

An Analysis of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Provisions which are Available to Teachers in Regular Primary Schools to Ensure the Effective Teaching of Learners with Special Education Needs in Zimbabwe

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ABSTRACT This study focused on analysing CPD provisions which are available for teachers in regular primary schools to ensure the effective teaching of learners with special education needs in Zimbabwe. The survey design which utilised a mixed methods approach was used. Questionnaires, face-to-face interviews and focus group interviews were used as instruments. The population comprised of 93 primary schools, 1457 teachers, 93 school heads and a District Education Officer in Gweru District. A sample of ten primary schools, ten school heads and one education officer purposively selected and one hundred and fifty teachers, selected through disproportional stratified random sampling procedure participated in the study. Results revealed that CPD provisions were grossly inadequate. The implication is that teachers' effectiveness is compromised. The recommendations are that more school-based than out of school-based CPD provisions in the field of SEN should be made available to all teachers and appropriate CPD models should be used.

INTRODUCTION

This study is an analysis of CPD provisions which are available to teachers in regular primary schools to ensure the effective teaching of learners with SEN. The inclusive policy was launched in 2010 in primary and secondary schools in Zimbabwe, which in turn translated into increasing enrolments of learners with special education needs in regular schools. The need for CPD for the purpose of curriculum adaptation, inclusive teaching methods; development of teaching materials and improvement of infrastructure became apparent. According to Kassa et al. (2015: 50), "The aim of Continuous Professional Development is to improve the performance of teachers in the classroom and raise student achievement..." The emphasis shifts away from the person in charge of an organisation, towards the professional. Gray (2005) asserts that the teacher takes up the responsibility of engaging in CPD programmes with the full support of the school where they are working. OECD (2009) reports that CPD is a rewarding provision for teachers in terms of acquisition of new knowledge, skills and teaching strategies.

The level of interest and support for CPD has taken strides throughout the world. CPD is a key component in educational reforms and poli-

cies. Broadly speaking, CPD refers to professional development after initial training. It is a continuous formal/ informal process in which professionals engage in, preparing and updating themselves, reviewing and reflecting on their own performance. Professional development is an aspect of personal development where the focus is on developing the whole person thereby bringing self-awareness to individuals (Bubb and Earley 2004; Radhakanta and Sushama 2013; The Teaching Council 2015). Thus CPD is essential for teacher improvement and it has a positive impact on student learning. Goodall et al. (2005) and McEarcher (2007) contend that the support and training available to regular teachers determine the success of programmes that accommodate students with SEN.

According to the European Commission (2011:7), "*Provision should take into account the perspective of the specific school context and needs, as well as national demands; connect school development with individual professional development.*" Thus, among other provisions highlighted in the list of priorities, the provisions should meet the needs of a particular school and its teachers. The paper sought to analyse CPD provisions which are available to ensure teacher effectiveness in the teaching of learners with SEN. The European Commis-

sion (2013) reports that CPD frameworks for teachers are available in order to regulate and support teaching and learning activities. Teachers are supported in terms of methodologies, selecting curriculum material and teaching material within a compulsory professional development plan. Hustler et al. (2003: 4) say, "...good professional development required time to reflect and set objectives, recognition and commitment, opportunity, particularly for work based learning, a focus on schools and teachers and high quality provision." A key factor in the provision of CPD for teachers is accessibility, which includes issues such as availability of courses or programmes, geographical location, appropriate timing, relevance, calibre of trainers, content and modes of delivery.

Teachers need to have access to CPD provisions throughout the year, held at sufficiently close venues to enable them to attend without onerous travel. Facilitators need to be suitably knowledgeable and skilled in the delivery of relevant content which teachers can put into practice. Modes of delivery should be appropriate to the content of the programmes and to the needs of teachers (Pricewater Coopers 2012).

The European Commission (2013) state that the provision of CPD activities for teachers should respond to the needs of each individual teacher at school level. Thus nations are encouraged to have a budget for CPD activities. The European Commission (2013) report cites a survey on a number of European countries carried out by Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) (2008) with lower secondary school teachers and principals of those schools. The survey focused on key aspects which included the professional development of teachers, provision and support for teachers, teaching practices, activities, beliefs and attitudes of teachers from different backgrounds. Results revealed that teachers were willing to take up CPD activities.

The European Commission (2013) also indicates that besides having a national budget for CPD, most European countries take away the financial burden from teachers by offering free courses. National governments take it upon themselves to pay the CPD providers, so that teachers can access the courses free of charge. In some cases, schools are allocated funds for CPD activities, then each school decides on how to use the funds based on their specific needs and circumstances.

