

Challenges that Hinder the Effectiveness of Staff Development Programmes in Primary Schools in Hwange

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Abstract: This study sought to explore challenges that hinder the effectiveness of staff development programmes in the primary school. The case study design under the qualitative research methodology was adopted and the case of five selected primary schools in Hwange District of Matabeleland North Province in Zimbabwe was used. The study population comprised senior primary school teachers and head teachers in the area under study. A sample of 30 (n=30) participants was Purposively selected from the population. Two research techniques, namely, Interviews and Focus Group Discussions were used with 5 head teachers and 25 senior teachers respectively. Verbatim data obtained from the participants was processed through use of the interpretive phenomenological analysis (IPA) approach and the findings were presented in text prose form. The major findings were that staff development in the primary school was faced with a host of challenges that hindered its effectiveness. These included poor consultation of teachers in its planning, time limitation due to the overloaded school timetable which was compounded by the introduction of the New Curriculum, lack of qualified and experienced staff development facilitators in certain areas, low teacher motivation due to poor working conditions including low salaries, shortage of resources that are necessary in enhancing staff development, low support for staff development by school authorities and the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education. However, participants were of the view that these and other challenges that hindered the effectiveness of staff development programmes in the primary schools could be addressed. Grounded on obtained findings and conclusions, the researchers mainly recommended that there should be concerted efforts by the school and other key stakeholders to address the different challenges that faced staff development considering that the reviewed literature indicated that teachers' professional development is critical in enhancing school effectiveness and attaining quality in education.

Keywords: Challenges, Hindrance, Effectiveness, Staff Development, Teachers.

INTRODUCTION

Most countries the world over have in recent years initiated a number of measures to promote quality education at all levels. One of such measures has been the professional development of teachers which is generally undertaken in different forms depending on the needs of the Ministry concerned, the schools and teachers themselves. Thus, the education system through its schools is mandated to implement staff development for teachers in order to improve their knowledge and pedagogical skills with the ultimate goal of improving the quality of education. In most countries, the government finds this initiative as justifying the huge expenditure that goes to the education sector each year [1].

School staff development is generally defined as those processes that improve the job-related knowledge, skills, and attitudes of school employees or

an organized effort by schools to change teachers' expertise with the expected result of improving their teaching practice and student learning [2]. For Guskey & Huberman [3], staff development for teachers is essentially about improving the efficiency and quality of pupils learning and should, therefore, focus on improving or extending the ability of teachers to undertake specified roles in relation to the delivery of the school curriculum. It has, thus, also been viewed as a lifelong learning approach to maintain and enhance teachers' professional competencies.

Notably, professional development for teachers is very essential as it inculcates their curiosity, motivation and new ways of thinking and delivering their teaching functions. Thus, effective school staff development experiences are designed to assist the teaching staff in developing a new understanding of teaching and learning in order to foster school

improvement. Staff development for teachers becomes most meaningful when it is adopted on continuous bases as well-planned education and training [4].

Despite the many positive measures put in place to ensure the effectiveness of staff development in schools, the quality of education as noted in various study reports has tended to remain low particularly in developing countries [5]. Arguably, most important in any educational program is the teacher; as wherever there are good teachers; there are good schools regardless of the kind of building or resources. Poor teachers mean poor schools and conversely; good teachers generally improve the teaching landscape and ultimately student outcomes [5].

In harmony, Quint [6] and Steyn [7] concur that there is general agreement that the educational prospects of the world's children largely depends on the quality of the teaching force and that the effectiveness of any educational programme largely depends on the quality of teachers, hence, the need for school staff development. Above all, school staff development should focus on continual teacher learning needs which are meant to improve student achievement and quality education. Education is essentially dynamic and in that regard, Hewton [8], observes that;

Changes do occur within the school, the schools community, the larger society and even within the education system itself. For teachers to continue to be effective and relevant in such a dynamic environment; there is, therefore, need for continuous education and training in order to cope with these changes.

Accordingly, just as teachers have to create conditions that support and encourage student success, schools have to support teachers' professional development.

However, due to several operational challenges, most professional development for teachers today are ineffective because it neither changes their teaching practices nor improves student learning [9]. It is against this background that this study endeavoured to explore the challenges that hinder the effectiveness of staff development programmes in primary schools of Hwange District in Matabeleland North Province of Zimbabwe from teachers' perspective.

