Continuing Professional Development; Dilemma of Information Provision for Secondary School Teachers in Kirinyaga County, Kenya

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Abstract

The objective of this study was to explore and analyse provision of information to secondary school teachers' in their endeavour to participate in Continuing Professional Development (CPD). In the current educational era, the trial and error teaching, and take it or leave it professional development programmes are no longer acceptable. In this respect, teacher training entails more than the mastery of certain practical knowledge, pedagogical skills, and techniques. Therefore, CPD plays an important role in teacher development geared towards classroom improvement. This paper highlights the need for secondary school teachers to be provided with information about CPD. This is significant in that CPD is hoped to provide a basis for teacher professional improvement discussion in Kirinyaga County. CPD will lead to constructive discussions by appropriate education experts in Kenya on vital professional development challenges that involve provision of information. Hopefully, CPD would stimulate educational research geared towards secondary school teacher improvement. The methodology used entailed a mixed method study design that involved analysis of macro and micro aspects using quantitative and qualitative techniques in the collection of data. A vertical case study method was used in sampling of twelve secondary schools in Kirinyaga County. The sampled schools were further subjected to a survey method where questionnaires were administered to teachers while six others were subjected to an in-depth case study involving teachers and principals. In the schools where case study was used, data was collected using in-depth interviews with principals and teachers. Teachers were further subjected to Focus Group Discussions (FGDs). The data collected was analysed qualitatively, though quantitative data was used for clarification where it was found necessary. The study found out that there is disparity on information provision from the different groups of people expected to provide critical information to teachers. Teachers need to be provided with information on CPD so that they can improve their professional status geared to classroom practices. The limitation of this study is that the findings could not be generalized to other schools and regions within the country without modification.

Keywords: Continuing Professional Development, Information provision, Principals, Teachers.

Introduction

Teacher's role in education is central. After learners, teachers are the most important actors in the education process. Education for All (EFA) targets adopted at the Dakar conference in 2000 recognized that enrolment in schools does not ensure quality education (EFA 2006). The Dakar framework on Education for All Goals number three and six advocated that the learning needs of all young people and adults should be met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skill programmes. Goal 6 advocates for the improvement of all aspects of the quality of education and ensuring excellence so that recognized and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially, in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills (EFA 2006). This position is further supported by the new Sustainable Development Goal number 4 that has interest in achieving inclusive and quality education for all with both girls and boys completing free primary and secondary schooling by 2030. The SDG 4 has envisaged that by 2030, all countries will substantially increase the supply of qualified teachers by involving them through international co-operation for teacher training in developing countries (UNDP 2017). As the Global Partnership for Education (2017) has observed, by 2030 countries will be required to recruit 69 million teachers in order to cater for the children in primary and secondary schools with education. Secondary schools will require 44.4 million more teachers in order for the goals to be achieved. In the light of the above trends, if schools are to achieve their educational aims, there must be effective systems to select, prepare, deploy, manage, support and provide teachers with information in order to make informed decisions about their Continuing Professional Development (CPD).

The EFA Global Monitoring Report (2005) defined the central role of the teacher in any education system, emphasizing that the quality of education is directly linked to how well teachers are prepared for teaching. The report further acknowledged the need to balance the time and money spent on initial training and continuing professional support. Darling-Hamond (1998), Steven et. al. (2017) and Wong (2017) have observed that each dollar spent on improving a teacher's qualification nets greater gains in student learning than any other use of an education dollar. More incremental training via several routes such as full time, part-time, day release, residential and distance learning in a variety of locations such as the school, teacher centres, colleges and universities needs to be explored on how to improve teachers' competence in class room set up. The opportunities available should be used to develop teachers' professional skills over a working lifetime. This is because today's teachers need to be equipped not only with subject specific expertise and effective teaching methodologies, but also the capacity to assist students to meet the demands of the emerging knowledge-based society. This view has been supported by UNESCO (2010) report that recognized that teachers are at the centre of educational change. They are active and powerful change agents who have the power to make a difference in society both individually and collectively. This can be possible only if teachers are provided with the information that will enable them to make decisions that are in line with their CPD goals.

