

Factors Related to the Development of the Consumer Studies Teaching Portfolio

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The study explored the factors namely skills, benefits, and teaching and learning activities that related to the development of the teaching portfolio in the field of Consumer Studies. Teachers had to select the factors related to the development of the teaching portfolio. Presentation skills and critical thinking received the highest response rate for skills. The benefits of assessing strengths and weaknesses, and making evaluation more meaningful were highlighted by the teachers. None of the factors were omitted by the teachers which indicated that all the factors were relevant when compiling a teaching portfolio at varying levels of importance.

The portfolio, a factual description of a teacher's major strengths and teaching achievements, portrays the teacher's role as an individual, a professional, and reflective practitioner (Xu, 2004; Campbell & Brummet, 2002; Darling, 2001; Painter, 2001; Seldin, 1993). Factors such as skills, activities, and benefits of the teaching portfolio should therefore be considered when compiling it.

A teaching portfolio, a tool of teacher evidence, records the process of assessment and contains various methods of assessments of learners' achievements evaluated according to the purpose of the program, unit, or lesson. The portfolio contains thoughtfully chosen teaching activities supported by evidence to portray its effectiveness (Darling, 2001; Painter, 2001; Seldin, 2000), and which collectively suggest the scope and quality of a teacher's teaching performance. The portfolio serves as a developmental process that requires a teacher to reflect on and improve his/her teaching practice, and is also an assessment product for personnel and professional development, such as permanent status, promotion or a teaching award (Delandshere & Arens, 2003; Campell & Brummet, 2002; Mues & Sorcinelli, 2000). In South Africa, the teaching portfolio contains all the instructions, assessment criteria, and rubrics pertaining to all the continuous assessment (CASS) tasks set for learners (Western Cape Education Department, 2001).

Besides the teaching portfolio being a developmental process, various factors such as skills, activities, and benefits can be developed during portfolio development. Skills developed during the compilation of a teaching portfolio include self-assessment, and improved the understanding of concepts and attitudes towards learning and assessment in the classroom (Slater, 1997) and setting of goals (Apple & Shimo, 2002). Robinson and Bennett (n.d.) indicated that skills such as self-reflection and evaluation, critical thinking, motivation, higher cognitive skill development, skills integration, and enhanced student performance were also developed while compiling a portfolio.

Self-evaluation, a benefit required for portfolio development, entails evaluation of a teacher's performance in the classroom in terms of strengths and weaknesses, and indicates how the teacher has performed against a set of criteria or standards (Klenowski, 2002). Critical thinking, another benefit of portfolio development, encourages teachers to think deeply and critically which can generate questions of clarification of their teaching practice (Khan and Begum, 2012).

Activities related to the development of a portfolio include professional development and beliefs about teaching and learning. It is a useful tool for professional growth in that it encourages self-reflection by teachers on their work (Attinello, Lare, & Waters, 2006; Xu, 2003). The portfolio process provides a sense of empowerment in terms of professional development, indicating that teachers are able to make decisions about the types of professional development required (Attinello et al., 2006). Ford and Ohlhausen (1991) indicated that the inclusion of portfolio assessment in a course helped to change beliefs about assessment. It can be concluded that portfolio development had positive effects for skills, benefits, and activities.

Teachers realize the importance of all the components of a portfolio. Reflection, as a component and a skill (Xu, 2003; Zeichner & Wray, 2001; Mues & Sorcinelli, 2000), is encouraged during portfolio development. Assessment as a component in portfolio development is a way to monitor and measure progress, through documentation of the process of learning or change as it occurs (Sewell, Marczak & Horn, n.d) The assembling of the portfolio is important because its primary objective is to assemble a teaching portfolio that is coherent, attractive, and a functional whole, irrespective of its function as material for a job interview or personal development (Campbell & Brummet, 2002). Teachers find the skills, activities, and benefits of a teaching portfolio has varying importance to them. Presentation skills as a skill for the portfolio have the highest response, followed by assessment of strengths and weaknesses as a benefit, and finally assessment methods as an activity.