Statement of the Problem

Considering that it is generally inevitable for any programme to face some operational challenges, staff development is not an exception. In view of the fact that the importance of staff development in any organisation including primary schools can not be overemphasized, the painstaking question is what challenges hinder the effectiveness of primary school staff development programmes in Hwange district of Matabeleland North province?

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to explore the challenges that hinder the effectiveness of primary school staff development programmes in Hwange District of Matabeleland North Province in Zimbabwe and how best they can be addressed from the teachers' viewpoint.

Research Questions

The study was guided by the following specific research questions;

- What are the fundamentals of effective school staff development programmes?
- What challenges are associated with staff development programmes in the primary school?
- How can the challenges associated with primary school staff development be addressed in order to promote its effectiveness?

Significance of the Study

It was envisaged that this study would be significant to education stakeholders who include pupils, teachers, parents, the community, School Development Committess (SDCs), Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (MoPSE) and other organisations with a keen interest in school staff development. The study is significant in that it is expected to unveil the different challenges that hinder the effectiveness of primary school staff development programmes in the area under study from the teachers' perspective. The researchers are of the view that these findings will have a bearing on primary schools with similar circumstances in Zimbabwe. Last but not least, it was anticipated that the study would help capture the teachers' views regarding how the challenges thereof may be addressed in order to enhance the effectiveness of staff development in primary schools.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Some Fundamentals of Effective School Staff Development Programmes

In order to better understand the challenges that hinder the effectiveness of staff development in the primary school, some of the key fundamentals of effective staff development programmes are discussed first. In this regard, Sparks & Simmons [10] suggest that for school staff development to be effective, certain elements or fundamentals have to be considered; and these include 'needs identification', 'collaboration', 'rewards' and 'evaluation'. For them, effective development for teachers should essentially be based on and directed towards the strategic needs of the school. Orlich [12] cited in Greenfield [11] clarifies that school staff development programmes that are based on teachers' identified needs, planned and designed for a specific group of teachers within the school, have a specific set of objectives and are designed to extend, add or improve job oriented skills and knowledge or improve teaching

and learning are bound to be the most effective. This implies that the needs of the school, largely those of teachers should take centre-stage in determining the course and goals of teacher professional development.

Secondly, collaboration between staff development facilitators and participants is critical, and entails the use of a wide range of activities that enable school managers and teachers to work together to promote school improvement and effectiveness (Sparks and Simmons, *ibid*). This could entail school heads engaging teachers in the planning (including setting of staff development objectives) and implementation of staff development sessions so that there is a mutually respectful relationship between school managers, facilitators and participants; as well as for participants to develop a sense of ownership for the school staff development enterprise. Paquette [13] cited in Tikunoff and Ward [14] also advises that school managers can help teachers to monitor the collegial progress during staff development, take responsibility for mentoring activities and develop cooperative learning skills. Communication during staff development should also not be top-down, but reciprocal, where staff collectively work as a team to achieve school goals and objectives.

Glatthorn [1] in Yorke [15] posit that one of the critical yet less considered aspect of effective staff development is 'rewards'. Teachers also need to be rewarded when they achieve higher through demonstrating co-operative skills as they work with students, school administrators and fellow teachers. Rewards in this context could be in the form of certificates of participation, awards for outstanding performance or even simple praise for doing well during and after staff development. For example, to implement effective school staff development, the supervisor should give praise immediately and be specific about what was done right or outstandingly, such as producing good student learning results. In the same vein, Chris & Bell [16] note that rewards are useful in motivating teachers to actively participate in staff development as well as in inspiring them to exercise competence in their work with learners in order to promote school effectiveness and the general quality of education.

Bishop [17] cited in Sparks and Simmons (*ibid*) notes that evaluation is yet another rudiment of effective staff development; and entails a process that enables educators to see whether a school staff development has been effective or not, which would help in planning future actions aimed at enhancing school effectiveness. Catalanello and Kirk [36] made a proposition of four criteria for evaluating staff development, namely, 'reactions', 'learning', 'behaviour' and 'results'. With regards 'reactions', educators seek to evaluate and determine how well the participants have liked and benefitted from the staff development programme. Secondly, 'learning' concerns

how much participants would have learned from a staff development programme. After the staff development programme, teachers are, thus, expected to become more effective in their work through implementing what they would have learnt.

