

LECTURERS' PERSPECTIVES OF PEDAGOGICAL TRAINING INITIATIVES AT A UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY IN KWAZULU-NATAL, SOUTH AFRICA

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ABSTRACT

Professional development of academics in higher education in South Africa has been offered in an uncoordinated and unsustainable manner. Ever since the new dispensation, concerted efforts have been implemented to address this problem. As part of the solution, universities through their academic development units, have introduced various pedagogical training workshops to equip academics with teaching skills. This study investigates perceptions of academics pertaining to this training. A multi-method cross-sectional research design was adopted to understand lecturers' perspectives regarding professional development. A total of 45 participants were purposefully selected to participate in the study from the academics who attended the pedagogical training. A questionnaire (closed and open-ended) was used to collect data. Quantitative data were analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), while thematic analysis was applied to analyse qualitative data. Results of the study revealed that the training was well-received and academic staff members felt motivated and confident to implement various instructional strategies acquired from the training. Participants expressed a need and willingness to learn and develop new instructional techniques and acquired a positive outlook on teaching and learning following the professional development training. The study recommends redesigning the pedagogical training to include ongoing support activities and customisation in addition to the generic version.

Keywords: evaluation, pedagogy, professional development, teaching and learning, training, university of technology

INTRODUCTION

Professional development for academics contributes to national development, hence it has become one of the most common central pillars in higher education (Bayar 2014). In the higher education context, professional development is an ongoing and systematic process that includes activities such as discussion, investigation, experimentation with new practices, learning, expansion of knowledge, acquisition of new skills, and the development of approaches, stances, knowledge, and work tools (Shagrir 2012). Therefore, professional development is important for both academic staff development and student learning, however, professional development of academics in higher education has been offered in an uncoordinated and unsustainable manner in South Africa (Quinn 2003). Until recently, the new democratic government opted to deploy concerted efforts to address this challenge. Consequently, since 2018, the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) through the University Capacity Development Programme (UCDP) has made funds available for professional development at public higher education institutions (DHET 2018).

Before the introduction of the UCDP, most South African universities including Mangosuthu University of Technology (MUT) already had established teaching and learning offices to address the changing needs of teaching and learning in the South African higher education sector. Pedagogical training has been recognized as an important vehicle to enhance teaching skills for academics (Pekkarinen and Hirsto 2017). Hence, in 2013 MUT established the Teaching and Learning Development Centre (TLDC) whose mandate is to design, coordinate, and implement the academic professional development within the institution. One of the TLDC's focuses is to design, coordinate and offer pedagogical training. The pedagogical training for academics is facilitated by academic development practitioners within the TLDC and peers from other institutions of higher learning. The primary implementation strategy for teacher professional development is through workshops, seminars, and formal programmes, namely Postgraduate Diploma in Higher Education and Postgraduate Diploma in Educational Technology.

Based on our work experience as academic developers, we have learned that most academics at MUT are not necessarily trained as teachers and possess limited exposure to teaching pedagogies on appointment while some have outdated instructional strategies. The rhetorical question then, is how do we expect effective and reflective learning to occur if academics have deficient or limited pedagogical knowledge? Over the years, there have been discussions about the need for capacity development that focuses on improving university teachers' pedagogical knowledge and skills (Postareff, Lindblom-Ylänne, and Nevgi 2007). On

top of that, Rutz et al. (2012) argue that professional development provides an opportunity for academics to improve their pedagogical skills through professional development programmes, and for students to learn as a result.

Since the inception of the TLDC, no studies have been conducted to establish the perceptions of MUT academics about the efficacy of the pedagogical training workshops. Therefore, an evaluative study was conducted to plug this gap so that the lessons learnt could be used to inform and improve future pedagogical training initiatives being offered at MUT and other institutions in higher education. Evaluation of professional development is a necessary component of academic staff development (Bimpitsos and Petridou 2012).

Therefore, the purpose of this study was to evaluate the perceptions of the academics towards pedagogical training initiatives offered at MUT. Ultimately, this study addressed the following three research questions:

- (1) To what degree did participants find the pedagogical training engaging and relevant to their jobs?
- (2) How knowledgeable was the facilitator in offering effective pedagogical training?
- (3) What are the benefits for participants attending pedagogical training?

CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

The study was conducted at the MUT which is situated in Umlazi Township in Durban, KwaZulu-Natal. Umlazi is the second largest township in South Africa. The MUT is one of the smallest public institutions of higher learning in South Africa. The institution has three faculties, namely the Faculty of Management Sciences, the Faculty of Natural Sciences, and the Faculty of Engineering. It houses approximately 15 000 students and 200 full-time academic staff members. While the MUT is a Science, Engineering and Technology (SET) University, it does not offer teacher education as part of its current learning programmes. In this regard, most academics do not have the pedagogical skills that are ordinarily part of teacher education. Hence it is vital that academics are capacitated on pedagogical training to support them in understanding how students learn and in their teaching approaches and strategies.

LITERATURE

Higher education institutions are experiencing transformation which is influenced by globalisation, internationalisation, and technology (Dzvimbo and Moloï 2013). Barnett (2005) asserts that this complexity is a universal feature of universities. Since 1994, as a result of changes in the political landscape in South Africa, universities have been confronted with

challenges including an increasing number of students; changing student population with varying levels of preparedness for tertiary study; a plethora of national policies and structures including quality assurance requirements; new information and communication technologies; the erosion of disciplinary boundaries, and under-prepared academic staff (Quinn 2012). This underscores the function of professional development for academics in contributing to national imperatives of higher education.

The significance of professional development for academics is also underscored and supported by the Department of Higher Education (DHET). In 2017, the DHET and the Council on Higher Education (CHE) jointly convened a national workshop aimed at strengthening university teaching. Stakeholders and professional development practitioners engaged and explored ways of creating structured and systematic ways to improve the quality of teaching in universities and thus student success. Consequently, DHET developed and published *A National Framework for Enhancing University Teaching* (DHET 2018), the purpose of which is to provide guidelines for universities in terms of supporting academics with professional development. The framework also advocates for academics to be developed as university teachers, which is a notion that MUT subscribes to.

Professional development is the primary means for capacitating academic staff members at higher education institutions and is considered a mechanism and a platform for academics to continuously improve their teaching skills with a view to improving student success (Sela and Harel 2019). Shagrir (2012) defines professional development as an ongoing and systematic process that includes activities such as discussion, investigation, experimentation with new practices, learning, expansion of knowledge, acquisition of new skills, and the development of approaches, stances, knowledge, and work tools. Academics improve their pedagogy through professional development programmes, and students learn more as a result (Rutz et al. 2012). Wood et al. (2011) assert that there is a growing need for professional development for lecturers teaching in disciplines due to the changing nature of learning and teaching in universities. Given the dynamics facing higher education, university academics require massive professional development support to successfully navigate this complex and ever-changing landscape in higher education (Sela and Harel 2019). This applies to both newly appointed and experienced lecturers. Therefore, the teacher's approach and conceptions to teaching are central to student success.

Pedagogical training of university teachers presents different views of the effectiveness of pedagogical training (Postareff and Lindblom-Ylänne 2008). By the same token, pedagogical training provides opportunities to support the development of university teachers' reflective skills and habits of reflection (Karm 2010). Thus, professional development of higher education

teachers before and after recruitment can assist the teachers to keep up to date with continuous professional practices and the needs of the students (Guskey and Yoon 2009; Merkt 2017). Hence, there is a need for further systematic pedagogical training of higher education teachers to improve the quality of learning and graduating students.

According to Simon et al. (2012), a lack of pedagogical training for academics often results in teachers maintaining the same old teaching methods and research styles, which negatively affects students' performance. It has been argued that without adequate pedagogical training of the teachers, higher education teachers may focus only on the teacher-centred method of teaching instead of the student-centred method of teaching, which is the current focus of higher education in the twenty-first century (Simon et al. 2012). Gibbs and Coffey (2004) reported that teachers became more student-centred and less teacher-centred after a period of four to 18 months of pedagogical training and their teaching skills were judged by students to be significantly improved. Therefore, there are positive effects of training on teachers' approaches to teaching and their teaching methods (Postareff et al. 2007).

A well-planned evaluation of professional development has the potential of providing both information to improve the design of professional development practices and demonstrating its impact on lecturer and student learning outcomes. Killion (2017) argues that if the evaluation is well conducted everyone in the institution benefits, while a poorly executed evaluation is considered a waste of resources. According to Horton (2015) and Houdyshell and Kirk (2020), when academics are trained to understand the methods of teaching holistically, they are better prepared to serve students. In this regard, Houdyshell and Kirk (2020) posit that action research is the most influential and the fastest-growing orientation towards staff development. As such, programmes focussing on just questioning skills or assessment for learning that are not also rooted in developing content knowledge to underpin such strategies and exploring how they work with different groups are not likely to achieve their potential. This kind of knowledge can be obtained through the interrogation of data provided by academics through the evaluation process.

