

Sex Education in Rural Schools of Mpumalanga Province, South Africa

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ABSTRACT This study reports part of the findings of an ongoing study, which aimed to capture views about how sex-related content is addressed at three rural secondary schools in the province of Mpumalanga. The study captured the views of 14 Life Orientation teachers, of whom 9 were females and 5 were males in the age range of 30 and 45 years. The sample was selected purposefully on the basis that they had undergone sex education training offered by the Department of Education. Data were collected using qualitative research methods involving individual and focus group interviews. The findings of data which were analysed for content reveal teachers' preference to: (a) outsource the services to other non-teaching professionals, (b) omit the content which they consider sensitive and (c) to postpone sex-related lesson until the year ends. The paper concludes that if teacher education and in-service training programmes are not intensified to equip teachers with the necessary skills and knowledge to address sex education in schools; and if some of the beliefs about the subject are not challenged, South Africa may fail in the fight against sex-related problems which continue to scourge lives of young people.