In planning effective CPD, Day and Sach (2004) suggest that the school culture and all the structures should be supportive to CPD efforts made at school level. Monitoring and evaluation of CPD programmes and activities is needed to ensure that teachers benefit. As teachers' attitudes towards CPD policy change, teacher performance improves and student outcomes also improve for the better.

Dean, cited in Irish National Teachers' Organisation (2002), contends that, a whole-school approach to the provision of CPD is essential. CPD which adopts a whole-school approach assist in developing and enhancing collaboration for teachers and other staff. Peters (2003) indicates that characteristics of a within-school support approach include immediate support for regular class teachers from specialist teachers within the school. Owen (2005) emphasises the power of collegiality on-site-based professional development. Awases et al. (2015: 21) in a UNESCO report consolidate the idea by stating that 'teacher CPD should be school-based, practice-focused, integrated with teachers' everyday work in the classroom... to improve education quality.' The Teaching Council (2015) points out that school-based CPD is an important provision in teacher learning.

Off-school-site-based modes imply CPD activities that take place outside the school sites. They usually come in the form of workshops or seminars at venues designated by the CPD programme facilitators and implementers (Back et al. 2009). Schwelle and Dembele (2007) reveal that the workshop method can only be effective if it is used as a part of a planned series of activities or workshops linked together through specific tasks or activities. According to the Ministry of Education (2009), the workshop method is a widely used approach in both developed and developing countries. This method relies on the information being passed on with the same level of understanding. However, at each level, the ideas get diluted so that by the time they reach the end-user, very little of the original information is transmitted.

A study by Sabah et al. (2014) focused on 'the nature and status of CPD provision for science and mathematics teachers from Saudi Arabia.' One of the findings was that CPD providers should be competent, skilled and specialised in the area of SEN. Furthermore, the provisions should be supported by funding the programmes

and also giving teachers some form of incentives for participating in CPD. This paper is focusing on CPD provisions for teachers in regular primary schools in Zimbabwe. There is limited literature on CPD provisions in the context of SEN in African states. No studies to the researchers' knowledge have been carried out to ascertain CPD provisions which are available in regular primary schools to ensure teacher effectiveness in the context of SEN in Zimbabwe. Interest in CPD for teachers is a relatively new phenomenon in local research. Therefore, this research is an important endeavour given the fact that Zimbabwe is a developing country and many educational reforms are being implemented in schools. The paper was guided by research questions.

Goal of the Study

The paper seek to analyse CPD provisions which are available for teachers in regular primary schools for them to be able to teach learners with special education needs effectively. The study sought to answer the following questions:

Research Questions

What are teachers' preferences of CPD provisions in SEN at school level?

How often do teachers attend workshops in the context of SEN as a CPD provision?

How supportive are schools on CPD provisions on SEN?

Which CPD models should be used in conjunction with these provisions?

What recommendations can be made?

METHODOLOGY

Design

The survey design, which utilised the mixed-methods approach, was used (Johnson et al. 2007). Concurrent triangulation strategy was used because it enabled the researcher to collect both quantitative and qualitative data at the same time in the research process (Creswell and Plano-Clark 2011).

Population and Selection of Sample

The population comprised of 93 Gweru district primary schools, 1 457 teachers, all school

heads and a District Education Officers. Purposive sampling procedure was used to select ten primary schools from which data was collected. One hundred and fifty teachers were selected through disproportional stratified random sampling procedure. The total number from the sub-groups were males (n=69) and females (n=81). The researchers purposively selected cases to be included in focus group discussions on the basis of their typicality. Data were collected through questionnaires, face-to-face interviews as well as focus group interviews.

Data Analysis

The Statistical Software Package for Social Scientists (SPSS) was used for data entry and analysis. Qualitative information was used to understand perspectives concerning CPD provisions. Thematic analysis was done to classify commonly reported perceptions and behaviours, patterns and determinants on the topic under study.

Procedure

An approval letter stamped and dated to carry out research in Gweru District Primary Schools was secured from the Provincial Education Director and the District Education Officer. School heads granted the researchers permission for entry into schools. The researchers abided by ethical considerations so as to ensure that individual rights are not infringed upon and to promote fairness in the interpretation of data.

RESULTS

Data is presented and discussed in this section. The paper focused on analysing CPD provisions which are available to teachers in regular primary schools so that they are able to teach effectively learners with SEN. Participants included 150 teachers, 10 school heads and one District Education Officer. In interviews, school heads are referred to as Head 1 up to Head 10. Focus group discussion 1 is referred to as FGD1 while focus group discussion two is referred to as FGD2. Participants in both groups are referred to as P1 up to P6 respectively. Each group had six participants.

