

The Performance of Newly Qualified Teachers: Implications for School Administration: A Case for Zimbabwe

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Abstract

A research was undertaken to assess the performance of newly qualified teachers in different facets of the school curriculum in Karoi Education District of Zimbabwe. Purposive sampling was used to select a sample of forty newly qualified teachers. These were selected from a population of 400 newly qualified teachers in the district. A sample of 13 deputy school heads and 13 school heads was selected from a population of 130 deputy school heads and 130 school heads. An open-ended questionnaire was used as the main data collection instrument and the data collected was qualitatively analyzed. In some cases simple descriptive statistics were used to assist in the analysis. Data was presented in tabular form where possible. These were based on the themes derived from the responses and research questions. The results show that teachers' colleges in Zimbabwe offer similar syllabi. All newly qualified teachers indicated that they had done the following main courses whilst at college: Theory of Education, Professional Studies/Applied Education, Curriculum Depth Studies and Main Subject. Almost all the teachers noted that the above first three courses were very much relevant to their teaching. Main Subject was found to be irrelevant to their teaching. Results further show that most deputy school heads and school heads found newly qualified teachers performing well in the teaching of Mathematics and co-curricular activities, but performing poorly in the teaching of reading, content subjects (Religious and Moral Education, Social Studies and Environmental Science). They were also found lacking in lesson planning and preparation, and class management. Deputy school heads and school heads also identified problems that affected the newly qualified teachers' performance at schools. These included indiscipline, absenteeism and inadequate planning and preparation. The results indicate that teachers, deputy school heads and school heads agree that school administrators have a role to play in the performance of newly qualified teachers. It emerged that whilst the college of origin had an influence on teacher performance, there were other factors that impacted on teacher performance at school level. Such factors included managerial styles at schools, motivation styles, the environment in which the school is located and teacher deployment patterns and trends after leaving college. The results also show that the performance of newly qualified teachers impacted both positively and negatively on the school and school administration. The impact includes the need to allocate resources to staff develop the newly qualified teachers in some of the areas noted, for example the teaching of reading. The study recommends that school heads and deputy school heads should be involved in the training of teachers much more than was the case at the time of the study. It is recommended that the teaching of such areas as reading among others be emphasized at both college and school levels. There is need for Continued Professional Development (CPD) for teachers.

Keywords: *Newly Qualified Teachers; Teacher Performance; School Administration; Quality Education*