

Tongaat woman graduates with Doctorate degree

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Tongaat researcher and educator at Parkgate Primary School in Verulam, Dr Prabitha Singh, graduated recently with a Doctorate Degree in Technology: Language Practice at the Durban University of Technology.

According to Dr Singh, low literacy levels in schools prompted her to conduct this research. As a dedicated senior primary educator, Mrs Singh realised that foundation phase educators are faced with many challenges in implementing the National Reading Strategy (NRS)

which include among others teaching or facilitating reading in English in their multicultural, multilingual classrooms where the majority of their learners do not speak English as a first language, catering for different ability levels of understanding and proficiency in their language of instruction and reading within the time-table and resource constraints, and also adapting to changing curricula and requirements without receiving training to do so.

“Recognising the above factors, I found the need to investigate foundation phase educators’ knowledge and attitudes towards implementing the NRS.

“Analysis of data revealed that despite a positive attitude towards teaching reading, educators’ level of confidence to implement the NRS was low as many of them were teaching reading in their second language. In the absence of training workshops and professional development, there was conflict between educators’ existing knowledge and the requirements of the NRS. Based on the findings, this study developed a training framework towards improving foundation phase educators’ knowledge and attitudes in order to facilitate reading and implementation of the NRS,” she said.

Dr Singh has admitted that it is hard work

but will continue to research the educational field because evidence through the accumulation of data through a carefully thought-out and systematic plan dispels speculation and when interpreted correctly, decisive action can be taken with conviction and confidence.