Teacher's professional development is the tool that policy makers use to convey broad visions, disseminate critical information, and provide guidance to teachers. CPD has many facets as evidenced by numerous terms used to refer to the process. Some call it professional growth, in-service education, on the job training, continuing education, recurrent education, staff improvement, or renewal. Hassel (1999) considers professional development as the process

of improving staff skills and competencies needed to produce outstanding educational results for students. According to Olivia and Pawlas (1997), professional development programmes are activities planned and carried out to promote the personal and professional growth of teachers. Villegas-Reimer (2003) and Ganser (2000) further explained that professional development includes formal experiences such as attending workshops, professional meetings, and mentoring and informal experiences such as reading professional publications and watching television documentaries related to an academic discipline (Villegas-Reimer, 2003, Ganser 2000). This conception of professional development is broader than career development that is defined as the growth that occurs as the teacher moves through the professional career cycle and broader than staff development, which is provision of organized in-service programmes designed to foster the growth of groups of teachers. This definition has further been supported by an article that dwelt with CPD policy and practice that has argued that CPD is an ongoing process building upon initial teacher training and induction, including development and training opportunities throughout a career and concluding with retirement (No Author 2017, Rose & Reynolds 2017)

This paper conceptualized the term Continuing Professional Development (CPD) to mean all programmes and practices initiated at the national, school or individual level that gives the teachers a chance to reflect, renew and acquire new professional skills with the aim of improving professional practices and the quality of education in schools. Any experience that teachers engage in to widen their knowledge, appreciation, skills, and understanding of their work should be in line with goals, values of the schools and the interests and needs of teachers (Duke & Stiggins, 1990; Beerens, 2000; Norton, 2008; Rose & Reynolds 2017).

Teachers need a wide variety of ongoing opportunities and information to improve their skills. Effective CPD of teachers begins with the understanding of teachers' needs and their work environments (Gaible & Burns, 2005). It is believed that the main step in any training programme is to determine whether training is needed and, if so, to specify what that training should provide. Although majority of teachers consider themselves to be knowledgeable and confident, due to the new expectations and challenges, they feel inadequately prepared to become expert teachers. They need to be provided with information that will enhance their decision making on CPD. If in-service teacher training programmes are established with the involvement of participants, Butler (1989) argued that they would meet participants' needs, level of awareness, mastery, and concerns. Unfortunately, when teacher CPD and teacher training needs are being formulated, needs analyses are usually ignored and information flow is always haphazard and not properly coordinated. This leads to a waste of time, human resources and money while damaging the motivation and enthusiasm of those involved in the programmes. According to Wanzare and Ward (2000), CPD for the twenty first century should give teachers an opportunity to contribute to these programmes, which address their own training needs.

Teachers' job has become more complex and stressful in the face of new expectations of schools and adjustment to social changes (Crosswell 2006, Ujlakyne 2017). Many countries in the world face a formidable challenge of how to expand the size of their teaching force while improving professional quality. A good CPD Programme is expected to fill this gap. Again, the issue here is that teachers need to refresh their skills from time to time to meet new challenges. In schools the majority of novice teachers begin their career in a teaching environment with little or no information on professional development. Some new teachers may teach disciplines

that differ from their area of specialization. Given the calls for pedagogical renewal from educational stakeholders, practicing teachers require to be provided with CPD opportunities and information especially in developing countries. This is because CPD is the means by which members of professional associations maintain, improve and broaden their knowledge and skills and develop the personal qualities required in their professional lives. Therefore, it involves conscious updating of professional knowledge and improvement of professional competence throughout a person's working life.

