Education stakeholders' perceptions regarding the adequacy, role and effectiveness of the tertiary education curriculum in the preparation of potential school heads in Zimbabwe

Kudzayiishe Mudzingwa

Great Zimbabwe University, Masvingo, Zimbabwe

ABSTRACT

This study examines the perceptions of education stakeholders regarding the adequacy, role and effectiveness of the curriculum offered by tertiary education institutions in the preparation of potential school heads in Zimbabwe. In Zimbabwe, individuals are appointed to the position of headship from the ranks of senior teachers, but without having undergone any specific school leadership preparation. In view of the role played by TEIs in the professional development of teachers, it would have been ideal for the curriculum to effectively prepare them for school leadership. The study employed a descriptive case study approach to collect and analyse data from three school inspectors, ten school heads, ten deputy heads and ten senior teachers. Individual interviews and focus group discussions were used to collect data. Documentary analysis of relevant documentary sources was also done. The findings indicate that although the TEI curriculum provides a basic grounding in the mastery of pedagogic skills, it lacks adequate content for the effective leadership preparation of potential school heads. The study recommends the need for TEIs to review the structure and content of curricula so that it incorporates aspects of school leadership that are responsive to the professional development needs of the 21st century school head.

Key words: effectiveness, curriculum, academic programmes, teacher education institutions, responsibilities, school heads

INTRODUCTION

The role of tertiary education institutions (TEIs) in school leadership preparation is widely acknowledged (Elsayed, Alfadda, Jeed, Afzaal & Al-haddad, 2020; Forde 2011; Ashu, 2014). The evidence base of school leadership development practices in several countries shows that TEIs have emerged to be a key element of the education value chain because of the central role they play in initial teacher education (ITE) and the professional development of school leaders (Magudu & Gumbo, 2018; Razzak, 2013). Literature also points to the role played by TEIs in the development of a teacher education curriculum that equips incumbents with the requisite knowledge, skills and attitudes to provide effective school leadership (Ibrahim 2011; Razzak,

2013). The incorporation of aspects of leadership into the TEI curriculum is critically important if consideration is given to the fact that school heads assume such broad responsibilities as instructional leadership, day to day administration of the school, financial management, human resources management, asset management, accountability and implementation of policies (Johnson, 2016; Pont, Nusche & Moorman, 2008; Hallinger & Huber, 2012; Bush 2008). School heads might not be able to execute these functions if they are not effectively prepared in the course of their studies. The extent to which the TEI curriculum in Zimbabwe is effective in preparing potential school heads for sound school leadership is the focus of this study. In the study, TEIs refer to teachers' colleges and universities, hence an inquiry will be undertaken to determine if the TEI

curriculum, as reflected in the diploma and degree in education programmes currently being offered, effectively equips practising teachers with the knowledge and skills required for them to provide strong leadership once they are appointed to the position of headship.

Historical development of TEIs in Zimbabwe

The role of TEIs in teacher training in Zimbabwe can be traced back to the 1920s (Majoni, 2014) when teacher training was the responsibility of the colonial government and the missionary churches. Priority was initially given to the training of primary school teachers, while secondary school teacher training only began with the inception of Hillside Teachers' College in 1956 (http://www.hillsideteacherscollege.ac.zw/about/). The nature of teacher education was shaped by the philosophy and context of the colonial order in the then state of Rhodesia. Under the colonial education policy, teacher training sought to develop classroom practitioners with basic pedagogic skills required to facilitate the education of semi-literate Africans who would provide cheap labour for the development of the colony (Maravanyika, 1990; Zvobgo, 1981). Personnel who were appointed to lead schools played the role of *primus inter pares* (first teacher among equals), with the main responsibility of supervising the instructional process. Little regard was given to leadership training as the administration of schools was centralised. This could explain why incumbents were often referred to as 'head teachers' during the colonial era (Atkinson, 1982:83). The above nomenclature confirms Mulford's (2003) assertion that the content of a training programme is influenced by how authorities perceive the role of the school leader. Based on the preceding, it is apparent that the teacher education curriculum deliberately did not focus on management skills because such

skills were deemed to be outside the ambit of the role of school heads then.

After the attainment of independence in 1980, the education system expanded rapidly following the introduction of the Education for All (EFA) policy (Shizha & Kariwo, 2011; UNESCO, 2001). This development resulted in the proliferation of mainly rural secondary schools and, consequently, a severe shortage of qualified school heads in the newly-established schools (CIET, 1999). The dearth of quality leadership in the Zimbabwean schools meant that TEIs had an obligation to provide in-service training for novice school heads.