Kusek and Rist (2004) define evaluation as a systematic process to determine the worth, value, or meaning of an activity or process. On the other hand, Gomez-Palacio, Espinal and Vargas (2018) warn that evaluating professional development programmes for academic staff is a continuous and technically challenging process. As challenging as it may be, a good evaluation of professional development does not necessarily have to be complicated; it simply requires thoughtful planning, the ability to ask questions, and a basic understanding of how to find valid answers (Guskey 2002). The need to evaluate the implementation of academic staff development programmes is important since there are limited studies that focus on the process

of academic development programmes (Griffin 2011). As asserted by Griffin (2011), the benefits of evaluating professional development are by and large concurred as supporting the choice-making process on what mediations ought to be re-dispatched, giving proof of speculation in human capital and showing the worth that preparation mediations bring.

Evaluation of professional development is a necessary component of academic staff development (Bimpitsos and Petridou 2012). According to Desimone (2011), the evaluation of learning within a professional development programme is undoubtedly a vital aspect of the professional development process. However, this step (process evaluation) in the professional development process is often overlooked or misconstrued. The evaluation of data during implementation might be utilised to advocate the use of preparing and improving the delivery of the training, especially during harder monetary times (Robson and Marvin 2015). Chalmers and O'Brien (2005) agree with this sentiment and advocate that an informed understanding of the quality of teaching, learning experiences and curriculum provided by the university is fundamental to the ongoing enhancement of teaching and learning.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical underpinning for this study is anchored on Kirkpatrick's four-level model of evaluation (Kirkpatrick 1976) as indicated in Table 1. Kirkpatrick's four-level model comprises inclusive approaches to evaluation by focusing on four levels, namely reaction, learning, behaviour, and results. This model was developed by Donald Kirkpatrick in 1977 to provide a comprehensive guide to evaluating training initiatives. Kirkpatrick's model is now over half a century old and has received lengthy scrutiny, particularly on its efficacy as a training evaluation approach in higher education (HE). According to the Hanover Research Centre (2015), this model is the most popular in the education field because of its capability in providing a valuable template for establishing the strengths and weaknesses of training initiatives. Gubbins et al. (2012) aver that Kirkpatrick's model keeps on being used as a part of the contemporary examination, although it is quite old. Moreover, the simplicity and inclusiveness in its application process are highly valued (Paull, Whitsed and Girardi 2016).

Table 1: The 4 levels of Kirkpatrick's model

Level		Description
1	Reaction	Sometimes referred to as happy or smile sheets, this level of evaluation considers whether the participants reacted favourably to the training or intervention.
2	Learning	Related to learning outcomes of the training or intervention, this level considers whether the participants acquired the intended knowledge, skills or attitudes based on their participation in the training or intervention

Level		Description
3	Behaviour	Sometimes referred to as “transfer”, this level considers the degree to which the participants altered their subsequent behaviour in other contexts (e.g., in the workplace) after participation in the training or intervention.
4	Results	Sometimes referred to as organisational level evaluation, and related to the longer term outcomes anticipated, this level considers whether the overall aims have been achieved as a result of the interventions, and of subsequent reinforcement. Rather than return on investment (ROI), the fourth level refers to return or expectations (ROE).

Adapted from: Paull, Whitsed, and Girardi (2016).

It is for these reasons that this study adopted the Kirkpatrick model as a lens to evaluate the pedagogical training initiatives that are being offered at MUT. It is worth noting that this study only focuses on Level 1 and Level 2 of Kirkpatrick’s model, which is “reaction and learning” because it does not seek to evaluate the other levels, i.e., behaviour, and results. A follow-up study will be conducted to evaluate the medium to long-term impact of pedagogical training. At that point, the focus will be on Level 3 and Level 4.

