Programme For School Improvement and Professional Development of Teachers: Real Stories of Schools in Sri Lanka

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Abstract: - **The main aim of this study was to investigate the teachers' professional development of government schools in Sri Lanka. Therefore, during this study it was explored, especially, the experiences of stakeholders of schools on teacher development initiatives are being carried out at school level. The nature of this study is qualitative and multiple case study approach was selected in this study. Mainly interview and document survey methods employed to gather information. Thematic analysis was used to analyze the data gathered from the School Development Committee members those who were purposively selected in this study. It appears that the schools do not have appropriate mechanisms to identify professional needs of teachers. Still, most of the teachers do not ready to come out from the traditional way of performing duties. Every school has attended some teacher development activities as per the instructions are given by the Ministry of Education. Usually, schools use human resources available within the school however; no adequate assistance is received from the external community. It appears that although the existing rules and regulations barricade, most of the schools organize teacher development activities in facing numerous difficulties. Majority of School Development Committee members are willing to continue teacher development programmes at their own if higher education authorities provide the necessary support. Therefore, schools should be given better guidance and adequate resources by the higher education authorities for teacher development, and need to make aware stakeholders of the schools about the effectiveness of teacher professional development and staff training.**

Keywords- **School Based Teacher Development, Teacher Development, School Based Management, Programme for School Improvement, Training and Development, Human Resource Management**

I. INTRODUCTION

The main intention of this study was to explore the experiences of School Development Committee (SDC) members on School-Level Teacher Professional Development (SLTPD) initiatives are carried out in the Sri Lankan public schools. What the nature of the responsibilities of the SDC on SLTPD and what the role of the SDC members on teacher development within the schools were the main research questions in this study. The central aim of this study was to investigate the experiences of SDC members of the schools on SLTPD activities. The SLTPD is one of the very significant attributes of the Programme for School Improvement (PSI)

system in Sri Lanka. Currently, PSI is the Sri Lankan version of School Based Management (SBM) system is being implemented in the government schools in Sri Lanka. The Ministry of Education in Sri Lanka (MoESL) encourages schools to organize SLTPD programmes at the school level. According to the MoESL, the SLTPD programmes need to be included in the five year and annual action plans of schools. Moreover, the alternative strategies for development of staff have been indicated in the instruction manuals issued by the MoESL (MoESL, 2013c, pp. 51,52). The MoESL has emphasized to prepare a 'resource directory', in order to assist schools in developing professional skills of academic staff members. The PSI has a purpose to recognize the relevant resource persons who could assist schools in developing skills of teachers through teacher development programmes. The World Bank indicates the importance of SLTPD as: "each school is unique with its own environment, resources and aspirations; teachers' needs vary, requiring a unique mix of teacher development activities that are convenient and relevant to their needs; instructional improvement, particularly to improve student learning, could be enhanced by promoting effective interactions and teaching-learning strategies suitable to the learning styles and pace of students on the relevant school; and teacher development activities and support that are practical and relevant to the conditions of a school are likely to be fully implemented and sustained" (World Bank & MoE, 2012, pp1-2). The MoESL has provided guidelines on the improvement of the learning environment in primary and secondary schools in Sri Lanka, through ESDFP - 2012-2016 (MoESL, 2013a, pp. 30,31).

Bandur (2012, p. 327) recommended that, to encourage all school governing board members to attend regular workshops on School Based Management (SBM), and has emphasized the responsibility of education authorities organizing such training and awareness programmes, for the benefit of the school. As Bandur (2012, p. 327) reminds, the responsibility of education authorities in Sri Lanka, they need to organize training programmes, and empowering stakeholders of schools in implementing PSI policy regulations.

As found out by Ayeni and Ibukun (2013, p. 42) the Ministry of Education in Nigeria organizes training workshops and seminars on quality assurance-oriented SBM

to build the capacity of members of SBM councils in their roles, responsibilities, operational policy guidelines, procedures, and practices of SBM model. A similar situation can be seen in Cambodia and Indonesia. Thida and Joy (2012, p. 1039) recommended organizing orientation workshops to provide better awareness of the situation and to prepare stakeholders and management board members. Moreover, they emphasize the empowerment of school principals and staff with the necessary skills and knowledge through pre-service and in-service training. Bandur (2012) suggests training of school principals in managerial practices, strategic planning, and school development planning, as well as in their changing roles as school leaders under the SBM policy.