Universities have also played a significant role in ITE and the professional development of school leaders in two ways. The University of Zimbabwe (UZ), for example, provides guidance to the policy and practice underlying teacher development in the teacher education colleges under its jurisdiction. Under the arrangement, all teachers' colleges are associate colleges of the UZ (Magudu & Gumbo, 2018). Secondly, most universities, including the UZ, offer degree programmes in education management and subject specialisation at both the undergraduate and postgraduate levels. The extent to which the curriculum has been effective in preparing teachers for school leadership has been subject to debate. Darling-Hammond, La Pointe, Meyerson, Orr & Cohen (2007) assert that graduates of degree-awarding courses often face the challenge of transferring their theoretical knowledge into the real school situation, as the curriculum does not provide adequate practical experience in school leadership.

TEIs and the professional development of school leaders

The role of TEIs within the education value chain can best be understood within the context of the policy, process and practice that define professional learning in ITE and school leadership development

(Zhang & Brundrett, 2010). According to Darling-Hammond et al (2007), teachers' colleges and universities have a mandate to provide effective academic programmes that enable the professional development of school leaders in line with set professional standards. This is largely because, as Chong and Ho (2009) assert, the quality of teacher education is a critical determinant of successful learner outcomes. Literature states that TEI academic programmes must comprise certain features that define effective leadership preparation programmes (Bell & Stevenson, 2006; Machekina, 2016). According to Bell et al. (2006), an effective programme must align with the state's ideological perceptions and national values to ensure that the purpose of education is achieved. In corroboration of the above view, Mathibe (2007) also postulates that an effective professional development programme should be integrated with the goals of education. Machekhina (2016) also proffers the view that leadership programmes must be responsive to the ever-changing global context, technological advancement and the incessant educational reforms affecting education systems. This implies that the quality and effectiveness of academic programmes offered by TEIs can only be guaranteed if the design and content of the curriculum ensures the transfer of knowledge, skills and competencies that are required for school heads to effectively lead the 21st century school (Pont, Nusche & Moorman, 2008).

A third feature of effective leadership preparation programmes is that the selection of training objectives, content and instructional approaches must address the responsibilities that school heads are expected to perform (Vacancy Announcement Notice – Internal Circular Minute No.32, 2014; UNESCO, 2009). In addition, the curriculum must be informed by a comprehensive training needs assessment (TNA) (Parshiadis & Brauckmann, 2009; Hussain & Zamair,

2011). A TNA provides the necessary evidence base of the real performance challenges that school heads encounter. Literature identifies such challenges as leading and managing staff (Becioglu & Widly, 2015), resource mobilisation, budgeting and management of finances, community relations (Suleiman, 2015; Ng, 2015) and policy implementation (Hobson, Brown, Ashby, Keys, Sharp & Benefield, 2003). Based on the above, it is apparent that TEIs must collaborate with education policy makers and schools to enable them to incorporate aspects of school leadership into the TEI curriculum in order to prepare potential school heads for leadership.

Lastly, effective academic programmes ought to be a blend of theory with practice-based activities such as simulation, role play and case studies, so that learners are able to engage in action learning through participation (Rogers & Horrocks, 2010). This view is corroborated by Walker, Bryant, Bryant and Moosung (2013) who cite workplace learning and field experience as critical components of the instructional process that expose learners to real school leadership practice under the support of mentors and coaches. An examination of the programmes offered by teachers' colleges and universities is very critical in coming up with a determination of the extent to which they are effective in the professional development of school heads.

Teacher Education Colleges

In Zimbabwe, teachers' colleges offer the Diploma in Education as a teaching qualification. According to Mavhunga, Mavundutse and Mamvuto (2008), the programme consists of four components which are Theory of Education, the Main Subjects, Teaching Practice, and Professional Studies. The composition of the curriculum clearly shows that the curriculum prioritises an in-depth knowledge of the subject matter and the pedagogic skills necessary for effective

teaching. The component of Professional Studies could potentially cover aspects of school leadership but, in reality, it focuses on such issues as teaching methodologies, classroom communication and classroom organisation. This attests to the observation that the teacher education curriculum hardly prepares student teachers for school leadership.