Concerns of Secondary Schools Teacher CPD in Kenya

There has been great concern for teachers to be involved in CPD in secondary schools in Kenya due to the continued increase in enrolment and expansion of the sector as a result of Free Primary Education (FPE) and introduction of the Free Day Secondary Education in Kenya. The number of secondary schools grew by 7.9 % from 8,747 in 2014 to 9,440 in 2015 with public schools recording a growth of 8.0 % (Kenya Republic of 2016). On the other hand, the population of the students in secondary schools increased from 2.3 million in 2014 to 2.6 million in 2015. The enrolment for boys grew by 16.7 % from 1.2 million in 2014 to 1.4 million in 2015. That of the girls rose by 9.1 % to 1.2 million in 2015. Though the number of teachers has been increasing by 8.5% from 78,727 in 2014 to 85,438 in 2015, the sector still has a deficit (Kenya Republic of 2016). This is because the number of students are more compared to the number of teachers that are being employed. The sector has been included as part of basic education with the introduction of Free Day Tuition for secondary schools. Secondary education constitutes an important sector in the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG), Kenya Vision 2030 and currently Sustainable Development Goals. In addition, secondary sector feeds higher education and the employment sectors, which are considered important levels in terms of economic and social development of the country.

Many educators, researchers and policy makers are convinced that investments in pre-service education are not yielding the expected results and that resources would be better utilised if redirected to other more productive areas (World Bank, 2010). The fact is that pre-service training in Kenya has remained virtually unchanged; raising more doubts about its effectiveness (SEIA, 2007). This is particularly so where secondary school teachers are concerned since their pre-service training relies almost exclusively on specialised knowledge training at universities with little, if any, practical training in the teaching and learning process (World Bank, 2010). The teaching practice that is provided is not effective and takes a short time- merely one school term. To a great extent, this means that secondary school teachers have to be responsible for their own CPD once they start teaching in schools and the need to provide them with the information is paramount to their completion.

Teachers generally have to teach with the student as the only witness to their professional activity (World Bank, 2010). Their jobs are characterised by greater solitude and isolation. They labour on their own to decide what instructions works, what standard of student work is acceptable and what additional knowledge, skills, or insights would best serve their students. There is, moreover, a profound mismatch between the radically new key competence demanded of students in the knowledge society and the teaching skills acquired from teacher training colleges and in-service training programmes provided.

There are problems that are facing policy makers in Kenya that draw the growing tension

and potential conflict between the drive to raise the status of the teaching profession and the perceived need to bring teacher education back from the academia and closer to schools and classroom. At the same time, there is need to base and concentrate both the pre-service and in-service teacher training in schools and the classroom if it is to be relevant and efficient. However, policy on information provision about CPD for secondary school teachers has been fragmented, incomplete and more often than not simply non-existent. The Teacher Service Commission Code of conduct has not discussed the provision of information on CPD. However, it has directed and cautioned those responsible to give honest, accurate and impartial advice without fear or favour (TSC 2012).

The development of coherent, medium term, financially sustainable teacher policy on information provision, tailored to meet the demand for new and existing teachers, has been widely neglected despite Kenya being a signatory to international ratifications such as: Education For All (EFA), Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the new Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). Teachers' policy on information provision on CPD has often been an afterthought to EFA, MDG and SDG targets, receiving less attention than universal schooling. The authority line within the Ministry of Education has not been clear and sufficiently prioritised, resources are not compatible with needs, and responsiveness of teacher education system to the changing environment in the field has been slow, as has been engagement and contributions from the private sector and general public. Despite that, the policy documents (Report on Republic of Kenya 1964; Report on Republic of Kenya 1977; Report on Republic of Kenya 1999) had highlighted the need for teacher CPD; implementation had been hampered by lack of follow up, information and funds (Report of the Republic of Kenya 2005a, Report of the Republic of Kenya 2005b).

It was Sessional Paper No.1 of 2005 that articulated the Kenya Policy Framework for Education, Training and Research that laid the foundation through which the Kenyan government was committed to the provision of quality education and training (Report of the Republic of Kenya 2005a). The Kenya Education Sector Strategic Programme (KESSP) was the mechanism through which the activities in the policy framework were put into operation. The policies recommended that teacher CPD was to be institutionalised and regularized (Report of the Republic of Kenya 2005b). This was to be made possible by developing the necessary institutional framework to meet the needs for quality assurance in secondary school. It was to be done through continuous skill upgrading for teachers and re-activation of subject panels at the school level. At the same time, teacher-training programmes were to be restructured in collaboration with the universities and colleges that were offering pre-service training.