One of the main attributes of the Sri Lankan version of SBM is to conduct SLTPD programmes by individual schools under their own supervision (MoESL, 2013, 2014). Accordingly, several instruction manuals and guidelines have been provided to schools on SLTPD by the MoESL. With the implementation of the PSI, government schools have been provided authority to organize such programmes, for training and development of their staff members. As the findings of Katuuk (2014), the SBM program in Indonesia effectively improved teacher professionalism. Some community members of schools believe that the staff development should be carried out by the government or education authorities. Therefore, schools are used in participating their teachers for the training programmes which are organized by the Zonal Education Office (ZEO) or the other educational institutions. According to Beerel (2009) and Gronn (2002), school leadership encourages staff development and students' learning.

Many researchers have reported that, the SBM reforms have contributed to the improvements of teaching and learning, human resource management, professional recruitment standards, and academic performance and professional development of teachers(Gropello, 2006; Kasturiarachchi, 2014; Sihono & Yusof, 2012; Sumintono, Mislan, et al., 2012; Vally & Daud, 2015)."The PSI can result in greater accountability of schools and teachers to their pupils, parents and local communities" (Aturupane et al., 2013, p. 17). According to Aturupane et al. (2013), teachers in schools where the PSI is implemented have a special responsibility, and accountability on education development of their students since one of the main aims of the PSI is education development of schools. Academic staff members of schools must be empowered through training and development in order to effectively perform their duties in relation to the education development of the school, and for enhancing the performance of students. Schools, where the PSI is implemented, are encouraged to organize teacher development programmes at the school level to empower academic staff members by the MoESL. Therefore, school-level teacher professional development is one of the key characteristics of PSI in Sri Lanka. Aturupane et al. (2013) further indicated that the deployment of teachers, remuneration, and conditions of employment of teachers;

professional development of teachers; supervision and evaluation of teacher performance as major functions of academic staff development (Aturupane et al., 2013, p. 04). And he stated that, the aim of teacher training as: "a shift in teachers' minds from inputs to the quality of student learning" (Aturupane et al., 2013, p. 16). Presently, SLTPD is apparent in the entire government school system throughout the country (MoESL, 2013c, 2014). Generally, training of employees can be made both as pre-service training and also as in-service training accordingly; SLTPD can be identified as a way for on the job training or in-service training. While the teachers are carrying out their scheduled duties at the working place, they are undergoing training programmes. "SLTPD is an approach to in-service teacher education using carefully prepared instructional materials for training, self-learning, and development of enabling skills for active learning and reflective practice. It involves continuing professional development of teachers while on the job, providing teacher monitoring and supervisory support, and cluster meetings to handle challenges faced by teachers. The SLTPD seeks to provide a solution to enhance professional practice, that will result in improved performance of learners in schools" (Fadokun & Ayankunle, 2013, p. 03).

Fadokun and Ayankunle (2013, p. 03) indicate objectives of SLTPD in Nigeria as: to provide the teacher with self-learning modules and training packages/teaching resources that will support his/her SLTPD; to adopt modalities for the delivery of the programme which ensures cost-effective systems of in-service teacher education and ensure coherence and consistency in the delivery of in-service teacher education. More frequent and more regular 'on the job' professional development in school which can occur as part of the everyday working lives of teachers. … long- term, coordinated and sustained focus on school-level teacher professional development which is the key to improving the quality of classroom pedagogy" (Fadokun & Ayankunle, 2013, p. 07).

As indicated by Ramachandran, Pal, Jain, Shekar, and Sharma (2005), in the schools of India, the lack of essential skills and competencies of teachers is a problem which hinders to manage so much diversity classrooms. Training programmes for teachers are designed in India keeping in view, the condition in large urban schools where one teacher handles one class. The problems faced by teachers in multi-grade situations, where teacher-student ratios are high, are considered in training programmes. Teachers who are working in schools in India are expected to attend a series of training programmes each year. Several of those training sessions are held during the academic session. In this country, the teachers are provided compensatory leave if they attend training sessions during their vacations. However, on the other hand, this teacher training programmes reduce teaching time and days in the schools (Ramachandran et al., 2005, p. 35). According to Ramachandran et al. (2005), one of the main issues is reducing teaching time of the teachers who attend

training workshops. Therefore, SLTPD may be a solution to the problem of reducing teaching time since those types of teacher training are conducted while engaging teachers in day to day academic activities of schools.