To begin with, respondents were asked to indicate their preferences of school-based CPD

provisions. Reference is made to in Table 1. Data from teachers' responses on CPD preferences reveal that the highly preferred CPD provision is CPD facilitated by an expert at 100 percent followed by CPD held during school time at 98 percent. The CPD held in their own schools and CPD where good practices are shared with workmates both stood at 96 percent. Focused and well-structured CPD stood at 74 percent. School heads' responses reveal that CPD which is focused, well-structured and CPD that is directly relevant to good practices on SEN is highly preferred and stood at 100 percent. This was followed by, CPD which is expert-driven, CPD held at school level and sharing good practices on CPD with workmates at 90 percent. CPD guided by action research stood at 80 percent while CPD held during school time stood at 70 percent. Low percentages were recorded on the category 'Somewhat Preferred.'

Results reveal that teachers and school heads have similar high preferred CPD provisions and these should be considered when planning CPD for teachers. School heads confirmed what they had pointed out in the survey. One of the school heads indicated that some of the heads consulted and worked hand in hand with specialist teachers from nearby special schools. Another school head pointed out that, although staff development was said to be a recognised activity in schools, time for doing it was neither enough nor fixed, but it was usually slotted in the afternoons. The DEO in one of the responses said: *I feel strongly that if more CPD activities were organised at school and at cluster levels, we would be able to achieve much more than we are achieving now in the area of SEN.*

It was important to establish if respondents have been afforded CPD provisions in the form of workshops or seminars on SEN since 2010 when the inclusive policy was launched. Reference is made to in Table 2.

Table 2: Number and percentage distribution of teacher respondents on CPD provisions in the form of workshops on SNE, attended between 2010 and 2014 (n=150)

Category	Number of teachers	%
Four workshops and above	13	8.7
Three workshops	4	2.7
Two workshops	5	3.3
One workshop	31	20.7
None	97	64.7
Total	150	100

Data reveal that 64.7 percent of respondents did not attend a single workshop on SEN, followed by 20.7 percent who attended only once. Those who attended workshops four times and above constituted 8.7 percent. Those who attended twice were 3.3 percent while those who attended three times were 2.7 percent. These results showed that the number of workshops organised for teachers were very limited. As a result, most teachers remained unknowledgeable in the area of SEN when they are expected to include such children in regular schools.

When interviewed, all school heads indicated that a very limited number of workshops or in some cases, no workshops were held at all for teachers between 2010 and 2014 specifically on SNE. For example, Head 1 commented: *Provisions which are available include minimal provisions of workshops and cascading informa-*

Table 1: Number and percentage distribution of teachers' responses on their preferences of CPD provisions (n=150). Number and percentage of school heads' responses on their preferences of CPD provisions (n=10)

Item	Teachers' responses				School heads' responses			
	P	%	SP	%	P	%	SP	%
A CPD guided by action research.	142	94.7	8	5.3	8	80	2	20
B Expert driven CPD	150	100	17	11.3	9	90	1	10
C CPD held in their own schools	144	96	6	4	9	90	1	10
D Focused, well-structured CPD	111	74	39	26	10	100	-	-
E CPD held during school time.	147	98	3	2	7	70	3	30
F Sharing of good practices on CPD with workmates	144	96	6	4	9	90	1	10
G CPD that is directly relevant to good practices on SEN	140	93.3	10	6.7	10	100		

tion. Head 2 said: *Specialist teachers went for in-service training initially, but nothing was organised thereafter.* The other issue which emerged was that CPD provision in the form of workshops was there but it was mostly availed to teachers who already had a qualification in SEN. Workshops for school administrators were also limited as indicated by one of the school heads who said: *We administrators have not received staff development on SEN. I don't remember any workshop for administrators being held on how to handle SEN learners in recent years.* Data from focus group discussions also confirmed lack of workshops for teachers. For example, one participant said: *We have not had workshops on SEN since three years ago...* A pertinent issue raised here was lack of feedback from those who would have attended workshops.

There was need to find out how adequate the time allocated for school-based CPD was, per week. Reference is made to in Table 3.