Although teaching portfolios are a valuable tool for teacher development there are hindrances to its development. Time is a factor of concern in every aspect of the compilation of the teaching portfolio. Teachers feel that compiling teaching portfolios is a time consuming process (Ford & Ohlhausen, 1991; Apple & Shimo, 2002; Tigelaar, Dolmans, De Grave, Wolfhagen & Van der Vleuten, 2006; Wray, 2007; Kocoglu, 2008). Time is consumed by reflection, conversation, and collecting evidence for the teaching portfolio (Attinello et al., 2006), which could more constructively be used on lesson planning (Attinello et al., 2006; Tigelaar et al., 2006). Teachers see the portfolio as an additional task, increasing their workload (Attinello et al., 2006). Rigidity of structure is also a hindrance to portfolio development (Tigelaar et al., 2006). Wray (2007) indicated instructions about the type of evidence to be included in the portfolio, its purpose, the assessment criteria, and its organizational strategy can be vague. These hindrances were also experienced by students in a study conducted by Apple and Shimo (2002).

Conceptual Framework

“For continuous reflection, portfolio development is an effective tool” (Khan and Begum, 2012, p. 372). Reflection is a compulsory exercise for teachers during the compilation of a teaching portfolio (Tigelaar et al., 2006; Attinello et al., 2006). Anderson & DeMeulle (1998) indicated that the development of a teaching portfolio promoted reflection which allowed teachers to think about their work in a deep and more meaningful way, and facilitated learning, and “facilitates improvement in professional practice” (Kocoglu, 2008). It produced teachers that were more knowledgeable about matters related to the complexities of teaching and about understanding that learning is an ongoing process. Thoughtful reflection about the content that is to be placed in a teaching portfolio is the key to portfolio success (Painter, 2001). Without reflection the teaching portfolio would be a scrapbook filled with artifacts, showing little evidence of a teacher’s intellectual and professional ideas (Painter, 2001; Wyatt & Looper, 2004). The reflection stage of portfolio development makes the process authentic, because the teacher has to state the value of each artifact that is placed in the portfolio (Wyatt & Looper, 2004)

Aspects to be considered when reflecting upon artifacts to be placed in a teaching portfolio include:

1. Consider the reason for the item being selected.
2. The artifact selected should display evidence of a teacher's growth and success against one or more of the performance standards.
3. Consider that readers who will be scrutinizing the portfolio out of context should see the reasons for including a particular piece of evidence.
4. Do the chosen artifacts reflect the teacher's professional growth and accomplishments?
5. The artifacts must represent who the person is as a teacher.

To add value to these artifacts teachers should also include a narrative statement or set of reflections that will give the reader insight into what the teacher has learned about him/herself and about the process of teaching and learning (Painter, 2001; Lyons, 1999). Reflective thinking about the content of the portfolio requires thoughts about a teacher's actions, experiences, strengths, and weaknesses about his or her teaching practice (Çimer and Palic, 2012) and can therefore improve teaching.

The most reflective teachers want feedback, initiate problem-solved difficulties, initiate various solutions, effectively learn from their learners, and focus on the dynamic life of the classroom (Willard-Holt & Bottomley, 2000). This correlation between reflection and teacher effectiveness emulates Braun and Crumpler's (2004) notion that reflective teachers have developed the ability to think about their teaching behaviours and the contexts in which they occur. This implies that these teachers can look back on past events, make judgments about them, and modify their teaching practices and beliefs based on the needs of their learners.

Review of Related Literature

Value of Reflection in Portfolio Development

Respondents in a study by Chitpin & Simon (2009, p. 285) stated that they "found constructing the professional portfolio and reflecting on it to be 'an incredibly valuable' experience." Reflection allowed teachers to think about their professional development against set goals and to reflect upon them continuously by modifying existing goals or setting new ones (Chitpin & Simon, 2009). Further, reflection changed their habitual practices and would determine things that worked or that were unsuccessful. Teachers thought of better ideas to improve that had previously been taken for granted. Reflection allowed teachers at various stages of their careers to look within themselves and ask questions about career choice and goals (Xu, 2003).

Reflection during portfolio development allows teachers to examine their teaching practices (Xu, 2003; Zeichner & Wray, 2001; Mues & Sorcinelli, 2000) which provides the opportunity for change in teaching strategies. It is a teacher's responsibility to select, explain and document his or her teaching performance by reflecting on the evidence chosen for the portfolio (Zeichner & Wray, 2001). Chapman, Pettway and White (2001) stated that reflection encouraged teachers to think about teaching techniques, learning styles, content of instruction sessions, and evaluation of teaching styles.