Many researchers and specialists in teacher education indicate that there is a relationship between SLTPD and the outcomes of the students, teachers and also the school. If teachers' affective outcomes are positive, their instructional task will be improved, thus making schools more effective (Bernaus, Wilson, & Gardner, 2009; Cheng, 2008; Dimmock, 2002; Walker & Dimmock, 2006). The teacher is one of the very important key active personals in the process of educating children in a country, and in contexts where teachers are inadequately educated and less prepared for their roles in the school, effective in-service training may help to improve outcomes in a sustainable way (Piper & Zuilkowski, 2016). In the United States and other developed countries, vast amounts of money, time, and research are devoted to in-service teacher training programmes (Piper & Zuilkowski, 2016, p. 173).

In the process of effective implementation of the PSI, the teacher's role is well connected, and therefore, the training and empowerment of teachers are essential, especially in-service training or on the job training are more useful (MoESL, 2014). If the teachers are expected to be engaged in decision making in school, they must have a better understanding of school management techniques. Some school level teacher professional development programmes are facilitated by outside resource persons and organizations (University of Peradeniya, 2007). "The school-based teacher mentoring and professional support program in Nigeria contracted a team of facilitators/mentors' from institutes and colleges of education and education faculties at universities" (Fadokun & Ayankunle, 2013, p. 03). "Produce quality, highly-skilled, knowledgeable and creative teachers based on explicit performance standards through pre-service and in-service programmes who are able to raise a generation of students who can compete globally" (Fadokun & Ayankunle, 2013, p. 02). Hong Kong SBM policy encourages school administrators to enable teachers' participation in decision-making within formal procedures. However, research findings suggest that teachers are not willing to take decision-making responsibility since they have a heavy workload (Cheng, 2008, pp. 41,42).As stated by Katuuk (2014), the Indonesian SBM program is effectively improving teacher professionalism; schools encourage teachers to acquire professional skills which are required to be an effective teacher. "In Chile, teacher salaries are relatively low with respect to other jobs requiring four years of university training" (Schiefelbein & Schiefelbein, 2000, p. 11).

However, job satisfaction is very important to perform the duties assigned to the teachers of schools where the SBM is implemented. Walsh (1990)'s study on the job satisfaction of teachers of SBM schools and non-SBM schools, the level of general satisfaction of teachers in SBM schools is higher than those of non SBM schools, even though an additional workload is created by SBM policy. Therefore, the teachers are needed training on new activities of the SBM. They have to allocate additional time and effort for performing those activities. However, according to Murphy and Beck (1995) teachers' involvement in decision-making leads to more job satisfaction and work commitment, however, a higher workload is created concurrently (Cheng, 2008, p. 33).

It can be seen that education development, pedagogical development or instructional development of schools are aimed by several education decentralization systems in various countries. Many SBM programmes are included in education development and improvement of the performance of students and teachers. According to Aturupane et al. (2013), the PSI may also ultimately lead to improved student retention, performance, and learning. The PSI can result in greater accountability of schools and teachers on the fulfillment of the educational needs of students, parents and community members. The SBM system in Indonesia is considerably effective in improving students' achievement and examination results (Bandur, 2012). The findings of the study of Thida and Joy (2012) demonstrated that there is a good relationship between the SBM programme and SLTPD of schools. The instructional materials are more available to support the process of teaching and learning in these schools. It has been noticed that there is a tendency of teachers in designing some important materials according to the needs of the school (Thida & Joy, 2012). "The SBM improves access (Honduras, Guatemala), reduces dropout rates (Honduras), and has little to no effects on achievement (Honduras, Nicaragua)" (Santibañez, 2007, p. 30). "There is no evidence to say that the SBM reforms had been badly affecting the work of teachers and students" (Dimmock & Walker, 1998). Santibañez (2007) has identified the effect of SBM reforms on students' outcomes of schools in various countries. However, it appears that the majority of research findings on SBM indicate that a positive relationship between school performance and SLTPD.