Table 3: Number and percentage of teachers' responses on adequacy of time allocated for school-based CPD per week (n =150)

Category	Number of teachers	Percentage	Rank
Most adequate	10	6.6	4
Adequate	47	31.3	2
Somewhat adequate	31	20.7	3
Not adequate	62	41.3	1

Data reveal that 41.3 percent of the teachers felt that time for CPD was not adequate, 31.3 percent said it was adequate while 27.7 percent said it was somewhat adequate. 'Somewhat' means to a less extent or degree. Only 6.6 percent of the teachers said time for CPD was adequate. Provision of time for CPD is a challenge in schools. School heads responded to an interview item on the adequacy of time allocated to CPD at school level. All school heads indicated that although staff development was slotted on the school timetable, time for teachers to engage in proper school-based CPD was not available. For example, Head 1 said: *Time is not adequate because we have too many subjects on the time table.* Head 4 also said: *We are supposed to allocate three or four sessions to staff development per term on the timetable. However the time table is packed such that all we are required to do does not fit at all on the timeta-*

ble. Both focus group discussions also stressed the fact that time for CPD was inadequate. For example, FGD1 P2 said: *We don't have enough time for self-advancement professionally.* FGD2 P4 said: *Our education system is examination-oriented. Time for CPD is very limited.* While the DEO acknowledged that time was not adequate, the explanation given was that CPD is an ongoing process. It was therefore up to individual school heads to make sure that teachers engaged in some forms of CPD. The other issue that was raised was that teachers were not really paid on the basis of CPD sessions attended and as a result, teachers tended to concentrate more on teaching and producing results than on CPD activities.

The researchers also wanted to find out how much support teachers were getting from school heads in terms of CPD provision. Teacher respondents were asked to indicate the support given on the issue of CPD for SNE by the schools administration. Reference is made to in Table 4. On one hand, data show that 32 percent strongly agreed and 52 percent agreed that school heads supported availability of CPD provisions. On the other hand, 8.7 percent disagreed and 13.3 percent strongly disagreed. However, 6 percent were undecided. The percentage of teachers who strongly agreed and those who agreed that school heads were supportive of CPD provisions for SEN in their schools added together, is 84 percent. By supporting CPD provisions, school heads were fulfilling their leadership mandate of making sure policies are implemented.

Table 4: Teachers' responses on whether school heads supported CPD provisions for teachers or not. (n=150)

Category	Number of teachers	Percentage	Rank
Agree strongly	48	32	2
Agree	78	52	1
Neither/nor	9	6	5
Disagree	13	8.7	4
Disagree strongly	20	13.3	3
Total	150	100	

When school heads were asked in interviews to say how much they supported CPD provisions for SEN in their schools, all of them (100%) indicated that they fully supported CPD, but

were limited by time and funding for the programmes. For example, one of the school heads said: *We fully support CPD. It is the school heads who request the DEO for staff development on a particular aspect. The DEO then organises a workshop accordingly which is catered for at district level using affiliation monies.* One of the school heads indicated that the heads supported CPD provisions in the form of staff development meetings and workshops, since they were the ones who advised the DEO on deficit areas. Both focus group discussions confirmed that school heads were supportive of CPD but were limited by lack of resources and lack of expertise in SEN. Participants also agreed that CPD is mainly in the form of staff development meetings and a very limited number of workshops. The DEO indicated that from the reports given by school heads on staff development and other teachers' activities, there was evidence that school heads supported CPD, but their efforts were being hampered by lack of funding and demanding work schedules.

Teachers and school heads were asked to choose CPD model provisions which they preferred to underpin CPD activities. Reference is made to in Table 5.

Results reveal that 92 percent of the teachers indicated that they preferred the standards-based model, while all school heads (100%) indicated their preference for this model. While 76 percent of the teachers indicated that they preferred the training model, 90 percent of the school heads indicated that they preferred the training model more than all the other models because it is cost-effective. This was viewed as a productive way of quickly in-servicing teachers relative to its cost. Only 24.7 percent of the teachers

and 20 percent of the school heads indicated their preference of the award-bearing model. An award-bearing model of CPD is one that relies on, or emphasises the completion of award-bearing programmes of study usually, but not exclusively, validated by universities. Although all qualified teachers in Zimbabwe's primary school sector are awarded diplomas at the end of their initial training, it is neither compulsory nor mandatory for them to continue with further education. Results on teacher qualifications in the present study show that a small percentage of qualified teachers are taking part in award-bearing programmes because they have to fund themselves to engage in such activities.

While the award-bearing model is one of the best models in initial teacher training, it cannot be fully dependent on when it comes to the idea of school-based CPD because it is expensive and time-consuming. Besides the award-bearing model, the deficit model appeared not to be popular with both teachers and school heads. Only 27.3 percent of teachers and 20 percent of school heads indicated that they preferred the deficit model which uses CPD to attempt to redress the perceived weaknesses in individual teachers. Thus, the deficit model is useful in as far as identifying the CPD needs of teachers is concerned, but it is not embedded in all the CPD activities. CPD based on the deficit model only focuses on particular problems encountered by teachers.

