

ADDRESSING TRAINEES' CONCERNS IN A PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME FOR INNOVATIVE TEACHING AND LEARNING

Anthony Isabirye

Vaal University of Technology, South Africa

Kholeka Moloji

Vaal University of Technology, South Africa

-Abstract-

The aim of this study is to explore concerns of 10 academics at a university in South Africa who participated in an in-house professional development programme and recommend how such concerns could be addressed. Guided by the Concerns-Based Adoption Model (CBAM), a qualitative, interpretive research design was adopted. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews and analysed qualitatively. The results indicated that organisers of successful staff development programmes need to inform the participants (informational concerns) about the nature of the programme and to explain the impact of the programme on individual participants (personal concerns). Participants were also concerned about how the change due to training would be managed in practice (management concerns) and the consequences of the programme on the students (consequence concerns). The study confirmed that being aware of trainees' concerns enables programme organisers to give relevant assistance to individual trainees and reinforce attraction to the programme. It is recommend that concerns of trainees be addressed pre and during the process of training.

Key words: Staff development, Trainees, Concerns, Innovative teaching, Learning, Training

JEL Classification: I23, 46, 53, 36, 015

1. INTRODUCTION

With the rise of the Fourth Industrial Revolution that encompasses distinct velocity, scope and systems impact, we stand on the brink of a technological revolution that will fundamentally alter the way we live, work, teach, learn and relate to one another in institutions of higher education (Scwab, 2016; Poro, 2017). Professional development for academics is thus not only a necessary strategic goal for their personal growth and development but is also important for effective student learning, academic achievement as well as institutional relevance, positioning and success (Isabirye & Moloji, 2013; Isabirye & Moloji, 2014). The need for effective staff development programmes to equip academics with knowledge and skills to incorporate technology in their teaching cannot be questioned. According to Marwala (2017), the Fourth Industrial Revolution is giving us cyber-physical systems, where human beings and machines will merge. Therefore, universities need to be prepared for the internet era and a post-work society. The European Commission's Report of 2017 of the agenda for modernisation of higher education, states that higher education institutions are not contributing enough to innovation in the places they are located (European Commission, 2017). Europe's universities lag behind competitors in the US in pioneering international research (Marwala, 2017). They are also too often disconnected from the companies, public services and people in their own cities and regions. This means that their teaching and research activities are not being used to bring benefits to communities in which they operate (European Commission, 2017). The situation is not different in the South African higher education arena.

The use of technology in higher education today dictates that academics are developed and equipped with the knowledge and skills to incorporate different forms of technology into their lessons. Academics are now compelled to interact with their students and learning content using interactive multimedia learning materials in CD-ROM mode and on social media to ensure rich student learning experiences (Isabirye & Moloji, 2013; Isabirye, 2015). Academics are further required to innovate by successfully exploring new ideas, to improve teaching and learning experiences of students based on new ways of thinking and delivery of curriculum content (Marwala, 2017:1). What this implies is that today's academics now need basic training in the use of information and communication technologies. With the ensuing modernisation of higher education internationally, there is pressure to harness new modes of learning and teaching, enhance quality

because of shared, high-quality learning materials and more creative and individualised pedagogical approaches (European Commission, 2017). Academics should thus not only be conversant with the different types of software but also the workings and capabilities of such software to enhance student learning and achievement. Academics also require a combination of several other technological and pedagogical skills that could entail techniques for effective online teaching, evaluation of the quality of online learning programmes, use of technology in student assessment and integration of technology in classroom instruction (Bothwell, 2016). Indeed, Kearsley and Blomeyer (2004) are of the view that academics as teachers must be acquainted with all strategies that are associated with the effective use of technology in the classroom. The purpose of this article is to explore trainees' concerns in a professional development programme dubbed *Vutela* that was designed to incorporate technology in teaching and learning at a university in South Africa.