Staff development evaluation also concerns the extent to which the 'behaviour' of participants would have changed as a result of specific staff development programmes. As argued by Sergiovanni [18] cited in Western [19];

Staff development should be less a function of polishing existing teaching skills or keeping up with the latest teaching developments and more a function of a teacher changing as a person in seeing himself or herself, the school, the curriculum and students differently.

Thus, staff development evaluation would reveal behaviour change patterns in participants; in this case teachers' increased commitment and capabilities in promoting school effectiveness. In addition, staff development evaluation aims at determining what 'results' were achieved from a staff development programme. Bents and Howey [20], contend that if change, in the form of improved instruction is the objective of staff development, the entire process is then seen as useless and meaningless when change does not occur. School staff development is, therefore, expected to help in the achievement of school goals and objectives for which it was intended; which in most cases is all about improvement in teacher performance and pupils' achievement.

Challenges Associated with Primary School Staff Development Programmes

Like every other programme, staff development for teachers is subject to encounter some form of challenges particularly in its implementation [21]. The same source notes that in spite of the indispensable significance of school staff development, some authorities may argue against its need and importance, criticizing specific teacher professional development programmes and learning opportunities for a number of reasons; especially if the school staff development programme is poorly designed, executed, scheduled, facilitated or evaluated. In addition, such criticism may be posed if teachers feel that the staff development is irrelevant to their teaching needs and day-to-day professional responsibilities, among many other possible causes.

Bents and Howey (*ibid*: 123) note that professional development for teachers can fall short in numerous ways, including:

- Too many (and sometimes conflicting) goals and priorities competing for teachers' time, energy, and attention;

- Unrealistic expectations of how much time it will take schools and teachers to adopt and implement goals;
- Professional development training events that are inappropriate in size, scope, or structure to support learning new ideas or skills. Gathering 100 teachers into one room for a training event, for example, will never give them the time they need to reflect on the material, ask questions, listen to their peers, or go through activities to enhance their comprehension;
- Lack of support for teachers' implementation of new instructional practices. Research shows there is an implementation gap in teachers' professional development as teachers may learn, understand and agree with a new idea or technique presented in a workshop, but it is hard for them to implement that idea without on-going administrative support; and
- Failure to provide teachers with feedback about how implementing new skills impacts on student learning coupled with teachers receiving no rewarding outcomes of their participation in staff development programmes.

This shows that quite a number of challenges associated with staff development in schools have to do with the schools themselves failing to play their role in supporting this noble enterprise.

For Friedman and Phillips [22], teachers' effective participation in school staff development programmes is often marred by various factors, the primary one being the fact that it is still not always clearly defined and the policies and procedures of different schools often reflect that fact. Moreover, some school authorities and the teachers are not even always clear what actually counts as school staff development. In this regard, Friedman and Phillips (ibid: 5) point out in their research into barriers to effective school staff development that "teachers' opinion was divided as to the kinds of activity that should count as school staff development; which consequently points to ambiguity over its fundamental purpose and significance within the school system". Thus, this lack of definition and understanding is a barrier to the wider acceptance and effective implementation of staff development for teachers.

The Great Schools Partnership (ibid, 112) further notes that;

Another challenge for school staff development is the way it is perceived as teachers often see it as a top-down process normally run by school management for the benefit of the school. Indeed, recent surveys would tend to back this position with head teachers generally dominating the staff development decision-making process within schools. In this way, the benefits of school staff development are often viewed in terms of

school management goals rather than for the individual teachers, who in essence, are the major stakeholders. There is a growing awareness that it is imperative to tailor school staff development to the needs of teachers and make it much more about their personal and professional development within their schools and not just for the benefit of the school itself.

Staff development for teachers should, therefore, be more teacher-centred; with the needs of teachers taking precedence in staff development decisions and considerations.

For Weston (ibid), a further challenge of school staff development relates to quality. To conduct it, some schools bring in outside facilitators who have very little idea of the needs of the school and its teachers. Consequently, there is often a real lack of planning in terms of the sort of staff development programme that the school needs and the best people to provide it. In some cases, facilitators come in, do their training and then disappear; resulting in the training tending to be superficial; with lack of follow-up. There is no back up and no planned system of evaluation of the impact of the specific staff development programme. Furthermore, whether the problem lies with the trainers themselves or rather the inadequate information provided to the trainers in preparation for the staff development facilitation is another matter. Since some schools do very little to highlight where training is required and what skills their teachers lack or need, it is hardly surprising that outside staff development facilitators are not able to respond to genuine teacher and school needs.

