

Peer Mentoring using Teachers' own Research Findings

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“... the debate on school quality has focused increased attention on teacher’s professional development,” (Richter et al 2011, p. 116).

“strong professional development opportunities must be embedded in the very fabric of public education.” (National Commission on Teaching and America’s Future, 2003, p. 129).

Teacher Professionalism

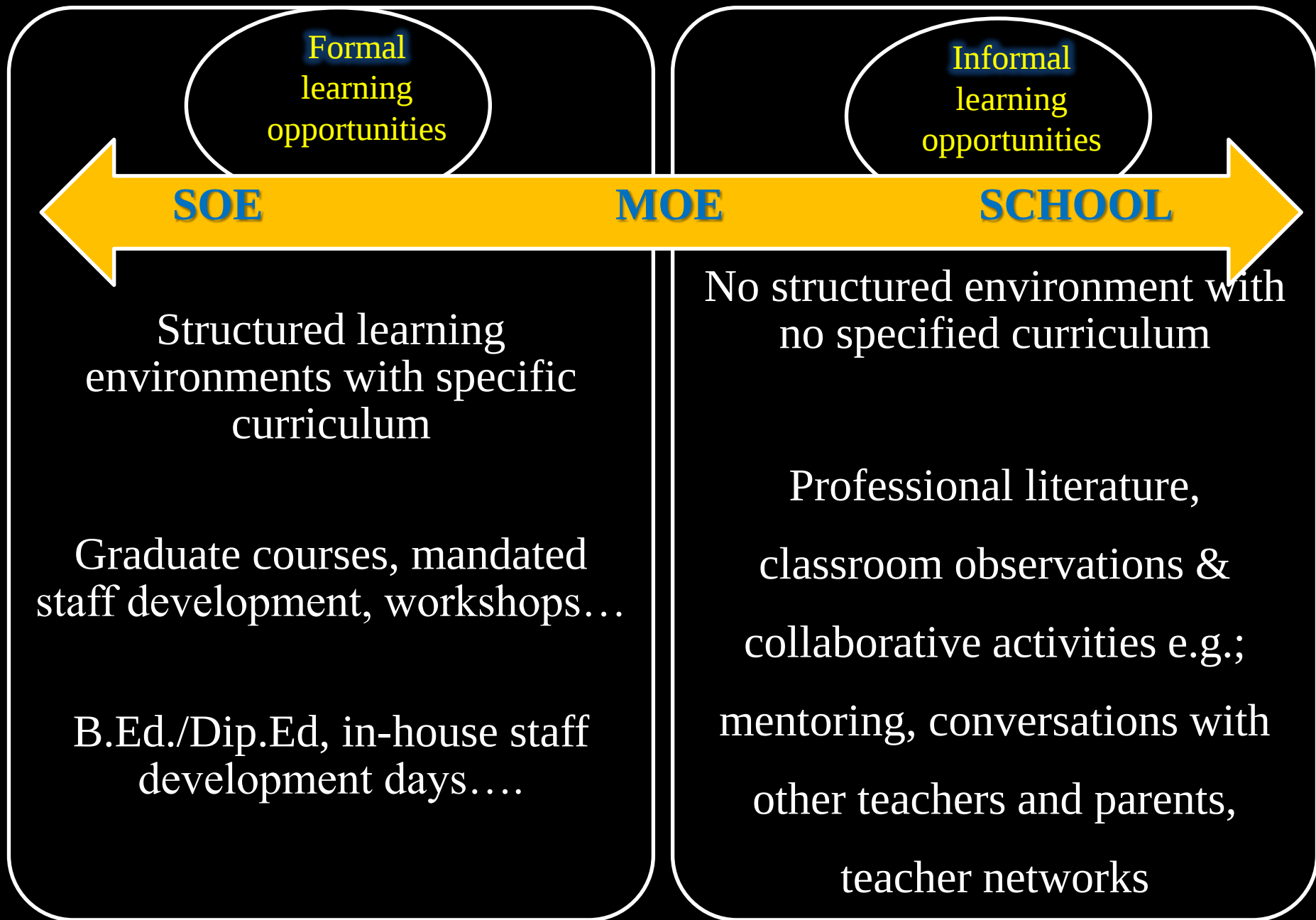
Teacher professionalism affects the role of the teacher, his/her pedagogy, and the student's ability to learn effectively.

It can be defined as the ability to reach students in a meaningful way, developing innovative approaches to content, while motivating, engaging, and inspiring the students.

Professional Development (PD)

“uptake of *formal* and *informal learning opportunities* that deepen and extend teachers’ professional competence, including knowledge, beliefs, motivation and self-regulatory skills,”

(Baumert & Kunter, 2006; Kunter et al, 2007, in Richter et al, 2011, p. 116).