2. PROBLEM STATEMENT

Whilst the necessity of staff development for academics cannot be questioned (Isabirye & Moloji, 2013; Isabirye, 2015), there is a lacuna in the research that addresses academics' needs and concerns during staff development programmes. Several studies indicate that although professional development programme developers identify the knowledge and skills that are required by the academics to teach using technology, trainee needs and concerns during such training programmes are usually excluded. Behari- Leak (2016), for example, notes that new academics often confront specific challenges of exclusion, marginalisation and alienation at institutional, faculty and classroom levels. Mushemeza (2016) identified inadequate staff remuneration, high student enrolments with low staff-student ratios as some of the challenges regarding professional development. Burns (2015) argues that difficult working conditions, low status, gender bias and teaching in hierarchical conditions may prompt academics to resist any attempts to enhance increased professionalism, such as professional development, especially when they are not paid for extra hours or when they see professional development as not resulting in either improvements in their own practice or leading to promotion. Based on these observations, the research question to guide this study is: What are the needs and concerns of the academics participating in training programmes designed to incorporate technology into teaching and learning?

To answer this question, the researchers were guided by the concerns theory and concerns based adoption model.

3. THE CONCERNS THEORY AND CONCERNS BASED ADOPTION MODEL (CBAM) RESEARCH

According to the Concerns Based Adoption Model (CBAM) model, when an innovation like e-learning is introduced to teachers, they register several concerns during the process of training as they adopt the use of the innovation. Distinct categories of concerns develop as the trainee teachers become more and more familiar with the innovation. Hall, George and Rutherford (1979) hypothesised that concern is a mental state of activity that is present when an innovation is introduced to an adult population. Such an innovation could be the incorporation of teaching strategies in technological platforms like Blackboard, Moodle, Web CT, AVA, to mention a few.

Teachers' early concerns begin with stage 0, a level of non-use with a focus on self-concerns, while the next two stages, 1 and 2, also focus on self-concerns. As the innovation begins to take hold and become implemented, the self-concerns of stages 0, 1 and 2 progress to the management concerns of stage 3. Subsequently, in stages 4, 5 and 6, these move into impact concerns. The adopter then turns away from focusing on individual concerns to concerns related to the logistics of how to manage the innovation, time, available resources and management concerns. Management concerns also involve connecting the use of the innovation to interaction facilitation with others who are using the innovation.

Horsley and Loucks-Horsley (1998) observe that when teachers use a model programme after training, they often change the procedures and strategies to suit either their own interests or those of their students, necessitating the use of an innovation configuration. Innovation configurations, therefore, represent teachers' patterns of use of the innovation during the implementation phase. It is vital that these trainees are examined at the end of the training to ensure that they use the innovation appropriately. Innovation configurations can be used not only to measure the implementation of the programme but also to monitor the adoption of the programme. In this case, Horsley and Loucks-Horsley (1998) indicate that it can be used to show parts of the model, which teachers may be using incorrectly or leaving out as they implement the new innovation. This is vital since it gives trainers and facilitators clues regarding the type of assistance the teachers, as adopters of the new technology, may require and didactic strategies needed to be incorporated in the course design for a technological platform (Bothwell,2016).

4. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

A qualitative research design of a phenomenological genre was used to guide the study. To bring to the fore essential themes that explain the academics' needs and concerns, the following phenomenology was used.

4.1 Giorgi's phenomenological psychology

Giorgi and Giorgi (2003), and Giorgi's (2009) phenomenology focuses on capturing, as accurately as possible, ways in which phenomena is experienced. Adopting Giorgi's phenomenology meant taking into consideration the four major qualities upon which it is based. It is descriptive, it uses reduction, looks for essences and focuses on intentionality (Giorgi, 2009). It was necessary to identify and follow the naïve descriptions as given by the respondents while taking into consideration the context in which the descriptions were made (Giorgi, 2009; Giorgi & Giorgi, 2003). Bracketing all our preconceived notions and prejudices about academics' concerns at the institution, phenomenological reduction was ensured. Thus the researchers assumed a position of disinterested scientists to obtain descriptions of untainted concerns as described by the participants (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Sadala & Adorno, 2002).

4.2 Participants and data collection

The researchers purposefully selected 10 academics who met specific criteria of having participated in staff development programmes and having been in the university's employment for at least three years. Data were collected through face-to-face interviews to ensure adequate data to generate thick descriptions (Englander, 2012; Giorgi, 2009; Gall, Gall and Borg, 2007). In-depth semi-structured interviews were used to collect research-specific data. The interviews were audio recorded, transcribed verbatim and prepared for analysis (Srivastava & Hopwood, 2009).