Teaching Practice (TP) is the other key component of the teacher education curriculum. This is an apprenticeship-based mode of learning which entails the placement of student teachers within schools for them to gain teaching experience under the tutelage of experienced mentors (Kiggundu & Nayimuli, 2009). Although TP exposes student teachers to pedagogical experience, such experience hardly provides them with practical orientation on school administrative matters. This implies that the focus of the teacher education curriculum is towards preparing student teachers for classroom practice rather than school leadership.

The utility of teachers' colleges could be further enhanced if the institutions offered additional courses on school leadership outside of the formal tuition programmes that they offer. Currently, teachers' colleges in Zimbabwe are not involved in any school leadership development programmes, yet research indicates that TEIs can hugely contribute towards the professional development of school heads through the provision of workshops, conferences and short courses (Mathibe, 2007).

Universities

Universities are at the apex of the education value chain in any education system (Oncer, 2018). Empirical evidence attests to the crucial role played by universities in ITE and school leadership preparation (Pont et al., 2008; Johnson, 2016; Jensen, 2016). The Bachelor of Education (B. Ed) Honours degree is the flagship academic programme offered to students pursuing a career in teaching. The degree is either offered with a specialisation in education leadership or with subject specialisations (Mapolisa & Muyengwa, 2012). The Post Graduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) is the other professional qualification that is offered to university graduates who intend to pursue a career in education. Holders of diplomas in education, obtained from teachers' colleges, are also capable of upgrading themselves by studying for degree programmes at universities. This arrangement suggests the prevalence of a spiral curriculum within the TEIs, spanning from teachers' colleges to universities, in which students progress from simple to complex ideas in teacher education and school leadership. The attainment of a relevant first degree, and in some instances with a PGDE qualification, is the minimum qualification for entry into the post of school head. In this regard, it is common expectation that a programme deemed to be the basic qualification for entry into headship must effectively equip incumbents with the knowledge and skills required for school leadership. Although the universities offer Master of Education degree programmes, these were not included within the scope of this study because focus was mainly on the first degree, which is a requirement for promotion to the post of school head.

The mode of instructional delivery that has traditionally been used by universities is classroom-based instruction (Walker et al., 2013), and Open Distance Learning (ODL) that is offered by Zimbabwe Open University (ZOU) (Mapolisa et al., 2012). Johnson (2016) argues that university academic programmes are mainly theory-based and, therefore, do not adequately prepare students for effective school leadership because they are disconnected from the practical and contextual realities of the school system. In view of the above defects,

scholars have called for the reformation of university academic programmes (Steyn, 2008; Forde 2011). Beyer (2009) suggests that university programmes must focus on the student's mastery of organisational management, leadership theory and administrative practices that constitute the day-to-day responsibilities of the school head. Zhang and Brundrett (2010) also cite field experience as an important aspect of practical learning for school leaders that must be included in academic programmes to integrate theory with practice.

AIM OF THE STUDY

The study sought to examine the perceptions of stakeholders regarding the effectiveness of the TEI curriculum in the preparation of potential school heads in Zimbabwe. There is increased awareness of the critical role played by TEIs in the professional development of school leaders. In an education system in which school heads are promoted from the ranks of senior teachers, there is a risk that individuals are simply thrust into their new roles and left to grapple with their roles on the basis of trial and error. This has invoked interest in this researcher to interrogate and answer the following research question: 'What do stakeholders say about the effectiveness of the TEI curriculum in the preparation of potential school heads for school leadership?' There is very little research that has been undertaken to evaluate the effectiveness of TEIs in the preparation of potential school heads (Pont et al., 2008) hence this study shall contribute significantly to the scanty knowledge base on the subject.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical framework for this study was based on Etienne Wenger's social Constructivist Theory of learning. The theory posits that learning is a social process in which knowledge, skills and attitudes are constructed within a given social context (Wenger, 2000). The major tenet of the social learning theory is the

notion of the community of practice (CoP), an age-old phenomenon in which people involved in a common practice interact within their communities to share knowledge and expertise (Wenger, 2000). Members within a specific community define the knowledge and the real competencies that characterise a particular profession and share ideas amongst themselves. The theory is relevant to this study as it provides a conceptual understanding of the psychology of learning underlying TEI programmes and the leadership preparation of school heads.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study employed the qualitative research methodology to examine the perceptions of stakeholders on the effectiveness of TEIs in the leadership preparation of potential school heads. Qualitative research is a form of naturalistic inquiry that seeks to interrogate a certain phenomenon from the viewpoint of individuals within a given social context (Creswell, 2013). In this study, the qualitative research approach was deemed to be appropriate because it enabled the researcher to investigate the problem from the perspective of the participants. Johnson (2016) asserts that an assessment of the effectiveness of educational leadership preparation programmes can be done optimally if the perceptions of those who participated in the programmes are interrogated.