Weston (ibid) further notes that even though research into barriers to effective school staff development often cite different reasons, from most schools' perspective, however, it often boils down to the critical factor of resource shortage. Firstly, school staff development can be costly, especially if the school has to hire venues and accommodation, provide stationery, organise food for participants and bring in expert facilitators from long distances; hence, the challenge of shortage of financial resources. Smaller schools might be able to avoid many costs but that still leaves other resource challenges unabated, including qualified human resource shortage, time constraints, and so on. More often than not, many schools lack personnel with prerequisite knowledge and skills to staff develop their colleagues. On the other hand, if the school staff development is done in school time for example, then there is also the problem of finding enough time for undertaking the staff development programmes; for most school timetables are often packed and teachers have so much on their hands to find time to sit in as participants or facilitate in the several staff development sessions that the school may schedule for them.

Burns [23] also identifies the following as some of the barriers to effective teachers' professional development in developing countries; particularly in rural areas;

- Poorly designed professional development;
- Lack of administrative will to upgrade the status of teachers;
- Fragile education systems; which are characterized by poor leadership, limited administrative capacity and inadequate budgetary support;
- Difficult working conditions; including low salaries, poor housing, lack of access to technological facilities, poor sanitary conditions, use of unsafe water and so on;
- Low teacher expertise and professionalism; which compromises the quality of facilitators;
- Teacher identity crisis; a case where some teachers lack passion in their work; and
- Conflict between teachers and school management which threatens unit of purpose within the school environment.

This implies that some staff development challenges are characteristic of development countries and less likely in developed countries.

Challenges Associated with School Staff Development in some African Countries

In a study on professional development for teachers in Ethiopia, Mekonnen [24] reported the following challenges as the major ones facing school-based staff development;

- limited resources including funds, relevant reading materials and stationery;
- lack of qualified staff development trainers/facilitators;
- failure by schools to provide incentives to qualified staff development facilitators ;
- time constraints for teachers who often have busy work schedules;
- teachers are not provided with awareness about the importance of staff development;
- absence of collaboration and coordination between staff development stakeholders;
- limited commitment by some stakeholders including some teachers and school administration;
- teachers do not feel motivated due to poor salaries and working conditions;
- absence of guide lines about how staff development programmes should be conducted;
- some teachers view staff development as time wasting; and
- poor feedback to teachers on staff development outcomes and impacts.

Thus, Mekonnen (ibid) note that staff development for teachers is often faced with a number of challenges or obstacles; all of which need efforts, commitment and strength of mind to solve.

Ngala and Stephen [25] noted that even though education managers are acutely aware of the benefits of staff development, numerous problems continue to bedevil staff development practices in Kenyan schools. Crucial among them were limited availability of staff development programmes, scarcity of time on the part of teachers due to high workloads, disagreement on the relevance of the content of staff development programmes in relation to teachers' individual needs, attitudinal problems and lack of co-operation on the part of some teachers and lowly qualified and inexperienced facilitators. In other words, the number and quality of staff development programmes in Kenyan schools particularly rural schools were noted to be somewhat wanting. In addition, financing staff development programmes presented insurmountable challenges to teachers and local educational managers in Kenya.

In another study on factors that limit teachers' effective participation in staff development and training programmes in Kenya, Kosgei's [26] revealed the following array of challenges, among many others;

- Lack of information on in-service education and training courses and programmes;
- Lack of financial support from the school and other responsible authorities;
- Lack of incentives for both teachers and staff development facilitators
- Teachers' lack of motivation exacerbated by poor working conditions;
- Teachers' lack of time due to other commitments withing their teaching role;
- Poor organization of staff development training programmes;
- Failure by in-service education and training programmes to meet teachers' needs and expectations;
- Poor relationship and collaboration between teachers and their superiors; and
- Lack of qualified and/or experienced staff development trainers/facilitators;

In the same study, Kosgei (ibid) concluded that some of the constraints to teachers' participation in school staff development programmes arose because teachers did not take personal initiative to overcome the constraints while schools on the other hand did not look for ways of motivating teachers or organizing and nurturing effective staff development programmes.

