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The Obligation of School Development Committees in Teacher Retention in Buhera District Primary Schools in Manicaland Province, Zimbabwe

By

**Oyedele V
Chikwature W**

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The Obligation of School Development Committees in Teacher Retention in Buhera District Primary Schools in Manicaland Province, Zimbabwe

¹Oyedele V and ^{*2}Chikwature W

¹Faculty of Education, Africa University, P.O. Box 1320, Mutare, Zimbabwe.

²Mutare Polytechnic, P.O. Box 640, Mutare, Zimbabwe.

*Corresponding Author's Email: whatmorec@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The study was carried out to establish the obligation which School Development Committees (SDCs) could play in school development to achieve sustainable teacher retention in their schools. The research design used in this study is a mixed research design; it incorporated both the quantitative and qualitative approaches. The population consisted of twenty five heads, fifty SDC members and seventy five senior teachers making a total of one hundred and fifty respondents that were used for the study. The research instruments were questionnaire, interview, and document study. The key activities for SDCs revolved around continuous teacher motivation. Motivational factors found to retain teachers among others were the provision of suitable living conditions for the teachers, the provision of teachers' professional support and the availability of conducive teacher/community relationships. The implementation of all these was seen to be the obligation of effective and skilful SDCs.

Keywords: obligation, School Development Committee, teacher, retention.

1. INTRODUCTION

This report is a study on the School Development Committee undertaken in the Buhera District of the Manicaland Province. In the education system of the Republic of Zimbabwe, school development functions have been decentralized from the central government to local authorities as per the country's Education Act of 1992 (Republic of Zimbabwe, 1992) and Statutory Instrument 87 of 1992 (Republic of Zimbabwe, 1992) in an effort to cut down on central government expenditure. The Statutory Instrument, among other things, clearly spells out that each non-government school shall elect a School Development Committee (SDC), a sub-committee of the Responsible Authority of that school whose major function would be to source for resources to develop its school and improve the welfare of the students and the teachers at the school.

On the other hand, each Government School, guided by Statutory Instrument 378 of 1998 (Republic of Zimbabwe, 1992) would elect a School Development Association (SDA) to perform a similar function in a government school as that of the SDC. Accordingly, schools in rural council areas would elect School Development Committees (SDCs) while those under government, mostly in urban areas, would elect School Development Associations (SDAs) to promote the development of their schools. Buhera District is a typical rural area under Buhera Rural District Council. As a result, the development of its schools falls under School Development Committees elected yearly at each school at a parents' annual general meeting called specifically for that purpose. School Development Committees are composed of eight members with three members from the school administration, who are the school head, the school deputy head and a senior teacher. At least five members are elected by the parents to represent them in the committee to make a total of eight altogether. The chairperson and the vice chairperson are then elected from the five parents' representatives. This policy has, to a great extent, empowered the parents to work on the development of their schools and appreciate ownership of the schools. Automatically, School Development Committees have become key stakeholders in the Ministry of Education Sport and Culture and have to work towards achieving its mission of providing high quality and relevant education to all who need it in the Republic of Zimbabwe.

A developed school should be in a position to offer high quality education to its students. One of the key factors to achieve the provision of high quality education is the availability of appropriately qualified teachers at the schools.

Zvobgo (1986) comments that qualified teachers are always a solution to high quality education. Therefore the quality of education at any school is very much dependent on the quality of the teachers in the school system. However, at some schools throughout the country, qualified teachers are never stable. They come and go through transfers to other schools. Buhera District has not been spared on this problem. While equity and equality have been used by government to efficiently deploy teachers to all the provinces and eventually to all the districts, there has been continuous movement of qualified teachers from one school to the other, one district to the next, and even from one province to another. For the past five years, Buhera District has been seriously affected by high teacher turnover. From 2011 to 2015 it has been established that 375 newly qualified teachers from colleges were deployed to Buhera District primary schools to take up vacant posts which were temporarily occupied by untrained teachers. Since then, 218 of them which are 58% have transferred from their original schools to other schools within or outside this district. The table of teachers' transfers below is an extract produced from the District Education Officers' records at Buhera Education Offices.