The multiple case study strategy was used to explore the perceptions of selected participants drawn from ten selected school sites. Creswell (2013) defines a case study as a strategy of inquiry that investigates a specific phenomenon within its real-life context. This approach was preferred because it allowed the researcher to undertake a comprehensive study of the phenomenon within a limited geographical area for the purpose of generalising empirical findings to a broader context. The multiple case study design was selected to

cater for the different sub-categories of participants (school inspectors, school heads, deputy heads and senior teachers) who would provide evidence during the study (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011).

The population for this study consisted of school inspectors, school heads, deputy heads and senior teachers. Cohen et al (2011) refers to a population as a group of elements or cases, in the form of individuals or objects, which conform to specific criteria and to whom the researcher intends to generalise the research results. The sample for this study comprised thirty-four participants who were purposively sampled from ten selected secondary schools and one district education office in one district of Zimbabwe. Kombo and Tromp (2009) assert that purposive sampling is used to target participants who have an in-depth knowledge of the issues being investigated. The maximum variation sampling approach was used together with purposive sampling to select different categories of participants ranging from senior teachers, deputy heads, beginning school heads, practising school heads to school inspectors. This was mainly done to select participants with diverse backgrounds and perceptions regarding the subject under study.

To maintain the privacy of participants, the researcher assigned identity codes, from A to J, to schools that were selected to be part of the research sample. School heads, deputy heads and senior teachers were then identified according to the nomenclature of their professional category and the code of the school from which they were selected. Participants in the category of School Inspector were ascribed letters A to C to ensure ease of individual identification.

Permission to undertake research was sought from the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (MoPSE). Prospective participants were furnished with information regarding the purpose of the study for them to make informed decisions. Data were collected using individual interviews (school heads and school inspectors) and focus group interviews (for deputy heads and senior teachers). The open-ended interviews enabled the researcher to adapt the order and frame of questions in line with the participants' responses, thereby giving the researcher the flexibility to follow up on issues raised during the discussions. Besides individual interviews and focus group discussions, the study also employed document analysis as a method of research. According to Glenn (2009), documents play a central role in qualitative research as they provide the researcher with an opportunity to review topical data that can then be examined and interpreted to generate meaning, understanding and in-depth knowledge of the phenomenon under study. In this study, content analysis of the content of academic programmes such as the Diploma in Education and the B.Ed (Honours) degree from one secondary teachers' college and three universities within the province, respectively, was done to determine whether the programmes had components of school leadership that could prepare potential school heads for school leadership. The use of document analysis alongside other previously mentioned research methods provided the researcher with an opportunity to triangulate data from the multiple sources as a way of ensuring its credibility.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Data generated from the study sought to assess participants' perceptions regarding the extent to which the TEI curriculum prepared beginning school heads for effective school leadership. Two themes emerged from the discussions, *viz:* responsibilities of school heads and the effectiveness of content of TEI curricula in the professional development of school heads. In respect of the second theme, two sub-themes further emerged. The first sub-theme focused on the category of teachers'

colleges, while the second sub-theme related to universities.

Responsibilities of school heads

This theme examined participants' perceptions regarding the responsibilities of school heads. An examination of participants' views regarding the job description of the post of school head was necessary as it provided insight into the domains of competencies that are and ought to be incorporated within the content of TEI curricula. According to Pont et al. (2008), the job description can be used as a framework for the selection of content of leadership preparation programmes for school heads.

The following statement can sum up the views of the participants regarding the role of school heads:

The responsibilities of heads … are guided by their job description... (School Inspector A)

School Head D identified *accountability* as a major responsibility. The participant insinuated that school heads needed to be accountable to education authorities on matters regarding the school, public funds as well as the welfare of students and teachers. School Head F also cited *the issue of policy implementation* as the other responsibility of school heads. In this regard, school heads were supposed to develop the craft literacy and competence required to implement policy. Participants also cited other responsibilities such as *the general planning of all activities* (Deputy Head I), t*he day to day running of the school, supervision of the staff* (School Head J), community relations (School Inspector A), marketing the school (School Inspector B) and budgeting (Senior Teacher D-1). Deputy Head F also identified the role played by school heads in the management of school assets such as *…facilities, the classroom blocks, the special rooms as well as the grounds and the teachers' houses*.