From the foregoing, the researchers noted that school staff development is generally soiled by a constellation of challenges including poorly planned staff development programmes, lack of qualified staff development facilitators, low involvement of teachers in the organisation of staff development, teachers' work pressure which negatively impacts on time needed for staff development, low commitment and administrative support for staff development, poor teacher working

conditions and low motivation. These and many other challenges, therefore, have a direct or indirect bearing on school staff development effectiveness. Furthermore, the researchers noted from the above reviewed literature that challenges that face school staff development may differ because of the level of development of a country, with this study having discussed those typical of developing countries like Ethiopia and Kenya. Such challenges in developing countries are likely to be more pronounced in rural areas than in urban areas considering that most rural areas in developing countries are predominately underdeveloped.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study adopted the the case study design under the qualitative research methodology. The qualitative case study is a research strategy that focuses on understanding the social dynamics present within single or specific cases [12, 27]. The study focused on 5 selected primary schools in the area under study; and was considered for its important hallmarks, including the fact that it is concerned with a rich and vivid description of events relevant to the case also studied in its real contexts [28-30].

The population of the study comprised senior primary school teachers and head teachers in the area under study and a Purposive sample of 30 (n=30) participants in equal proportions from the 5 schools was considered for the study. The purposive sampling method was preferred as it essentially involved choosing the most qualifying individuals to serve as participants; ensuring that the entire sample's elements had similar or related characteristics [31]. Through use of the sampling technique, the researchers were able to identify data rich sources [32], who in this study were 25 senior primary school teachers and 5 head teachers with arguably wide knowledge and experience in the teaching profession in general and possibly in school staff development.

Interviews and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were used as the research techniques to gather research data and the researchers personally administered the Interview guides with head teachers and moderated the FGDs with senior teachers in five separate sessions. The use of these two data gathering techniques served to compensate for each other's weaknesses (Creswell, *ibid*). Before using the Interview and FGD guides, the researchers pretested them at one school which was not one of the research sites. This enabled the researchers to consolidate the guides while at the same time ensuring the trustworthiness of findings [33].

Verbatim data obtained from the participants was processed through use of the interpretive phenomenological analysis (IPA) approach; which the researchers noted to be appropriate considering that the data had been gathered through qualitative media,

namely, Interviews and FGDs [32]. The findings were thereafter presented in text prose form; thereby qualitatively representing key findings on challenges that hinder the effectiveness of staff development programmes in the area under study from the primary school teachers' perspective. The researchers note that even though the findings apply to the research sites in question, their generalisability to other primary schools in Zimbabwe is somewhat negligible; which the researchers, however, found to be consistent with qualitative case studies [34, 35,37].

STUDY FINDINGS

As excerpts from some of the participants show, primary school teachers highlighted a number of challenges that hinder the effectiveness of staff development programmes in primary schools in the area under study. Key among these challenges is lack of involvement in the planning of staff development [12, 23]. Teachers complained that they were usually not involved in determining what should be covered in staff development. Their own needs were often overlooked, as the excerpts below show;

- “I think the first challenge I can talk about has to do with the planning of staff development. For example, some of us have never been consulted on our need for staff development which I think is a challenge in that we often attend sessions for areas which do not have any usefulness to our work or personal development;
- “Most staff development programmes are decided for us by the school management, hence, we take them as the ‘*school management’s thing*’; for which we do not feel so much part of and, therefore, often a waste of time for us”.

As a result of these, teachers did not benefit from the programmes that should improve their practice. Another challenge was inadequate time for staff development programmes, as the timetable was overloaded [20, 25]. Some schools hosted the sessions in the afternoon when teachers were tired and preoccupied with planning for next lessons. The resources and venues for such sessions were poor or not available [19, 26, 24]. In addition, some participants complained about lack of Ministerial support for staff development which led to schools paying lip service [20].