4.3 Data analysis

Data were analysed following Giorgi's (2009) method of phenomenological data analysis. To familiarise ourselves with what the respondents had said, the recordings were listened to several times. This was followed by verbatim transcriptions. Reading the transcriptions enabled the researchers identify what is referred to as meaning units; words, phrases, or para-linguistic communication, which express a unique and coherent meaning (Giorgi, 2009; Giorgi & Giorgi, 2003). The identified meaningful units were separated and organised through a

process called coding, putting those units with similar meanings into different clusters. Once all the above steps had been applied to all the 10 transcripts, it was possible to document the respondents' concerns. Each cluster was given a name that reflected the general meaning of all the units within it. These names constituted the themes of the study.

4.4 Credibility

To ensure credibility of the research, a clear and sensible link connecting each step of the research from data collection to reporting of findings was provided. Information was not only presented systematically but was also interpreted based on empirical findings. Any personal assumptions and pre-conceived ideas about academics' concerns were acknowledged in advance to avoid tainting data and research findings (Maritz & Visagie, 2010)

4.5 Ethical considerations

Permission to conduct the research was sought and obtained from the university's Ethical Research Committee. Academics' participation in the study was voluntary and every participant was accorded the latitude to withdraw from the study if they wished to do so. To obtain informed consent, the purpose of the study was communicated to the participants in writing. All participants were assured that the information sought was not to be used for any other purpose but to advance scholarly research and enhance scientific findings in the field and that they would remain anonymous.

5. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This study explored concerns of academics who participated in a staff development programme for innovative teaching and learning at a university in South Africa. Ten participants coded as P1 to P10 took part in the study. The respondents' concerns about the training programme manifested in several themes that emerged during data analysis. These themes constituted the findings of this study and are captured in the table below.

Table 1: Units of meaning and themes reflecting academics' concerns

Units of meaning	General themes
P 2 : I think lecturers should be involved and be part of the decisions concerning introduction of new approaches to teaching P 7: Facilitators should initially have explained why we needed to transit from what we are used to, to Vutela. P 10: Our feelings and views about the use of technology in teaching should have been initially solicited.	<i>Information concerns</i>
P1: <i>Me, I did not like the way we were mixed up in training.</i> P5: <i>Am personally concerned about the waste of teaching time</i> P6: <i>I feel not much information is given to us about the programme.</i> P8: <i>It would have been better for programme organisers to divide that trainees into two groups.</i>	<i>Individuals' concerns.</i>
P 8: <i>Are we going to prepare new learning materials for our students?</i> P 9: <i>Am attending the Vutela workshop for the second time but still I fee</i> P 9: <i>...no follow up to make sure that lecturers implement what they learn,</i>	<i>Programme management concerns</i>
P1: I cannot effectively use the skills I got from the workshop P8: Many of us cannot use Vutela as a teaching plat form. P 10: In my department only, x can effectively use features the Vutela plat form P2: Im concerned that it is impossible to monitor and assess learners online.	<i>Consequence concerns</i>
P7: There was no time for practical activities. P3: Programmes are conducted as workshops. This too short to perfect the skills needed. P2: We needed more time to master the necessary skills. P4: The presenters were too fast in their presentations	<i>Time concerns</i>

5.1 Informational concerns (inadequate information)

As reflected in Table 1, participants were concerned about a number of issues that have major implications for professional development. They did not only want to know how long the training programme would last, but also its usefulness in terms of making their teaching easier. Furthermore, since participants were full-time lecturers, they were concerned about the loss of teaching time, since the training

programmes were scheduled to take place during normal teaching time. The possibility of lecturers' failure to effectively use the innovation after training and the students' inability to use technology featured prominently in the respondents' responses. Furthermore, the participants felt that they were excluded from the programme as no discussions were engaged into between management and them.

The following excerpts vividly capture the respondents' informational concerns.

P2: Managements does not tell us in advance how long the workshops will take. We are given the programme on the day of training. Sometime s it is one day workshop and at times it is an entire week..... and I think lecturers should have been in.... the decisions concerning introduction of new approaches to teaching

P5: am personally concerned about the waste of teaching time. The programmes interfere with our core business; I mean teaching. It is worse when the programme runs for the whole day.

P6: When you ask me how I feel about the Vutela training, I feel not much information is given to us about the programme. There is need for CPD department to let us know in advance how the training will be conducted. Issue like how long it will last, the time it take us. At times we are trained but our students can themselves log in Vutela. They lack the skills and knowledge to do so. And another thing is that many of us find it difficult to use Vutela as a tool of teaching. The training is too short. One cannot learn in just a single day

P7: Facilitators should initially have explained why we needed to transit from what we are used to, to Vutela.