The above views imply that school heads are mainly responsible for the general administration of the school, accountability, financial management, human resources management, asset management, implementation of policies, community relations, marketing the school, and instructional leadership. One wonders whether the TEI curriculum equips aspiring and practising school heads with the requisite skills to effectively execute these responsibilities.

Effectiveness of the TEI curriculum in the preparation of potential school heads

This theme focused on participants' views regarding the extent to which the content of TEI curricula effectively prepared teachers for school leadership. The views of participants were categorised under two sub-themes: teachers' colleges and universities.

Teachers' colleges

Under this sub-theme, participants' broadly viewed training in teachers' colleges as an elementary step that provided the *…fundamentals of teaching* (School Head C). This view was also echoed by Deputy Head D who stated that *… teacher education gave us the foundation from where to start*.

The findings indicate that participants acknowledged the role of teachers' colleges in providing teachers with the basic professional grounding in instructional leadership that is fundamental to the development of an effective school leader. Pont et al. (2008), who contend that school heads require a strong pedagogic background for them to provide sound instructional leadership, support the views promulgated above. Although the curriculum in teachers' colleges was revered for the elementary roles they played in teacher development, some participants expressed concern that it did not include components of school leadership.

According to School Head J ...teacher *training does not include much on leadership* (as) *...much of the emphasis is on the child but not on leadership*. School Inspector A also proposed that, ... *at college level, they are supposed to teach them leadership styles since everyone who is going to be trained as a teacher has room to be promoted to the post of school head*. School Head H also corroborated the above views by stating that ...the *training that I got at college was mainly to see me teach and make sure that pupils pass*. According to the participant's view, there exists a gap in teacher training as the curriculum does not ...*encompass the idea of educational management in terms of managing schools*. In the participant's view ...the *teacher training programme should somehow include leadership training,* to avoid a situation where... *the teacher suddenly finds himself or herself in a leadership position but without any skills from college*. Deputy Head J aptly stated that ...*teacher training* does not cover ...*all the expertise which is needed in the management of schools* as it focuses ...*more on how to build a teacher in the classroom rather* than *a teacher as an administrator.*

The above findings imply that the content of the Diploma in Education programme hardly provides student teachers with the requisite grounding in aspects of school leadership as it mainly focuses on the professional preparation of classroom practitioners. Yet Beyer (2009) contends that the effective preparation of school leaders must incorporate leadership and management theory into school leadership preparation programmes so as to impart a knowledge base of management skills among aspiring school leaders.

In terms of the effectiveness of the TP component to leadership preparation, documentary analysis revealed that the school-based experiences mainly focused on the mastery of pedagogic approaches and classroom practice in general rather than school administration. The impression that one gets from the above is that teachers' colleges provide little preparation for school leadership as they prioritise the inculcation of pedagogic skills.

Universities

This sub-theme sought to examine participants' views about the effectiveness of university degree programmes in preparing potential school heads. School Inspector A stated that she was ...*not happy with teacher training at universities* as the programmes did not adequately prepare novice school heads for effective school leadership. She further stated that she had ...*tried to make reference to quite a number of course outlines from the various tertiary institutions* and had realised that students graduated without a deep understanding of the professional skills required for the day-to-day administration of the school. The participant's views resonate with those of the other participants, who indicated that the content of degree programmes was not responsive to the real training needs of school heads.

Participants also indicated that academic programmes were simply prescribed by TEIs without the collaboration of the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (MoPSE) and schools in the design and implementation of the curriculum. Effective programmes must be responsive to nationally-acceptable performance standards and the evidence base of the training needs of school heads (Bell et al., 2006; Hussain et al., 2011). School Inspector A, who stated that ...*there should be strong partnership between the ministry* ... and the tertiary institutions emphasised the need for collaboration. The above excerpt implies that MoPSE, TEIs and schools have a shared responsibility to develop programmes that are custom-built to address the contextual challenges faced by school heads. Such collaboration could help to standardise the content of degree programmes across all institutions by identifying the minimum body of

knowledge that must be covered under these programmes. The current situation is that the content of degree programmes offered within universities varies across institutions. This discordance could imply that there is no standards framework that guides the academic programmes.