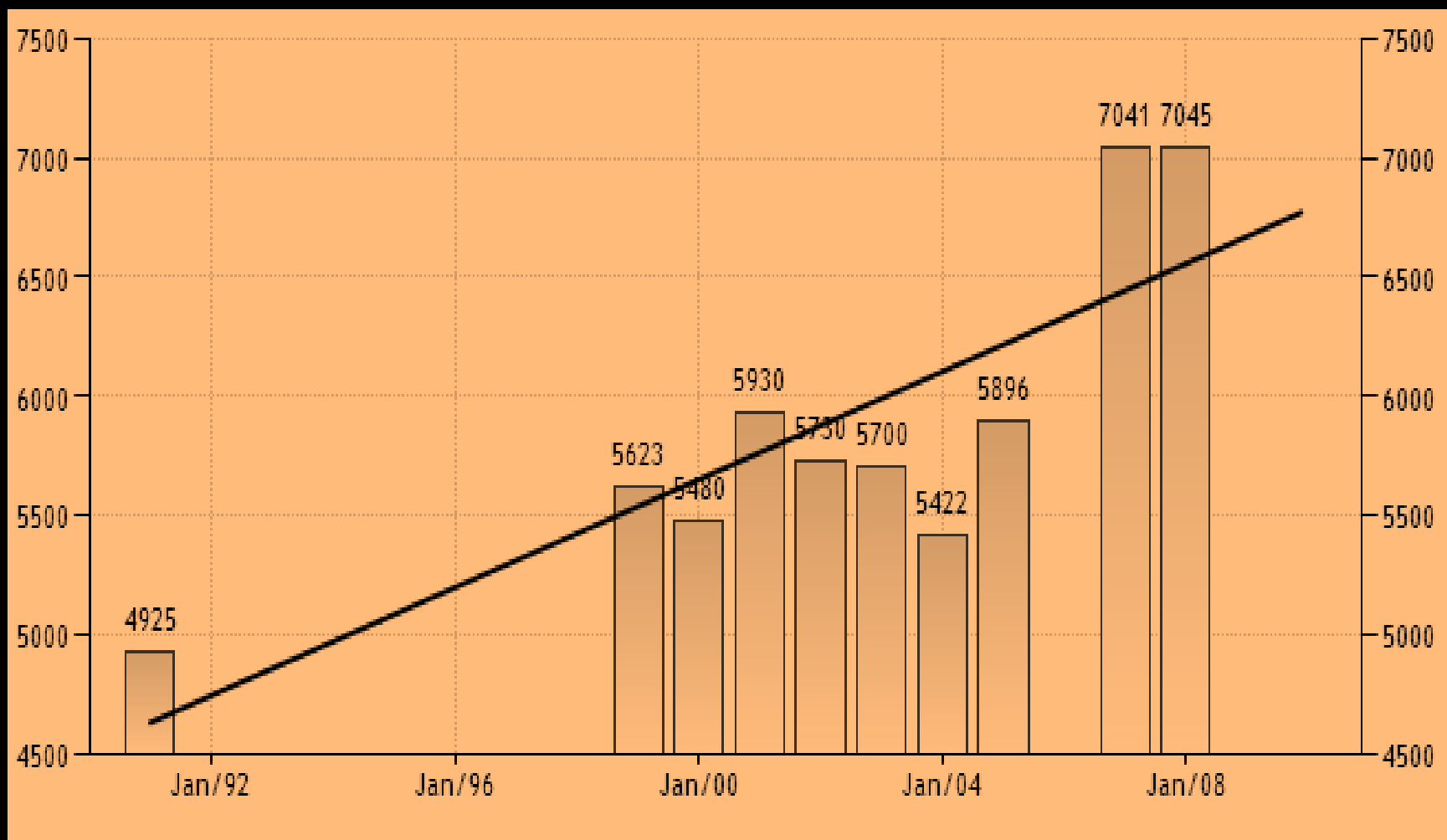
BACKGROUND



“The Caribbean region requires professional development of the teaching fraternity to implement school reform and school improvement,” (Singh, 2007, p. 673).



Locally we have “untrained teachers” in the classroom (Sharma-Maharaj, 2009; Lochan, 2006; Joseph, 2004; Rampersad, 2002).



1991 4925; 1999 5623; 2000 5480; 2001 5930; 2002 5730; 2003 5700; 2004 5422; 2005 5896; 2007 7041; 2008 7045

<http://www.tradingeconomics.com/trinidad-and-tobago/secondary-education-teachers-wb-data.html>



soe

Est. 1972 “to promote training of teachers and to research into educational problems” (Retout, 1982, p. 108).

- “Develop professional approach to teaching”



moe

- Standards: 3.1.1.i; 20.1.3; 20.1.6. (Quest for Excellence, 2005) for PD of teachers
- Target 2015 identified “Enabling teachers; Improved teacher professionalism,” as one of its eight action areas.
- Schools are encouraged to host “PD days.”

