offered inservice programs. There was merit, therefore, in undertaking research concerning specific programs, which are deemed by teacher participants to be highly successful, in order to identify specific characteristics of their success. A detailed examination of the characteristics of any inservice program, its content and mode of delivery, and of the transfer of skills and knowledge to classrooms, provides valuable information which can inform policy makers, principals, inservice providers and teachers. The purpose of this study was, (a) to examine, in depth, one such program,

*Teaching for Effective Learning*, which was developed and presented by a commercial educational consultant, Dr. Julia Atkin; (b) to ascertain its impact on teacher practice in classrooms, and (c) to identify factors which influenced the transfer of skills and knowledge learned in the workshops.

Anecdotal evidence from three states of Australia indicated that Atkin's *Teaching for Effective Learning* workshops have attained a reputation for excellence among teachers, and two principals in NSW schools (Barracough, 1994; McIntyre, 1994) maintained that the implementation of skills and knowledge learned in Atkin's workshops has led to a significant improvement in their schools. When an inservice program receives high acclaim, for such things as the relevant and practical nature of its content, pitched at an appropriate level for the participants, or for the quality of its presentation, it is important first, to ascertain the nature of the qualities which appeal to teachers, and second, whether or not those attributes lead to high levels of implementation. It should be noted that this study's highly regarded inservice program was school or teacher selected rather than system selected, and teachers volunteered to participate. The popularity of this particular inservice program and its 'teacher-judged' effectiveness, would seem fertile ground for successful implementation.

Information from this study is about both the attributes of successful inservice programs and their providers and, of significance for educators, the factors which lead to positive outcomes in terms of implementation. The study highlighted the multiple factors involved in success or failure of the implementation of skills and knowledge learned in workshops. It shows how those influential factors relate to the inservice program itself; to teachers' willingness to change their behaviour, and to action, or lack of action, taken by principals or other staff in supporting those teachers facing change in their classrooms.

The study had several aims. The first was to analyse in a critical fashion one commercially offered inservice program, *Teaching for Effective Learning* and its conceptual structure, Atkin's Framework for Effective Teaching, which was disseminated in three, two-day workshops, spread over a year. This in-depth analysis was undertaken in order that aspects of the Framework could be identified when observed in classrooms. A review of the literature was also undertaken to ascertain the veracity of the conceptual structure, and the extent to which it was an innovation. Second, Atkin's own style of presentation was examined, to establish whether or not there was congruence between her theory and practice, that is, between her Framework for Effective Teaching and her own presentation style in the workshops, and the part that this may have played in the workshop's popularity. Third, the study aimed to determine the impact of Atkin's Framework in the classroom and to ascertain, not only its implementation, but the factors which influenced implementation.

## Methodology

In this study, a multi-modal and multi-site design was used to ensure richness of data, and to take account of the multiple events within it. Data was gathered from three groups of teachers, each group having attended a different *Teaching for Effective Learning* workshop series. Document analysis, interviews, observation, a questionnaire and teacher journals were the data gathering methods employed. Inductive analysis was used to categorise data, in particular, the concepts of *horizontal* and *vertical* transfer (Joyce & Showers, 1983) to show how skills and knowledge were transferred to the classrooms. According to Joyce & Showers (1983) if skills are transferred directly from the workshops to the classroom, with little or no disruption to the teacher's practice, it would be said to have been transferred *horizontally*. If new learning was required in order to implement a new skill, and a disruption to practice was involved while the teacher attempted to gain 'executive control', then the skills would be seen as having transferred *vertically*.

## The Inservice Program

The positive regard which teachers had for the *Teaching for Effective Learning* workshops appeared to relate to both the content and its methods of delivery. First, high levels of congruence were noted between the three "dimensions" (Atkin, 1994, p13) of Atkin's Framework for Effective Teaching (*relationships, psychological conditions* and *appropriate mental processes*), and its practice in the workshops. In other words Atkin developed good *relationships* with participants, ensured that the *psychological conditions*, which she deemed important, were in place and she engaged the *appropriate mental processes* of participants in her presentation. The literature on adult learning indicates that adults learn best in a supportive environment, and Atkin's enacting of the first two of

her dimensions (*relationships* and *psychological conditions*), shown through observation and interview data, could be deemed to have created a supportive environment.