The other shortcoming of the academic programmes that was identified by participants related to their over-reliance on classroom-based instruction which tends to focus more on the theoretical perspectives rather than the practical aspects of school management. Studies have shown that contact sessions are not effective because they are mainly theory-based and lack practical components that expose learners to real school experiences (Steyn, 2008). A review of the programmes revealed that the content and instructional strategies that were used did not incorporate practice-based learning approaches that could enable learners to develop problem-solving skills. Jensen (2016) contends that problem-based learning helps to connect the preparation of school leaders to real administrative practices expected in schools. This implies that effective programmes ought to integrate theory with such practical activities as role play, simulations and case studies as espoused by Steyn (2008). Studies by Davis and Darlington-Hammond (2012 in Johnson 2016) confirm that school leaders who underwent training in educational leadership preparation programmes that had aspects of practical applications, problem-based learning and field-based learning were highly effective.

Mentoring and coaching are some of the experiential learning approaches that have proven to be effective in providing on-the-job training to novice school heads within the school site (Zhang & Brundrett, 2010). These approaches entail the pairing of inexperienced school heads with their experienced peers so that the former are able to develop the requisite skills and experiences through site-based learning

(Preis, Grogan, Sherman & Beatty, 2007). A review of the instructional strategies used in the degree programmes clearly showed that field- based experiential learning was not a part of the process of instruction. Yet the importance of doing ...*some fieldwork*, particularly ...going *into schools studying various situations together and trying to come up with solutions* was highlighted by School Head H as central to the professional development of school heads within the real school situation. In view of the multiplicity of roles that school heads are expected to play, it is evident that they require multi-tasking skills and these can only be developed through site-based experiential learning under the guidance of mentors. This shows the compelling need for TEIs to incorporate field-based learning into the academic programmes.

Given the fact that teachers' colleges are associate institutions of the UZ, it is important that the curriculum content taught across the two institutions be structured in a spiral form to ensure learner progression from simple concepts of school leadership at diploma level to complex ones at degree level. This content restructuring is quite important, especially if consideration is given to the fact that holders of diplomas are eligible to enrol to study for a bachelor's degree as a way of professional upgrading. Such an arrangement provides TEIs with an opportunity to initiate the teaching of concepts of school leadership at an early stage of teacher development.

The discordance between the content of academic programmes within universities and the professional development needs of novice school heads clearly shows that academic staff is detached from the realities of the school system. The mismatch exists because there is a lack of meaningful collaboration between TEIs and schools in terms of research on school leadership. According to School Inspector A, lecturers often showed signs of ...*deficiency* in their understanding of the education ...*policy system* and the

contextual realities underlying school leadership. As a way of resolving the problem of incompetence among academic staff, she suggested that the …*Ministry (MoPSE) people facilitate (a workshop for the) lecturers.* The process of reorienting academic staff within TEIs is necessary so that they are kept abreast of the contextual realities of the school system and policy developments that have shaped the role of school leaders in the 21st century.

A review of the content of the B. Ed (Honours) degrees and the Post Graduate Diploma in Education from three purposively selected universities was undertaken to determine whether the content of degree programmes included components of the skills and knowledge required to prepare students for effective school leadership. The analysis indicated that the evidence base of the job description did not inform the content of degree programmes and the real training needs of school heads. Literature asserts that effective professional development programmes ought to be constructed based on expectations of the national agenda (Bell & Stevenson, 2006), school heads' responsibilities (Pont et al., 2008) and the real contextual challenges faced by school heads (Hussain & Zamair, 2011). Research has shown that academic programmes that are responsive to the challenges encountered by novice school heads must address such key areas as instructional leadership, financial management, policy implementation, assets management, staffing, student discipline, computer literacy, community relations and documentation (Mapolisa, Ncube, Tshabalala & Khosa, 2014; Tshabalala, Muranda & Gazimbe, 2014; Sulemain, 2015; Johnson, 2016; Bush, 2008).

CONCLUSION

The focus of the study was on examining the effectiveness of the TEI curriculum in the professional development of potential school heads. The study's findings indicate that TEI programmes do not effectively prepare novice school heads for the role of school leadership. Although the programmes provide a basic grounding in the mastery of pedagogic skills, they do not impart the requisite technical skills that enable school heads to execute their responsibilities effectively. Based on the above, there is a need for TEIs to review the structure and content of academic programmes so that they are purpose-built to respond to the professional development needs of the 21st century school head.

REFERENCES

Ashu, F. E. 2014. *Effectiveness of School Leadership and Management Development in Cameroon: A guide for Educational systems, schools and school leaders.* New Castle Upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Atkinson, N. 1982. Racial integration in Zimbabwean schools, 1979-1980. *Comparative Education*, 18 (1):77-89.