Influence of Reflection on Teaching

In a study by Parker, Ndoeye and Ritzhaupt (2012), respondents indicated that the reflections allowed them to develop an improved understanding of their work and develop focus areas to improve their effectiveness as a teacher. In another study by Maat and Zakaria (2010) reflection identified teachers' strengths and weaknesses in their teaching practice and

it motivated them to improve their teaching skills. This improvement took place by improving their presentation skills or by giving the best of themselves to their learners. Williard-Holt and Bottomley (2000) stated that the most reflective teachers were the most effective ones. These reflective teachers showed effectiveness in various areas of their teaching practice. Firstly, the goal of their lessons was for them to learn from their own lessons, and their learners learned more about the topic being taught. Secondly, the planning of their lessons included in-depth and over planning of all aspects of the lesson, flexibility in their lesson, and the ability to alter lessons according to learners' needs. Thirdly, they possessed problem-solving skills because they had insight into problems that arose during their lesson and its causes, and effectively implemented various solutions to these problems. Lastly, the focus of these teachers was on the dynamics that took place during the lesson addressing needs of individual learners instead of on themselves. Therefore, these studies promote reflection as a tool to improve teacher quality. However, there were setbacks or limitations while teachers developed a teaching portfolio and doing reflection on it.

Limitations to Reflection in Portfolio Development

A few setbacks when developing the portfolio are that teachers find it time consuming (Kocoglu, 2008; Anderson & DeMeulle, 1998) and overwhelming (Chitpin & Simon, 2009) due to the preparation of the items to be placed in the portfolio and its appearance (Kocoglu, 2008). Understanding the portfolio concept such as its purpose, logistics, and value of using it is a setback too (Breault, 2004; Anderson & DeMeulle, 1998; Wade and Yarbrough, 1996). Buy-in from teaching staff (Breault, 2004; Anderson & DeMeulle, 1998), lack of consistency in the interpretation of writing the reflections, the development of the portfolio, and support during this process were setbacks (Yao, Aldrich, Foster & Pecina, 2009). Wade and Yarbrough (1996) identified several setbacks when a teaching portfolio is developed, namely presentation and explanation of the portfolio process, lack of exposure to the portfolio process, expectations about education coursework, and lack of effort in the construction of the portfolio. Besides setbacks to the development of a portfolio there are setbacks to reflection upon the teaching portfolio.

These setbacks included lack of familiarity with the concept of reflection, lack of in-service training and time, a heavy workload, lack of student motivation and achievement, absence of constructive and logical criticism, and inadequate collaboration among colleagues (Çimer & Palic, 2012). Lack of coaching can inhibit the reflection process if coaches or mentors do not explain the types of questions that should be asked when reflecting on the teaching portfolio (Driessen, Van Tartwijk, Overeem, Vermunt, & Van der Vleuten, 2005). These setbacks can inhibit reflection which is a crucial aspect of portfolio development and stunt teacher quality and growth. Despite these setbacks, portfolio development can improve the quality of a teacher's work.

Influence of Portfolio Development on Teacher Quality/Behaviour

“A portfolio, being a colourful collection of a teacher's work, shows the interest, strengths, effort, and goals of the teacher to see how he/she thinks, feels, works and changes over a period time” (Khan & Begum, 2012, p. 368). Portfolio development allowed teachers to formulate their teaching practice, assists them to articulate their identity as teachers and identify their strengths and areas of growth (Khan & Begum, 2012; Chitpin & Simon, 2009). Teachers are aware that the chosen artifacts placed in a portfolio reflect their skills as teachers (Kocoglu, 2008) and are evidence of the experiences and learning that displays the practice of effective teachers (Khan & Begum, 2012).

Components of a Teaching Portfolio

The intention of the teaching portfolio should be clear when selecting artifacts as it will influence the type of content and organization of the portfolio (Wyatt & Looper, 2004). To make a teaching portfolio meaningful, the learning outcomes, assessment standards, captions, and written commentary should accompany each portfolio artifact, explaining the content, so that the reader understands the reason for its inclusion and the complex thinking behind the teaching process. Therefore “a portfolio collection should be purposeful, selective, diverse, ongoing, reflective and collaborative exercise” (Wyatt & Looper, 2004, p. 43).

The various components of a teaching portfolio include creating and assembling the portfolio with relevant materials, reflection, assessment, and the portfolio’s sustainability with emphasis on its creativity (Smith, Cook, Faulkner & Peers, n.d.). The creation and assembling of portfolio artifacts is a physical product that display a professional collection of materials that represent an important period of training and professional development (Kocoglu, 2008).

Factors Related to the Development of the Teaching Portfolio

Self-Evaluation and Self-Reflection

Chapman et al. (2001) uses the term self-reflection, a major benefit of portfolio development which involves analyzing whether the goals and outcomes set by teachers have been achieved or not, and the reasons for this state of affairs. Part of the process of self-reflection is the self-selection about artifacts to be placed in the teaching portfolio. The selection of evidence is a learning process, because when the teacher evaluates his or her performance, strengths and weaknesses are identified with the intention of improving the teacher’s learning outcomes or goals (Klenowski, 2002). It is under each teacher’s control to collect evidence for the portfolio (Chapman et al., 2001).