Table 1: Buhera Primary School Teachers' Deployment and Rate of Transfers within five years, 2011 to 2015

Year of Deployment	No. of teachers Deployed	Teachers Transferred within the District	Rate %	Teachers Transferred outside the District	Rate %	Stable Teachers	Rate %
2011	92	34	37	27	29	31	34
2012	75	28	37	18	24	29	39
2014	77	23	30	22	29	32	41
2014	65	24	37	17	26	24	37
2015	66	15	23	10	15	41	62
Totals	375	124	33	94	25	157	42

Source: Buhera District Office Staff Records (2011 to 2015)

The above table shows a total teacher turnover of 218 (transfers within the district of 124 and transfers outside the district of 94) transfers which is 58% from 2011 to 2015, that is, 33% who transferred to other schools within the district plus 25% who transferred to schools out of the district. This is a very high staff turnover which cannot be condoned if high quality education is to be realized. It is because of the above background that School Development Committees in Buhera District should not just stand and stare at such a situation. Their key obligation to develop schools can only be well enhanced by an output of high quality education which will eventually have a positive impact on the students and subsequently on the entire nation if the students would become responsible citizens who are self-reliant. That can hopefully be achieved if the SDCs can always retain suitably qualified staff to work in their schools. Very often, the teacher turnover problem has been left to the mercy of the school heads, the Education Officers or the entire Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education to sort out transfer problems on their own yet the input of the parents through their SDCs can go a long way in curbing the frequent and rampant transfers of teachers in search of better schools. The SDCs, though empowered to develop their schools, seem not to have an opportunity to take necessary precautions to retain or have the teachers they want to serve at their schools. They are usually denied the chance to interview both the incoming and the outgoing teachers so as to have a feel of the teachers' requirements, yet in Section 5 Subsection (b) of Statutory Instrument 87 of 1992, the SDC is empowered to employ or hire staff to serve the needs of the school on such terms and conditions as the committee may fix with the approval of the Minister of Education Sport and Culture. It is strongly believed that when teachers' needs at a school are constantly and sufficiently provided, then, the teachers are likely to remain in the school for a long period which is the ideal situation. The problem of high teacher turnover which exists in Buhera District might be resolved by

enforcing the obligations of School Development Committees in teacher retention in the district as prescribed in Statutory Instrument 87 of 1992 and encouraging the execution of their critical obligations.

2. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following were the research questions in the study on the School Development Committees:

1. To what extent would the following factors contribute to attracting qualified teachers to serve for a long time at a school in Buhera District?
 - (a) Provision of adequate and decent accommodation
 - (b) Availability of essential teaching / learning materials
2. What can the School Development Committees in Buhera District do about the existing school structures in order to attract qualified teachers?
3. What will be the impact on serving qualified teachers in Buhera District if School Development Committees improve communication facilities like transport or phones at their schools?
4. How can School Development Committees benefit from promoting healthy teacher-community relationships in their school?
5. What responsibilities do School Development Committees have towards effective implementation of school development in their schools?

3. RESEARCH DESIGN

The research design was a quantitative one that was of descriptive survey approach and also the qualitative approach. It was suitable for this study because it allowed the researchers to describe, analyse and interpret data easily. Preference was given to this approach over the others on the basis that it had the capacity of describing the characteristics of large populations with seemingly divergent interests or views. Besides, the descriptive survey made it easy to quantify the data and it allowed the use of percentages which were very essential in the description, analysis and interpretation of data. The method typically involved designing and administering questionnaires to selected school heads, teachers and School Development Committee members. Face to face interviews were also carried out with some of these respondents when administering the questionnaires in order to supplement the information that were not totally attended to in the questionnaire.