The other model which is preferred by some teachers and school heads while others do not prefer it is the cascade model. While 43.7 percent of the teachers indicated preference for the cascade model, only 30 percent of the school heads indicated that they preferred this model.

Table 5: Number and percentage distribution of teachers' responses on CPD models they preferred (n=150) Number and percentage distribution of school heads' responses on CPD models they preferred to use for teachers (n=10)

<i>Model of CPD</i>	<i>Number of teachers</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Rank</i>	<i>Number of school-heads</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Rank</i>
a) Training model	114	76	2	9	90	2
a) Award bearing model	37	24.7	8	2	20	2
b) Deficit model	41	27.3	7	2	20	2
c) Cascade model	71	47.3	4	3	30	6
d) Standards based model	138	92	1	10	100	1
e) Coaching /Mentoring model	70	46.7	5	3	30	6
f) Community of practice model	51	34	6	5	50	4
g) Action research model	82	54.7	3	4	40	5
h) Transformative model	66	44	5	6	60	3

Teachers who participated in the present study indicated that those teachers who are selected to go and attend workshops do not get the time to give feedback. If they are afforded the time to do so, the feedback is just summarised and little or no learning takes place among teachers.

On the coaching/mentoring model, 46.7 percent of the teachers indicated that they preferred this model, while 30 percent of the school heads indicated that they preferred the model. The other point put forward by participants was that student teachers attached to schools and temporary teachers needed coaching and mentoring since they were considered to be novices. However, it was noted from the discussions that not much mentoring was going on among qualified teachers because they are tied down with the issue of standards in terms of results.

While 34 percent of the teachers indicated that they preferred communities of practice, only 10 percent of the school heads indicated preference for this model. This model, while it is one of the best models for school-based CPD, it is not used in schools because teachers are governed by national policies which place a lot of emphasis on result-based management for quality assurance. As a result, teachers do not have time for collaboration because there are set targets which they must fulfill at any given time. While 54.7 percent of the teachers indicated that they preferred the action research model, 40 percent of the school heads indicated their preference of action research. In Zimbabwe, action research is one of the modules learned by student teachers in initial training. They are expected to produce a research report based on action research at the end of their internship. The action research model involves facing problems head-on through reflecting on ones practices on a day-to-day basis.

While 44 percent of the teachers indicated that they preferred to use the transformative model, 60 percent of the school heads preferred this model. Besides the transformative model, both teachers and school heads had high preferences for all the other models discussed earlier. This shows that teachers and school heads would be in a position to make use of a combination of these models comfortably in enhancing their professional development. The transformative model of CPD involves the combination of a number of processes and conditions. It recognises the range of different conditions required

for transformative practice. The transformative model is effective in the integration of a range of all the other models.

When school heads were interviewed about CPD models they preferred to use in their schools, all school heads (100%) indicated that they preferred the standards-based model while nine of them indicated that they preferred the training model to all the other models. Only one school head (10%) preferred the deficit model to the other models because the deficit model looks at individuals, focusing on their strength and weaknesses. This suggests that standards are highly regarded and they are also key result areas for both teachers and school heads.

Head 1 responded by saying: *I can say that all the models are important in one way or the other, but because of limited resources, we take what works in our own situation.* Head 5 said: *We make use of mentoring a lot with student teachers. We also coach temporary teachers on how to scheme and plan and also on school requirements.*

Most of the participants in both focus groups confirmed preference for the standards-based model and the training model over other models because their level of performance in terms of students' achievements is measured against those standards. Training would be valued more if it carried an award in the form of a certificate. For example, FGD 2 P4 also said: *Training at school level through a series of workshops for all the teachers is preferable.* One of the participants in FGD2 pointed out the importance of action research although it was not used regularly. The DEO on the issue of models indicated that different models could be used for school-based CPD but it all depended on each school head's initiative skills and innovation.

DISCUSSION

The paper focuses on analysing CPD provisions which are available to teachers in regular primary schools to ensure the effective teaching of learners with SEN. The Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education is well informed on the need for capacity building in the area of SEN and the fact that teachers' CPD should be commensurate with the tasks they are expected to perform. The success of the inclusive policy depends on provision of CPD which is underpinned by an all-encompassing model of CPD.

Results on teachers and school-heads preferences of school-based CPD provisions revealed that these two groups of participants have similar preferences of school-based CPD which they regard highly. The on-school-site-based modes are the school-based CPD activities. Back et al. (2009) contend that in on-school-site-based CPDs, teachers within a school or within a cluster of several schools jointly do collaborative professional development. This type of CPD, which is organised and offered at school level is more accessible than out-of-school-based CPD especially considering the economic challenges bedeviling the education system and the country as a whole. School-based CPD allows teachers to have opportunities to engage in CPD activities which are directly related to their classroom practices. A research study by Mokhele (2013) provides evidence that intensive school-based professional development programmes can enable teachers to increase their knowledge and improve their teaching.

