AN ASSESSMENT OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES FOR PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS IN MALAWI: A CASE OF ZOMBA RURAL EDUCATION DISTRICT

BY

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SUPERVISOR

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2011
DECLARATION

I hereby solemnly declare that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, this thesis entitled “An Assessment of the Implementation of Continuing Professional Development Programmes for Primary school Teachers in Malawi: A Case of Zomba Rural Education District” is my original work. It has not been submitted to any other institution of higher learning for the award of any degree or qualification. Where I have used information from the published or unpublished work of other scholars, I have acknowledged such sources both in the text and in the list of references.

__________________________________________________________

Date: ________________________________
ABSTRACT

This study assessed the implementation of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Programmes for primary school teachers in Zomba Rural Education District in Malawi. The study arose from a concern that, despite the Government of Malawi putting in place structures to facilitate the implementation of CPD for primary school teachers, research has shown that teachers have not improved their classroom practice. As a result, there has been poor learner performance at all levels of the primary education system to the extent that learners scored the lowest in the 2005 international examinations for the Southern Africa Development Community. From the literature, it appears that no thorough and conclusive studies to look into the issues behind the implementation of CPD programmes in Malawi have been conducted. Hence the researcher was motivated to assess how the CPD programmes are implemented with the view to explore better ways of implementing CPD programmes for teachers that can result in teacher change.

The study was placed within the post-positivism paradigm and used a mixed method research design that incorporated concurrent procedures in the collection, analysis and interpretation of the data. Questionnaires were used to collect quantitative data while qualitative data were collected through interviews, focus group discussions, CPD observations and document analysis. A total of 798 teachers filled the questionnaires. This figure represented 47% of the total number of teachers in the district. The researcher conducted 34 focus group discussions with teachers from various schools. She also held interviews with 34 head teachers and CPD programme facilitators (12 Primary Education Advisors and 3 CPD facilitators from organizations). Other interviews were held with the District Education Manager, the Coordinating Primary Education Advisor, the Coordinator of the New Curriculum, and the Coordinator for the Department of Teacher Education and Development. Further, the researcher made 3 CPD observations.

The study revealed weaknesses in the implementation of CPD programmes for teachers in the district. Generally the study noted that there was much emphasis on the transmissive model of CPD implementation, to the neglect of transitional and
transformative models such that the personal, social and occupational aspects of professional learning were not holistically considered in the programme designs. Specifically, the duration of the programmes was found to be inadequate for meaningful assimilation of new knowledge and skills; the expertise of facilitators was sometimes questionable; and the use of the cascade model left teachers unsure and with knowledge gaps. Further, the study noted that the monitoring and support mechanisms for the programmes were weak; the consultation processes for teacher inputs in the CPD programme designs were dismal; and the welfare of teachers at the CPD venues was poorly handled.

At school level the study revealed that the teaching and learning environment compounded the problem of teachers’ difficulty in implementing what they learnt from CPD training. Large classes, inadequate teachers, lack of teaching and learning resources, limited infrastructure, lack of accommodation for teachers, lack of support from colleagues and learner absenteeism were some of the factors hindering implementation of CPD programmes at school level.

The study has put forth recommendations for the effective implementation of CPD programmes for teachers in the district. Furthermore, based on the findings of the study and an extensive literature search, the researcher has suggested an alternative model for CPD implementation that can result in teacher change. Overall there is need for collaborative effort among stakeholders in education to ensure effective delivery of CPDs and their subsequent translation into practice at classroom level.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Third, the cooperation I received from the District Education Manager, the Coordinating Primary Education Advisor, the Primary Education Advisors, the Head teachers and teachers of Zomba Rural Education District in the process of collecting data for this research, cannot go unnoticed. You people supported me beyond
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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my father, Mr Gabriel Selemani; my mother, Mrs Felesia Selemani; and my sons, Moses and Innocent Meke. The days, months, and years you persevered without your beloved daughter and mother respectively have enabled me to climb yet another ladder in the education arena. May God bless you abundantly!
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<td>MASTEP</td>
<td>Malawi Special Teacher Education Programme</td>
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<td>MCP</td>
<td>Malawi Congress Party</td>
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<td>MGDS</td>
<td>Malawi Growth and Development Strategy</td>
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<td>MIE</td>
<td>Malawi Institute of Education</td>
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<td>MIITEP</td>
<td>Malawi Integrated In-service Teacher Education Programme</td>
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<td>MK</td>
<td>Malawi Kwacha</td>
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<td>MoE</td>
<td>Ministry of Education</td>
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<td>MSCE</td>
<td>Malawi School Certificate of Education</td>
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<td>NESP</td>
<td>National Education Sector Plan</td>
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<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non Governmental Organization</td>
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<td>NSF</td>
<td>National Science Foundation</td>
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<td>NSO</td>
<td>National Statistics Office</td>
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<td>NSTED</td>
<td>National Strategy for Teacher Education Development</td>
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<td>OBE</td>
<td>Outcome Based Curriculum</td>
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<td>Open and Distance Learning</td>
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<td>PCAR</td>
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<td>PSCL</td>
<td>Primary School Leaving Certificate</td>
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<td>PTA</td>
<td>Parent Teacher Associations</td>
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<td>SACMEQ</td>
<td>Southern African Consortium for Monitoring Education Quality</td>
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<td>SADC</td>
<td>Southern African Development Corporation</td>
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<td>SHN</td>
<td>School Health and Nutrition</td>
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SIP   School Improvement Project
SMC   School Management Committees
SPSS  Statistical Packages for Social Sciences
STD   Standard
TA    Traditional Authority
TALULAR  Teaching and Learning Using Locally Available Resources
TDC   Teacher Development Centre
TOT   Trainer of Trainers
TTC   Teacher Training College
UDF   United Democratic Front
WVI   World Vision International
CHAPTER 1: BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This study assessed the implementation of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) programmes for primary school teachers in Zomba Rural Education District in Malawi. This chapter highlights the background to the study and contextualizes the problem that led to the study. The chapter begins by discussing the organization and administration of education in Malawi. It then gives the background to the problem, states the problem, highlights the research purpose and objectives, outlines the research questions and assumptions, underscores the rationale and significance of the study, and then gives the delimitations of the study. Thereafter, the chapter discusses the limitations of the study, defines key terms as used in the study and gives an outline of the organization of the chapters. The chapter ends with a summary of the contents of the chapter.