Bell, L. and Stevenson, H. 2006. *Education policy, themes and impact.* London: Routledge.

Beycioglu, K. and Wildy, H. 2015. Principal-preparation: The case of novice

principals in Turkey. In Beycioglu, K. and Parshiadis, P. *Perspectives in Principal leadership effectiveness. United States of Africa:* Information Science Reference: 1-17.

Beyer, B. 2009. An imperative for leadership preparation programs: Preparing future leaders to meet the needs of students, schools and communities. *International Journal of Educational Leadership Preparation*, 4 (1): 1-12.

Bush, T. 2008. *Leadership and management.* London: Sage Publications.

Bush, T. 2009. Leadership development and school improvement: contemporary issues in leadership development, *Journal of Educational Review*, 61(4):375-389.

Commission of Inquiry into Education and Training (CIET). 1999. *Zimbabwe: Report of the presidential commission of inquiry into education and training*. Harare: Government of Zimbabwe.

Chong, S. and Ho, P. 2009. Quality teaching and learning: a quality assurance framework for initial teacher preparation programmes, *International Journal of Management in Education*, 3 (3/4): 302-314.

Cohen, L., Manion, L. and Morrison, K. 2011. *Research methods in Education*. London: Routledge.

Creswell, J. W. 2009. *Research Design: Qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods approaches*. London: SAGE Publications.

Day, C. and Sammonds, P. 2014. *Successful school leadership.* Education Development Trust: Berkshire.

Darling-Hammond, L., La Pointe, M., Meyerson, D., Orr, M. T. & Cohen, C. 2007. *Preparing school leaders for a changing world: lessons from exemplary leadership development programmes*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University. Stanford Educational Leadership.

Elsayed, A. M. A.; Alfaada, H. A.; Jeed, A. M. F. A; Afzaal, M & Al-Haddad, N. M. A.D. 2020. The role of educational institutions in preparing future leaders from the viewpoint of school principals in Oman. *Talent Development & Excellence*, 12(2):3231-3248.

Forde, C. 2011. Leadership for learning: Educating educational leaders. In Townsend, T. and MacBeath, J. (eds). *International handbook of leadership for learning*, 25(1): 355-374.

Hallinger, P. & Huber, S. 2012. School leadership that makes a difference: international perspectives. *School Effectiveness and School Improvement: An International Journal of Research, Policy and Practice.* http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/09243453.2012.681508

Hillside Teachers' College website. http://www.hillsideteacherscollege.ac.zw/about/

Hobson, A., Brown, E., Ashby, P., Keys, W., Sharp, C. and Benefield, P. 2003. *Issues of Early Headship – Problems and Support Strategies*. National College of School Leadership.

Hussain, K.S. and Zamair, S. 2011. Managerial Training Needs Assessment of Heads of Secondary Schools. *Bulletin of Education and Research*, 33(2): 23-37.

Ibrahim, N. 2011. Preparation and development public secondary schools in Kenya. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, 1(9): 291-301.

Jensen, R. 2016. School leadership development: What we know and how we know it. *Acta Didactica Norge*, 10(4): 48-68.

Johnson, A. D. 2016. Principal perceptions of the effectiveness of university educational leadership preparation and professional learning. *NCPEA International Journal of Educational Leadership Preparation*, 11(1):1-17.

Kiggundu, E. and Nayimuli, S. 2009. Teaching practice: a make or break phase for student teachers, South African Journal of Education. *South*

African Journal of Education, 29: 345-358.

Kombo, D. K. and Tromp, D. L. A. 2009. *Proposal and thesis writing: An Introduction.*Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa.

Leithwood, K., Day, C., Sammonds, P. Harris, A. and Hopkins, D. 2006. *Seven strong claims about successful school leadership*. London: National College for School Leadership.

Machekhina, O. N. 2016. Globalization of education: the experience of retrospective complex analysis, *SHS Web of Conferences*, 29 (01047): 1-4.

Magudu, S. and Gumbo, M. T. Efficacy of the partnership between teacher education institutions and primary schools in teacher preparation in Zimbabwe, *South African Journal of Higher Education*, 32 (5):104-123.

Majoni, C. 2014. Critical evaluation of teacher education quality and the implications on teacher quality in Zimbabwe. Unpublished Thesis. Zimbabwe Open University.

Mapolisa, T. and Muyengwa, B. 2012. Impact assessment of the Bachelor and Master of Educational Management programmes at the Zimbabwe Open University, *International Journal of Asian Social Science*, 2(12): 2162-2174.