Self-Assessment and Professional Development

Compiling a teaching portfolio is a self-assessment activity, because through collecting evidence for the portfolio, the teacher recognizes areas providing strong, ample evidence of meeting professional standards, as well as areas of the teaching portfolio that lack the necessary evidence. Recognition of the weak areas could motivate the teacher to pursue professional development in these particular areas (Riggs & Sandlin, 2000).

When compiling the portfolio, the teacher has the opportunity to reflect on teaching practice and teaching standards. Thus the teaching portfolio should be assembled in such a way that it displays who the teacher is and his/her experiences and feelings about teaching. The documents in the teaching portfolio will sanction the individual's teaching, application, and organizational skills. Teachers should bear in mind that the professional self is mirrored in the teaching portfolio (Wyatt & Looper, 2004). The teaching portfolio is “first and foremost a tool to support teacher learning” (Painter, 2001) and is a process that is self-developed and promotes continual self-review of the teacher (Riggs & Sandlin, 2000).

Through developing a teaching portfolio teachers are obligated to think about the beliefs and practices conducted in the classroom and to identify discrepancies between beliefs and teaching practices. Teachers who are able to articulate their beliefs are able to justify and reflect on their own practices. They are also able to share teaching practices with colleagues and are prepared to research various methods to improve instruction and support for learners. Riggs & Sandlin (2000) state that the teaching portfolio documents and stimulates the professional development of a teacher. Therefore, it can serve as a link to individualized goal setting.

Goal Setting

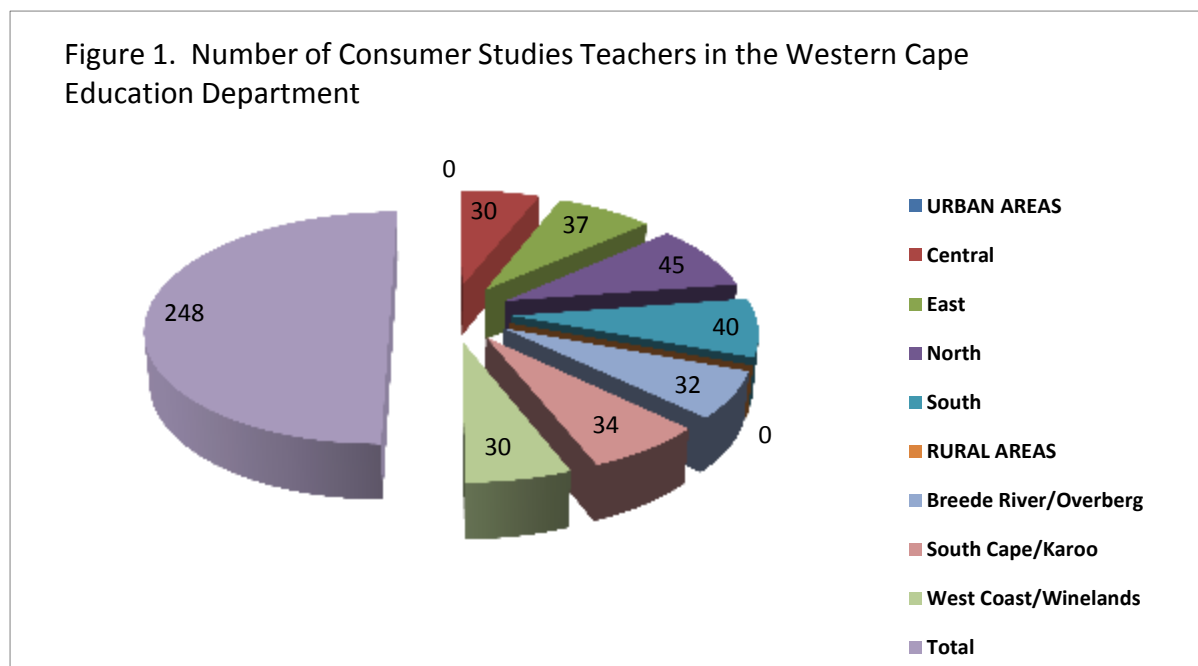
The teaching portfolio should show evidence of teachers' goals and standards to be demonstrated in the classroom (Lyons, 1999). Each goal identified in the teaching portfolio should be accompanied by a plan of action, in other words, the teacher must envisage a specific way of how each goal will be achieved. The goals set should document ways in which teaching in the classroom will be improved (Seldin, Annis & Zubizaretta, 1995). Setting goals while developing a teaching portfolio allows a teacher to reflect on teaching practices.

