

Assignment 2 – Case Study

Find an example of a problem reported in a teacher magazine or any newspaper. Cut & paste it in your assignment. It is important to indicate who wrote the article & where or in which newspaper, magazine or article it was obtained. It means you need to acknowledge the reporter or author of the article

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A. Mind-Map SA schools have 5,139 teachers who are unqualified or under-qualified



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SA schools have 5,139 teachers who are unqualified or under-qualified

June 6, 2017 Matthew Savides

Every day, tens of thousands of school children are being taught by teachers who aren't qualified to do the job.

The result is that pupils are "not receiving the quality of teaching they're supposed to be getting", the South African Democratic Teachers' Union (SADTU) has admitted.

And with mathematics and the sciences the subjects hardest hit, education authorities say the solution to the problem might have to come from outside South Africa's borders.

Responding to a parliamentary question by the Democratic Alliance, the national education department recently admitted that 5,139 teachers – the vast majority of which are in rural KwaZulu-Natal, which stands at the heart of the problem – are either unqualified or under-qualified.

While this was an improvement from 2014 (6,719 teachers) and 2015 (6,030 teachers), it is still a worrying situation.

There are, according to a 2016 statistical study released by the education department, about 435,000 teachers across the country.

In the response to the DA, the department's revealed that, in 2016:

– KZN had 2,875 unqualified or under-qualified teachers last year, 57% of the total number of such teachers across the country;

– The Northern Cape had the second most, with 400 teachers; and

– Limpopo was best off, with just 15 teachers.

The response also showed that five districts across the country had more than 200 unqualified or under-qualified teachers: eMtshezi (231 teachers), Paulpietersburg (228 teachers) and Ixopo (219 teachers), all in KZN, and Ngaka Modiri Molema (218) and Dr Ruth Segomotsi Mompati (201 teachers), both in the North West. Figures for individual districts in the Free State were not provided.

"The subjects most affected include mathematics, sciences and technology at all levels, and African language teaching, particularly at foundation phase.

"The focus of the department, at a national level, is to address the supply of educators through various initiatives. These include the Funza Lushaka Bursary Scheme, which focuses on mathematics, sciences, technology and African languages, and the appointment of foreign educators qualified to teach scarce skills," the response reads.

Newly appointed DA shadow education minister Ian Ollis said the implications of situation were severe.

"This means that, every day, teachers stand in front of a class without the necessary skills to teach the subject that they are teaching. It is simply wrecking the futures of children who have to be taught by teachers who are not qualified," he said.

For him, the solution lay in specialist facilities for new teachers.

"We need teacher colleges urgently reintroduced. On the job management for school principals and subject training for the under-educated teachers [is also needed]," said Ollis.

The party's KwaZulu-Natal education spokesman, Rishigen Viranna, lashed out at the KZN education department over the situation – particularly taking aim at how the poorer, more rural, parts of the province were worst hit.

"Without a quality education in the gateway subjects of Mathematics and Science they are destined to remain trapped in the cycle of poverty. The DA believes firmly that there is no better teaching tool than trained teachers in classrooms when it comes to properly educating learners," he said.

He added that he would request that the situation be urgently discussed at the KZN Legislature's next education portfolio committee meeting.

SADTU general secretary Mugwena Maluleke said the problem was not that teachers weren't qualified, it was that they were being made to teach the wrong subjects.

"The problem is now you allocate the teacher," he said. "You get teachers who are qualified to teach a subject, they are they allocated to a different subject. The issue is misallocation of resources."

Maluleke said that this was largely because of a change in syllabus, with teachers not being properly trained to meet the new requirements and criteria.

Agreeing with Ollis, he said the solution was to re-establish specialist teacher training facilities, much like dedicated medical schools.

"There need to be dedicated colleges for education. Universities...given you theory and not teaching practise. We also need more teacher development for those who are in the system. An international norm is that teachers must spend 120 hours [a year] on teacher development. We are living in a changing world," he said.

KwaZulu-Natal education department spokesman Muzi Mahlambi said that one of the biggest problems was attracting teachers to rural parts of KZN.

"We were forced to engage the services of unqualified educators, some of whom would have degrees but would be referred to as unqualified because they did not have teaching methodology. Post-1994 we referred to them as unqualified protected educators. They were given grace to develop themselves in terms of obtaining qualifications. Many have qualified.

"It would be critical to mention that these educators did a great job for African rural township children during apartheid. Today many of the children are highly educated people and are contributing a lot to our communities. We now have an over-supply of qualified educators, some we are unable to absorb due to their specialisations that are not in demand in our schools," he said.



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C. Summary of Issue in your own words

The quality of education in South Africa has drastically reduced owing to the alarming rate of under-qualified and unqualified teachers in the country. This issue has been growing from the shortage of teachers and teachers that are teaching outside their subject expertise. These teachers rush through subject content without learners understanding the subject and this has led to an increasing failure rate. Children that fail more than twice are granted a pass to the next standard which severely affects their future success with Maths and Science being the most affected subjects. We are setting our future generation up for failure with the level and quality of teaching at the rate that it is now.

D. Steps to be taken to solve the problem

Whilst government has started implementing strategic future teacher empowerment plans like the Funza Lushaka Bursary, NSFAS student grants, NYDA, etc, more steps need to be implemented on base level, which is at the schools themselves. The solution firstly lies with the school management in ensuring that current teachers get the 120 hours or more of teacher development every year, to ensure that they are kept on par with latest developments. More hands-on training of student teachers in the classroom to bridge their understanding of problems faced as well as mitigation methods. It is the role of school management to start looking at innovative approaches to learning and focusing on improvement plans, one such example of Early Childhood Development (ECD) innovation is a private school in Durban (Educare), that ensures 5 year olds use tools to open up broken appliances and toys. This method is unique and gives the child improvement in fine motor skills, harnessing their ability to see for themselves how things work from a young age. In higher grades or Secondary education, more evaluation needs to take place on each child before the start of the year so teachers can identify strengths and weaknesses of learners and find ways to improve upon them. Another innovation is peer assessment that is also happening at Educare, where learners mark each other's tests or assignments, they must give two positive remarks and two remarks on improvement. This builds learners attitude in the class, motivates them and also grows their critical thinking skills. I believe each teacher should have a rating card that learners can comment on, this open feedback will enable teachers to understand what areas need improvement. One of the most important matters in education currently is innovation, by combining normal teaching into ICT, E-Learning, computer programming and robotics to name a few innovations that need to be implemented in schools. This issue whilst slow is starting to gain momentum in South African schools and should be viewed as the smarter way of learning. Coming from an ICT background myself and facilitating training with schools nationally, it is shocking as to the low or zero level of computer literacy that teachers as well as principals have, a good example is a principal from rural KZN. I interviewed her for a school selection of a mobile tablet trolley donation. I asked her if she knew how to use a mouse and she told me "No, no, we don't have any mouse here, our school is clean clean!" Luckily, the deputy principal was a certified and trained computer teacher and I completed the interview with him. We need to collaborate more and not be scared of using new technology, as a keen mind with technology can open many doors of opportunity.