Several circulars have been issued by the MoESL underpinning the implementation of the PSI in the government schools. These circulars provide guidance to school managers to implement the PSI in their schools, and the way to organize teacher professional development activities also. Moreover, MoESL points out the importance of identification of teacher professional development needs by individual schools, further expresses the ways to organize activities at the school level, and also clarifies how to generate resources for teacher development, and emphasizes the importance of the formulation and implementation of teacher professional development activities by individual schools. According to the guidance given by the MoESL, schools are responsible for preparing programmes for the professional development of teachers. Therefore, this study intended to investigate the experiences of SDC members on the professional development of teachers in the schools.

This study expected to make a substantial and original contribution to the knowledge about the school level teacher development in government schools. Some aspects of teacher development, nature of the staff, the behavior of school managers and attitudes towards school level teacher development are also not similar in each school. Therefore, the experiences and perception of the participants on SLTPD in the schools are not similar. Thus, the information collected was very significant in the understanding the actual situation of affairs in relation to the school level teacher development in the government schools in Sri Lanka.

II. METHODS AND MATERIALS

The main research aim of this study was to investigate the experiences of SDC members of schools on SLTPD. The research objectives were to recognize the role of school development committee members on teacher development within the schools; identify the existing situation of SLTPD in the government schools in Sri Lanka and identify the challenges faced by school development committee members in implementing SLTPD programmes. This is a qualitative study, seeking an explanation and description of the topic from the subjects of this research (Marshall & Rossman, 1989). The primary source of data was the experiences and perception, meaning and understanding (Mason, 2000) of the participants about the SLTPD in the government schools in Sri Lanka. A qualitative methodology is an empowering approach for both participants and the researcher. Understanding the participants' views of the phenomenon requires a flexible and holistic approach that encourages them to talk. The researcher in this study was playing an important part in encouraging the participants; also, it allowed for reinterpretation and reshaping of the problem that may lead to some causal explanation of the phenomenon (Howe, 1997). The qualitative approach was ideally suited for this study because it gave priority to understanding and explanations of the participants' points of view on SLTPD. The information was gathered from the participant's reasoning, perceptions, and personal experiences. The qualitative methodology emphasizes words rather than quantification in the collection and analysis of data in this study.

A case study research approach was employed to study the research problem in this study. Leary (2004) describes the case study as a method employed to study the social elements of an individual, a group, or any other unit of social life organization. In support, Stakes (2005) and Yin (2003) present the case study as a framework, and a form of social inquiry employed for the exploration of an issue through one or more cases within a setting. The concept of studying the social elements of a case is necessary to the present study, considering its emphasis on SLTPD as a social process. In the field of qualitative research, case studies enhance experiential knowledge of the case and the effects that contexts have on the case (Stake, 2005). Theintention of this research was to understand how SDC members play their role in relation to the SLTPD. It was felt that a constructionist perspective sits comfortably alongside the research questions for this study because such a perspective seeks to understand how SDC members make meaning of their role on SLTPD as key decision-makers in the schools. It provides them with a voice to construct meaning around the role and how it fits into the schools.

Two different research methods were used to collect data from school development committee members of the government schools in this study. Research methods included document survey and semi-structured interviews. In addition to that, data was gathered during informal discussions and through informal observations. These tools were considered to provide rich information and to ensure consistency of the SLTPD processes experienced by stakeholders of the government schools in Sri Lanka.

Interviews allow the researcher to gather direct information from the participants, and the researcher has an opportunity to get more clarifications about the information provided by them. Hence, it seems that the interview is a more appropriate method of accessing people's insights, sense, and definitions of situations and constructions of reality. It is also one of the most significant ways we have of understanding others (Punch, 2009). Since this study aimed to explore the experiences of school development committee members on the SLTPD in the Sri Lankan government schools, interviews enabled to capture their ideas, experiences, and perceptions about the SLTPD in their schools. Interviewing was an appropriate method of data collection in this study, because, it was expected to explore particular experiences and perceptions about SLTPD.