Purpose of the Study

The objective of this study was to determine the factors that were related to the development of a Consumer Studies teaching portfolio. Factors included the skills and activities required to develop a teaching portfolio and the benefits gained from developing a portfolio.

Method

The survey method was utilized. The Consumer Studies teachers of the seven Educational Management Development Centres (EMDC) (Figure 1) in the Western Cape Education Department constituted the population. Each EMDC has a specific number of schools that were grouped according to their location in the province.



The Research Instrument

A questionnaire designed by Gordon (1998) titled "Vocational education teachers' perceptions of their use of assessment methods" was adapted and used. The questionnaire included questions about demographics of the participants and the factors related to the development of the Consumer Studies teaching portfolio. The questionnaire included a list of the skills, activities, and benefits which was predetermined by the researcher. Teachers could tick off more than one in each category and they could include any additional skills, activities and benefits that they felt required developing a portfolio. The questionnaire was voluntarily completed by 145 Consumer Studies teachers at the cluster meetings in each district.

Data Analysis

Data was analyzed through the Statistical Analysis Software (SAS) using frequencies and displayed in a graphical format. The mean responses were ranked in descending order and presented in a figure format. The various groups of factors namely skills, activities, and benefits were determined by the questionnaire.

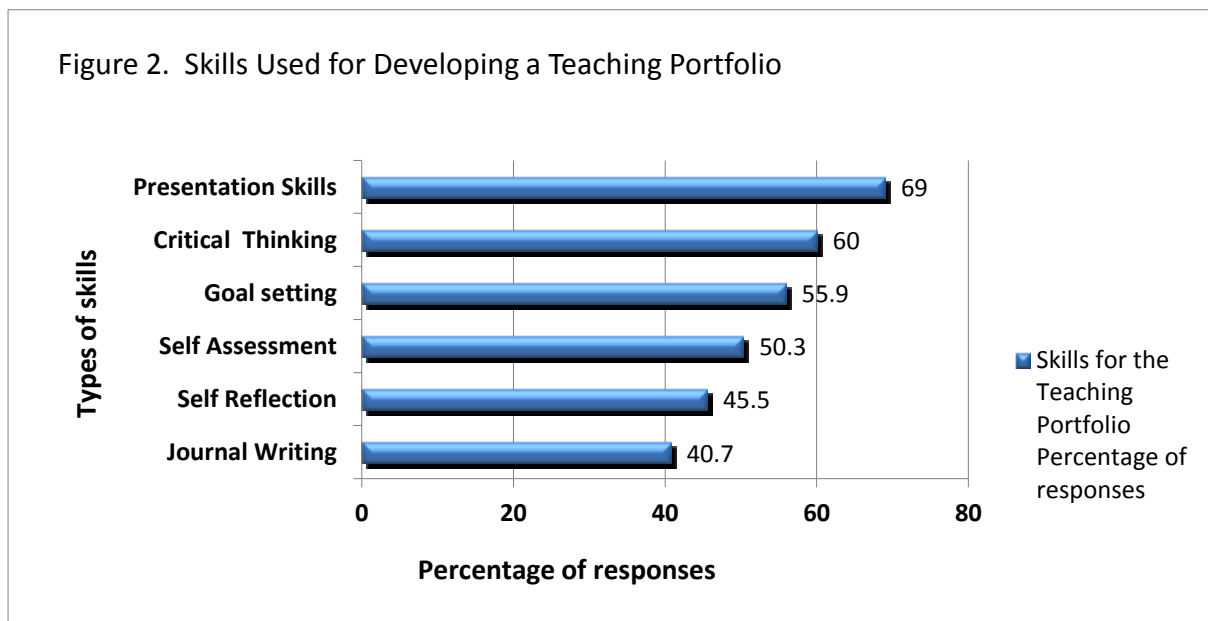
Results

Demographics

The majority of Consumer Studies teachers was female, 40 years of age, and obtained a qualification (Higher Diploma) in Education in Home Economics/Needlework. The teachers had various levels of experiences with no teacher less than five years in the field. It was also noted that Consumer Studies teachers undertook further studies to enhance their personal and professional development.