1.2 THE ORGANISATION AND ADMINISTRATION OF EDUCATION IN MALAWI

The formal education system in Malawi comprises primary, secondary and tertiary (including teacher training) education. The primary level, which is an eight-year cycle, runs from Standard 1 through Standard 8. This level is divided into three sections; the infant section comprising Standards 1 and 2; the junior section comprising Standards 3, 4 and 5 and the senior section comprising Standards 6, 7 and 8. Secondary education lasts four years and consists of two cycles i.e. the junior (Forms one and two) and the senior (Forms 3 and 4) with national examinations after each cycle. The last level is tertiary education, which includes university; technical and vocational; and teacher education. The number of years for this level varies, depending on the course being pursued and ranges from one year to five years. All these fall under the Ministry of Education (MoE) except for technical and vocational education and training which falls under the Ministry of Labour.
According to the National Strategy for Teacher Education Development (NSTED), teacher education is offered in two categories i.e. secondary teacher education and primary teacher education (NSTED, 2007). Secondary teacher education is offered through both public and private universities in Malawi. In addition to that, Domasi College of Education trains secondary school teachers up to the Diploma level. Primary teacher education is offered through Primary Teacher Training Colleges which train primary school teachers for two years. The broad policy for teacher education in Malawi is to provide teachers with adequate pre-service training and systematic in-service and refresher training (NSTED, 2007). Hence, In-service education or Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is regarded as a key means of developing the professionalism of teachers (NSTED, 2003). The Ministry of Education has assigned the Department of Teacher Education Development (DTED) to look into issues of Pre-service and In-service education of teachers.

The Ministry of Education (MoE) has administrative, financial and academic control over primary, secondary, tertiary (including the university), as well as the training of primary school teachers. The system of education is organised in four tiers. At the top of the national structure is the Minister of Education. While the MoE plans and administers the system as a whole, the responsibility of managing and administering the three levels above is assigned to one Principal Secretary who is assisted by heads of departments. The second tier is the division administration comprising six divisions each headed by an Education Division Manager (EDM). The divisions are organised into thirty-four education districts managed by District Education Managers (DEMs). After the introduction of the FPE policy in 1994, there was an attempt to improve the management of the education system which saw the districts being demarcated into zones (NSTED, 2007). Each zone is manned by a Primary Education Advisor (PEA) with a maximum number of primary schools of up to 15 and a Teacher Development Centre (TDC) in each zone (NSTED, 2007). These are expected to play both inspection and supervisory roles in the schools. At the bottom of the tier, are the schools.
1.3 BACKGROUND TO THE PROBLEM

CPD for teachers is currently receiving global attention. Literature, for instance, Coolahan (2002); Fraser, Kennedy, Reid & Mckinney (2007); and Schwille & Dembele (2007) attributes this recognition to the wider policy agenda of lifelong learning as well as to the view of CPD as a means of improving learner performance and production of required skills. CPD embraces the idea that individuals aim for continuous improvement in their professional skills and knowledge beyond the basic training initially required to carry out the job (Gray, 2005). Guskey (2002) describes Professional development programmes as systematic efforts to bring change in the classroom practices of teachers, in their attitudes and beliefs, and in the learning outcomes of students. This is also supported by Clarke & Hollingsworth (2002) who argue that the most immediate and significant outcome of any successful CPD for teachers is a positive impact in changing teachers’ knowledge and practice. This in turn results in improved learner performance. Further, research by Bolam (2000); and Hargreaves (1994) suggests that CPD is an essential part of improving school performance. It is also perceived as having a positive impact on the curriculum and pedagogy as well as teachers’ sense of efficacy and their relationship with students (Talbert & McLaughlin, 1994).