METHODOLOGY

Research design

To fulfil the purpose of this study, a multi-method cross-sectional research design using a constructivist paradigm was adopted to understand perceptions of academics towards pedagogical training initiatives. The multi-method research involves combining data gathering and analysing techniques from two or more methodological traditions (Seawright 2016). Out of the wide range of possible multi-method combinations, the literature overwhelmingly focuses on designs that combine quantitative and qualitative methods to strengthen causal inference (Seawright 2016). The decision to conduct a multi-method study was influenced by the intent to reduce bias. Multiple methods strengthen the evaluation design since it does not choose one approach or privilege one method over the others (Twersky, Arbreton, and Trivedi 2019). Most strong evaluations use multiple methods to collect and analyse data to maximize rigour without compromising relevance (Seawright 2016).

Data collection

Data were collected from all 45 academics who attended the three pedagogical training sessions during 2017, 2018 and 2019, respectively. Each year, 15 participants attended the pedagogical training sessions. Participants were from all three faculties, namely, the Faculty of Engineering, Faculty of Management, and Faculty of Natural Sciences. We used a purposive selection strategy to identify participants for the study. In purposive sampling, researchers use their own judgement about which participants will be chosen (Bertram and Christiansen 2014). In this

study, the criterion for selecting participants was that they should have attended these training sessions between 2017 and 2019. These academics met the participation criterion since they attended the pedagogical training between 2017 and 2019. A self-administered questionnaire (closed and open-ended) was used to collect quantitative and qualitative data from participants.

To evaluate the “Reactions” (Level 1 of Kirkpatrick’s model), participants were asked to respond to the following four closed-ended questions:

- What was the relevance of the training to your current job? The variables were “very relevant”, “Somehow relevant”, and “Irrelevant”.
- Was the facilitator adequately prepared for the training? The variables were “Yes or No”
- Was the facilitator keen to assist you to learn during the training? The variables were “Yes” or “No”.
- How was your involvement during the training? The variables were “Very good”, “Somehow good”, and “Low”.

To assess the “Learning” (Level 2 of Kirkpatrick’s model), participants were asked to respond to an open-ended question: *How do you think the training will influence your approach towards teaching?* Through this open-ended question, we were able to adequately capture the thoughts of participants and their perceptions of the pedagogical training on teaching at MUT.

Data analysis

For the open-ended questions, descriptive statistics analysis was conducted using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS Version 26.0) to understand the perceptions of participants who participated in the pedagogical training. Qualitative data gathered through open-ended questions were coded and categorised to develop themes using thematic analysis. This was done through labelling of concepts to develop a pattern which emerged from data.

Ethical considerations

Ethical approval was obtained from the MUT Research Ethics Committee. The institution provided gatekeeper permission for the study to use institutional data. All participants provided oral consent to participate in the study. Also, participant numbers were assigned to each participant to ensure anonymity.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The purpose of the study was to evaluate the perceptions of the academic staff toward the pedagogical training at MUT. The overall finding of the study was that the facilitator possessed

skills and knowledge of the pedagogical training which promoted the participants' involvement and engagement. Also, the training was relevant to the current job of the academics hence, they perceived the training as valuable. To understand the findings of this study better, frequency distribution and individual themes are hereunder identified and discussed. This article presents and discusses the findings that are aligned with Levels 1 and 2 of Kirkpatrick's model, which is "reaction" and "learning" from three pedagogical training sessions conducted between 2017 and 2019.

Facilitators' skills and knowledge

The "reaction" (Level 1 of Kirkpatrick's model) of the participants to the ability of the facilitator to deliver pedagogical training efficiently was evaluated. Ninety-eight percent (98%) of the participants indicated that the presenter was adequately prepared for the training, knew the content, and was keen to assist all participants during the training while 2 per cent disagreed with all the variables. One participant remarked that "There is nothing as important as a having a facilitator who knows his or her work. I am so encouraged to participate on other programmes" (#Participant 1). While the focus of the study was to evaluate the perceptions of the academics towards professional development initiatives, it was critical to first establish if facilitators possessed pedagogical content knowledge (PCK). The PCK refers to teachers' interpretations and transformations of subject-matter knowledge in the context of facilitating learning and is generally accepted as positively impacting teaching quality and student learning (van Driel, Verloop, and de Vos 1998; Evens, Elen, and Depaeppe 2015). These results postulate that facilitators possessed PCK which is critical during the facilitation of learning because it may influence how participants perceived the pedagogical training. Although the minority disagreed that the facilitators possessed the skills and knowledge to deliver the pedagogical training, their perceptions cannot be ignored. The limitation of that study was that no further probing was conducted to understand the reason for such discontent. Bulger, Mohr, and Walls (2002) claim that facilitators may possess a substantial amount of subject-matter knowledge but fail to design and implement instructional methods to enhance learning due to a lack of pedagogical ability. On the contrary, facilitators may possess some generic pedagogical skills, yet have limited subject-matter knowledge and again be predisposed to ineffective teaching (Bulger et al. 2002). While acknowledging the different views, we maintain that the facilitators were skilled and knowledgeable. Consequently, facilitators inspired confidence in the participants' view of the training since quality teacher development is directly related to the professional skill of the facilitator (Courtney 2007; Avidov-Ungar 2016).