- “Time limitation due to the overloaded school timetable is one of the major challenges facing staff development at this school. I am sure that my colleagues will agree with me that this trend has been compounded by the introduction of the New Curriculum as it has too many areas to be covered”;
- “The fact that we have staff development at this school in the afternoon (at 14.00hrs) though once a week; is quite a challenge in that as teachers, we

will usually be tired due to work pressure since beginning of day and some would be rushing to prepare for the next lessons”;

- “I am also concerned that the support for staff development that our school is receiving from the Ministry and other authorities is limited, and sometimes not even available. We then wonder if staff development is important at all to our employer”;
- “Sometimes staff development is conducted in very unconducive environments. For example, if we are to consider that Hwange is generally a very hot area, staff development isn’t comfortable when it is conducted in classrooms with poor ventilation, with no air conditioners and without provision of drinking water”;
- “There is also shortage and sometimes even absence of some resources including electronic resources such as computers, stationery, reading materials, audio and visual aids and others which are necessary in enhancing staff development”;

Another challenge was lack of suitably qualified facilitators for areas where teachers needed staff development [24, 38].

- “Our school generally lacks people who are qualified and experienced in certain areas particularly new areas introduced under the New Curriculum such as ICT, hence, there is shortage of staff development facilitators in such areas”;
- “Though it is possible to secure some external facilitators for staff development, the challenge is that there are often no incentives for the facilitators, hence, it’s not easy for the school to find someone who would like to work for nothing”;

A further challenge cited by some participants was low motivation due to poor working conditions and lack of incentives [26], as shown below.

- “I think my colleagues at this school will agree with me that our motivation is generally low due to working conditions that are poor including low salary. You find that someone who never even went to school has a better paying job than us teachers which I think shouldn’t be the case”
- “There are no incentives for taking part or even excelling in staff development, and to make matters worse, staff promotions are often under ‘freeze’ by the Public Service Commission. So as senior teachers, we end up finding no reason in participating in staff development when it is not rewarding in any way”;

The researchers noted that most of the challenges raised by the teachers were consistent with the reviewed literature, which showed a generally common thread in school staff development challenges.

Regarding how challenges associated with staff development programmes in the primary school could be addressed in an effort to enhance the effectiveness of the programmes, the participants had suggestions for solving each of the challenges raised, as the following demonstrate;

- There is need for school management to consult teachers as part of staff development planning in order to ensure that their staff development needs are considered and subsequently met;
- It may be helpful to consider conducting staff development over the weekend or include it on the morning school time table so that time constraints and the challenge of teachers’ fatigue are not experienced;
- There is need for schools to provide incentives to external (including from other schools) facilitators which will attract qualified and experienced facilitators in areas of shortage;
- Teachers’ working conditions need to be improved including reviewing up teachers’ salaries and other benefits;
- Teachers should be rewarded in some way for taking part in staff development. For example, more experienced teachers should realise some form of promotions in order for them to have reason for participating in staff development;
- Our conditions for staff development should be conducive enough to generate interest in teachers to participate;
- School authorities should show interest and commitment in supporting the professional development of teachers, including providing the necessary resources for staff development;
- Schools with the support of the School Development Committee should try by all means to retain staff which they can do through some staff retention schemes
- With the introduction of the New Curriculum, there is need for teachers to have increased staff development sessions in order to discuss the challenges they face including the teaching of new learning areas like Information and Communication Technology (ICT).

From the foregoing, teachers generally gave the researchers the impression that the different challenges that hindered the effectiveness of staff development programmes in primary schools in the area under study could be addressed in one way or the other in order to boost the effectiveness of the programmes.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the above findings, the researchers concluded that primary school teachers were of the view that there were several challenges that hindered the effectiveness of school staff development programmes in Hwange District of Matabeleland North

Province in Zimbabwe. However, teachers generally indicated that there were possible ways of addressing these challenges in order to promote the effectiveness of staff development programmes in the primary school.

Grounded on obtained findings and conclusions, the researchers make the following recommendations;

- School management should closely involve teachers in the organisation of staff development in order for teachers to reveal their staff development needs and realise the importance of the staff development sessions to their work;
- In spite of the loaded school time table, staff development should be included on the school time-table rather than have it simply as part of an afternoon activity as it consequently leads to passive participation by teachers due to fatigue and also rushing to plan for the next day's lessons;
- Schools should strive to provide the necessary resources for staff development as well as a conducive environment in order to stimulate interest in teachers;
- The school management, School Development Committees and Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education should also show commitment in supporting the professional development of teachers;
- Depending on their need, primary schools and the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education may need to come up with short 'Trainer courses' in areas of shortage for different teachers who will be considered for facilitating different staff development sessions; and
- Further research studies in this area need to be conducted in other parts of the country and in the secondary school sector in order to have a broader picture of the challenges that hinder the effectiveness of staff development programmes.

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