ACCREDITATION OF SKILLS PROGRAMMES THROUGH ACTION RESEARCH

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Abstract

The skills programmes offered at one Community Learning Centre in Pretoria, South Africa, did not comply with the requirements of accrediting bodies. Action research was employed to find and resolve the challenges that restricted the accreditation of skills programmes. A mixed method approach was applied to conduct the research. The Nominal Group Technique (NGT) was employed as compass for the research. From the NGT meeting, hindrances to accreditation from a perspective of skills development lecturers emerged. We used the outcomes of the NGT to guide us in the formulation of other data collection instruments such as questionnaires, participative observation and semi-structured interviews to triangulate findings. During action research we established a quality management system; learning and teaching content and resources were enhanced; we developed a functional marketing strategy and established partnerships for work integrated learning and for placement of alumni in different jobs. The action research was conducted in five cycles according to the observe, reflect, plan and action model. After the fifth cycle of action research the Centre submitted an application for accreditation at the Quality Council for Trade and Occupations (QCTO). The feedback from QCTO culminated into another cycle of action research. At the time of presentation at the conference the last cycle will be completed.

Keywords: Accreditation, skills programmes, action research, nominal group technique.