Participants' involvement and engagement

The “reaction” (Level 1 of Kirkpatrick’s model) of the participants’ involvement and engagement during the training was evaluated. Most participants (86%) indicated that they were involved and engaged throughout the training, while a few participants (14%) indicated that they were somehow engaged, and none indicated that they were not engaged. As such, #Participant 2 reckoned: “Sometimes I found myself having to attend to my office work whilst the facilitator was busy with other participants”. The importance of keeping participants engaged cannot be overemphasised. Coe et al. (2014) contend that the classroom climate, which involves the quality of interactions between teachers and students and teacher expectations, forms the base for effective pedagogical training. Therefore, it is critical for the facilitator to manage the entire training programme to effectively attain the envisaged outcomes of the pedagogical training. Thus, we argue that the ability of the facilitator to possess the PCK is not necessarily the only means to attain the training outcomes. The atmosphere in the training venue and its management thereof is equally vital. Classroom management is related to teachers’ abilities to make efficient use of lesson time, coordinate classroom resources and space, and manage students’ behaviour with clear rules that are consistently enforced (Coe et al. 2014). Although all participants were engaged, there is a need to reach out to the 14 per cent of participants who indicated that they were somehow engaged so that we could understand the reasons for such hesitation.

Influencing teaching approaches

The “learning” (Level 2 of Kirkpatrick’s model) that influences the teaching approaches was evaluated through an open-ended question: *How do you think the training will influence your approach towards teaching?* This question is important in the development of teaching culture in higher education since reflecting on and developing professional practices and participation in professional development (Coe et al. 2014) provides an opportunity to self-assess the pedagogical training programme. Three themes emerged to depict the perceived value of the training, namely, i) *acquired knowledge and skills in teaching and learning*; ii) *reflections on current teaching practices*; and iii) *intended strategies to improve teaching practices and students’ learning experiences*. These themes are individually presented and discussed below.

Acquired knowledge and skills in teaching and learning

The participants highlighted that there were knowledge and skills gaps before participating in the pedagogical training. They indicated that they acquired teaching pedagogies, i.e., knowledge and skills during the training. The knowledge learned includes different approaches

to teaching and assessment, i.e., various forms of assessment strategies such as the use of the formative tools; alignment of the aspect of teaching and learning – from purpose and outcomes of assessment; a practical example of active learning and peer assessment; and the importance of prompt and adequate feedback to students. One participant indicated that: “The training changed my mindset in several areas of teaching, learning, and assessment” (Participant #5). Results suggest that participants developed a changed mindset toward learning and teaching leaning towards a transformative outlook. Moreover, some of the skills that participants mentioned that they have acquired included communication; teaching and assessment; alignment of teaching and outcome-based approach and providing more opportunities for the use of formative assessment tasks; new teaching methods for large classes; and evaluating students to measure performance. For instance, one participant stated that: “The skills acquired from this training will transform the way I teach and assess” (#Participants 3). This finding correlates with a study conducted at another University of Technology in South Africa where the majority (91%) of participants reported that academic staff training programmes enhanced academic staff capabilities for improving teaching and learning (Bingwa and Ngibe 2021). Participants indicated that they had an opportunity to review their identity and reflect on their teaching methods using fresh lenses. Continuous improvement is important, as Podolsky, Kini and Darling-Hammond (2019) argue that experienced teachers also need support to maintain good practices and improve their knowledge and skills.

The study highlights that university teachers appear to be interested in learning how to teach and appreciate the training that has a robust design and is context inspired. In a study conducted at a UoT in South Africa, participants indicated that workshops were identified to be influential in terms of capacitating and developing academic staff in terms of technical skills (Bingwa and Ngibe 2021). It is therefore not surprising to observe an overwhelmingly positive response (98%) when participants were asked to evaluate the facilitators' skills. The knowledge and skillset acquired by participants may be attributed to the preparedness, content knowledge, and the willingness of the facilitator to assist all participants. The only candidate who disagreed with all variables was noted. However, it raises the question of the validity of the response because the candidate disagreed with all variables without providing the reasons. Due to the anomaly of the responses, we could not make a follow-up to find out the reasons.