Skills as a Factor Related to the Development of the Consumer Studies Teaching Portfolio

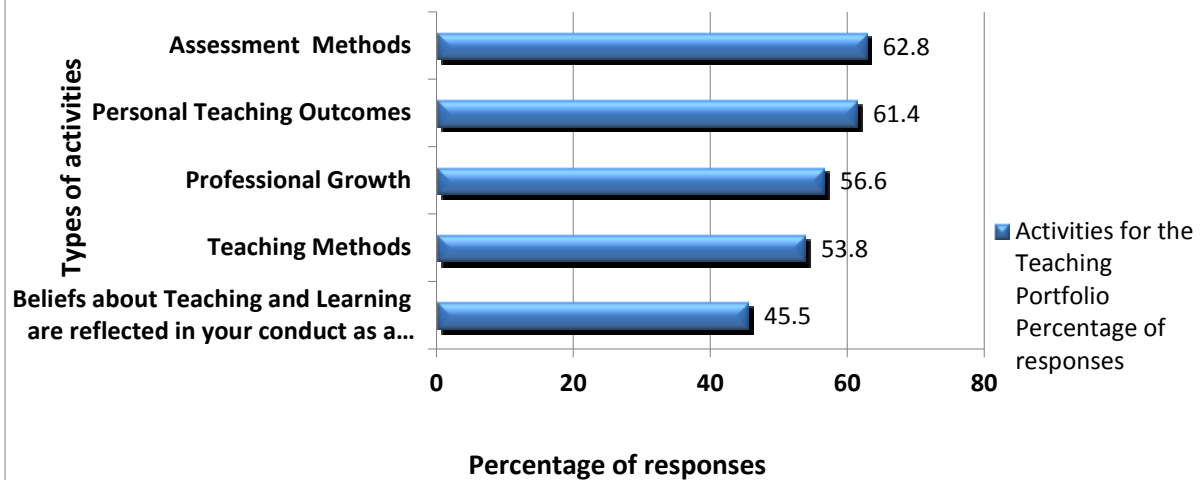
Teachers had to select the skills that assisted them to develop or complete their teaching portfolio. Presentation skills (see Figure 2) had the highest response rate (69%) followed by critical thinking (60%) and goal setting (55.9%). The skills required to compile a teaching portfolio were rated at 50.3% for self-assessment and 45.5% for self-reflection. Teachers scored journal writing the lowest with a score of 40.7%.



Activities as a Factor for Compiling a Teaching Portfolio

Teaching and learning activities had to be selected that would assist teachers in developing the teaching portfolio (Figure 3). An educator could select more than one of the activities. Assessment methods at 62.8% were the activity with the highest percentage followed by personal teaching outcomes (61.4%), personal growth (56.6%), and teaching methods and strategies jointly at 53.8%.

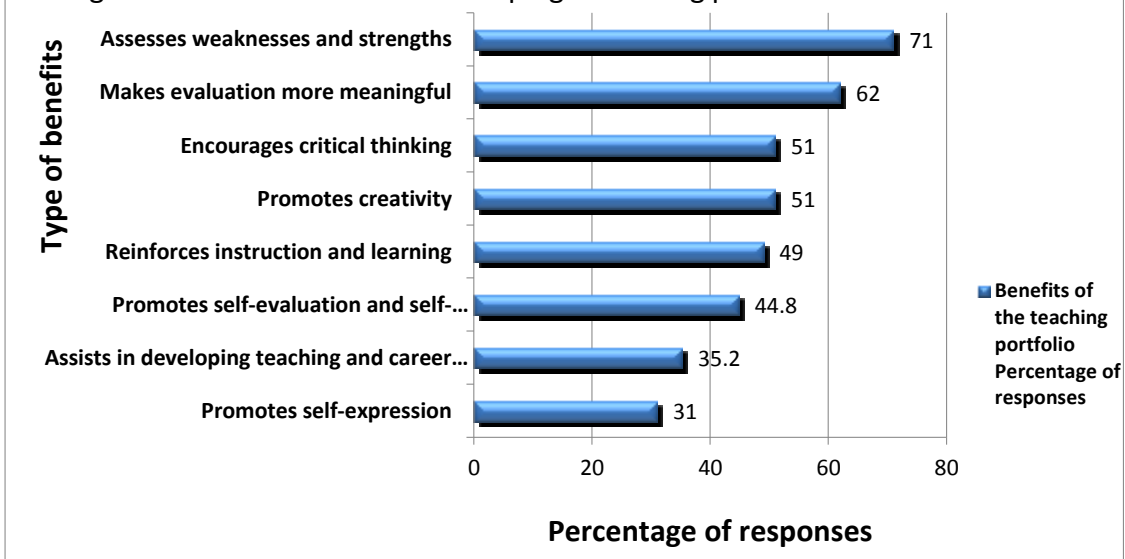
Figure 3. Activities Used for Developing a Teaching Portfolio