UNESCO (2012) pointed out that initial teacher training for teachers does not equip them with knowledge, skills and the confidence to effectively support learners with disabilities and rarely does it prepare them to work in diverse classrooms. As a result, many children with disabilities are excluded from the learning process. Hustler et al. (2011) indicated that teachers valued sharing of good practices in teaching. In a survey carried out by Nisbett, cited by Wan (2011) results showed that teachers were keen to be engaged in CPD and they preferred classroom-based topics for professional development, held in their own schools during school-time. This is in line with the school-site-based approach where teachers can engage themselves in communities of practice. Classroom-based practice can be an entry point for teachers' CPD using an alternative approach that allows teachers to inquire, share and reflect on their practice in schools and classrooms. In a study by Hustler et al. (2011) participants felt that effective CPD provision had an impact when they could use the knowledge, ideas and teaching and learning strategies in their own classrooms which would lead to personal gains associated with increased self-confidence and encouragement to reflect on their work.

Regarding CPD provision in the form of workshops at different levels, the results revealed

that although workshops were organised for teachers in the context of SEN, they were very minimal and in most cases targeted specialist teachers within regular schools. Information is then cascaded to teachers who have no idea what SEN is. Cascading is a model which has immense weaknesses which include dilution of information and failure to give feedback by those teachers who would have been given the opportunity to attend the workshop (Mokhele 2012). The provision was there but it was limited to teachers who already had a qualification in SEN. According to Guskey (2000) the education leadership continue to provide ineffective CPD experiences for teachers. They tend to reinforce the perception of CPD as a series of short courses or workshops with little follow-up or guidance for implementation. A pertinent issue raised was lack of feedback from those who would have attended workshops. Failure to report back the lessons learned from workshops defeated the whole purpose of organising such workshops, considering that the aim of CPD for teachers is to improve the performance of teachers in the classroom and raise student achievement (Kassa et al. 2015). The European Union (2013) states that a key factor in the provision of CPD for teachers is accessibility, which includes issues such as availability of courses or programmes, geographical location, appropriate timing, relevance, caliber of trainers, content and modes of delivery.

Teachers need to have access to CPD provisions throughout the year, held at sufficiently close venues to enable them to attend without onerous travel. However, CPD provision in Zimbabwe is *ad hoc* and is not adequately coordinated at all levels. CPD is also viewed as a loose, possibly unrelated set of staff development opportunities, such as short courses and workshops (Africa Country Synthesis Report 2011; Sabah et al. 2014). On adequacy of the time allocated for CPD, at school level per week, teachers revealed that time to engage in CPD is inadequate. School heads and the DEO acknowledged that time is not adequate and CPD is supposed to be an on-going process, according to the DEO. It was, therefore, up to individual school heads to make sure that teachers engaged in some forms of CPD to support inclusive education. The other issue that was raised was that teachers were not really paid on the basis of CPD sessions attended and were not even reim-

bursed if they engaged in out-of-school-based CPD. So, teachers tended to concentrate more on teaching and producing results than on CPD activities. Awases et al. (2015) in a UNESCO report point out that CPD should address the reforms being made, be school-based and integrated with teachers' day-to-day classroom tasks. The Teaching Council (2015) points out that school-based and external-based CPD are important provisions in teacher learning. Teachers need to update their knowledge and skills in line with the changes which are taking place in their profession. Teachers felt that they are ill-equipped in terms of knowledge and skills in SEN.

Teachers also lamented lack of funding as the greatest impediment to professional development. Thus teachers suggested provision of free courses by government. Findings of Liberal Democrats (2014) revealed that schools' CPD budget allocations vary alarmingly, with some funding for CPD in schools being inadequate and patchy. CPD is given relatively low priority in some of the schools. The report recommends that it is important to put professional development back into the hands of teachers and allocate resources to meet their needs for CPD. It is also important that teachers should have considerable flexibility in using their allocation. Teachers could be entitled to access an external national funding. This could neatly relate to the idea of a national CPD framework. The national framework should be rigorous about this so that CPD funding is seen as worthwhile and accountable. The DEO also indicated that from the reports given by school heads on staff development and other teachers' activities, there was evidence that school heads supported CPD but singled out failure by the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education to provide funding for CPD as the main obstacle for them to provide effective CPD for teachers.