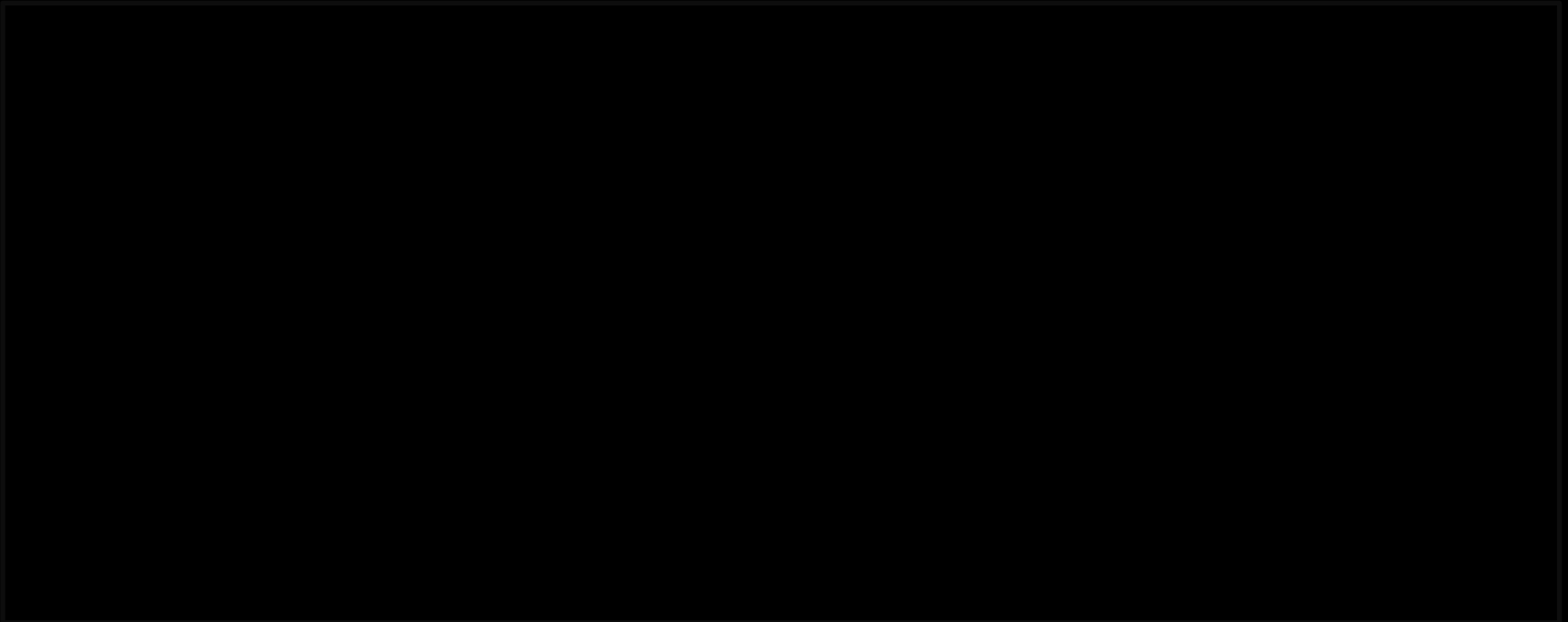


THE UNIVERSITY OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO



UNIVERSITY *of the*
SOUTHERN CARIBBEAN

So we also have locally **we have trained**
teachers in the classroom but...



An “individual’s (personal and) professional development behaviour changes over time,”
(Richter et al, 2011, p. 117) with “career maturity”
(Cook & Bastick, 2009, p. 102);

Years of Experience	Stages/ Dominant Features	
1-4	“INITIATION” shock of the real, discovery	
5-7	STABILITY security, enthusiasm, maturity	
8-14	DIVERGENCE (+) dedication, enthusiasm	DIVERGENCE (-) disillusionment, routine
15-22	SERENITY reflection, personal satisfaction	
≥23	RENEWAL OF INTEREST renewed enthusiasm	DISENCHANMENT withdrawal & saturation

Figure . Stages in the Teacher’s Career. Adapted from Gonçalves (2000) in Gonçalves (2009, p. 22)₁₁

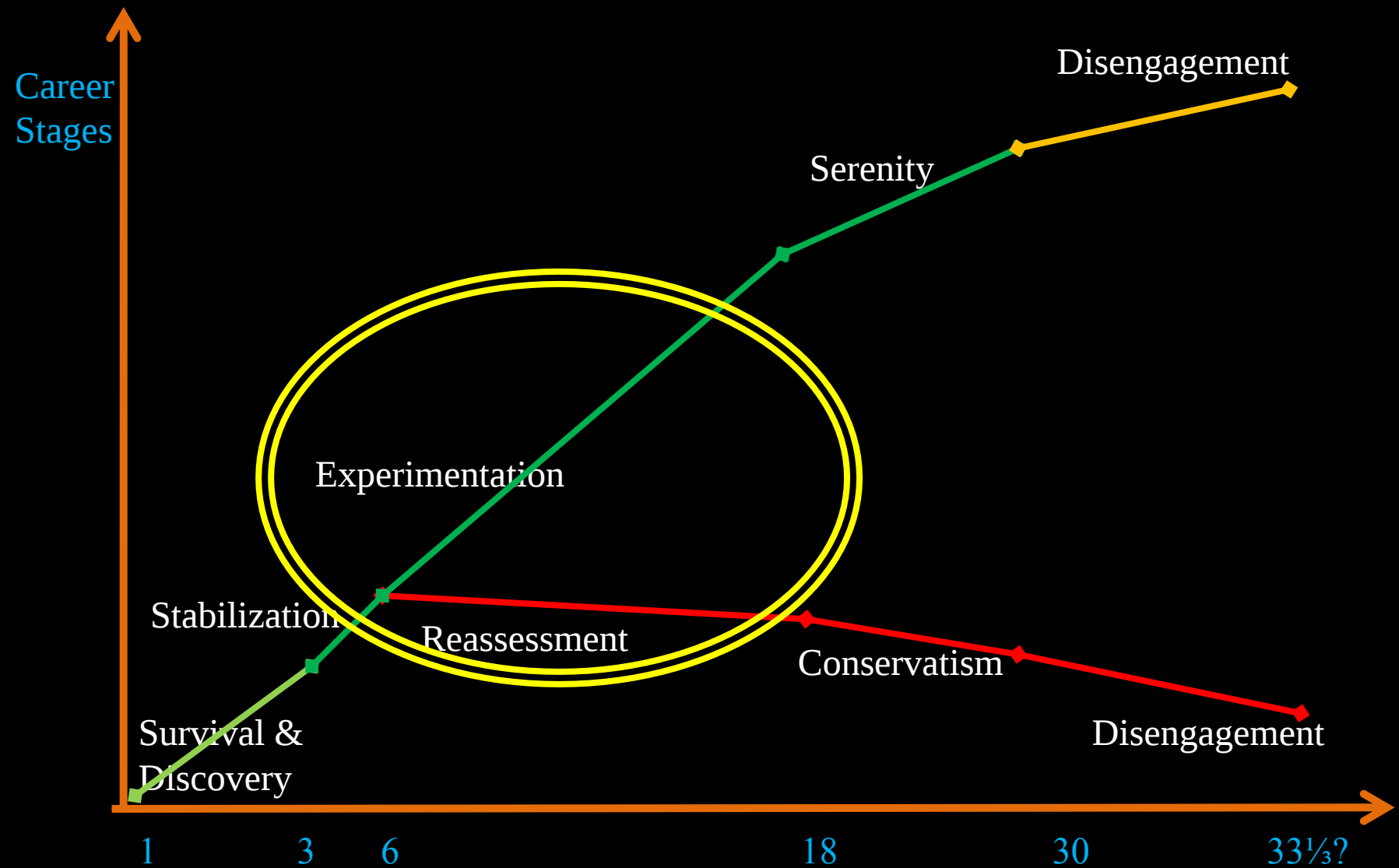


Figure. Stages of Teacher Development. Adapted from Huberman (1992).