A second factor which led to the success of the *Teaching for Effective Learning* workshops was Atkin herself. Participant observation by the researcher, evidence from the video-tapes, and subsequent interviews indicated that teachers enjoyed and highly valued Atkin's teaching style and she appeared consciously or unconsciously to pay attention to principles of adult learning (Moore, 1988, Knowles, 1990; Conners, 1991). In doing so she acknowledged teachers' prior experiences and built on these experiences; she made clear the 'what', 'how' and 'why' of the content of the workshops; based all learning in the context of the workplace, and provided a climate of trust and respect between facilitator and participants and between participants, in a secure environment. Moreover, Atkin clearly motivated the teachers through her enthusiasm for, and commitment to their profession. In this sense, findings of this study support the literature on adult learning and effective workshop facilitators.

A feature of this study was the teachers' frequent reference to having their implicit knowledge of teaching made explicit. A teacher's implicit theories about teaching, or their craft knowledge (Brown & McIntyre, 1989; Grimmatt & MacKinnon, 1992; Batten, Marland & Khamis, 1993; Fenstermacher, 1994) was a theme which emerged from the data of this study. It appeared, from video tape and interview data, that Atkin was, in large part, presenting what was already known to teachers; she articulated known 'good practice', thereby accessing the implicit knowledge that teachers had about teaching, and she gave teachers a language to describe their practice (Williamson, 1991; Galton & Williamson, 1992). This may have been a motivating factor underlying the popularity of the workshops because it provided those who perceived that they were already 'doing it' with an explicit explanation for their implicit knowledge of good teaching practices. One teacher, deemed by her peers and principals to be a high calibre teacher described her experience of having her practices made explicit:

*Going there you're sort of sitting and nodding and nodding and you are agreeing with everything that she is saying and I am ... thinking ... I know this already - but it is just linking for you [and] thinking well wow ... this is what I do, or this is why... it has worked so well, or why I do things ... The word is enlightening ... It's like putting on a pair of shoes now. Walking in space shoes because you can access into everything but it was already there before ... It's like science you know, lifted the veil off, it was there all the time but you just couldn't quite see through the blurry bits.*

On the other hand, Atkin provided the same language to those who were not 'doing it' so that they were able use the rhetoric, even if they were not practising it. An inservice program designed to be embedded in teacher craft knowledge affirms existing skills and knowledge; it can give a sense of ownership of the content for participants; it can move teachers from implicit to explicit understanding, and is useful in raising the level of teachers' awareness of new practices and readiness to learn.

Teachers valued having their craft knowledge articulated, particularly those who were already 'best practice' teachers. Shulman (1987) argued that researchers need to work with teachers to codify the "practical pedagogical wisdom" (p11), because he claims, it is the least codified of all sources of knowledge of teaching.

Teacher educators of those professional development situations need to work with teachers to enable them to conceptualise, internalise and articulate material learned in inservice programs. Anecdotal evidence may indicate that there is a lot of criticism of teachers, from academics, for their inability to conceptualise and internalise complex theoretical issues of teaching and learning. It may be equally true that academics need to learn ways of presenting those complex issues in a language more closely allied to the world of teachers. The finding, that teachers felt empowered by having a language to describe teaching practice, as a result of attending Atkin's workshops, was an important outcome of this study. However any language which teachers adopt to describe their pedagogy needs to be based on sound theoretical knowledge of teaching and learning.

Interview data from four teachers indicated they believed they were practising the principles of Atkin's Framework for Effective Teaching, and observation confirmed this. All claimed to be motivated by the model because their practices were affirmed and reinforced through gaining a

language to describe it. A study by Guskey (1988), which focused on the implementation of instructional strategies for mastery learning, had similar findings. Guskey (1988) concluded that those with high levels of efficacy, who were proficient teachers and who enjoyed the work, were the most receptive to the instructional strategies for mastery learning. This researcher maintained that strategies which lead to mastery learning were probably already being practiced by proficient teachers and therefore were more likely to be motivated. The research by Guskey might provide some insight into why the four teachers were enacting aspects of Atkin's Framework for Effective Teaching without apparent difficulty, while claiming to have always taught that way from an intuitive understanding of their students.