Semi-structured interviews were chosen to seek a deeper understanding of school-level teacher professional development processes as experienced by SDC members. Each interview was digitally recorded and conducted for about one hour. Almost all interviews were carried out at their workplaces. Almost all interviews were conducted in Sinhala language and only one interview was conducted in the English language. When each interview was completed, it was transcribed and then followed up any ambiguous data with the respective participant through emails and telephone calls, and member checking process was undergone. This was to ensure that the meaning captured was, indeed, the intended thoughts conveyed by them. The interviews that were conducted in the Sinhala language were transcribed from Sinhala to English.

Atkinson and Coffey (2004) state that "documentary materials should be regarded as data in their own right. They often enshrine a distinctively documentary version of social reality. This was indeed the case with this research study where the analysis of secondary source material took place in conjunction with the interviews of SDC members. There were various types of documents available for review. The documents included in this study were minutes of SDC meetings, SLTPD plans, regulations and guidelines, policy statements, and project reports related to SLTPD. Especially,

by using document analysis in the current study, it was expected to uncover in-depth background information about the SLTPD programmes in the government schools in Sri Lanka.

Participants in this study were selected using a purposive sampling method. It was comprised of principals from three selected schools, nine teachers, nine past pupils and nine parents who were the active members of the school development committee in those schools. In addition, one education office member of the SDC was included in the sample. Ten participants from each school took part in this study. Accordingly, a total number of 31 participants partook in this research. The principals, past pupils, teachers, parents and education office member had a good understanding of the SLTPD in the schools since they represent SDC for many years in their respective schools. Moreover, they had valuable experiences on SLTPD since they have been working in their local schools for several years. In addition, many steps have been made to maintain the anonymity of the participants, and special arrangements were occupied for their protection. For instance; using of coding system to identify them, using pseudonymous during the data collection process, and data analyzing, data presentation processes, etc.

There are two general purposes of data analysis central to this study. The first purpose is that analyzing qualitative data provides an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon being studied (Cavana et al., 2000), or the SLTPD processes experienced by SDC members. The second purpose is that the tools used to analyze data helped to the researcher to provide relevant conclusions in relation to the key research question. Denscombe (2007) says that a qualitative data analysis tool allows different researchers to reach their conclusions. Thus, data analysis was started during data collection. Several themes emerged while it was collecting the data and recording them. In summary, the participants in this study, principals, teachers, parents and past pupils of schools presented their experiences as their real-life stories, and those stories were the research data in this study. Thematic analysis is one of the most common approaches of qualitative data analysis (Bryman, 2001; Mutch, 2005) and it is the most appropriate method for analyzing qualitative data, and this study had qualitative data in the interview transcriptions and documents. As Patton (2002) argues, thematic analysis is important for researchers to identify the core meanings of the raw data. In addition, percentages were used to analyze quantitative data in this study.

III. RESULTS AND FINDINGS

In order to maintain relevant research ethics and credibility in this study, sample schools were coded as School A, School B, and School C. For instance, the participants in this study were also coded as principal of school A, principal of school B, principal of school C, 1st teacher of school A, 2nd teacher of school A, 3rd teacher of school A. 1st teacher of school B, 2nd teacher of school B, 1st teacher of school C

…and so on. Parents of the sample were coded as a 1st parent of school A, 2nd parent of school A, 1st parent of school C, past pupils of the sample were coded as 1st past pupils of school A, 2nd past pupils of school A, 1st past pupils of school C, and education officer, etc. In the process of presentation, analyzing and interpretation of the data, schools and participants are identified as the above codes.

Identification of teacher professional development needs

Generally, schools do not have a mechanism to identify **the** professional development needs of teachers in order to improve students' learning achievements through a SLTPD programmes. There is no internal supervision system in the majority of schools (67%). Therefore, the training and development needs of the teachers are not easy to identify in those schools. The teacher professional requirements associated with the development of student learning achievements have not been well recognized. The schools do not have appropriate mechanisms to identify teachers' professional needs. The SLTPD programmes are conducted according to the annual action plan of some schools (School A, C). There are no SLTPD programmes being conducted data satisfactory level in school B. According to the information received during the interview the participants, principals and teachers do not have much intention in this regard, and on the other hand, teachers are unwilling to deviate from the traditional way of working and teaching, and also teachers are overloaded with paperwork.