From the definitions of CPD, it can be noted that Continuing Professional Development is designed to contribute to learning of teachers who have completed their initial training. It aims to bring about a change in teachers’ attitudes, beliefs, values and practices about their profession, which consequently results in improved learner performance.

To understand CPD better, Kennedy (2005) provided three models for understanding CPD, namely; the transmissive, transitional and transformative models. In the transmissive model, CPD is conducted by an external expert, focusing mainly on imparting skills to the teachers i.e. technical aspects of the job rather than issues relating to values, beliefs and attitudes. Usually, the cascade model of implementation is used in the transmissive model. The transitional model, is generally used to enhance the status and profile of the teaching profession by
creating opportunities that support and contribute to shaping education policy and practice (Edward, 1991). In this model, teachers work together to support each other’s professional growth through peer coaching and mentoring using experimentation, observation, reflection and exchange of professional ideas and shared problem solving (Showers & Robinson, 1991).

The transformative model uses Action Research, school-based CPD models and teacher networks. According to Cohen, Manion & Morrison (2002), Action Research is a powerful tool for change and improvement at the local level as it involves teachers in research and the evaluation of their own performance. Transformative implementation models demonstrate the most effective efforts for change to take place close to the action. They aim at meeting the needs and expectations of the teachers; they are practical; they occur continuously; and give teachers the opportunity for professional development and growth (Kennedy, 2005). Noteworthy, is the fact that the three models of CPD need to be complementary in order to be effective in bringing about the much needed teacher changes.

In terms of the process or modes of delivering CPD, two broad categorizations emerge, namely; on-school site and off-school site based modes. The on-school site modes are the school based CPD activities. According to Back, De Geest, Hirst, & Marie (2009), teachers within a school (or within several schools) jointly develop their professional skills, sometimes led or initiated by teacher educators. Examples include peer review and coaching, mentoring, study groups and communities of practice. Teacher networking is another learning opportunity where teachers from different schools network and help each other grow professionally. Gray (2005) reports that although these opportunities take relatively little time out of the teachers’ working lives, the teachers find them stimulating and refreshing, and they assist the teachers’ overall professional development. A similar argument was made by Wenger (1998) who noted that engagement in social practice is the fundamental process by which we learn and gain a sense of identity - in this case, professional identity.

The off-school site CPD implies CPD activities that take place outside the school sites. They usually come in the form of workshops or seminars at venues
designated by the CPD programme facilitators and implementers. Such programmes might focus on, for example, specific subject topics or strategies for teaching. They may also be associated with the implementation and revision of policy issues (Back et al., 2009). These approaches are sometimes described as ‘top-down’ (Mwanza, 2008) and usually use the cascade model of training.

In the cascade model of training, messages "flow down" from experts and specialists, through several layers of personnel, and eventually reach the teachers (Maheshwari & Raina, 1998). In this situation, a small group of specialists called Key Resource Persons are first oriented to the training design and are entrusted with the task of training larger numbers of middle-level personnel such as college lecturers or school functionaries, who form the Resource Persons. Resource Persons, in turn, train the teachers at local level (Dove, 1986). This strategy has been widely used in countries such as Malaysia (Mukherjee & Singh, 1983), and Bangladesh (Dove, 1983). Dove (1986), reports that a survey of cascade operations in Asia revealed that the main weakness of this strategy is the dilution effect that invariably takes place when the training design is passed down through the various levels of personnel.

1.4 THE MALAWI SITUATION ON CPD

The National Strategy for Teacher Education Development (NSTED) in Malawi recognises the fact that teaching requires professionals who are committed to lifelong learning in order to remain relevant and effective in the education system (NSTED, 2007). The strategy emphasizes the point that initial teacher preparation will never be sufficient insofar as it simply launches one into an ever changing and developing profession. It is Continuing Professional Development which enables a teacher to go on teaching effectively (NSTED, 2007). Hence the Government of Malawi through the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy (MGDS) and other policy documents, recognizes the role that Continuing Professional Development of teachers can play in improving the quality of education in Malawian primary schools (MGDS, 2006; National Education Sector Plan, 2006; NSTED, 2007; Policy Investment Framework, 2001). Realizing the importance of CPD for teachers, the
Malawi Government has put in place structures to facilitate it in the country. The structures include both off-school site CPD programmes, which are conducted at zonal or national levels and on-school site CPD programmes, which are school based.