An element of the *Teaching for Effective Learning* workshops which could have contributed to its high levels of acceptance by teachers, was the nature of its content. The content of inservice workshops which appeal to teachers are those which are practical (Sharan & Hertz-Lazarowitz, 1982); are easily adapted to classroom use (Conners, 1991), and are seen by teachers as a means of improving the learning of their students (Smylie, 1986). Sharan & Hertz-Lazarowitz's (1982) study showed that practical activities of this nature were important to teachers, if the activities helped them to cope with the main focus of their working lives, the teaching of children. In the *Teaching for Effective Learning* workshops activities were designed for immediate use in the classroom, and Atkin devoted nearly half of the six days to demonstration and rehearsal of strategies, examples of which were concept mapping, visualisation and mind mapping. Many of the strategies presented are to be found in the literature of cognitive psychology (such as concept mapping and visualisation) and were not new to teachers, but were given new significance in the workshops. The strategies of visualisation and mind mapping fit Conners' (1991) assertion that teachers want curriculum content and methodology that can be readily adapted to their classrooms. In terms of practical difference in the classroom, implementation of these strategies would mean fairly minor changes to routine teaching. The same strategies affirmed Smylie's (1986) notion that, not only did teachers want strategies of practical value, but they wanted skills and knowledge which would improve the learning of their students. Teachers in this study consistently reported that student learning was improved as a result of using visualisation strategies.

Success factors were shown to relate to Atkin herself, her practising of what she preached, her attention to theories of adult learning, the provision of a language to describe their implicit practices, and content which was easily transferrable to classrooms without disruption to routine teaching. However, results showed that low levels of transfer occurred. The implication of this finding is that assumptions cannot be made that inservice programs, however highly regarded by participants, will automatically lead to transfer of skills and knowledge, and it confirms Ingvarson & MacKenzie's (1988) conclusions that popularity in itself does not necessarily guarantee ability or willingness to change. While a degree of *horizontal* transfer was found in the study, a lack of evidence of *vertical* transfer could have arisen from factors which were both within the workshops and, in schools where teachers attempted to implement skills and knowledge.

Two aspects of the workshops could have mitigated against transfer, namely, unclear documentation, and lack of attention being paid to the process of change within the workshop. Fullan (1991) maintains that for inservice to lead to successful implementation, the change process must be an integral part of the program. Further, Joyce & Showers (1980) claim that when mastery of a new approach is the desired outcome, then learning should involve theory, demonstration, practice, feedback and classroom application. While all four of these conditions were present, in part, in the *Teaching for Effective Learning* workshops, the focus of the workshops was predominantly on extending the teachers' knowledge of teaching and learning, and minimally on the process of implementation. There was no evidence of classroom application being closely supervised.

A compounding factor which could have been responsible for the predominance of *horizontal* transfer, was the lack of clarity of some of Atkin's documentation which seemed to mitigate against the extension of participants' thinking. There is a compelling reason why documentation, particularly the inservice course notes, needs to be clear and unambiguous. On returning to classrooms from attending inservice programs, teachers face the routine of day to day teaching and administration, with all their attendant pressures. It is highly unlikely that everything taught in workshops will be remembered, or reinforced through instant implementation. An *aide-mémoire*, in the form of comprehensive notes, first, allows teachers to revisit and reflect on material learned and

second, could provide significant support material for those attempting transfer of skills and knowledge learned in an inservice program. Documentation needs to be an accurate representation of theories of teaching and learning, presented in a 'user-friendly' way and should encapsulate a range of issues without overwhelming the reader. Most importantly, that documentation must contain valid and reliable information. For *vertical* transfer to occur, Joyce & Showers (1983) claim that a conceptual understanding is required. If inservice course programs are to achieve more than *horizontal* levels of transfer, documentation of theoretical material presented to participants needs to be clear and congruent with workshop activities. It would seem important then, that designers of inservice programs need to ensure that documents which accompany workshops make clear the theoretical foundation on which those activities are based, that those activities reflect examples of that theoretical concept in practice, and that theoretical underpinnings are based on sound, well researched theories of teaching and learning.