Support for SLTPD

School Development Committee (SDC) is the responsible authority for preparing plans for SLTPD. However, most of the members of SDC are not much interested and engaged in this type of activities in school. Only the principal and deputy principals are involved in teacher development programmes in the majority of schools (school A, C). Although attempts should be made to encourage all teachers to have an updated knowledge of their particular subjects it seems that sufficient effort has not been made by the SDC members in this regard. The majority of participants (70%) indicated that teacher development is a responsibility of all the stakeholders and also educational officers. Although requests are made to the past students' association and to the school development society, necessary steps have not been made on staff professional development. However, parents' assistance towards SLTPD is very less. As indicated by the majority of participants (65%), assistance received for teacher professional development at Ministry, Provincial, Zonal and Divisional levels are insufficient. Moreover, they explained that no adequate assistance is received from the Zonal educational office in this regard (Principals A and B).

It was identified that almost all the schools have implemented some SLTPD activities according to the instructions given by the Ministry of Education. Majority of the schools (more than 66%) have generated funds for SLTPD

activities while some schools are expecting funds from the higher education authority and sometimes from the government education agencies for that. The schools who generated funds for SLTPD have accomplished the targets of those programmes. However, one school (School C) has provided SLTPD plans to the Zonal Education Office in expecting funds for their teacher development projects. They still have been awaiting funds from the Zonal Education Office for more than two years. During the last two years, they have not implemented any teacher professional development programme at their school level by getting funds from higher education authority. Teachers, parents and past pupils are also quiet on that, and no objection from them about the delay. They do not have much confidence on the effectiveness of the SLTPD, and it was revealed that, alternatively, majority of them used to participate in training and teacher development programmes organized by Zonal Education Office and the other higher education authorities.

Resource persons' support for SLTPD

Schools authorities have identified the importance of external resources for teacher professional development programmes, and thus, it seems that lectures, training, and teacher development sessions are conducted with the assistance of experienced and qualified resource persons. Payment for resource persons is problematic since the low rates recommended by the government authorities in this regard. So, the schools face big difficulties in getting the service of outstanding resource persons. Therefore, schools tend to carry out SLTPD programmes with the assistance of experienced teachers, principal and ISA's. It was observed that due to many reasons, some schools tend to use human resources available within the school without any assistance from external resources.

Challenges for SLTPD

The principals and majority of participants (more than 66%) stated that insufficient human and other financial resources are challenging them to organize teacher development programmes at the school level. In addition, majority of participants (more than 55%) indicate that lack of support from higher education authority, inadequate financial resources and lack of resource persons and poor attitudes of staff members towards SLTPD obstruct those activities in their schools. It seems that there isn't a learning environment in most of the schools, and the required features of the concept of "learning organization" has not been adopted by the majority of schools (100%), and no comprehensive programmes to obtain assistance from institutions towards teacher professional development and school development.

The principal of school C indicated that "there are teachers who do not follow proper teaching methodologies. I have advised them on several occasions in a personnel and official manner. In addition, teachers were directed to attend seminars". Majority of the teachers (78%) also indicate that "there are many shortcomings in the staff. The attitude of the

teachers should be improved on their professional development". As per the observation made during this study, leaders of the majority of schools face many challenges in implementing teacher professional development activities at the school level. For instance, since the regulations put down by the Ministry of Education, schools face difficulties in organizing teacher development activities at the school level.

Responsibility for SLTPD

Almost all the SDC members (principals, teachers) point out that "Ministry of Education and other higher education authorities are responsible for providing training and development for teachers before placing them at workplaces, education authorities have shifted their responsibility to the schools, and thus, we face problems in training teachers at school level". However, the majority of SDC members (More than 55%) are willing to conduct continuous SLTPD programmes at their schools if higher education authority provides the necessary support.

But the SDC members say that "the initial training and large-scale development programmes should be conducted by the higher education authorities before and after placing them to the working places". Majority of teachers (more than 88%) are not happy about teacher development programmes conducted by their schools. One teacher of school B says that "the quality of teacher training programmes conducted by our school are not satisfactory, but those types of events are useful to build up interaction among staff members of the school".