“If the reflection-renewal-growth cycle is broken, the teacher begins to withdraw. Without intervention, the teacher slips into deep professional withdrawal until, finally, there is little hope of remaining in the classroom,” (Steffy & Wolfe, 1998, p. 4).

- Hackett (2005) “... continuous and ongoing staff development (based on need) would contribute considerably to greater efficacy and effectiveness among teachers.”
- Herbert & Rampersad offer “site-based interventions” (2007, p.98) as one means to improving thinking in lower secondary science classes.
- Barrow (2007) advocates that Dip Ed graduates “are also prepared for leadership roles among peers and within professional associations...and for mentoring,”

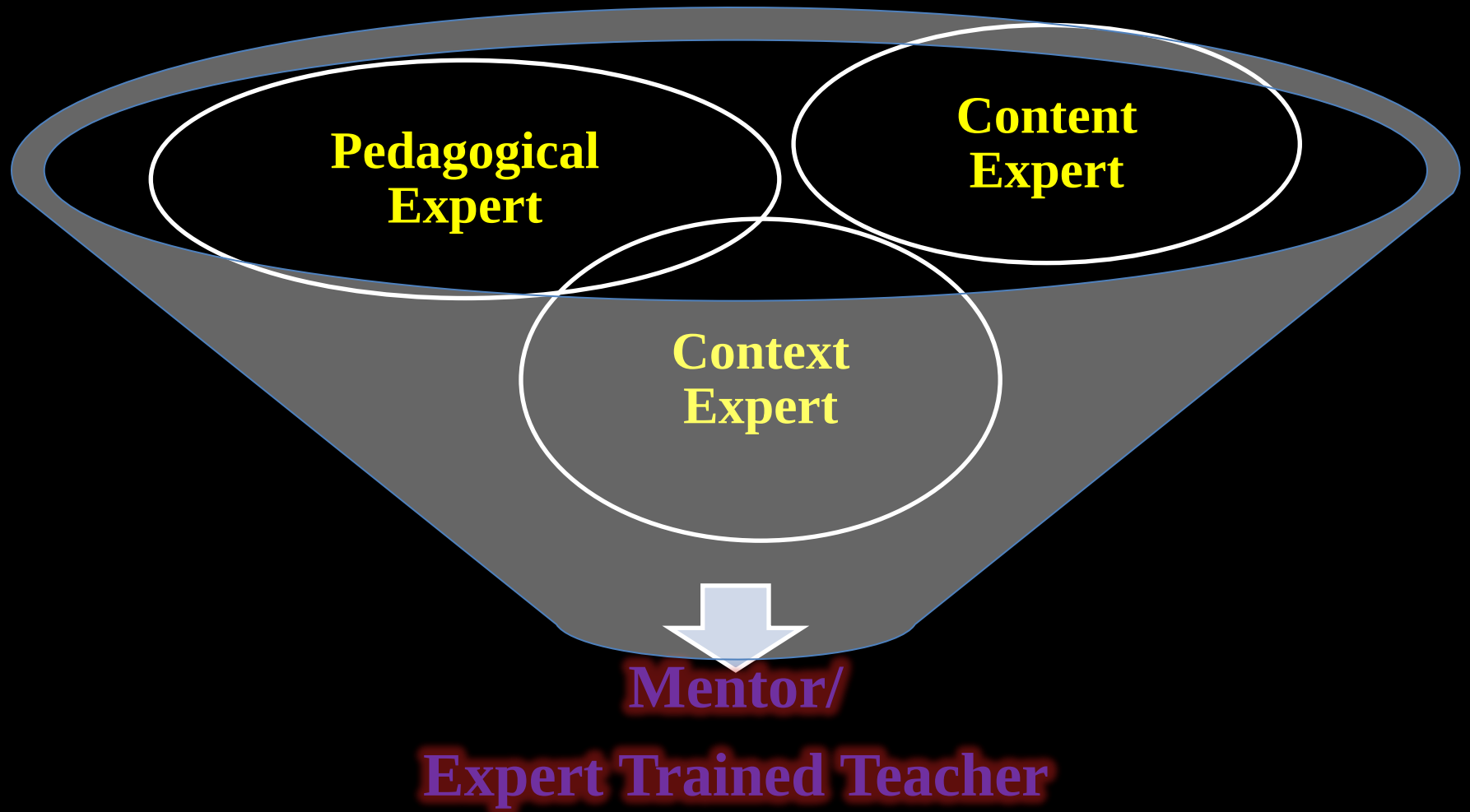


Issue

B.Ed. & Dip.Ed. Graduates can be moved to career stagnation if not afforded opportunities/avenues for continued professional development; Involvement in ongoing professional pursuits, in their professional settings, is one such avenue that is not adequately explored.

Mentoring

“... is a coaching and learning process involving a mentor (person who coaches) and a mentee (the person being coached)” who engage in reflective practice “through collecting and sharing data from classroom observations and asking thoughtful questions,” (Villani, 2009, p. 14).