According to the 2007 National Strategy for Teacher Education Development, the zonal based CPD programmes are conducted through a national network of 315 Teacher Development Centres (TDCs). These TDCs are staffed by Primary Education Advisors (PEAs) who are part of the district advisory and support system. These CPDs are usually done in the form of workshops or seminars. The workshops entail drawing participants out of their schools to a venue where they are exposed by experts to a core of information and skills (Gray, 2005). The workshops may be short or long-term. The nature of the skills and processes to be acquired also vary. The off-school site CPD programmes are initiated by the Ministry of Education itself, and are dependent on perceived or observed areas of need or are initiated by donors or Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs). Sometimes resource materials in the form of hard circulars are given to the participants for use in their schools (NSTED, 2007). The zonal system with its network of TDCs is a means of communicating with all teachers and making them aware of on-going reforms and initiatives (NSTED, 2007). For instance, prior to implementing a new Primary Curriculum and Assessment Reform (PCAR), teachers in Malawi were oriented to acquire skills that would enable them handle the new curriculum more effectively as well as enhance their professional skills (PCAR, 2006). The orientation was conducted in phases following the introduction of the curriculum into the system, which was also done in phases.

In some cases, other national needs have been addressed for specific groups of educators. For instance, since 1996, Malawi has been developing and implementing a national professional certificate in primary headship (NSTED, 2007). About a quarter of the nation’s primary teachers have undergone this professional development course in school management, staff development, and class and school improvement (NSTED, 2007). The course recognizes the critical role of school management teams, particularly heads, in promoting school improvement. The Ministry of Education (MoE) has also developed a national professional
certificate in primary advisory services. This is an in-service course to equip serving PEAs with knowledge and skills required to do their work more effectively. Usually the cascade model of training is utilized at the zonal or national level CPD training where experts would train Primary Education Advisors and these are required to train Head teachers or a few selected teachers from schools, who then pass on the information to fellow teachers in their schools. However, studies by Dove (1986); Khulisa (2001) cited in Engelbrecht, Ankiewicz & de Swardt (2007) have criticized the dilution effect embedded in the cascade mode of training where information is watered down at each level of the cascade.

Apart from the off-school site CPD programmes, teachers are also exposed to formal or informal school based CPD. These are organized by the head teachers of the schools or the teachers themselves depending on the particular needs they want to address at their schools. According to an Action Research Evaluation Report (2009) by the Centre for Educational Research and Training (CERT), sometimes learners, teachers, supervisors and facilitators are involved collaboratively in carrying out a series of classroom/school-based activities that help the teacher to improve. In such cases, the teachers get professional support from facilitators and supervisors who serve as mentors. Activities include direct classroom support by the facilitators and supervisors and staff meetings within the school where teachers share ideas on areas of concern. Other forms of school based CPD that teachers are involved in include peer review, coaching, mentoring and communities of practice including teacher networking (Wenger, 1998). However, CPD activities in schools are a factor of how the administration of schools, value them. Gold (1998:8) writes

A commitment to quality means that school leaders have full responsibility for continuous professional development in school. Continuous professional development works best when it is understood theoretically as well as planned for. The challenge is to encourage a culture which ensures that the school is a vibrant and learning school

Further, Gillard (1992) points out that poor design and resources could limit the impact of school based CPD.
From the above discussion, it can be noted that almost all the three models of CPD implementation as described by Kennedy (2005) are used in Malawi with the aim of effecting teacher change. However, research in Malawi and the researcher’s own experience, have shown that, in spite of the teachers attending CPD programmes, very little and in most cases, no change is observed in their professional knowledge, methods, attitude and beliefs, as the teachers still stick to their old ideologies and learners continue to perform poorly (Centre for Educational Research and Training, 2009; NESP, 2006; NSTED, 2007; SACMEQ, 2005). The Malawi situation concurs well with Clarke & Hollingsworth’s (2002) finding that most of the Continuing Professional Development activities fail to achieve the most immediate and significant outcome of any successful CPD, which, according to them, is a positive impact in changing teachers’ knowledge and practice. This in turn leads to improved learner performance. In fact there are reports which show that the performance and participation of learners in Malawian primary schools are disturbingly low, even scoring the lowest in the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) Region (Milner, Chimombo, Banda & Mchikoma (2001); SACMEQ, 2005).

The media, as well as the researcher’s own experience and informal reports from teachers and learners in Malawi, partly attribute this poor learner performance to teachers’ inability to change their values, beliefs and attitudes about their teaching practices even after attending CPD programmes (Centre for Educational Research and Training, 2009; SACMEQ, 2005). In a study on the Conditions of Schooling and the Quality of Education in Malawi (SACMEQ II) it was reported that teachers do not appreciate a wide range of teaching strategies in their classrooms. The study further revealed that only 26.5% of the sample found in-service courses effective; and that the few days spent attending CPD training were just a waste of time, as teachers did not derive any satisfaction from the courses (SACMEQ, 2005). The report further adds that one possible cause of these poor results could be teachers’ inability to teach effectively and detect deficiencies in learners as they learn. Teaching effectively is one of the major skills that CPD programmes emphasize. Oki (2004) alludes to this as he attributes low quality of education in Malawi to a number of factors including a weak teaching force. Ogunniyi (1986) contends that unless in-service education is properly provided to teachers, hopes of improving the quality of education cannot be realised.
The researcher, who also works as a Research Fellow at the Centre for Educational Research and Training, University of Malawi, have come across a number of teachers who have informally expressed a lot of dissatisfaction and concern over how CPD programmes are implemented in the country. These concerns evolve around issues of resources, time, expertise of trainers and modes of implementation of the CPD programmes among others. Further, the implementation process of CPD programmes does not take into consideration the issue of the varying contexts of rural and urban schools. Yet, according to the Education Management and Information Systems (EMIS), rural schools in Malawi are the most poorly resourced in terms of materials, equipment and teachers (EMIS, 2008). Rural schools have high pupil to teacher ratios when compared to urban schools i.e. 97:1 against 51:1 in urban schools (EMIS, 2008). Further, rural schools have limited opportunities for CPD programmes and the general environment in which rural teachers operate is relatively poor (NSTED, 2007). Hence, in terms of learner performance, it is not surprising that rural schools perform poorly compared to learners in urban schools. SACMEQ (2005) concurs with this when it found that around four times as many learners from schools located in cities reached the minimum level of mastery than learners located in isolated areas.