4. POPULATION AND SAMPLING

The target population for this study was composed of School Development Committee members as service providers, classroom teachers as service recipients, and school heads as custodians of policy implementation. It was not possible to contact all the School Development Committee members, teachers and heads in the entire district because it would be very involving. Therefore it was very important to select samples of participants or respondents which actually represented the populations from which they came. Those samples provided data on the research questions. The researchers came up with a representative sample of the population by using cluster sampling because of the limited resources like time, money or materials. Out of 35 clusters of schools in the district, the researchers randomly selected five clusters. Twenty five out of one hundred and forty two primary schools were used for the study (five from each cluster). From the twenty five schools, all the school heads were involved; two members from the SDC and fifteen senior teachers who were randomly selected from each school were also involved, making a total one hundred and fifty respondents that were used for the study.

5. DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS

In carrying out this research, the questionnaire, interviews and documentary analysis were used to facilitate soliciting of information on the obligation of School Development Committees in teacher retention in Buhera District. The questionnaire was administered to all the respondents and seventy five respondents were interviewed, consisting of all the twenty five school heads, twenty five most senior teachers (one per school) and twenty five S D C members .

Transfer records at the district offices and in the schools were carefully studied to find out major reasons for teacher turnover in Buhera district primary schools. Both the interviews and the study of documents complemented the data collected from the questionnaire. The reason for using the three instruments was for data triangulation purposes.

5.1 Questionnaire:

The questionnaire was very suitable for the study because information could be sourced from the respondents at the same time. It therefore saved time as compared to other methods. Survey questions were designed in such a way that they were simple to answer by the respondents in so much that their time was not wasted in responding to the questionnaire at all. On capturing data through the questionnaire, the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software was used. The method was efficient in that it was user friendly since the respondents did not labour much to supply required data which would also be very easy to capture during the next stage of data collection.

5.2 Interviews:

Personal interviews were done with seventy five participants during the administering of questionnaires at each school. The interviewees comprised all the twenty five school heads, one most senior classroom teacher per school and all the SDC chairpersons of the schools. The interviews made the collection of primary data possible and any areas which were not clear were explained in the process which improved the prospects of quality information. The interviews covered structures expected at an ideal school, modes of communication used in the schools, major sources of conflict between the teachers and the community, SDCs' knowledge of policy guidelines and constraints encountered by teachers at work

5.3 Study of Documents:

The researchers further carried out a documentary analysis of transfer records at the schools and at the District Education Office of the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education to capture information on the reasons for teachers' transfers over the past five years, 2011 to 2015. The documentary analysis was extremely valuable in this study because the teachers, who transferred from the schools under study, moved to places which were difficult and expensive to reach and yet their information was very valid for this study.

6. DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION

These are presented in relation to the five research questions and from the findings made through the questionnaires, documentary analysis, and the interviews carried out with the respondents, the five research questions will be discussed below, one after the other.

Research question 1a states that:

“To what extent would the provision of adequate and decent accommodation contribute to attracting qualified teachers to serve for a long time at a school in Buhera District?”

Table 2: Rankings by Respondents of the facilities that greatly influence teachers' turnover/retention in Buhera primary schools

Facilities that influence teacher turnover/retention	Rankings by type of respondents					
	Overall ranking by all respondents	School heads (25)	Classroom teachers (75)	SDC members (50)	Total (150)	%
Decent Teachers' Houses	1	-	65	10	75	50
Supply of piped water	2	-	10	15	25	17
Accessibility to Transport	3	20	-	-	20	13
Supply of Electricity	4	5	-	10	15	10
Nearness to Health centers	5	-	-	10	10	7
Availability of Tele-Communication	6	-	-	5	5	3
Closeness to Rural Service Centre	7	-	-	-	-	-
Totals		25	75	50	150	100

Table 3: Teachers who transferred in the twenty five schools under study between 2011 and 2015 by reason and by sex