Many Counties in Kenya are spending less money and resources on teacher CPD. The MOE is not directing their professional development money in a coherent way towards sustainable, practical learning opportunities for teachers. In addition, there are challenges that involve widespread weakness in teachers' skills due to lack of CPD training (Onyango, 2009). Moreover, the country lacked a national system of teacher CPD training accreditation and most of the courses are not well co-ordinated and standardized.

In recent years, teachers have been enrolling in long and short term programmes that could be classified as continuing and career progressive, but their contribution to professional growth has yet to be established. A recent report by the Teachers Service Commission (TSC) highlighted the fact that the long term accredited programmes that teachers are pursuing are making little

contributions to professional development (Otieno, 2009). In addition, there are many providers of CPD in the country such as universities, middle level colleges, private entrepreneurs and MOE affiliated statutory bodies. The major problem is that providers have no harmonised programmes that would take care of the teachers CPD. They have different programmes and criteria that are used to provide teachers with CPD information.

Fundamentally, a change is required in the way the teaching profession is viewed: a teacher must be seen as a professional, an acknowledged worker who does not spend his or her entire professional life in just one education system or even in a single country. Like students, teachers must be prepared to work in changing and unpredictable environments in which knowledge is constructed from different sources and viewpoints. The ability to teach challenging content to learners with different experiences and conceptions depends on the capacity of practitioners to create powerful and diverse learning experience that connect with what students know and how they can most effectively learn.

Statement of the Problem

The problem of this paper was to establish dilemmas related to teacher provision of information on CPD in Kenyan secondary schools. Although, various efforts have been instituted to provide teacher CPD, through in-service courses, gaps still exists in the education system on how teachers are provided with the information dealing with CPD. There are various providers with different requirements that they need to communicate to the teachers so that they can be able to make informed decisions on the CPD programmes that they need to pursue. The apparent side-lining of secondary school teachers in the provision of information on CPD is seen as potentially threatening to the attainment of well intentioned international goals and targets of EFA, MDGs and SDGs.

Purpose of the paper

The paper sought to find out the views that are held by the teachers about the sources of information that are available to them in their quest to make appropriate decisions on whether to be involved in Continuing professional development courses in the county.

Objective of the Paper

The objective of this paper was to establish the perspectives of teachers on the available sources of information for CPD in Kirinyaga County.

The research question to be answered was:

What are the teachers' perspectives on the available sources of information for CPD in Kirinyaga County?

Methodology

The Mixed Method research designs was used in the collection and analysis of the data. The concept of mixing different approaches probably originated in 1959 when Campbell and Fiske used multiple methods to study validity of psychological traits (Creswell 2003). This prompted others to mix approaches associated with field methods such as Focused Group Discussions and interviews (Qualitative) with the traditional survey (Quantitative). Recognizing that all methods

have limitations, researchers felt that biases inherent in any single method could neutralize or cancel the biases of other methods. This approach involves collecting and analysing data both quantitatively and qualitatively in a single study. The study further used comparative education methods where a vertical case study was used to situate local (Micro) action and interpretation within the broader cultural, historical and political investigation. The vertical case study is grounded in a principal site such as a school, a community, and institution or government ministry. It should attend to the ways in which historical trends, social structures and national and international forces shape local processes at the site. The research work was carried out in Kirinyaga County, Kenya. The rationale for sampling this County is that it is one of the counties with high mean score at the primary level and a dismal performance in secondary level at KCSE. Kirinyaga County covers a total area of 1,478 square kilometres, which is 11.2 percent of Kenya's total area respectively (Report of Republic of Kenya 2002).

At the national level education officials dealing with quality assurance were sampled using a non-probability sampling technique of snow balling. After interviewing the first officer, the researcher was introduced to other officers that deal with teacher professional development. The process was also repeated at the County level using the criteria of the officers that interact frequently with teachers. All the education officers were subjected to interviews. In addition an interview with the County TSC Human Resource Officer was conducted. This is because County TSC Human Resource Officer are crucial in determining whether a teacher would be granted study leave with pay or not. They are also expected to provide vital information on teachers pursuing CPD. At the school level all the principals were included in line with case study methodology. They were subjected to in-depth interview. Questionnaires were administered to teachers and using purposive sampling another group was subjected to in-depth interviews and FGD.