In line with these concerns, studies have criticized the use of the cascade model in most formal Continuing Professional Development programmes (Dove, 1986; Khulisa, 2001 cited in Engelbrecht et al. (2007). They contend that ‘cascading’ of information results in the ‘watering down’ and / or misinterpretation of crucial information, hence, the messages become diluted and distorted at each level of the cascade model. Furthermore, the trainers during workshops, especially those involved in the model of training, lack confidence, knowledge and understanding to manage the training process (Engelbrecht et al., 2007). Again, Gillard (1992) concluded that poor design and inadequate resources could limit the impact of school based CPD and Gold (1998) contends that it is a challenge for school administrators to encourage a culture which ensures that the school is a vibrant learning environment.

If teacher professional development programmes are not achieving what they are meant to achieve and teachers are not changing their practice, the end result is
poor participation in the classroom from both teachers and their learners (Maistry, 2008) and hence, no improvement in learner performance. Most studies on CPD in Malawi have focused on assessing the needs and preferences of teachers for CPD and the general environment in which the teaching and learning process takes place. Little has been done to look into the issues of implementation of the CPD programmes. Hence, this study assessed how CPD programmes for primary school teachers are implemented in Zomba Rural Education District in Malawi so as not to result in teacher change as per the concerns raised above.

1.5 STATEMENT OF THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

The government of Malawi realizes the role that Continuing Professional Development for teachers plays in improving classroom practice and overall learning outcomes in schools (NSTED, 2007). As earlier noted, the government has put in place both on-school and off-school site structures and opportunities to facilitate the implementation of formal CPD for primary school teachers. It has instituted a national network of 315 TDCs solely for Teacher Professional Development activities and has encouraged school-based CPD (NSTED, 2007). Following curriculum reviews, the Malawi Government has oriented all teachers to the new curriculum and it has lobbied NGO’s and donors to assist in such teacher professional development activities. However, despite the implementation of the CPD programmes, research has shown that teachers have not improved their classroom practices (Centre for Educational Research and Training, 2009; NSTED, 2007; SACMEQ, 2005). As a result, there has been poor learner performance at all levels of the primary education system; particularly in the rural areas to the extent that the country scored the lowest in international examinations for the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) Region (CSR 2009; SACMEQ 2005).

The media, as well as informal reports from teachers in Malawi partly attribute this poor learner performance to the way CPD programmes are implemented. Teachers expressed that they do not derive much satisfaction from them. As a result, the teachers continue to use their old, ineffective methods of teaching. Informally, teachers have referred to issues of resources, time, expertise of trainers and modes
of implementation as contributing to their dissatisfaction. SACMEQ (2005) Report also alludes to this when it highlights that teachers found the few days spent attending to CPD programmes as just a waste of time as they were not deriving any satisfaction from the courses (SACMEQ, 2005). This also concurs with Clarke & Hollingsworth’s (2002) finding that most of the CPD activities fail to achieve the most immediate and significant outcome of any successful CPD, which is a positive impact in changing teachers’ knowledge and practice. So far, it appears that no thorough and conclusive studies to investigate the issues behind the apparent unsatisfactory implementation of the CPD programmes in Malawi have been conducted. Hence, this study assessed implementation of CPD programmes for primary school teachers in Zomba Rural Education District in Malawi.

1.6 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES / AIMS

The main objective of this study was to assess how Continuing Professional Development programmes for primary school teachers in Zomba Rural Education District in Malawi are implemented. The study further sought to:

i. find out what monitoring and support programmes are put in place to ensure that teachers practice what they learn from CPD programmes

ii. examine the challenges that are faced in the implementation of CPD programmes and

iii. explore effective ways of implementing CPD programmes in Malawi

1.7 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The enquiry was guided by one major question and five sub questions as follows:

1.7.1 Major question

How are Continuing Professional Development programmes for primary school teachers in Zomba Rural Education District implemented to ensure teacher change?
1.7.2 Sub questions

i. How do CPD programme facilitators impart knowledge and skills to the teachers during the CPD programme training?

ii. What professional experience and qualifications do the CPD programme facilitators have?

iii. What monitoring and support programmes are put in place to ensure that teachers practise what they learn from CPD programmes?

iv. What challenges are faced in the implementation of CPD programmes in Zomba Rural Education District?

v. What can be learnt from the findings of the study regarding different models of implementation of CPD programmes in enhancing teacher change?