Mapolisa, T., Ncube, A. C., Tshabalala, T. and Khosa, M. T. 2014. Challenges faced by school heads in the management of school finances in Nkayi district secondary schools. *Nova Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, 3(4): 2014:1-5.

Maravanyika, O. E. 1990. Implementing educational policies in Zimbabwe in G. Psacharopoulos (ed.) *World Bank Discussion Papers: Studies on implementation of African educational policies*, African Technical Department Series, Washington D. C: The World Bank.

Mathibe, I. 2007. The professional development of school principals. *South African Journal of Education*, 27(3): 523-540.

Mavhunga, P. J., Mavundutse, O. and Mamvuto, A. (2008) Professional studies: the Zimbabwe teacher education burden bearer? *The Zimbabwe Bulletin of Teacher Education*, 15 (1): 2008.

Mulford, B. 2003. *School leaders: Changing roles and impact on teacher and school effectiveness.* OECD: Education and Policy Division.

Ng, P. T. Aspiring principals' perception of the challenges of beginning principals and

the support that they need. *Asia Pacific Journal of Education*, 35(3): 366-376.

Oncer, A. Z. 2018. Redesigning value chain for higher education and proposal for analysis process. *Impact: International Journal of Research in Business Management*, 6 (4): 25-26.

Parshiadis, P. and Brauckmann, S. 2009. Professional development needs of school principals. *Commonwealth Education Partnerships*, 120-124.

Pont, B., Nusche, D. and Moorman, H. 2008. *Improving School Leadership. Volume 1: Policy and Practice.* OECD.

Preis, S., Grogan, M; Sherman, W. H. and Beatty, D. M. 2007. What the research says about the delivery of educational leadership preparation programmes in the United States. *Journal of Research on Leadership Education*, 2 (2): 1-36.

Razzak, N. A. 2013. The effectiveness of a university based professional development program in developing Bahraini school leaders' management and leadership competencies of implementing effective school-wide professional development and ICT integration. *Professional Development in Education*, http://dx/doi.org/10.1080/19415257.2012.759127.

Rogers, A. and Horrocks, N. 2010. *Teaching Adults*. Berkshire: Open University Press.

Shava, G. N. 2015. Educational leadership and learner achievement: contemporary issues. *Zimbabwe Journal of Science and Technology*, 10: 26-38.

Shizha, E. and Kariwo, M. T. 2011. *Education and development in Zimbabwe: A social, political and economic analysis*. Rotterdam: Sense Publishers.

Steyn, G. M. 2008. The influence of school leadership preparation programmes: Identification of possible focus areas. *South African Journal of Higher Education*, 22(4): 889-905.

Sulemain, Q. 2015. Managerial challenges faced by fresh directly appointed secondary school heads in Kohat Division, Pakistan. *Research on Humanities and Social Sciences*, 5(5): 91-104.

Tshabalala, T., Muranda, A. Z. and Gazimbe, P. 2014. Challenges faced by School Heads in handling teacher disciplinary issues in Primary Schools in Umguza District. *Nova Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, 3(4): 1-6.

UNESCO. 2009. *The new roles of secondary school headteachers*. Paris: UNESCO Interagency Group on Secondary Education.

UNSECO International Bureau of Education. 2001. *The developments in Education: The education system at the end of the 20th century 1990-2000*. Harare: Zimbabwe National Commission for UNESCO.

Vacancy Announcement Notice – Internal Circular Minute No.32 of 2014. Primary and Secondary Schools Heads. Zimbabwe: Civil Service Commission.

Walker, A. Bryant, D. and Moosung, L. 2013. International patterns in principal preparation: Commonalities and variations in pre-service programmes. *Educational Management, Administration & Leadership*, 41(4):405-434.

Wenger, E. 2000. Communities and Social Learning Systems. *Organization*, 7(2): 225-246.

Wilson, D. 2005. The education and training of knowledge workers. In Zajda, J. & Freeman, K. (eds) *International handbook on globalization, education and policy research: Global pedagogies and policies*. Dordrecht: Springer.

Zhang, W. and Brundett, M. 2010. School leaders' perspectives on leadership learning: the case for informal and experiential learning. *Management in Education*, 24(4): 154-158.

Zvobgo, C. J. M. 1981. African education in Zimbabwe: The colonial inheritance of the new state, 1899-1979. *A Journal of Opinion*, 11(3/4): 13-16.