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Coaching

Coaching is a strategy a mentor may use to provide more targeted support to the new and early-career teacher. (Gudwin & Salazar-Wallace, 2010, p. 53).

Benefits to the Mentor

1. Improved reflective practice
2. A higher level of professional responsibility/
leadership
3. A broadened perspective of the profession
4. A renewed appreciation for the field of education

Hanson, 2010, p. 79; Saffold in Scherer, 2003, p. 83.

FOCUS OF STUDY

One trained science teacher's experiences as a mentor and her own professional development.

Research questions

Questions:

- What does mentoring a novice teacher entail in the setting?
- What are the barriers (to the mentor) that impact on the mentoring process?
- What are the enablers (for the mentor) that enhance the mentoring process?

Vicksburg Model

3 Participants:

1. Instructional Specialist
2. Mentor
3. Mentee

The Mentor-Mentee Handbook

1. Welcome & Introduction
2. Overview of Programme
3. Responsibilities of Mentor
4. Responsibilities of Mentee
5. Sample Reflective Journal Template
6. Article: Gilbert, L. (2005). What helps beginning teachers? *Educational Leadership*, 62(8), 36-39.

Villani, 2009, p. 38-96

The mentoring process involved:

1. a **pre-observation conference** (planning conversation);
2. **nonjudgmental classroom observation**;
3. a **post-observation conference** (reflecting conversation)

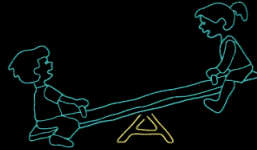
(Villani, 2009, p. 14)

Data Sources:

1. **interviews**
2. **reflective journals**

The setting, the participants...

An all girl, board-assisted secondary school in the Victoria District, Trinidad.



mentor

Dip Ed Science Graduate
(2009, with distinction) –
Curriculum Study =
Hands-on Approach