IV. CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

The majority of schools do not have a proper mechanism to identify **the** professional development needs of their teachers. However, as the findings of Katuuk (2014), the SBM programme in Indonesia effectively improved teacher professionalism. Thus, the improvement of students' learning achievements through a SLTPD programmes is still a dream for some schools. As discovered by Fadokun & Ayankunle (2013) more regular 'on the job' professional development programmes in schools are occurred as part of the everyday working lives of teachers.

As revealed by Piper & Zuilkowski (2016) effective in-service training may help to improve outcomes in a sustainable way. According to many researchers, there is a relationship between SLTPD and the outcomes of the students, teachers and also the school (Bernaus, Wilson, & Gardner, 2009; Cheng, 2008; Dimmock, 2002; Walker & Dimmock, 2006). Most of the principals and teachers do not show much intention in SLTPD activities. The teachers of the sample school in this study are reluctant to change their traditional way of thinking on training, professional development, working style, and teaching style, and teachers are overloaded with paperwork. Similarly, Al-Ghefeili and Ghani (2014) found that the senior teachers of Oman schools are more negative about the training and development of staff. There is no appropriate encouragement, support, assistance

from the MoESL, Provincial, Zonal and Divisional education authorities for teacher professional development. Especially, no adequate assistance is received from the Zonal Education Office in this regard. However, as found out by Ayeni and Ibukun (2013, p. 42) the Ministry of Education in Nigeria organizes training workshops and seminars for the staff of schools. Similar findings of Piper & Zuilkowski (2016) indicate that in the United States and also the other developed countries, vast amounts of money, time, and research are devoted to in-service teacher training. According to Beerel (2009) and Gronn (2002), education and school leadership encourage staff development and students' learning.

The majority of school tends to participate in their teachers in training and teacher development programmes organized by the Zonal Education Office and the other higher education authorities. Likewise, as found by Katuuk (2014), the Indonesian SBM program is effectively improving teacher professionalism; schools encourage teachers to acquire professional skills which are required to be an effective teacher. Since many reasons, some schools use their own human resources available in the school instead of gaining assistance from external resources for SLTPD programmes. Nevertheless, a study carried out by the University of Peradeniya in 2007, they discovered that some SLTPD programmes are facilitated by outside resource persons and organizations. Fadokun & Ayankunle (2013, p. 03) found that the school-based teacher mentoring and professional support program in Nigeria contracted a team of facilitators/mentors from institutes and colleges of education and education faculties at universities. It cannot be seen as satisfactory and comprehensive programmes to obtain assistance from institutions towards teacher professional development. Fadokun and Ayankunle (2013, p. 03) revealed the objectives of SLTPD in Nigeria as to provide the teacher with self-learning modules, and training packages/teaching resources will support his/her school-based professional development.

Since the pointless barriers and regulations put down by the MoESL, schools face difficulties in organizing teacher development activities at the school level. As indicated by Ramachandran, Pal, Jain, Shekar, and Sharma (2005), in the schools of India, the lack of essential skills and competencies of teachers is a problem which hinders to manage so much diversity classrooms. However, according to Ramachandran et al. (2005), one of the main issues is reducing teaching time of the teachers who attend training workshops.

However, the SDC members of schools are prepared to conduct continuous SLTPD programmes at their schools if the higher education authorities provide them necessary support, guidance, encouragement, funding, etc. Sanga and Walker (2005) and West-Burnham's (2003) revealed that the maintenance of a pleasant relationship amongst the school, parents, and communities is important for staff development and ultimately the development of student learning.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

Every school should form a committee consisting of principal and competent teachers to identify professional needs of teachers. The principals and the teachers should come to an understanding whereby teacher professional needs would be recognized and implemented with the collaboration of both parties. It is essential to delegate power, and provide financial assistance to the school to conduct SLTPD programmes, and strengthen the physical and human resources of Schools. The SLTPD should be conducted, based on the students' requirements identified by the entire school community. School managers and leaders need to be empowered to develop their teachers through SLTPD programmes. The schools should be given better guidance and adequate resources by the higher education authority to conduct teacher professional development programmes at the school level, and the stakeholders must be convinced the importance of the effectiveness of continuous SLTPD programmes.

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