Reason	2011		2012		2013		2014		2015		Totals		Grand total
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	
Need for better living conditions	-	10	5	10	-	5	5	5	5	10	15	40	55 = 61%
Need for better professional support	-	-	-	-	-	10	-	5	-	-	-	15	15 = 17%
Need for better community relationships	5	-	5	-	5	-	-	5	-	-	15	5	20 = 22%
Totals	5	10	10	10	5	15	5	15	5	10	30	60	90
Grand totals	15		20		20		20		15		90		
Total %	17%		22%		22%		22%		17%				100%

Table 4: A ranked Overall Distribution of Teachers' transfers by reasons in Buhera district primary schools between 2011 and 2015

Rank	Reasons	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	Totals	%
1	Need for better Accommodation	12	13	8	18	20	71	33
2	On promotions	-	11	-	13	-	24	11
3	Strained community relationships	6	2	3	9	2	22	10
4	Lack of professional support	6	2	5	6	1	20	9
5	To join spouses	6	2	5	1	1	15	7
6	Wrongly deployed	4	2	4	3	2	15	7
7	Misconduct	3	4	3	1	1	12	6
8	Remoteness of schools	3	2	4	1	2	12	5
9	To work near own home	4	2	2	2	0	10	5
10	Others	1	2	3	2	1	9	4
11	Fear of witchcraft	1	3	3	1	-	8	4
	Totals	46	45	40	57	30	218	
	Total %age	21	21	18	26	14	100	100

Table 2 shows that 50% of the respondents to the questionnaire ranked decent teachers' houses as the most influential to teacher turnover in the twenty five schools. On the same note, the statistical analysis from the study of documents on teachers' transfers in the twenty five schools given in table 3 also shows that 61% of the teachers transferred during the period of 2011 to 2015 due to the need for better living conditions. However the study of transfer documents in the entire district reflected in Table 4 shows that the largest proportion of the teachers that is 33%, of the 218 teachers who transferred between 2011 and 2015 was due to the need for better accommodation. This is fairly low because some schools elsewhere might have adequate decent accommodation provided. In an interview carried out with seventy five of the respondents, they all concurred that adequate decent teachers' houses were essential structures to be provided in the schools. Such a physiological need as termed by Maslow (1970) would make teachers in Buhera primary schools unstable if not adequately provided. In this study, it was discovered that the provision of conducive teachers' living conditions in Zimbabwe is a crucial task if teachers are to stay for long in their schools. The Republic of Zimbabwe Education Act of 1992, Moyo, D. (2010), Arachchi (2014), Powers, E. J. (2010), and other researchers concur that the provision of such physiological needs is the task of the parents through their representatives who are the School Development Committees. Mupindu (2012) even comments that if teachers are not provided with what they want, as people they have the right to choose alternative schools. So the movement of teachers from one school to another in search of improved living conditions in Zimbabwe cannot be blamed on them but on the School Development Committees who were legitimately authorised by the state to carry out such a task. Usually when teachers are young or new from college, they tend to fit even in small accommodation but gradually they acquire property, get married and bear children. As these happen, they also require increased space to accommodate their expanding families. Indeed their transfer request would be justified if they are to live comfortably at the school. Improved teachers' living conditions ranked in table 4 in descending order were decent houses, supply of piped water, accessibility to transport, supply of electricity, nearness to health centres, supply of telephones and nearness to rural health centres are all very essential and they constitute part of an ideal school which can be emulated by any teacher. The provision of such physiological needs in Buhera might put to end teacher mobility in search of improved living conditions in the district.

Interviews carried out with the SDCs showed that some committee members were conscious about the acute shortage of essential facilities in their schools but they did not have the means or the capacity to supply them soonest. Most difficult to supply were electricity, rural service centres and health centres. However construction and maintenance of classrooms and teachers' houses were ongoing by the use of building levies raised by the parents through the pupils.

Research question 1b state that:

"To what extent would the availability of teachers' professional support in schools contribute to attracting qualified teachers to serve for a long time at a school in Buhera District?"