P10: This training is somehow imposed by the university. All lecturers are urged to attend the training sessions whether they like it or not. Our feelings and views about the use of technology in teaching should have been initially solicited.

It is important that during the information stage (stage 1) more details about the training programme in the form of characteristics, effects and requirements for participation are given to the participants. According to Isabirye (2015) and Dickhauser, Butler and Tonjes (2007), such information could be given during an orientation phase of the training, for it does not only raise potential trainees' awareness of the programme, but also clarifies the needed skills and competencies. Isabirye (2015) further notes numerous issues that must be attended to prior to the commencement of training. Potential trainees do not only have to be given a clear picture of what the entire training is all about but must be given

the alacrity to take part in the planning of the programme. Before commencement, the facilitator should solicit and address the respondents' concerns, clearly explain the reasons and benefits of the programme, explore and acknowledge respondents' prior experiences and knowledge and ensure trainees' total buy-in into the training programme.

5.2 Individual concerns

Analysed data indicated that apart from the need for information regarding various issues concerning the training, participants raised several issues that were coded "personal concerns". For instance, whilst all academics were required to attend and master how to integrate technology into teaching, the department of Continuous Academic Development (CAD), as sponsors of the programme, did not ascertain the level at which each trainee was regarding the use of technology in teaching. Consequently, during the training, participants who did not have experience regarding the use of technology in teaching felt that there should have been an introductory session for those who were not familiar with how technology worked in teaching.

The following excerpts vividly capture most of the participants concerns regarding this issue.

P1: Me, I did not like the way we were mixed up in training. There were those who were familiar with using technology, the young ones and us, I should say me who was born before technology. I did not know how to do it. The practical work on the web, I mean using those tools on Vutela was not for one without prior knowledge. Trainers should have given us our own training at different times to save us the embarrassment during those times when we failed to do relatively "simple" tasks.

P8: It would have been better for programme organisers to divide that trainees into two groups; those who had an idea and us who were learning how to use computers in teaching for the first time

P10: My major concern was being trained together with colleagues whose computer proficiency was far superior to me. I lagged behind at all times and I never mastered what I was meant to master during the three days of training

We found that the above finding is contrary to the dictates of the CBAM model. Among several other recommendations, the CBAM model indicates that professional development practitioners must establish the stage at which the

trainees are and address the relevant questions before the training. This could probably be done through a skills audit of the potential trainees. Isabirye (2015), Isabirye and Makoe (2018) observe that such an audit could establish potential trainees' knowledge and skills level, enabling the facilitator to group and train the participants according to their skills level. Because such an audit was not done, participants who were not familiar with the use of technology in teaching were concerned and wondered how long it would take them to become proficient in using the innovation. The participants further questioned why they should have been mixed together with those who had more skills in the use of technology. It is no wonder then that Botha and Coetzee (2012) emphasise the need for trainers to establish not only what trainees are supposed to do, but also what they can do before commencement of any training programme.

Therefore, it would appear in this case that the sponsors of the programme were more concerned with the process of training the participants before addressing their personal concerns. According to Isabirye, (2015) and Isabirye and Makoe (2018), introducing technology in teaching is bound to produce difficulties if potential trainees' initial concerns are not addressed. Issues regarding why the programme is personally important to all participants and why reluctant individuals should take part in it have to be addressed. It is only after this general awareness of the programme/ innovation and cultivation of interest in learning, that participants may embrace the programme willingly and enthusiastically. Addressing concerns at this level is vital in any innovation programme for, as Hall and Hord (1987) note, potential trainees seek out information regarding the innovation and will take no action without the sought information.

5.3 Management concerns

Regarding management concerns, participants raised several issues, which if not answered, had the potential to derail the training programme and render it ineffective. Whilst they showed interest in *Vutela* as an innovation, they were concerned about the processes and tasks of using it. Participants wondered how efficient the innovation would be compared to traditional teaching. They were also concerned about how it would have been managed, the time they would take uploading learning resources on *Vutela* and how best they could make use of it. Since *Vutela* was an innovation, respondents' concerns also related to the impact it would have on students. This was particularly prevalent against the backdrop that most of the students, especially the first years, were not exposed sufficiently to the use of technology. P8s views in this regard epitomise most of the

respondents' views. In a question that solicited P8s views about the innovation, the participant stated thus:

"... I don't have a problem with Vutela (innovation) as such. But my concern is what is involved in the process of using it to enhance our teaching. Are we going to prepare new learning materials for our students? What will it take for us to upload all our resources on the Vutela plat form? How about our students will they be able to use it....many especially firs years are not proficient computer users. Will they be able to log in, answer and submit their assignments? How much time shall we need to develop materials compatible with Vutela actually there are many things that require clarity if this training has to work for us and the students.