1.8 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The main concern of this study is that Continuing Professional Development programmes for teachers in Malawi have not yielded positive results in changing teachers’ knowledge and practice which leads to improved learner performance. Hence this study assessed how the Continuing Professional Development programmes for teachers are implemented in Zomba Rural Education District

1.9 ASSUMPTIONS

This study was based on the assumption that there are problems associated with the implementation of Continuing Professional Development activities for teachers in Malawi. As such, the programmes have failed to change the teachers’ knowledge, beliefs and attitudes. This has negatively impacted on the performance of learners in the schools. Further the researcher made assumptions that:

i. the modes of training used in most CPD programmes in Malawi are not appropriate for achieving the intended goals of the CPD programmes.
ii. monitoring and support mechanisms for CPD programmes are weak or non-existent.

iii. the time allocated for the delivery of CPD programmes is inadequate to realize gains in teacher professional development and growth

iv. the capacity of some facilitators and team leaders of the CPD programmes for teachers is, in some cases, inadequate

1.10 RATIONALE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Continuing Professional Development for teachers contributes to the good quality education which many countries, including Malawi, are striving to proffer to their citizens. Being cognizant of the fact that pre-service training alone cannot make a teacher effective in the classroom, the government of Malawi has put in place structures to facilitate CPD activities for primary school teachers. Unfortunately, research has shown that the structures have failed to achieve their intended purposes of transforming the teachers’ knowledge, beliefs and attitudes (Centre for Educational Research and Training, 2009; NSTED 2007). The resultant effect has been continued poor classroom practices that do not translate into gains in learning outcomes. The trend of poor learner performance has been more evident in rural schools than in urban schools.

Little has been done to explore the issues behind the implementation of CPD activities in Malawi. Hence, this study intended to fill that gap and bring to the fore, the issues behind the implementation of the CPD programmes which have rendered them ineffective and, consequently, to explore better ways of implementing CPD programmes that might render CPD activities more effective in
the transformation of teachers and their practice. In this case, then, the study will be an eye opener to the Ministry of Education in Malawi and its partners as regards best practices for the successful implementation of CPD programmes. Further, the findings of the study will help the Ministry of Education in Malawi and other partners in education to determine proper transformational strategies for CPD programmes for teachers, which will lead to teacher change. Needless to say that this study has identified an appropriate CPD model for teachers, especially those teaching in rural areas which are the worst hit in terms of resource allocation and the performance of learners. Consequently, the study has generated a database, which has simply expanded the literature on the effective implementation of CPD programmes for primary school teachers nationally, regionally and globally.

1.11 DELIMITATION / DELINEATION OF THE STUDY

Since this study used the mixed method approach where both quantitative and qualitative data were collected, its confines varied in terms of the sample for the quantitative as well as the qualitative data. The sample for the quantitative data included all teachers in all the primary schools in Zomba Rural Education District. The qualitative data collection was confined to 34 primary schools from the 17 educational zones of Zomba Rural Education District. The sample included teachers; head teachers; Primary Education Advisors in the District; the District Education Manager; the Coordinating Primary Education Advisor; the CPD programme facilitators from NGOs; and the Director for the Department of Teacher Educational Development. All these categories of people are involved in one way or another in CPD programme implementation in Zomba Rural Education District. Further, the study was confined to formal or organized CPD programmes conducted for primary school teachers in Zomba Rural Education District.
1.12 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Any research study has its own limitations and this study was no exception. However, measures were put in place to safeguard against any demeanours that might have adverse effects on the outcome of the study. As anticipated by the researcher, it proved really difficult to get all the questionnaires back from the teachers. Nevertheless almost half of the questionnaires (798 out of 1684) were filled by the teachers. This was possible because the researcher made frequent follow-ups with the Coordinating Primary Education Advisor as well as with the Primary Education Advisors of all the 17 education zones in the district. These were frequently reminded to remind the head teachers to return the questionnaires. The good relationship that already existed between the researcher and the DEM as well as the PEAs for the district was an added advantage in sorting out this problem.

Again some respondents found the study rather sensitive, so that they were reluctant to reveal valuable information on CPD implementation in their area. This was taken care of by the use of multiple methods of data collection. Again the researcher took time to explain to the respondents the aim for the research and the importance of their contributions in the research. Adherence to the research ethics also set the minds of the respondents at ease.

1.13 DEFINITION OF TERMS

The meanings of terms may vary depending on the context in which they are used. In this study, the following terms were used as defined below:

Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

CPD is an on-going process of reflection and review that results in qualitative shifts in aspects of teachers’ professionalism and consequent improvements in learner performance (Fraser et al., 2007). In this study the term CPD has been used interchangeably with the terms In-service Teacher Education; and INSETs as these three terms basically mean the same thing in the study.
Assessment

Assessment is used to refer to the processes of collecting evidence and making judgments relating to the way CPD programmes are implemented. This definition is a modified version of Harlen’s (2007) definition of assessment.