The target population for all the schools in Kenya was 78,727 as in 2014 while the number of teachers were 85,438. Therefore, the number of schools in Kirinyaga County were 137 public and 12 private secondary schools. Schools were sampled in a stratified manner as National, Extra County, County and County day schools. The schools in each category were purposively sampled so that they can provide the required information. A mark of 30% was used to select the teachers from the teachers' register in each school. The criteria of whether a teacher has participated, never participated and involved in CPD was used. This led to ninety four questionnaires being collected while thirty three teachers were involved in focus group discussions and another thirty four were involved in interviews. Four education officers were sampled at the MOE head quarters while three were sampled at the district level. The instruments that were used in the data collection included Focus group discussion schedules, interview schedules, Document analysis and questionnaires.

Findings

The findings of the study were guided by the research objective that answered the question; What are the teachers' perspectives on the available sources of information for CPD in Kirinyaga County? Teachers enumerated various sources of information that include schools, principals and their deputies, education officials in the counties, Trade union officials, colleague teachers and tutors from colleges. The information was collected through interviews and a questionnaire. The following is a discussion for each of the above categories of the respondents.

Schools as sources of information for teachers' involvement in CPD

Teachers were requested to indicate whether they were provided with any information concerning CPD in the school by their principals. Twenty-six of the teachers (76.47 %) interviewed responded that they were not given any information concerning CPD in their schools. They lamented that they had never heard any information given to them at the school level. A female teacher in an extra county school argued that:

I have been in this school for twelve years and I had never heard anybody giving us that information. At the school level we don't have any information. We rely on self-driven issues (Teacher, 01P03FI, 2008).

Some complained that the information was provided in a sporadic manner, especially when it involved seminars and workshops. A female teacher in an extra county school observed that:

There is nothing in the school. Unless you take your own initiative and try to find out you cannot get anything from the school. At times we are told, at other times we are not (Teacher, 01P01FI, 2008).

This was further supported by another English female teacher that:

Ooh No! But there was a time we had people coming from Catholic University. They came up with the courses that they offer. The information we are getting is not from the school but from other sources (Teacher, 02P02FI, 2008).

Eight of the interviewed teachers (23.076 %) indicated that the schools do provide them with information. This group cited the principal as the main source of information. The researcher conducted a further probe of the information given by those teachers. They admitted that colleague teachers provided the information.

Teachers viewed it as the role of the individual to access the TSC code and other materials so that they could get information. They argued that there was nobody to remind and provide teachers with professional information that they were expected to use in making decisions about CPD. The bulk of the work was left to the teachers to seek information by reading materials that would provide them with the information.

Principals and deputy principals as sources of information for CPD

Teachers had been complaining that principals were not the best sources of information on any teacher CPD courses. A female teacher in an extra county school indicated that:

Unfortunately, our head of the school is not very good in disseminating information on any teacher CPD. People complain that there are circulars from the MOE and we are not aware, while in the other schools they are there. So he tells us if we get them, we bring. But you see he is supposed to get them for us. Now we find that he is trying to block the way! (Teacher, 02P02FI, 2008).

When this information obtained from teachers was triangulated with the information from the principal interviews' the findings were contradictory. In the case of circulars, the principal indicated that they do circulate them so that teachers could read the information. A male principal noted that;

I do avail all the information to the teachers and departments. I also give a follow up to ensure that no information is lost. I run the school in an open manner and the teachers can access any information. The principals' office is never locked to anybody. Even when the principal is going away a teacher can be left in charge of the schools. Immediately the information comes here I do not keep it in my drawer. I let them know immediately (Head teacher, 01D05MI, 2008).

The information from the survey is summarised and shown in Table 1 below, which indicates the various officials that are supposed to provide teachers with information do not do it. Of the teachers surveyed, sixty-seven (72 %) had not been approached by the principals to inform them about CPD. Only fifteen teachers (16.1 %) indicated they had received such information, at least one time from their principals. Out of the total, five (5.4 %) indicated that they had received the information over six times. Only three (3.2 %) indicated that they received the information two times in the past six months. There was one (1.1 %) and two (2.2 %) who indicated that they received the information five times and three times respectively. From this analysis, it can be concluded that teachers have not been receiving any information concerning the CPD from their respective principals in the last six months despite some citing them as a source of information.