Echoing the sentiments of P8, P9 further wondered how management would ensure that trained individuals coordinate and cooperate among themselves as teachers regarding the use of innovation to sharpen the acquired skills. (S)he also wished that participants would be able to explore other more effective alternatives as opposed to focusing on *Vutela* as the only way through which effective teaching and learning could be achieved. In his/her words, the participant stated thus:

"... am attending the Vutela workshop for the second time but still I feel am not proficient enough to implement what I have learned. I wonder if there could be a system where quick adaptors like X (name withheld for confidentiality) and all those who are good at using the platform could cooperate with the rest of us to help us horn home the learned skills'.

P9s response explicitly raises the issue of creation of supportive relationships within the trainees. However, support, as indicated by P7, was also needed from the university. The respondent indicated that though the training programme had been started some years back, he was concerned that it was not as effective as he thought it should have been. The respondent attributed this to lack of university support. In his own words:

"Many of us have attended workshops on Vutela several times for the last two years ...but we are still not using the plat form."

Asked why he was not yet proficient in the use of the *Vutela* platform, P9 stated thus:

“There are several reasons; one there is no follow up to make sure that lecturers implement what they learn, two, the university does not have clear policies regarding the use of Vutela. Lecturers that are proficient in the use of it do use the platform. Those who are not don’t use it. So the university has to do something in terms of supporting the lecturers, give clear policies and resources like that.

The respondent went further to explain that he was also concerned that not many students are willing to use the *Vutela* platform since they did not have the know-how.

This finding reveals two major issues regarding teacher professional development, namely the need for university management support and the need for cooperation and support among trainees as a supportive mechanism. The finding confirms the postulates of the CBAM model as explained by Horsley & Loucks-Horsley (1998) and the findings of a recent research by Isabirye & Makoe (2018). Horsley and Loucks-Horsley (1998) indicate that the concern for trainees to cooperate and collaborate is a major one and has to be explored and attended to prior to the implementation of an innovation like *Vutela*. Such collaboration and cooperation work as supportive mechanisms for the trainees (Isabirye, 2015; Isabirye & Makoe, 2018). It is vital, therefore, that during training, a supportive context consisting of university management trainees, students and university support staff is created to enhance learning and implementation of an innovation (Hemmington, 2009; Leu & Ginsburg, 2011). This means that trainees are not only interested in finding out how the use of an innovation affect their students, but also in establishing how they would relate to each other during the training and implementation phases of the programme.

5.4 Consequence concerns

Regarding consequence concerns, participants wondered how the innovation would impact on their students. While they agreed that the use of the *Vutela* platform was supposed to make teaching and learning easier and more effective, they did not see how the platform could be used by students to write essay type questions and how they themselves would assess certain exercises on the new platform. Although all 10 participants had at one time or another attended a workshop designed to train them to teach online, they still struggled to plan, monitor and assess learners online. It was important that by the end of the training the participants were able to effectively apply the acquired skills and knowledge,

commit to teaching using the platform, collaborate and support each other as academics, continuously refine their e-teaching skills and effectively use the relevant online teaching software.

It is no wonder, therefore, that some of the participants questioned the relevance of the innovation for students and evaluation of student outcomes. The following excerpts capture some of the participants concerns in this regard:

P1: My question is how the introduction of the Vutela plat form will affect the standards. Shall we be able to assess the students through essay writing?

P7: I participated in the training last year and I was assisted to upload some of my resources and assessments; but only multiple-choice questions were uploaded. I wonder if it will be possible to upload other forms of assessment.

P10: I uploaded my PowerPoint slides and multiple-choice questions. The students can do the questions and marking can take place immediately, but we cannot do essay marking on the plat form!

P5: It is okay to train how to use the innovation, but I feel that it has to be used together with the traditional way of teaching. It alone could even be irrelevant because how do we evaluate the student outcomes. We can not only do it using multiple choice questions. We need a variety of assessment methods. This may be impossible on this plat form.