Other barriers to accessing CPD provisions are, timing of professional development programmes and lack of relevant programmes. Australian research by Westwood (2003) found out similar results where teachers were concerned about lack of time for CPD because of demanding timetables. Some of the teachers were worried about the behaviours of some learners with disabilities, presumably, those with mental challenges. The workload of the teacher would obviously increase because of learners with chal-

lenges in the mainstream. Teachers, therefore, needed to be knowledgeable in handling such learners and in preparing Individualised Educational Programmes (IEPs). In the Hartford public school system study, the finding was that special education students were not getting the services they needed, regular classrooms were being disrupted and teachers were exasperated (Gottlieb 2006). Studies cited by McEarchern (2007) found out that teachers expressed their inability to teach learners with SEN and also lamented lack of time. Konza (2008) reiterated that, having a child with SEN in a regular classroom was very demanding and required more time and other resources than usual. The focus and quality of these CPD experiences vary widely, and some of these learning opportunities do not enhance teacher effectiveness (Mokhele 2012). Teachers need well-designed school-based CPD programmes and activities to be able to update their knowledge and skills, change their teaching practice and educate learners with special education needs to high levels of standards.

For school heads/principals to be effective in their support for CPD, they need to be knowledgeable about special needs education. That way, they are able to support CPD in more meaningful ways and to avail the provisions. The World Health Organisation and the World Bank (2011) noted that teachers are often simply not trained or supported to teach children with disabilities, which causes these children to be the most marginalised in terms of educational opportunity and attainment. Thus, the support which is required is that which enables regular teachers to acquire knowledge and skills in SEN, thereby equipping them to teach learners with special education needs competently and with confidence. In the clusters studied by Ridley (2010), head teachers invariably assumed the role of the CPD coordinator along with their many additional roles and responsibilities. Although teachers did not generally have an allocation of funding for their own CPD or a specified entitlement, they claimed to have adequate access to CPD through their head teachers. The quality of CPD often varied, but there was a general agreement across the clusters that it went a long way to matching the teachers' needs. School heads who participated in the present study indicated that they supported and promoted CPD in their schools. Some teachers agreed that school

heads supported and promoted CPD. However, it was noted that the CPD being referred to by school heads was staff development which is one aspect of CPD and is not synonymous with CPD. Thus, school heads should be in a position to provide meaningful CPD for teachers, which addresses specific needs.

The researchers also sought to find out which CPD models teachers and school heads would prefer in the provision of CPD activities. Almost all teachers and all school heads preferred the standards-based model. However, while the model is useful for developing a common language for teaching, it may be narrow and limited in scope and does not view teaching as a complex phenomenon (Kennedy 2005). Beyer cited in Kennedy (2005) suggests that the move towards increasing standardisation in teacher education at both initial and continuing stages is in part a response to growing concerns about nation states' abilities to compete in the global economy. However, despite the existence of extensive literature which is critical of the standards-based approach to teacher education, policies that adopt this approach present a justification for its use.

The training model is viewed as a productive way of quickly in-servicing teachers relative to its cost. The training model is the most widely used model and it is sometimes considered synonymous with professional development. Most of the participants indicated their preference for the training model over other models because most would value training if it carried an award in the form of a certificate. The idea of receiving a certificate at the end of a workshop or a short course is viewed as motivating by teachers. The DEO also indicated that different models could be used for school-based CPD but it all depended on each school head's innovativeness. Tantranont (2009) concurs that the training model is powerful in maintaining a narrow view of teaching. The emphasis on standards overshadows the need for teachers to collaborate with others and to work towards identifying and meeting their CPD needs. However, the main weakness of this model is that it focuses on skills with expert delivery rather than the practical side of teaching, thereby placing the participant in a passive role to gain knowledge. Both teachers and school heads in the present study showed high preference for this model.

Preference for the award-bearing model was very low among both teachers and school heads as a CPD provision. An award-bearing model of CPD is one that relies on, or emphasises, the completion of award-bearing programmes of study usually, but not exclusively, validated by universities. This external validation can be viewed as a mark of quality assurance, but equally can be viewed as the exercise of control by the validating and/or funding bodies (Kennedy 2005). While the award-bearing model is one of the best models in initial teacher training, it cannot be fully dependent on when it comes to the idea of school-based CPD because it is expensive and time-consuming. The deficit model appeared not to be popular with both teachers and school heads. However, this model is useful in that it is used to redress the perceived weaknesses in individual teachers. According to Rhodes and Beneicke (2003), CPD can be designed and provided specifically to address a perceived deficit in teacher performance. Performance management is a way of raising standards. It is a government intervention strategy to bring about greater efficiency, effectiveness and accountability.