Table 5: Views of Respondents on the adequacy of materials provided to the teachers by the SDCs in Buhera primary schools

Materials	Adequacy of Materials							
	More than adequate		Adequate		Inadequate		Never provided	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Text books	-	-	-	-	150	100	-	-
Stationery	-	-	-	-	150	100	-	-
Furniture	-	-	60	40	90	60	-	-
Classrooms	-	-	120	80	30	20	-	-
Teaching Aids	-	-	-	-	150	100	-	-
Resource books	-	-	-	-	150	100	-	-
Libraries	-	-	-	-	-	-	150	100

Assessment report has a special section where the use of teaching and learning aids is commented on, because, that is the core of the teaching and learning process. When a teacher performs well, chances of promotion are obvious. Therefore it appears that when teachers are not satisfied with the provision of such essential needs, they are likely to transfer to other schools which can always provide them with essential professional. This study established that when teachers are at work, they need material support to enable them to perform their duties effectively and efficiently. Hystek and Louw (2009) stress the need for teachers to be provided with adequate teaching and learning aids which are in sound working conditions as a means to make teachers content with their jobs. When teachers feel that they are secured at work, they are likely to perform and stay longer at their schools. Maslow (1970) in his study on human needs considers job security as an important step in the hierarchy of needs to ensure that a worker is satisfied with his or her job. The views of heads, teachers and SDCs on the provision of support materials in table 5 shows that in the twenty five schools under study, teaching and learning materials were in short supply at all the schools. In the same table, it shows that libraries were never provided at all while textbooks, stationery, learning aids and teachers' resource books were 100% inadequately supplied. Only furniture and classrooms were seen by 40% and 80% of the respondents to have adequate supply. When teachers talk of teaching and learning materials or facilities, they look at all those items that enable them to teach the children effectively and those that make the children learn easily. These include the provision of classrooms, furniture, textbooks, teachers' resource books, stationery, charts, chalk, computers and overhead projectors, just to mention a few. Since the teachers are very happy to work in an environment where essential teaching materials are provided, it is very unfair for the teachers to provide some of these using their own scarce resources neither is it fair for the teachers to operate without them.

An interview with the teachers, school heads and SDCs revealed that teachers could always afford to improvise minor teaching or learning aids like painting brushes, charts and those which are cheap. Big items like videos, furniture or text books would need to be strictly catered for by the school budget each year. School budgets are always the business of the SDC finance committee. Therefore it stands to reason that all cases of non - provision and inadequate provision of teachers' support materials should be the obligation of the School Development Committees. The ability by SDCs to provide their teachers with appropriate professional support would lead to long stay of teachers in schools which would result in the provision of high quality education to the learners.

Research Question 2 states that:

"What can School Development Committees in Buhera district do about the existing school structures in order to attract qualified teachers?"

From the collected data reflected in table 5 and interviews carried out with respondents, School Development Committees should not only construct school structures but the structures need to be attractive enough to lure suitably qualified teachers. Hystek and Louw. (2009) stresses that provisions given to schools should always be in good repair to make them useful. In table 4, the need for adequate decent teacher's accommodation was ranked the top most in influencing teacher turnover. That does not mean simple houses with walls and roofs on. A decent accommodation should provide the comfort which the occupant likes. As a result, School Development Committees have to ensure that the structures that exist in their schools are comfortable enough. From Table 2 above, respondents showed items like electricity, piped water and telephones as essential for a teacher's life. Such items and others should therefore be included on existing teachers' houses to make them decent enough.

From the interviews with the school heads, senior teachers and SDC chairpersons, there was an indication that there is no comfort in staying in houses which are never renovated neither is there security to live in houses with broken window panes, leaking roofs, cracked walls and sometimes unlockable doors. Therefore appropriate maintenance has to be provided by the SDCs from time to time if teachers are to be happy with their stay in a school.

Research Question 3 states that:

"What would be the impact on serving qualified teachers in Buhera District if School Development Committees improve communication facilities like transport or phones at their schools?"