## Implementation

There is an assumption that teacher learning in inservice programs can lead to change in teacher behaviour. However, change is hard work; it involves risk (Galton & Williamson, 1992; Fullan, 1993); it can go hand in hand with conflict, particularly if change involves a tension between an innovation and the implicit theories which teachers have about teaching and which guide their practice (Brown & McIntyre, 1989). Change may be avoided by some but accepted by others, depending on their cognitive processing style (Joughin, 1992), or problematic for all because of demands placed on teachers by school systems (Logan, 1994). Problems with the implementation process may be exacerbated by lack of collegial and administrative support for those facing the personal issues of change (Fullan, 1991, 1993).

Accurate identification of the transfer of skills and knowledge learned in the *Teaching for Effective Learning* workshops was one goal of the study. The analysis of the content of the workshops, through video-tape and observation, provided a detailed picture of all that had been presented in the Atkin's workshops. Methodologically, this was a significant aspect of the study because it effectively tied together the workshop content and processes with implementation. As a data gathering approach it provided the total picture of Atkin's workshops and their impact. Observations, interviews, teacher journals and student work provided rich data for that total picture and though, as a methodology, it was too time consuming to be easily replicated, it provided a thorough understanding of the skills and knowledge which had the potential to be transferred to classrooms and a means of tracking workshop material through to classrooms.

Data gathered through observation (video-tape) presented a comprehensive picture of all that was presented in the *Teaching for Effective Learning* workshops. Results showed that of approximately 18 concepts and strategies taught, only three, visualisation, guided imagery and mind mapping, well known cognitive strategies aimed at improving long term memory, were consistently found to be in use in classrooms. Significantly, these strategies were transferred only at a *horizontal* level, that is they were transferred without disruption to teachers' existing beliefs and practices. It would appear that the overwhelming majority of teachers in this study avoided risk taking in transferring strategies, but 'bolted on' the strategies to existing practices instead. Smylie (1986) indicates that, in inservice programs, teachers want to learn skills and knowledge which would improve the learning of their students. Teachers in this study consistently reported that student learning was improved as a result of using visualisation strategies, a strategy which teachers seemed to perceive as the icing on the pedagogical cake. One teacher reported her use of visualisation as follows:

*We did a lot of work with visual photographs ... I was using that with spelling, and it was having tremendous success particularly with the really weak kids, and the kids came up one day ... I still do old fashioned rote learning of tables, and they said "why can't we 'photograph' them," which I thought was wonderful, and parents had been in to say "look they have been taking pictures of things and learning their tables," but it works. That's something I hadn't thought of. It came from themselves, so I thought that was really good.*

A teacher/assistant principal went so far as to maintain that visualisation was "the key to success in the world," claiming that:

*Visualisation is the key to success in this world. I mean it's no big surprise. If you can become a visual or more visual person, you are almost*

*guaranteed some form of success. My daughter is a good example. P. P. at R. Primary uses a lot of visualisation and [my daughter] was ... a lot like me in terms of her spelling, she couldn't spell to save herself and her spelling has gone ahead in leaps and bounds. She is getting 18s and 19s out of 20 now and she is spelling at a level, her level, so she has developed quite well. But I know P.P. in that class does visualisation almost daily with the techniques - similar techniques - and it is paying off.*

Mind mapping was another strategy which teachers readily took from the *Teaching for Effective Learning* workshops, and claimed that it improved the way in which their students presented material. A grade 1 teacher, prior to Atkin's workshop, considered that children as young as this would not be able to do mind mapping. She tried this in her class and found that they could do it, describing the outcome as follows:

*I've used mind maps and concept maps when we're talking about things and clarifying brainstorming. I thought they wouldn't be able to concentrate and interpret but I've found they can. For example we're discussing snails this morning in our brainstorming. I construct them as the children talk ... The children have also started their simplified very personalised little mind maps ... and I find the way they talk about it ... explain to other people is really interesting. So it's not just what they put on paper, it's what they can describe to the group ... It seems to make the learning more meaningful [because] ... I think it does help them to make connections and see a broader picture than having a wash of words. I am surprised at how they take meaning from diagrams whereas I hadn't thought it applicable for very young children (PPIO 1, 1993).*

Mind mapping was widely used in one school in which the principal provided considerable support for the implementation of Atkin's Framework for Effective Teaching. The grade 6 teacher, who had attended the workshops, assisted other teachers to use mind mapping. This teacher reported that older children retained the ability to mind map and transferred the skill to high school the following year. She reported that:

*... the children that I taught last year have gone to high school and I have had phone calls from the teachers saying "what's this mind mapping?" They have noticed the children, before they write, are actually getting in and doing a mind map of what they are doing. So that is really exciting. We use the mind maps, too, and I have got examples, I think. For before we go into a topic we ask the children what they know, and they mind map it, and then [do it again] as an evaluation at the end as well. And that is recorded. Many classes use that (SLT 3, 1993).*

It is reasonable to assume that in any inservice program there will be a range of personalities, abilities and beliefs. Therefore attitudes will vary towards an inservice program, its processes and content and towards risk taking in implementation. Joughin (1992) argues that the cognitive style of teachers who attend inservice programs will play some part in their ability and willingness to change, and challenges the assumption (Moore, 1988; Knowles, 1990) that teachers are self-directed learners, who need to learn in such an environment. Joughin (1992) claims the cognitive learning style of a teacher can dictate their capacity for self-direction and need for a supportive environment. Some teachers, he argues, will have an analytic ability which will allow them to conceptualise the requirements of the learning task, and will have an awareness of their needs in working towards meeting goals of new learning, whereas others lack this ability and require structure and more assistance in the implementation process. Joughin's (1992) assertion could explain the differences in cognitive styles and therefore attitudes, towards implementing skills and knowledge found among participants in this study, particularly two teachers who were willing and able to transfer some of the skills at a *vertical* level, demonstrated by one teacher in her journal. She described her attempts to develop new skills as follows:

*I'm still not really happy or am confident that it is going OK. I read once about the Implementation Dip that occurs when some change is being trialled and implemented and that teachers' performance actually drops off before you can see the benefits of the change. I hope this is happening to me.*



As this study has shown, attention to the change process in the workshops and the personality, attitude and ability of teachers, are important, but are not in themselves, the most predominant factors in bringing about change. Willingness and ability to change must also be seen in the context in which teachers will make those changes, that is the school. Here, more influential factors such as the administrative and collegial support which teachers receive may be the greater influence, for it can be assumed that, with appropriate support, most teachers, whatever their cognitive style or ability, can be assisted to change.

Change for the majority of teachers is a complex and risky process if that change involves disruption to existing practice and a subsequent change of beliefs. Collegial and administrative support for change (Fullan, 1991, 1993) will assist with practice which could lead to change in belief (Galton & Williamson, 1992). Huberman & Miles (1984) point out that innovations that involved change, "lived or died by the amount and quality of assistance that their users received" (p273). In presenting her workshops, Atkin indicated an understanding of the process of change through her affirming of the importance of forming networks within and between schools, while implementing skills and knowledge presented. However, of critical importance in this study, with one exception, no follow-up from the *Teaching for Effective Learning* workshops was addressed by Atkin or any other agency.

Assistance for change may come from principals or senior staff, district personnel, parents or consultants (Fullan, 1991). However despite the extensive documentation on the need to support teachers, results in this study indicated that assistance for teachers was minimal. Only one of the 31 teachers reported having encouragement from her principal to not only implement aspects in her own classroom, but to work with other staff to do likewise. Through the support of her principal, the teacher in question conducted at least six staff meetings and implemented, throughout the school, some strategies which she had learned in the *Teaching for Effective Learning* workshops. Logan (1994) pointed out that the personal demands placed on teachers are increasing, and there are fewer opportunities for teachers to share ideas. If teachers have a reluctance to adopt new practices, they can avoid them by shutting the classroom door and quietly ignoring increasing demands for innovation. It seems imperative therefore that an articulated plan for inservice is built into a school's strategic plans, and contains structures which assist the change process over the long term, while taking account of, and building on, existing competent teacher practices.