Implementation

The term “Implementation” in this study referred to the way CPD programmes for primary school teachers in Zomba Rural Education District were delivered and their consequent translation into practice at classroom level. This definition is in line with Fullan’s (1982) definition of the term.

Teacher change

Teacher change in this study has been used to imply the positive change in aspects of professionalism of the teacher resulting in improved classroom practice and consequent improvements in learner performance after undergoing CPD training. This definition has been adapted from Guskey’ (2002) definition of the term “teacher change”.

1.14 ORGANIZATION OF CHAPTERS

The study is organized into seven chapters. Chapter 1 presents the background to the study, the statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, research questions / objectives / aims guiding the study, assumptions; rationale / significance of the study and delimitations for the study. The chapter also defined the key terms as used in the study.

A review of related literature has been done in Chapters 2 and 3. Chapter 2 reviews the conceptual framework for studying CPD, by discussing the meaning of CPD, the rationale and purpose for CPD, as well as modes for delivering CPD. The chapter also examines the theoretical frameworks for studying CPD including the
models of CPD for teachers. Chapter 3 discusses the challenges of CPD programme implementation as unveiled by other studies elsewhere as well as best practices for the effective implementation of CPD programmes. Issues of time allocation as well as capacities of facilitators and monitoring and support mechanisms for the effective implementation of CPD programmes are also discussed in the chapter. Lastly, the chapter highlights findings from other studies on the implementation of CPD programmes for teachers and locates the gap in the literature of the topic under study.

Chapter 4 presents the methodology that was followed in conducting the study. Issues of research approach, research design, population, sample and sampling, instrumentation, validity and reliability, data analysis, and ethical considerations are discussed. Chapter 5 focuses on data presentation and analysis of the findings. Chapter 6 is a discussion of the data presented in chapter 5. Lastly chapter 7 consolidates the thesis by summarizing the major areas of the study in addition to highlighting the major findings and making conclusions and recommendations. The chapter also underscores the contribution that this study makes to new knowledge and also offers areas for future or further research. This is followed by a list of references that were used in the course of writing the thesis. Appendices have been presented at the very end.

1.15 SUMMARY

This chapter has given an overview of this study. It has highlighted the background and contextualized the problem that led to the pursuit of the study. It has given the socio-economic, socio-political and educational backgrounds of Malawi where the study is located. In addition the chapter has underscored the statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, research questions / objectives / aims guiding the study, the assumptions, rationale / significance of the study; and the delimitations for the study in addition to defining the key terms as used in the study. The next chapter is a review of literature that was conducted for the study.
CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF LITERATURE ON CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

2.1 INTRODUCTION

A review of literature is necessary in any study so as to have a deeper understanding of the topic under study. This chapter discusses the literature related to the implementation of CPD programmes for primary school teachers. The chapter is divided into three major sections. The first section presents the conceptual framework for CPD within which it discusses the meaning of CPD, the rationale and purpose of CPD as well as modes for delivering CPD. The second section is a discussion of the theoretical framework for understanding CPD. Lastly, in the third section, the chapter discusses the models for studying CPD for teachers.

2.2 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR STUDYING CPD

2.2.1 Meaning of CPD

The term Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is said to have been coined by Richard Gardner, who was in charge of professional development for the building professions at York University in the mid-1970s (Gray, 2005). According to Gray (2005), CPD embraces the idea that individuals aim for continuous improvement in their professional skills and knowledge beyond the basic training initially required to carry out the job. Gray (2005) further states that, in teaching, such development used to be called ‘in-service training’. In line with Gray’s idea, Mohammed (2006) says that Continuing Professional Development may be regarded as all forms of ‘in-service’, ‘continuing education’, ‘on-the-job-training’, ‘workshop’, ‘post qualification courses’ etc. whether formal or informal, structured or unstructured, teacher-initiated or system-initiated, accredited or not. Desimone (2009) concurs with Gray (2005) and Mohammed (2006) and writes that
Teachers experience a vast range of activities and interactions that may increase their knowledge and skills and improve their teaching practice, as well as contribute to their personal, social, and emotional growth as teachers. These experiences can range from formal, structured topic-specific seminars given on in-service days, to everyday, informal “hallway” discussions with other teachers about instruction techniques, embedded in teachers’ everyday work lives (p. 182).