On table 2 the influence of tele-communication to teacher retention was ranked sixth by the respondents. Further probing through interviews with the school heads and the senior teachers, showed that tele-communication has now been overridden by the use of cell phones because all the five schools under study now have access to Net One coverage. As a result most teachers have since acquired their own cell phones. However in the same table 2, the need for transport has been ranked fourth. The roads to the schools were not bad and were at most less than ten kilometers away from the main tarred road. What School Development Committees might need to do would be to link

up with bus companies and convince them to detour and pass through their schools regularly. That would go a long way in retaining suitably qualified teachers in their schools because teachers want to go for shopping, workshops and other various businesses when they occur and so they require easy access to reliable transport for that.

Research Question 4 states that:

“How can School Development Committees benefit from promoting healthy teacher-community relationships in their schools?”

The study revealed that a sound teacher-parent relationship contributes a lot to teacher retention in the schools under study. Madziyire (2010) stresses the point that every school has to establish close relationships with its community because of the moral, financial and material support which the community gives to the schools. This means that when teachers are up in arms with the local community, they should not expect any good from that community. The worst situation is that the parents can even stop their children from going to that school. On the other hand, the teachers who are not happy with their community may not do their best at work, instead they will seek for transfers to better schools. Table 3 shows that of all the teachers who transferred from the twenty five schools under study between 2011 and 2015, 22% of them left the schools for lack of good relations between them and the community. Sources of frictions between the teachers and members of the community were investigated during some interviews with the heads, teachers and SDCs. Problems were found to usually emanate from laziness of the teachers, love affairs with school children, drunkenness and political affiliations. It could be for political reasons that large numbers of transfers occurred in 2011 and 2015 as shown in table 4 with 21% and 26% respectively, because the Republic of Zimbabwe conducted some elections during those years. With reference to this study, School Development Committees should coordinate both the teachers and the parents through special planned functions which they convene.

Table 6: Opinions of Respondents on the frequency of contacts between teachers and parents to promote good relations

Activities	Frequency of Contacts							
	Always		Sometimes		Rarely		Never	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Interviewing incoming or outgoing teachers	-	-	-	-	-	-	150	100
Holding consultation days	20	13	100	67	15	10	15	10
Seeking for opinions before decision making	-	-	90	60	60	40	-	-

Table 6 shows that SDCs never conducted interviews with their incoming or outgoing teachers, because of that, the SDCs may never know teachers' needs as they get into their schools or the reasons that make them choose to leave. In the same table, 67% of the participants indicated that SDCs sometimes contact their teachers for decision making. However there were varied opinions on the holding of consultation days which ranked from never, rarely, sometimes, up to always conducted. When a healthy community relationship is established at a school, teachers and parents will understand one another thereby promoting teamwork which would allow effective goal achievement at the school.

Research Question 5 states that:

“What responsibilities do members of School Development Committees have to enable them to effectively implement school development in their schools?”

Table 7: Respondents' views on the obligations of the SDCs in schools

Duties of SDCs	Extent of Agreement/Disagreement							
	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
SDCs allocate houses to their teachers	-	-	60	40	30	20	60	40
SDCs have clearly defined obligations	-	-	60	40	-	-	90	60
SDCs are not influenced by religious or political affiliations	-	-	30	20	60	40	60	40