1st appointment, 7 years
at school,
Acts as Form Dean

Serves on many
committees & organizes
School's Science Fair

Utilises MOE PD
opportunities

mentee

2 years into 1st
appointment

Serves on many
committees

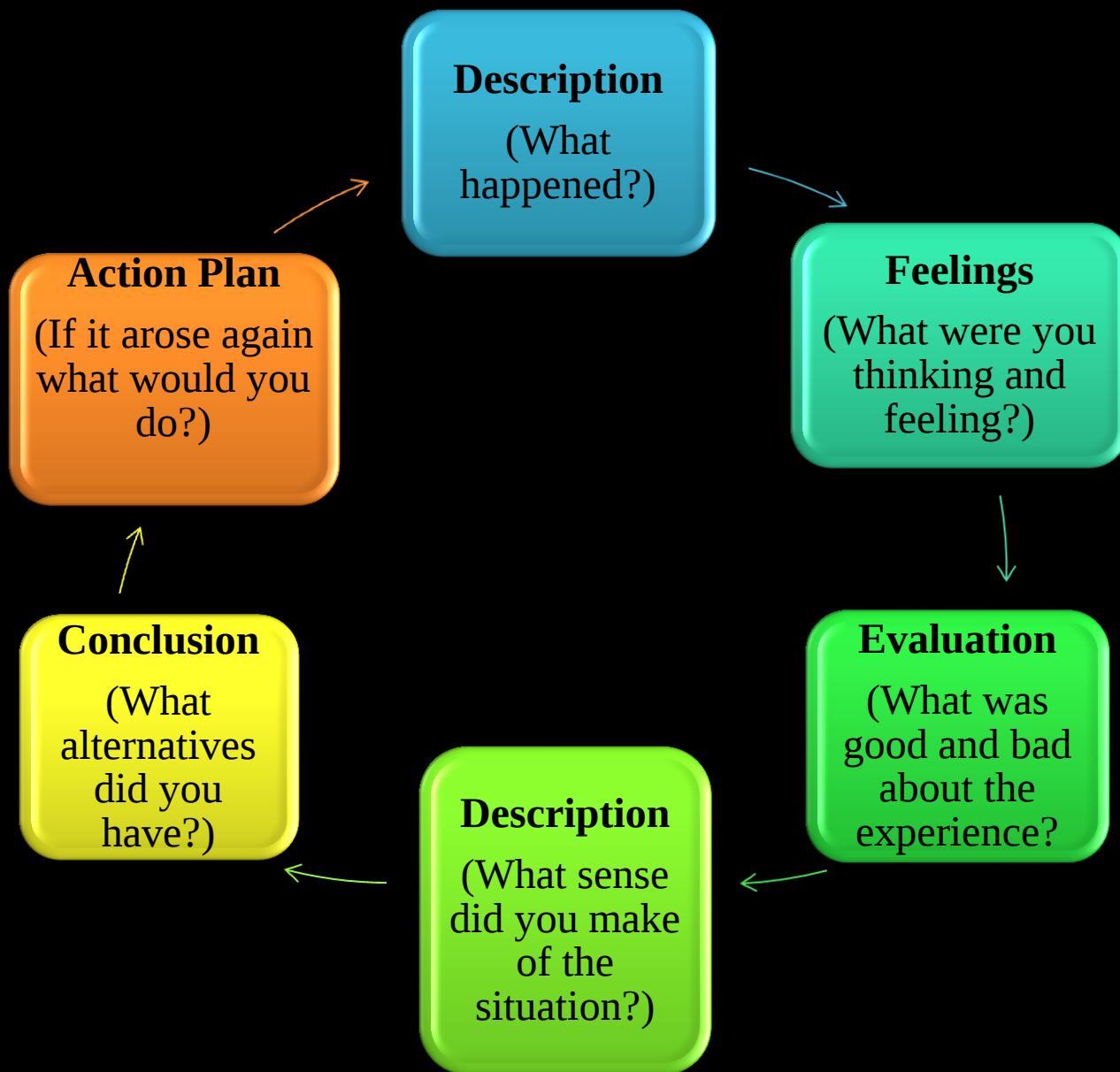
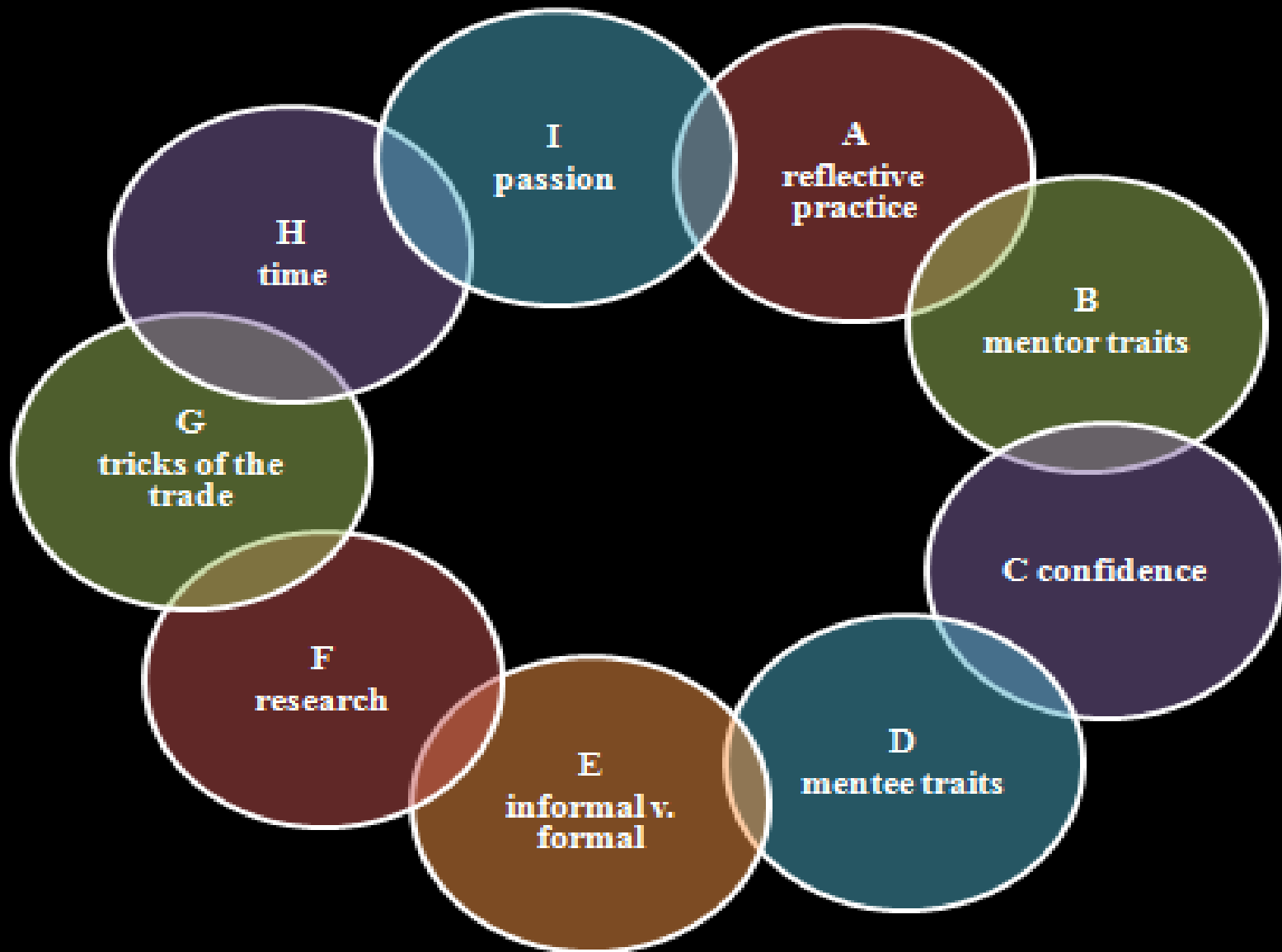


Figure 2. Gibbs' reflective cycle. Adapted from "*Beginning reflective practice: Foundations in nursing and health care*" by M. Jasper, 2003.

FINDINGS



A: Reflective Practice

Serving as a mentor:

“forced me to take stock of my craft”

“made me sit up and take stock about my role as a mentor and the effect on the mentee, her career and her students”

“gave insight into the powerful role that a mentor has on her mentee and how it endures”

“was rewarding for me in a way because I actually got to practice what I’ve learnt so far in diped and to help someone else”

“actually showed me where I need to improve”

Myrtle

B: Mentor Traits

“a mentor needs to gauge the mentee’s interests”

“too many changes can’t be introduced too fast”

“always made her feel comfortable”

Myrtle

Table 5

Comparison of functions of the complete mentor to mentor roles identified by Myrtle

	Function	Purpose	Mentor role identified by Myrtle
1	Relationship emphasis	To establish trust	✓ Effective communicator ✓ Available
2	Information emphasis	To offer specific advice	✓ Inductor ✓ Sharer of information
3	Facilitative focus	To introduce alternatives	✓ Action researcher
4	Confrontive focus	To challenge	✓ Facilitate improvement
5	Mentor model	To motivate	✓ Intuit ✓ Praiser
6	Mentee vision	To encourage initiative	✓ Relinquisher of power ✓ Aware of successes