Reflections on current teaching practices

Participants critically reflected on their current teaching practices based on the pedagogical training. Although some had several years teaching at a university, they felt that participating in pedagogical training bridged the articulation gap from previous jobs to higher education.

Some participants indicated that they would change several aspects of teaching approaches to improve learning in classes and the ways of assessing students. For instance, one participant stated: “I was uncomfortable in the past, and I will certainly change my way of teaching and assessing” (#Participants 4). It was clear that participants were not confident about their teaching practices prior the pedagogical training yet were not competent in adequate and relevant teaching and learning practices. Other participants reckoned that they realised that they mostly just used PowerPoint, which was not promoting student learning, as one participant stated: “I will encourage other lecturers to attend pedagogical training so that students would be at the centre of learning” (#Participant 2). Hence, it appeared that they committed to transforming and using an integrated participatory strategy in line with what they had learnt from the course. Furthermore, participants were willing to focus on equipping students with skills and application of knowledge rather than just knowledge to pass exams. Data suggests that participants were focusing on surface learning rather than a deep learning approach, and the pedagogical training provided them with a clear view of their blind spots. Data further suggests that participants were willing to transform the way they understood teaching and learning, which underlines the role that training plays in the enthusing of change in practitioners' behaviour.

Intended strategies to improve teaching practices and students' learning experiences

Since most participants (86%) indicated that they were involved and engaged throughout the training, the knowledge and skills learnt appear to have transformed how the participants perceived their role in teaching and learning, as one participant stated: “It [acquired knowledge and skills] will make me a better teacher going forward if I practice what has been done on this training” (# Participants 3). Consequently, it was clear that the pedagogical training had influenced the participants to critically think of strategies for improving their teaching practices and students' learning experiences. Below are the intended strategies stated by the participants to enhance their teaching practices and students' learning experiences:

- Being well structured and more effective in teaching.
- Aligning assignments with subject outcomes, teaching methods and activities to the examination question papers.
- Improving the interaction and engagement with students so that they will be keen to participate in class.

- Improving teaching and learning to focus on learning.
- Implementing what is learnt from the training as soon as they return to class; and
- Adapting the strategies gained from the training that will be implemented in class.

It appeared that the participants were committed to being interactive and more involved with students, improving the way teaching was construed, and viewing the teaching and learning in the broad context of higher education. These findings support the results from a university in Finland where teachers thought that their self-confidence as a teacher had increased due to the course (Postareff et al. 2007). Guskey (2002) suggests that individuals who participate in pedagogy training simply want to become better teachers. The training appears to have reinvigorated the university teachers' commitment and confidence in developing their teaching repertoire. In addition, participants' confidence to try other ways to teach grew from the intervention. This finds expression in the work of Nolan and Molla (2017), who explicates the positive relationship between the teachers' confidence and the execution of their core mandate in the classroom.

CONCLUSION

This research evaluated the implementation of pedagogical training initiatives using Level 1 and Level 2 of Kirkpatrick's model of evaluation. The study highlights the importance of pedagogical training in capacitating academic staff members who join higher education with limited pedagogical skills. This was further attested by the academics' acknowledgement that they viewed teaching and learning differently after the pedagogical training. These academics went as far as indicating their willingness to incorporate some of the knowledge and skills acquired during the training into their teaching and assessment practices. The study further reveals the significance of facilitators possessing PCK and the skills to deliver it effectively so that participants can be engaged and derive value from their participation. Therefore, the study concludes that the facilitators of pedagogical training initiatives are pivotal to influencing the teaching approaches of the participants positively or negatively. A positive influence could lead to a commitment and confidence in academics to implement what was learnt from the pedagogical training, changing their attitudes about teaching and learning, and the transformation of teaching pedagogies which could result in positive student experiences and enhanced learning.

The study did not interrogate the extent to which the trained lecturers are using the new knowledge and skills acquired in their teaching and how useful these have been in improving

actual student learning. Hence, a future study that explores the impact of pedagogical training on university teachers' actual classroom approaches and conceptions of teaching and learning is recommended. Such a study could focus on Level 3 and Level 4 of Kirkpatrick's model.

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