Benefits as a Factor for Compiling a Teaching Portfolio

More than one benefit relevant to their experiences with a teaching portfolio was selected. Of all the benefits “assesses strengths and weaknesses” elicited the highest response rate of 71%, followed by “making evaluation more meaningful” (62.1%). “Promotes creativity” and “encourages critical thinking” elicited the same response rates (51%). Teachers unawareness of the benefit of “self-evaluation and self-awareness” during portfolio development had a low response rate of 44.8%. Critical thinking as a skill had a response rate of 60%, while critical thinking as a benefit had a response rate of 51%.

Figure 4. Benefits used for developing a teaching portfolio



Discussion

All the activities, skills, and benefits related to the development of the teaching portfolio were selected by the teachers. Various teachers felt that all the factors were necessary when compiling the portfolio; however, less than half selected some of the items. Assessing strengths and weaknesses had the highest rating (71%) as a benefit of the teaching

portfolio and it is seen as a prerequisite to self-evaluation, because the teachers' strengths and weaknesses need to be identified beforehand (Chapman et al., 2001). This result indicates that the teachers utilized the teaching portfolio to assess their strengths and weaknesses, but omitted the self-evaluation and self-awareness exercises. Literature (Klenowski, 2002; Riggs & Sandlin, 2000) shows that the "assessment of strengths and weaknesses" has to precede "self-evaluation and self-awareness." Studies by Xu (2003) and Chapman et al. (2001) also indicate assessment of strengths and weaknesses as a perceived benefit. The assessment of strengths and weaknesses was thus seen as a valuable benefit in the development of the teaching portfolio. The rating for the benefit self-evaluation and self-assessment in Figure 3, however, elicited a response of 44.8% which is a low rating in comparison to assessing strengths and weaknesses. A possible reason for this low rating could be that teachers were unaware of the benefit of self-evaluation and self-awareness when developing a teaching portfolio. Klenowski (2002) indicated that self-evaluation assessed the teacher's performance in terms of strengths and weaknesses in the classroom. The teaching portfolio as a benefit in the "assistance of educators to develop teaching and career goals" had a low response rate, which could be the result of teachers not consciously thinking about their teaching and career goals. This could be linked to the non-inclusion of a teaching philosophy in the teaching portfolio developed by WCED Consumer Studies teachers.

For activities, the highest response was for "assessment methods" (62.8%) in Figure 3. This high response could be linked to positive attitude to the assessment process that was determined in this study. The assessment process entails the use of various assessment methods that are placed in the teaching portfolio. Therefore, the teachers' response rate to assessment methods was higher than to other activities listed in the questionnaire. Teachers are required to think about the assessment methods that will be used to assess learners before placing them in the teaching portfolio as evidence for moderation purposes.

The activity referred to as "beliefs about teaching and learning are reflected in the conduct of a teacher" elicited the lowest teacher response of 45.5% in Figure 3. This activity is referred to as the teaching philosophy (Darling, 2001; Mues & Sorcenelli, 2000). This is important as it describes the teacher's beliefs about his/her teaching practice, which will in turn influence the teaching practice of the teacher. These beliefs include teacher reflection upon how to assist learners to learn, goals for learners, and the implementation of effective teaching and learning strategies. This low response could be attributed to the fact that teachers were not required to include their teaching philosophy in the teaching portfolio, or that teachers were not trained in writing a teaching philosophy, as this is not a prerequisite for compiling a teaching portfolio for the WCED. Therefore, these teachers have to be taught how to write a teaching philosophy while compiling the teaching portfolio. Similarly, the skill of self-reflection in Figure 2 had the same rating of 45.5% and was also among the lower responses. The reason could be that teachers either do very little self-reflection, or they do not know how to reflect on their teaching practice. This could imply that they do not document their beliefs about teaching and learning that should reflect in their conduct as teachers.

Self-reflection as a skill obtained the second lowest rating for skills of the teaching portfolio (45.5%) as shown in Figure 2, indicating that teachers did not see self-reflection as an essential skill for teaching portfolio development. Chapman et al. (2001) indicated that self-reflection involved not only an analysis of goals and outcomes set by the teachers, but also whether these goals and outcomes have indeed been achieved, as well as the reasons for achievement or lack thereof. Self-reflection and goal setting as skills are interlinked, but a difference in the rating to goal setting (55.9%) and self-reflection (45.5%) were evident (Figure 2). When compiling the teaching portfolio teachers should learn the skill of self-reflection because they must reflect upon the types of evidence to be placed in it (Chapman et al., 2001).