Lack of collegial and administrative support has serious implication for policy makers. Australian reviews and investigations into professional development (Coulter & Ingvarson, 1985; Karmel, 1985; Schools Commission, 1988; Schools Council, 1990) highlighted the often weak connection between professional development programs, and school priorities. McCulla (1994) points out that locating staff professional development in a school's strategic plan would take into account the context in which changes will be made as a result of skills and knowledge learned in any inservice programs. Further, McCulla (1994) indicates that the reviews and reports criticised the lack of 'forward planning' for professional development, and the 'withdrawal', or off-site approaches to professional development, rather than a developmental approach which takes into consideration the context in which the teachers work. It is interesting to note that the teacher participants in the workshops which were the focus of this study, came to a central location from a number of schools; the teachers ranged in grade levels taught, from kindergarten to senior secondary level, and the workshop participants also included curriculum developers and educational consultants. The workshop therefore had no specific context in which to embed the concepts being taught.

The lack of connection between school strategic plans and professional development was highlighted in this study through the number of teachers who reported that they could not inform the rest of the staff about what they had experienced in the *Teaching for Effective Learning* workshops. Some teachers reported that their expectations of disseminating their ideas to the staff were not fulfilled because, on returning to their schools, they found that other commitments had priorities. Other teachers in the study reported having presented at staff meetings, but, with one exception, had done nothing beyond one or two staff meetings. Here again, principal support, or lack of it, is emphasised, for their support has a considerable bearing on teacher attitudes towards their follow-up obligations. Teachers can return to their schools with an assumption that they report to the staff, possibly in a one-off staff meeting, and in doing so perceive that they have fulfilled their obligations. On the other hand, as shown in one case in this study, a teacher will have the

expectation that what she or he learned in an inservice program will be disseminated in a structured way so that all may benefit. There is a considerable difference in the two attitudes and reflects the attitudes of the principals towards ensuring cost effectiveness of inservice programs.

## Conclusion

Data obtained from a study into a commercially provided inservice program has highlighted the multiple influences which impinge on the change process in schools, and the complexity of changing teacher practice. They have shown what makes a successful inservice program, and supports the literature in indicating that an inservice program, however successful, will not bring about change on its own. Success was shown to relate to practical and adaptable content which teachers deemed appropriate and which they could transfer to their classrooms without disruption to practices; it related to the sense of comfort teachers had with each other and with Atkin, and being provided with a language to describe their practices. Lack of clarity in documentation and lack of attention to the change process within the workshops may have worked against implementation, but data obtained illuminated what was probably a more significant reason for low levels of *vertical* transfer, that is, a lack of clear articulation of support from senior staff in schools, and minimal commitment on the part of principals to monitor the outcomes of their teachers attending the workshops.

Until this study was undertaken, there were no prior investigations of inservice teacher education programs presented by private providers, with a follow-up study of its implementation. In using a multi-method, multi-site approach to link an investigation of the inservice program with an investigation of its implementation, this study has produced accurate and extensive data which can inform policy makers in control of professional development funds, principals, senior staff or anyone involved in decision making regarding successful and the cost effectiveness of inservice programs and their implementation.

The critical examination of one such inservice program highlights the qualities which make a successful inservice program, but more importantly, to those factors which will lead to successful implementation. The study points out that, despite devolution of management to schools from central authorities, little had changed in terms of responsibility for ensuring that implementation occurred. In the present situation it can be seen that the resources and funding tends to be allocated towards inservice programs rather than towards implementation. This study would indicate that we need to redress the balance and allocate more funds to the process of implementation in order that workshops therefore can be deemed to be cost effective.

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