Teachers and school heads' preference of the cascade model provision was low despite the fact that it is widely used. The cascade model is a top-down approach, where teachers attend workshops at regional, national or district level and then cascade the information to other members of staff. It is presumed to be a cost-effective model which is a provision used where resources are limited (Kennedy 2005). However, as noted from the responses in this study, the model lacks an element of collaboration with colleagues at the initial stage. Ono and Ferreira (2010) indicate that the model is used to transmit knowledge or information from upper to lower groups of teachers. The cascade model is used widely in many developing countries, because it is considered to be cost-effective. According to Dichaba and Mokhele (2012) the cascade model has been widely criticised as an inadequate model in CPD provision for delivering effective training because it has a dilution effect. In the South African context, the cascade approach failed to prepare either officials or school-based teachers for the complexity involved in implementing the new national curriculum. The result was misinterpretation and watering down of crucial information. Myers and Bagree quot-

ed by Lewis and Bagree (2013) agree that the approach often fails to offer trainees practical learning and experience exchanges and the depth of learning that is needed which can even result in inaccurate information being cascaded down. Rieser (2012) noted that the popularity of cascade training mechanisms among non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and ministries of education needed careful review. Although the cascade model is widely used, it should not be seen as a quick way of fixing problems of inclusive education in terms of teacher development. Teachers who participated in the present study indicated that those teachers who are selected to go and attend workshops do not get the time to give feedback. If they are afforded the time to do so, the feedback is just summarised or rushed and little or no learning takes place among teachers.

Preference for the coaching/mentoring model by teachers and school heads was also very low. It was noted from the discussions that not much mentoring was going on among qualified teachers because they are tied down with the system which is examination-oriented. Kennedy (2005) says that these two models share the main element of one-on-one partnership in learning. The coaching model places emphasis on acquisition of skills, while the mentoring model is more inclined to counselling. Mentoring also often implies a relationship where one partner is novice and the other more experienced. Mentorship can also be applied where teachers are at the same level of education, but have something to learn from each other. Key to this model is the notion that professional learning can take place within the school context and can be enhanced by exchanging information with colleagues. Few participants indicated their preference for communities of practice. Although this is one of the best models for school-based CPD, it is not used in schools because teachers are governed by national policies which place a lot of emphasis on results-based management for quality assurance. As a result, teachers do not have time for collaboration because there are set targets which they must fulfill at any given time. Within a community of practice, CPD should be socially binding. Frequent informal talk which is genuine is essential to learning within a community of practice. Regular consultations and shared experiences build stronger communities.

The action-research model was preferred by just over fifty percent of teachers and less than

fifty percent of school heads. The action-research model involves facing problems head-on through reflecting on one's practices on a day-to-day basis. Kennedy (2005) says that this model, when used allows teachers to ask critical questions of their practice and lead them to succeed as they seek immediate solutions to problems. The quality of action that is taken can be perceived as the teacher understands the situation as well as the practice within the situation. An action research model clearly has significant capacity for transformative practice and professional autonomy, hence the need to include it as one of the provisions which enhance CPD in the context of SEN.

The use of the transformative model was also preferable to some teachers and school heads. The transformative model of CPD involves a combination of a number of processes and conditions. It recognises the range of different conditions required for transformative practice. The transformative model is effective in the integration of a range of all the other models. The transformative model is also a means of supporting educational change. A key characteristic of the transformative model is its effective amalgamation of the range of other models, together with a real sense of awareness of issues of power (Kennedy 2005).

The delivery and diversity of CPD models are affected by the nature of the educational system. In non-centralised systems, schools put in place CPD provisions and activities that meet the needs of teachers within a given context. In centralised educational systems, the CPD activities are usually organised by the ministries of education. It should be realised that what is important is not the professional development but the students' improved performance (Sabah 2014).

CONCLUSION

In light of the results of the study, it is concluded that the CPD provisions which are made available to teachers are inadequate. Although there is an attempt to provide out-of-school-based CPD, the number of workshops is very limited. These workshops are attended by very few teachers who have failed in many instances to cascade the learned skills adequately to their colleagues due to a number of factors which include lack of time and poor leadership styles

on the part of the school head. School-based CPD is only provided in the form of staff development meetings which are mainly administrative in nature. The study concluded that the provision of school-based and out-of-school based CPD should incorporate a combination of models to enhancing teachers' professional development in the context of special education needs.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that CPD provisions should be made available to teachers as a way of enhancing their knowledge and skills in the context of SEN. Most of the CPD activities should be school-based and should be facilitated by experts in the field of SEN. The use of a combination of CPD models in the context of SEN is recommended.

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