Table 1: Provision of Information by Officials in Kirinyaga County

Number of times	Education Officers	Trade Union officers	Principal	Deputy head Teacher	Colleagues
0	(80) 86.0	(84) 89.2	(67) 72	(77) 81.7	(31) 33.3
1	(8) 8.6	(6) 6.5	(15) 16.1	(8) 8.6	(9) 10.8
2	(3) 3.2	(2) 2.2	(3) 3.2	(3) 3.2	(14) 15.1
3	(1) 1.1	(1) 1.1	(2) 2.2	(3) 3.2	(4) 15.1
4	(0) 0	(1) 1.1	0	(1) 1.1	(8) 8.6
5	(0) 0	(0) 0	(1) 1.1	(1) 1.1	(4) 4.3
6-10	(1) 1.1	(0) 0	(5) 5.4	(1) 1.1	(12) 12.9

Source: Gathara (2011)

On the same note, table 1 shows the analysis of information provision by Deputy Principals. The scenario was the same as the one for the Principals. This is indicated in table 1 above where seventy-seven (81.7 %) teachers had not received any form of information from Deputy Principals. This was distantly followed by eight (8.6 %) who indicate that they had received the information only once. Only one (1.1 %) in each category indicated that they had received the information four, five and over six times respectively. Lastly, three (3.2 %) in each category had received the information from deputy principal, two and three times respectively.

The information from the teachers Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) contradicted what the principal and education officials had provided. All the teachers in the FGDs agreed that they were not provided with any information in their school. They claimed that teachers struggle to get access to information and principal are considered as the main obstacle. They further indicated the reluctance of principal in assisting the teacher. CPD is taken as an individual endeavour. Teachers are expected to search for the information instead of relying on the school administration.

Education officers as sources of information

The County Education Officers (CEO) acknowledged that they do enlighten the teachers on what the code of ethics stipulates about CPD. During seminars and workshops the CEO have indicated that they do enlighten the teachers on furthering their education instead of relying on what the MOE was offering them in the form of seminars and workshops.

On further probing whether the MOE does provide all the information through County Education Officer (CEO) it was further indicated that the scenario is the same. Apart from the seminars and workshops that are organized by the MOE there was no other source of information. The survey as indicated in table 1 further indicated that thirty-six teachers (38.0 %) disagreed that they were provided with information concerning CPD. Another group comprising of sixteen teachers (17.4 %) strongly disagreed that they are provided with information in their schools. Those who agreed that teachers are provided with adequate information comprised of twenty-one (22.8 %) while those who strongly agreed were three teachers (3.3 %). Another group of teachers decided to be non-committal and they comprised of eighteen teachers (18.5 %) as this was a touchy issue and they feared. Teachers indicated that the MOE provided random information that could not assist them in making decisions on their needs of CPD.

Further, teachers were requested to indicate the number of times that education officials in the County had provided them with information concerning CPD. Table 1 indicated that eighty teachers (86.0 %) had not received any information from them. This was distantly followed by eight (8.6 %) who indicated that they had received the information from them only once while three (3.2 %) had received it two times. Only one teacher in each category responded that they had received the information three times and over six times respectively. None of the teachers indicated that they had received the information four or five times.

Trade unions as sources of information on CPD

The situation was even worse with trade union officials. As table 1 above indicated, eighty-four (89.2 %) teachers had never received any information on CPD from trade union officials. It was only six (6.5 %) teachers who indicated that they had received information once from them while two (2.2 %) had received it twice. The remaining two (2.2 %) indicated that they had received it three and four times respectively. None of the teachers indicated having received any information from trade union officials more than five times. This confirms what teachers articulated: that they do not get the information from education officials, principal and their deputies or the trade union officials in this County. They observed that they get the information from other teachers and friends. They lamented that even the institutions that offer the courses were not providing the information apart from advertising for the courses in the print media.