It was also interesting to investigate on the responsibilities SDCs have in running the affairs of their schools in terms of the rules, policies and regulations that govern their obligations. For the schools under study, table 7 shows that only 40% of the participants agreed that the allocation of teachers' houses was done by SDCs while the other 60% disagreed to that. Such a situation is usually a source of conflict when members of the SDCs do what they should not do or fail to do what they should do. In table 7, a small proportion of the respondents (20%) agreed that SDCs were not influenced by religious or political emotions in their operations of school development. Such a scenario is very detrimental to teaching and learning in schools because the pupils who are the key beneficiaries of the schools come from varied parents in terms of religion or party politics and should receive appropriate services in their schools. Chikwature and Oyedele (2016) acknowledge that where people's usual business is confused with party politics, then most of the time and effort of the management are directed towards addressing political issues or interests at the expense of real business. For example in schools if SDCs use schools as campaign fields for party politics then school development would suffer. From the above discussion, SDCs should therefore develop in them skills that would always make them capable of referring to the rules and regulations that govern their obligations like statutory instruments. They all need to be apolitical and impartial when executing their duties. An interview of the SDCs was made to establish if they were conversant with the contents of the statutory instrument 87 of 1992 about 90% of the respondents were ignorant about its existence. However they were aware of some of the requirements of the instrument. That showed that SDCs had no full exposure of the document but were briefed in bits and pieces. For SDCs to be able to carry out their obligations, it is indeed imperative that they are conversant with the contents of Statutory Instruments which spell out their obligations.

7. CONCLUSIONS

From the findings of this study, School Development Committees in Buhera could play a pivotal obligation in curbing teachers' turnover in Buhera primary schools by providing teachers' physiological needs in the schools. The provision of decent living conditions for the teachers, the supply of teacher support materials and ensuring sound teacher-parent relationships can be easily handled by skilful and competent School Development Committees. The investigation clearly showed that where teachers failed to get their basic needs and felt insecure, they transferred in search of better schools.

From the finding on the provision of teachers' decent accommodation to attracting qualified teachers to stay for a long time at a school, it can be concluded that teachers' accommodation is very essential for teachers' welfare in schools. With reference to the findings made on the provision of professional staff support in Buhera primary schools, it can therefore be concluded that Buhera primary school teachers are not adequately provided with essential support materials to carry out their professional duties effectively and efficiently.

From the information captured during interviews with respondents, it is evident that Buhera primary school structures lack regular maintenance which would ultimately make them inhabitable. Also, from the data analysis on the impact of the improvement of accessibility to transport and provision of tele-communication in schools, it can be concluded that a reasonable proportion of teachers' transfers is influenced by lack of reliable transport and tele-communication in Buhera primary schools.

From the findings on how SDCs can promote healthy teacher-community relationships, it can be concluded that there is lack of regular contacts between SDCs and teachers in Buhera primary schools. That makes SDCs unaware of their teachers' needs. As a result, teachers' needs may not be addressed early enough and also on the

finding made on skills needed by SDCs to effectively implement school development, clearly indicates that SDC members in Buhera primary schools do not have relevant skills to effectively administer school development.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

From the conclusions which were drawn from the findings of the study, recommendations for implementation by SDCs have been proposed as given below so as to promote teacher retention in Buhera primary schools. The study revealed that teachers' decent accommodation is very essential for the teachers' welfare in schools. It is therefore recommended that SDCs should endeavour to provide suitable accommodation for their staff in order to attract them to stay for a long time in their schools. It became evident in the study that teachers in Buhera primary schools do not get the professional staff support they deserve to carry out their duties effectively. It is therefore recommended that SDCs in Buhera primary schools should make frantic efforts to supply their teachers with required support materials.

From the study, it came out clearly that Buhera primary school structures are at the state of neglect. As a result, it is strongly recommended that SDCs should quickly institute regular maintenance of the existing school structures to keep them always attractive and safe for use all the time. Since the study revealed that some teachers transfer for the need of accessibility to reliable transport and access to tele-communication, it is therefore recommended that SDCs should initiate the provision of such facilities in their schools. From the findings of the study, it came out clearly that the teachers in Buhera primary schools have no opportunity to formally interact with their communities so that they can spell out their needs at the schools. It is therefore recommended that SDCs should provide time for regular contacts between the staff and the communities or with the SDCs themselves.

The findings of this study reflected that SDCs in Buhera primary schools were not competent enough to implement school development effectively. It is therefore recommended that SDCs should be inducted and continuously staff developed to operate within the Republic of Zimbabwe Education Act of 1992 and Statutory Instrument 87 of 1992.

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