Note. Adapted from “The adult education professor as mentor: A means to enhance teaching and learning,” by M. W. Galbraith, 2002, *Perspectives: The New York Journal of Adult Learning*, 1(1), p. 9-20 and the mentor roles identified by Myrtle during the mentoring programme

C: Confidence

“the series of experiences during the mentoring process
boosted my confidence as a teacher”

“the exercise was useful for developing my confidence as
well as the confidence of Dora”

“since the students felt that I was more motivated and that I
was more confident in myself they actually grew in their
confidence as well”

Myrtle

Table 6

Comparison of confidence developing experiences

Factors which influenced the development of exemplary teachers	Experiences identified by Myrtle which boosted her confidence
•Specific kinds of professional development	•Engaging in professional development workshops
•Collegial support	•Being mentored
•A sense of engaged autonomy	•The Curriculum Study for DipEd

Note. Adapted from “Exemplary teacher voices on their own development,” by R. Gabriel, J. Peiria Day and R. Allington, 2011, *Phi Delta Kappan*, 92(8), p. 37-41 and direct quotes from Interview 1.01 with Myrtle.

D: Mentee's traits

“the willingness to teach on her side and the willingness to learn on my side”

“came to me asking what improvements she could have”

Myrtle

E: Informal v. Formal

“I now see that professional development just doesn’t have to be in a classroom itself or in a very formal atmosphere it could actually be very informal and be just as effective”

“did not feel pressured at all because all the meetings were so informal”

Myrtle

F: Research

“actually encourage it (use of her action research) because you’re actually helping your school and your students become better.”

“having the information there within me being put to use by another teacher in the school was so ... I just felt relieved and happy I was not the only one using the hands-on approach after I put so much work in trying to get a technique our students would respond to”

Myrtle

G: Tricks of the Trade

“more than 90% of teachers attended schools with a different school culture and the techniques they were exposed to when they were in secondary school are not necessarily applicable to their students”

“share with her some of the challenges I faced and how I was able to overcome them”

Myrtle

H: Time

“time was one of my main hindrances”

“if mentors are within the school itself and readily available it would be easier”

“I wish I had more time to share with her some of the challenges I faced and how I was able to overcome them”

“requires a lot of planning as the mentor must come prepared with written information and examples on topics to be discussed and possible readings”

Myrtle

I: Passion

“I have always admired my former principal who knew all the students by name and knew all their problems at home she was just amazing”

“make a difference in the students’ lives”

“to do whatever I can to help the students in my school ... even the ones I don’t teach”

“the way to help the students I don’t teach is to help their teachers understand what I understand about this teaching thing”