The issues of relevance and evaluation as raised by the participants in the study often come up during the adoption of innovations (Isabirye, 2015). However, they are normally addressed during training. It would appear in this case that relevance and student evaluations, as raised by participants, were not addressed. According to the CBAM model, as presented by Horsley & Loucks-Horsley (1998), during training, facilitators should allow participants to explore other ways to use the innovation and even improve upon it. The focus during this stage is thus more on exploration of universal benefits from the innovation.

5.4 Time concerns

Analysed data revealed that time was a major concern for all those who participated in the programme. Participants were concerned that during the workshop, not enough time was apportioned to practical activities and the training programmes were in the form of workshops that lasted for just a single day. Furthermore, participants indicated that they needed more time to master the skills required to teach using the online platform, *Vutela*. They also lamented the speed

of the programme by presenters who did not give them enough time to reflect and master the skills required. In their own words they stated thus:

P7: There was no time for practical activities. You see a programme like this one should be practical. So, we needed more practical activities but because of time there were hardly any; and this worked to our disadvantage.

P3: Programmes are conducted as workshops. For me this is a major concern because it gives not enough time for us to learn. Workshops are conducted in just a day or half a day. This is too short to perfect the skills needed.

P2: We needed more time to master the necessary skills. Using computers can at times be intimidating, especially for some of the lecturers whose proficiency in their use is poor. So, there was need for more time if learning was to be effective.

P4: The presenters were too fast in their presentations for some of us. I personally take long to figure out issues, especially if they are to do with technology. Even a mere smart phone bothers me when it comes to setting it. So, my major concern was the fastness of the facilitator. He was a young man who assumed that all of us would keep up with his pace. I couldn't. I had to excuse myself and I left the training session.

It became evident that enough time is necessary for the success of any professional development programme. Indeed Isabirye (2015) and Isabirye & Makoe (2018) argue that there is need to give enough time to every phase of a professional development programme if such a programme has to be implemented successfully. In a study that explored lecturers' experiences during a training programme, Isabirye (2015) discovered that short training interventions in the form of one-day workshops may not lead to improved trainees' performance, as change in teachers' ways of teaching does not occur overnight. Addressing this concern, therefore, means that rather than conducting professional development programmes in the form of short workshops and seminars, programmes should be longer to enable participants to master the taught skills.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

Given the findings of this study, it is recommended that academics, as potential participants in training programmes of this nature, should be fully involved in decisions leading to the implementation of the development programmes. It is envisaged that this will empower them with all information related to the programme, making them willing participants. Such involvement will thus take care of the trainees' information and individual concerns. Regarding time

concerns, it is proposed that more time be apportioned to training programmes as a whole and that participants be allowed more time to execute hands-on activities during training sessions. This is because learning to teach using platforms like *Vutela* and mastering techniques like uploading study materials, online assessments, using graphics, diagrams and close-up of pictures requires extensive time. Participants wondered whether their training would have a positive impact on students' outcomes (consequence concerns). Considering this finding, it is recommended that university management establishes a mechanism to gauge the impact of staff development programmes, not only on the students' outcome but also on academics' instructional behaviour. Regarding management concerns, it is recommended that university management plays an active role to enable trained staff to manage and use the *Vutela* platforms to enhance technology incorporation in teaching. In this regard, the authors feel that IT staff should constantly get in touch with academics to support them with any *Vutela*-related challenges.

Incorporation of technology into teaching is meant to enhance quality student learning and positive learning outcomes. This research focused on only academics' concerns without soliciting those of students, university management and personnel in the unit for continuous academic development. These concerns could also impact on academics' professional development. Therefore, there is a need to establish the concerns of other stakeholders and establish how they impact on professional development programmes and student performance. It is also important for future researchers to undertake quantitative studies to establish how the identified concerns in this study impact academics' development in other contexts.

7. CONCLUSION

This paper explored the concerns and needs of 10 academics who participated in a professional development programme for innovative teaching and learning at a South African university. It emerged that whilst the sponsors of the programme identified the required knowledge and skills for academics to teach innovatively, they disregarded the trainees' needs and concerns, which were found to be vital for the successful implementation of the training programme. Such concerns related to, among others, lack of information about the programme, programme management and implementation, time and personal issues experienced by the trainees. It was recommended, therefore, that if programme sponsors have to successfully implement a training programme, they should take cognisance thereof and attend to trainees' needs and concerns during and after the training.

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