Colleagues as sources of information

The number of colleagues providing information to their fellow teachers presents a different scenario to what has been observed with Principals, Deputy Principals, Education officers and Trade Union officials. Table 1 above indicates that thirty-one (33.3 %) of the teachers had not got any information concerning CPD from their colleagues; the percentage is quite low compared to that of the deputy principals and the principals. Those who indicated that they were provided with information two times comprised fourteen (15.1 %) teachers. This percentage was similar to those who were advised for three times. Twelve teachers (12.9 %) indicated that they had received information from their colleagues over six times while nine (10.8 %) indicated that they received it once. The remaining eight (8.6 %) and four (4.3 %) had received information four times and five times respectively.

When this information was triangulated with what was got from the interviews twenty-two teachers (64.705 %) indicated that they were encouraged by their colleagues to participate in courses geared towards CPD. Despite this encouragement, teachers noted that there were variations. There were some who fully supported by colleagues while another group noted that they had others not fully supporting them. Teachers already involved in CPD courses had been cited to be the main sources of information. A male teacher in an extra county school observed that:

Yes, some of them were so much interested in me pursuing these courses. They wanted me to join the next level of education immediately (Teacher, 03P04MI, 2008).

This was further supported by another female teacher that:

Yes from colleagues. They keep on encouraging us to continue by telling us that we are still young and can do it, before we engage in other activities like getting families and children (Teacher, 03P02FI, 2008).

A male teacher in an extra county school further observed that:

The teachers do encourage each other because there are three who were doing the courses in this school. They are friends and they do influence one another. In fact colleagues do encourage each other and they are very co-operative. They would handle everything for you (Teacher, 03P06MI, 2008).

Discouragement by colleagues

There was another group that indicated that there was a lot of discouragement. They had blamed the old teachers who rarely talk about CPD. A male teacher in an extra County school observed that:

If you listen to the way she talks, the talk is not encouraging. She would come and ask you, look at me I have done my masters but I am still teaching with you. What is the need of doing this course? That is how things are here (Teacher, 03P05MI, 2008).

This was further complicated by the complaints that are launched by those involved in these courses. Their comments were negative and discouraged those not involved. On the other hand, teachers had indicated that most of the discouragements come from those who were not involved in any CPD courses. They indicated that they had alternatives; this made them not to encourage those who would be interested. A female teacher observed that:

They would ask you why you waste money and time. After all what is education and what do you expect after you complete the course... Even Provincial Directors of Education (PDE) have only one degree. They have everything with just that level of education that they have (Teacher, 01P05FI, 2008).

College tutors as a source of information

The colleges that offer the course had been cited as a major source of information. The lecturers in these institutions had provided guidance to teachers interested in the courses. A female teacher in a Country day school noted that:

A lecturer from one of the public university came to assess a teaching practicing teacher. He encouraged us to enrol in the courses offered in their institution rather than remaining at the diploma level (Teacher, 02D01FI, 2008).

This has also been evident with college tutors that had advised their students the need to pursue CPD after they had completed the current course. A female art teacher in an extra county school observed that:

My former tutor used to advise us to continue with education even if we were to be employed. They advised us to backup the knowledge we had through CPD courses (Teacher, 01P01FI, 2008).

The knowledge of CPD was also provided to teachers when they interacted with Doctor of Philosophy Students in various universities in the country. They acted as catalysts and important sources of information for teachers interested in pursuing CPD.

Discussion

It is clear that information provision has been a major dilemma for teachers in Kirinyaga County. This has been portrayed by teachers lamenting that principals are not the best source of information in the school set up. In schools, principals are expected to be the main conduit of information on CPD from the Ministry of Education and Teacher Service Commission to teachers. They are expected to facilitate information flow through the system by linking teachers with schools and the outside world. From the findings, the information is provided in a sporadic manner especially where workshops and seminars are involved. This has greatly influenced teachers' participation as principals refuse to forward the information as expected due to costs involved in travelling and accommodation. Principals are considered by teachers as the main obstacle in information provision in schools. At the school level the policy guidelines are not clear on how teachers should be provided with information concerning their involvement in CPD. A similar dilemma is experienced with deputy principals. Teachers have indicated

that they get information concerning their CPD in a sporadic manner. This is contrary to the available literature that indicates that principals and deputy principals should promote formal and informal opportunities for teacher learning and development (Muthamia, Mutharimi & Thinguri, 2014; Hinchco 2011).