Myrtle

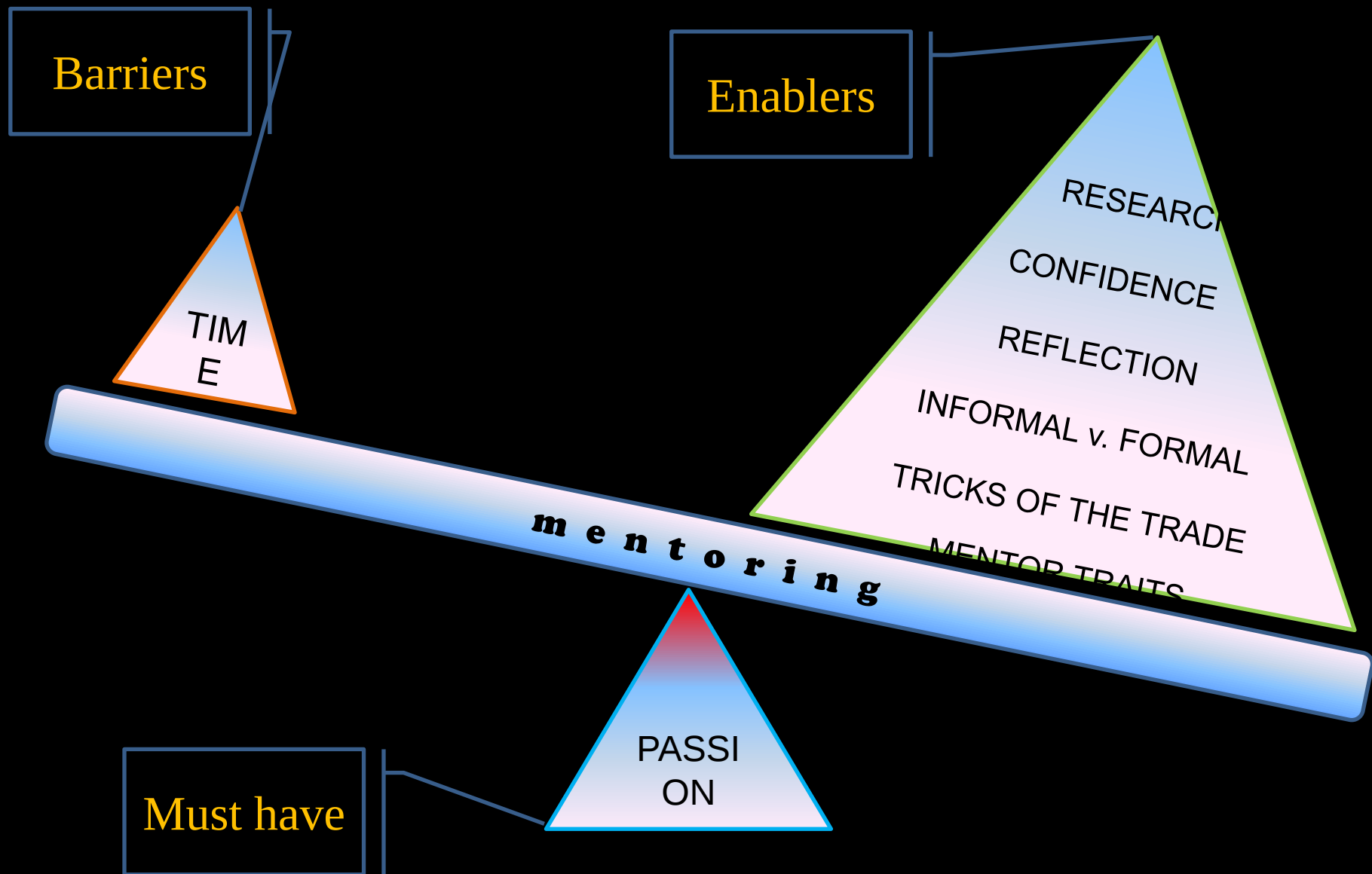


Figure 5. Weighting of themes which influence the mentoring process. The study's findings postulate that once the passion fulcrum is in place, the enablers will outweigh the barrier.

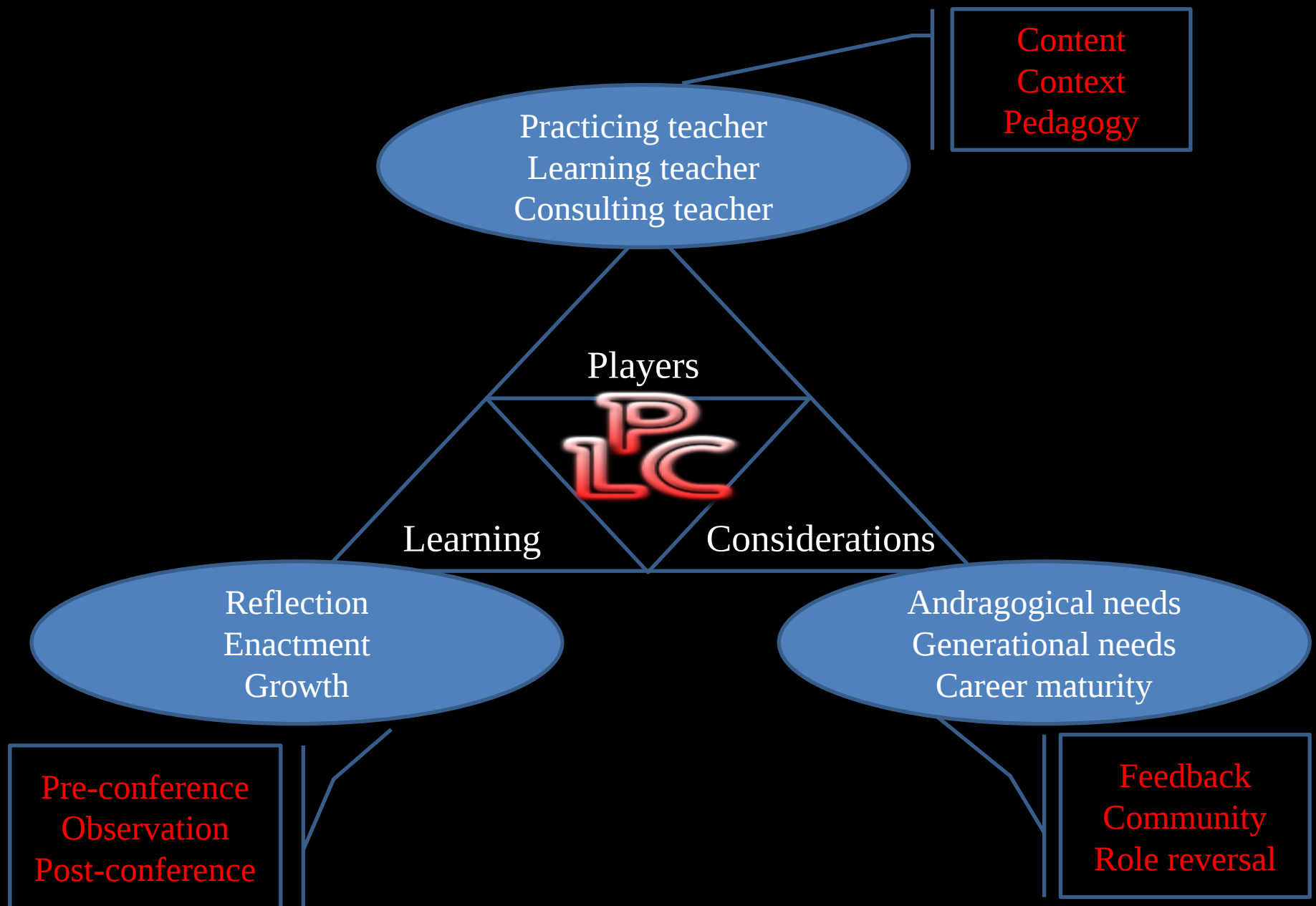


Figure 6. PLC model showing the conditions necessary for an effective mentoring programme.

The Wow & Wonders Protocol

After every session report on:

1. What left me wondering
2. What wowed me/ what I liked.

Easton, 2009, p. 19

FUTURE STUDIES

1. Implement the PLC Model for mentoring of untrained teachers at the District Level in an “academically underperforming” education district.
2. Establish PLC populated by trained teachers in school environments.



“the greatest teachers – now and in the future – are those who both help students learn and spread their expertise to others”

(Byrd & Rasberry, 2011, p. 3)

Call for Support

“If schools are not *well organized and supportive*, it is possible that even good teachers will not be successful”

(Raudenbach et al, 1992, in Mitchell et al, 2001, p. 19).

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Thank
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