The activities of “personal teaching outcomes,” “teaching methods,” and “professional growth” were considered in the process of developing the teaching portfolio. Similar percentages of responses were reported for “personal teaching outcomes” and “assessment methods.” The association between “personal teaching outcomes” and “assessment methods” can be explained by the recommendation (Mues & Sorcinelli, 2000; Seldin, 2000; Seldin, 1993) for both activities to be placed in the teaching portfolio. “Teaching methods” and “professional development” elicited the same percentage response. Both “professional development” and “teaching methods” should also be included in portfolio development (Campbell & Brummet, 2002; Chapman et al., 2001; Riggs & Sandlin, 2000).

“Critical thinking” as a skill had a rating of 60% and “encourages critical thinking” as a benefit had a rating of 51% for the compilation of the teaching portfolio. This indicates that teachers see critical thinking as a skill and not as a benefit of teaching portfolios. The teachers’ preference for critical thinking as a skill is confirmed by the studies of Chapman et al. (2001), while Driessen et al. (2005) established that critical thinking was a benefit in the development of the teaching portfolio. Briede (2005) confirmed the importance of critical thinking as a skill for teaching portfolio development by indicating that for reflection upon the content of the teaching portfolio to take place, skills of critical thinking and evaluation are required.

The responses to the skill of goal setting (55.9%) as depicted in Figure 1 and the activity of professional growth or development (56.6%) in Figure 2 were similar. Riggs & Sandlin (2000) indicated that professional development is a bridge to goal setting. This confirms the relatedness of goal setting and professional growth or development.

Presentation skills and critical thinking had the highest responses for skills are required to compile a portfolio of this kind. The skills of journal writing and self-reflection had the lowest responses which are important skills for teaching portfolio compilation as indicated in current literature. The other skills include self-assessment and goal setting. (Wyatt & Looper, 2004; Campbell & Brummet, 2002; Klenowski, 2002; Chapman et al., 2001; Painter, 2001; Riggs & Sandlin, 2000; Lyons, 1999; Seldin, Annis & Zubizaretta, 1995). The importance of all the skills, namely journal writing, goal setting, self-assessment, self-reflection, presentation skills, and critical thinking were listed in the questionnaire for portfolio development.

The skills, activities, and benefits are all necessary to compile a teaching portfolio, and opportunities have to be created for teachers to acquire the skills, activities, and benefits that elicited low response rates in this study. This would ensure that teachers create successful and complete teaching portfolios that can be used as a valuable assessment tool.

Conclusions

Through the data analysis and results the following linkages between the skills, activities, and benefits of the teaching portfolio were found. Firstly, “critical thinking” is linked as a skill and an activity, but enjoyed preference as a benefit by the teachers. This means that teachers did not regard “critical thinking” as a skill.

Secondly, “goal setting” as a benefit is linked to “professional growth” as an activity, and to “self-reflection” as a skill. Campbell and Brummet (2002), Chapman et al. (2001), Riggs and Sandlin (2000) have indicated that “professional development” acts a bridge to “goal setting,” and that through “self-reflection” a teacher can analyse the achievement or lack of achievement of goals.

Thirdly, “self-reflection” as a skill is linked to the activities of “professional growth” and the “beliefs about teaching and learning that is reflected in the actions as a teacher.” It has been stated that the teaching portfolio promotes “professional growth,” because it

encourages “self-reflection.” The latter activity, which was referred to as the teaching philosophy, had the same response rate as “self-reflection,” which had low ratings. This result indicated that teachers did not see the importance of “self-reflection” as a skill and the teaching philosophy as an activity in the development of the teaching portfolio.

It may be concluded that skills, activities, and benefits that constituted the factors relating to the teaching portfolio, are all interlinked and necessary. Therefore the teacher has to possess and demonstrate all the factors that are required to develop a successful teaching portfolio.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are suggested to assist teachers in compiling a successful teaching portfolio. Training programs or workshops should be run that would equip teachers with the skills, activities, and benefits that had a low response rate. Further, training can take place in portfolio aspects such as the development of a teaching philosophy from a self-reflective position, developing a road map of teaching activities and for, the skills of self-assessment, journal writing, and writing a reflective statement. Education faculties at higher education institutions should allow student teachers to compile a teaching portfolio during their teaching internship. This would familiarize the student teachers with the concept of the teaching portfolio and reflection.

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