Trade unions do not provide teachers with information concerning teacher CPD. As the literature indicates, the teachers union in Kenya has worked with the Ministry of Education and the UNESCO National Commission to mobilise stakeholders to work on EFA goals and to devise strategies on a range of professional teacher concerns, including the impact of HIV/AIDS (UNESCO 2004). However, the main dilemma is that this information is prevalent at the national level where policies are worked together with the Ministry of Education; but this has not trickled down to the local level especially in schools. The data has indicated that teachers have not been getting any information from the trade union officials at the local level on the aspects of professional development. This complicates the dilemma of information provision since trade unions are expected to provide their members with information that can help them improve their professional competence.

Although colleagues are a major source of information concerning CPD, the dilemmas still persist as there are some who discourage their colleagues from participating in CPD. Those who had participated in CPD courses earlier and successfully completed are a major source of information. Teachers have indicated with enthusiasm that colleagues are a major source of inspiration together with friends and family members. This has been confirmed by literature that indicates that teachers are key players in supporting and sustaining the professional development of themselves and their colleagues (General Teaching Council for England 2005). On the other hand, there was a group of colleagues that discouraged others from participating and this group could not be relied upon to provide teachers with information. This group provided negative talk and were advocating for alternatives that were not educational in nature.

Lecturers from universities and middle level colleges have been indicated to be a major source of information. This is sporadic and depends on the number of times a particular lecturer would visit a school. Further more not all can provide the required information about CPD.

Therefore, the dilemma of information provision for teachers in Kirinyaga County is prevalent as there are no clear guide lines on how information about CPD should be provided to teachers. This leaves them with no clear cut information flow on how they can access programmes that are geared towards CPD (Gathara, 2011).

Recommendation

The institutions that provide CPD should avail information on the courses that they offer to teachers through advertisements. They should ensure that the information reaches all the schools so that teachers would be in a position to make the right decision about the courses and modes in which they would be involved. The lead institutions should open satellite campuses that are closer to teachers. They should have all the required teaching and learning materials and if possible be connected to Information Communication Technologies so that they are accessible to many teachers. This would help in reducing the distance and make the information available to teachers. At the school level, teachers should be provided with relevant information concerning study leaves, courses they should enrol in and what they should expect after completing the courses. The school principals should support the teachers by providing them with the relevant

information so that they would be granted study leave with pay. The MOE should have written guidelines posted to all the school so that teachers could make their own choices and decisions. More over, there should be regular and ongoing dissemination of information through a wide variety of formal and informal communication techniques such as newsletters, meetings, daily discussions and conversations among staff. Feedback mechanisms are to be put in place and encouraged so that adjustments can be made on continuous basis to professional development initiatives. Teachers and community members are to be provided with opportunities to plan and participate in CPD initiatives and to serve on a wide variety of school committees. They are expected to take responsibility for teacher professional learning and for contributing to the knowledge of the profession, within the context of their employers' expectations.

Conclusion

From the foregoing discussion teachers rarely get information from the Principals and Deputy Principals in their institutions. The scenario changes when teachers were asked about their colleagues who were a major source of information and motivation. This indicates that there was a breakdown in information provision between teachers and principals on matters about CPD in this County. Despite policies indicating the role of other stakeholders in provision of CPD, there was discrepancy with the practice at the school level in the provision of information. The sources of information were teachers' friends and colleagues, college and university tutors, current university students, TSC code of Ethics and Newspapers. The MOE has been accused by teachers of providing information in a sporadic manner that would not assist teachers in their decision-making. The ignorance portrayed by teachers has reduced their chances of getting the information on the type of course that they should pursue. Schools lacked clear guidelines on information that could facilitate teacher involvement in CPD through workshops and seminars. This has made the selection of teachers' haphazard and subject to abuse by teachers and principals. Without any criteria of selection and information provision some teachers have been involved in workshops, conferences and seminars more often than others. This has brought a dilemma on information provision geared to teacher involvement in CPD.

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