Further, Guskey (2002) describes professional development programmes as systematic efforts to bring about change in the classroom practices of teachers, in their attitudes and beliefs, and in the learning outcomes of students. Desimone, Porter, Kwang Suk Yoon & Birman (2002) concur with Guskey (2002) in looking at Professional development as an essential mechanism for deepening teachers’ content knowledge and developing their teaching practices. In addition, Fraser et al. (2007), list a number of competing claims for professional development that are evident in the literature of professional associations such as:

i. lifelong learning for professionals;
ii. a means of personal development;
iii. a means of assuring a wary public that professionals are indeed up-to-date, given the rapid pace of technological advancement;
iv. a means whereby professional associations can verify that the standards of their professionals are being upheld;
v. a means for employers to garner a competent, adaptable workforce

In the Malawian context, Continuing Professional Development refers to the life-long process in teachers’ lives that results in developing teachers’ professional knowledge, skills, attitudes, and aspirations, and a general understanding of their changing roles and tasks (National Strategy for Teacher Education Development (NSTED, 2007).

From the above definitions of CPD, it can be noted that Continuing Professional Development is designed to contribute to learning of teachers who have completed their initial or pre-service training. For the purposes of this study, the term Continuing Professional Development refers to the formal courses and programmes that are attended by primary school teachers with the purpose of enhancing their
professional skills so that they become better teachers. These formal courses and programmes may be in the form of but not limited to the following as outlined by Gray (2005): whole-school training days; undertaking joint training exercises with other schools; joining teacher networks, engaging with specialist subject associations; and attending short courses in the form of workshops and seminars at zonal, district or national levels.

### 2.2.2 Rationale for studying CPD

NSTED (2007), emphasizes that initial teacher preparation will never be sufficient as far as effective teaching is concerned. It is Continuing Professional Development which enables a teacher to go on teaching effectively (NSTED, 2007). This implies that, even if standards for pre-service education of teachers are improved, it will not necessarily lessen the need for continued in-service preparation and professional growth. So teachers, like other professionals, must continue with their education after their pre-service education. Robinson and Latchem (2003) captured in Mohammed (2006) have indicated some identifiable stages in the process of becoming a teacher. They identify a five stage model of novice, advanced beginner, competent performer, proficient performer, and expert teacher. According to Dreyfus & Dreyfus (1986), novices and advanced beginners exercise no judgment, whereas a competent performer will judge by means of conscious deliberation. Proficient performers and experts make judgments based on their prior concrete experiences. Hence, how people make judgments while performing a particular task is based on their level of experience within that task (Dreyfus & Dreyfus, 1986). The journey from being a novice teacher to becoming an expert teacher is facilitated, quickened and made less stressful by well planned Continuing Professional Development programmes (Mohammed, 2006).

Research on teacher education has consistently stressed the need to regularly provide opportunities for teachers to improve their knowledge of the subject matter they teach and the teaching skills they learned in the pre-service courses they attended. This is based on the recognition of the fact that we live in a rapidly changing world, such that whatever knowledge and skills teachers acquired in their
pre-service training becomes stale very fast as new challenges and realities emerge in the socio-economic and political environments. This explains why in some countries such as Singapore, every teacher is required to submit himself/herself to 100 hours of retraining every year (Mohammed, 2006). In Malawi, each teacher is allocated a minimum of 3 days per year of In-service Training (Policy Investment Framework, 2001). In some cases, for instance in Mexico, the training of high school mathematics teachers is not organized in the form of a well defined teacher training program. These teachers go into high school mathematics teaching without being specially prepared for it (Guttenberger, 1992). This situation makes in-service teacher training more and more important. In Malawi, more and more emerging topics arise such as HIV/AIDS, sex education, life skills and others in addition to new curriculums for which teachers are not thoroughly prepared during their pre-service training. Hence, there is a need for CPD to equip them with skills on how to handle such topics.

In line with the above need for CPD, Bolam (2000) and Hargreaves (1994) point out that professional development is an essential part of improving school performance. This performance is not only in terms of learner achievement but also in terms of school culture, learner and teacher behaviours, and attitudes towards each other in the school as well as to visitors to the school.

In the field of education, new goals are being set continuously e.g. gender parity by 2005, Universal Basic Education by 2015; lifelong learning; life skills education; HIV/AIDS education; competence in the use of ICT (Mohammed, 2006). Such goals have resulted in teachers facing high expectations and new roles and demands. They need new skills and knowledge which they can get through CPD. Hence, Continuing Professional Development of teachers ought to be an issue of central concern to all those who care about the quality of education in schools.

In Malawi, the government is clearly aware that pre-service training alone, cannot make a teacher effective in the classroom, and so the government has put in place structures to facilitate Continuing Professional Development activities for primary school teachers. Unfortunately, research has shown that the structures have failed to achieve their intended purposes of transforming the teachers’ knowledge, beliefs
and attitudes (Centre for Educational Research and Training, 2009; NSTED, 2007). Instead, the resultant effect has been continued poor classroom practices that do not translate into gains in learning outcomes. This has motivated the researcher in this study to look into the issues of the implementation of the CPD programmes with a view to bringing them to light, and finding better and more effective ways of implementing CPD programmes that can result in teacher change.

2.2.3 Purpose for CPD

CPD programmes for teachers should aim at forming a better and more effective teacher capable of adapting to different school or classroom situations. At the same time, the end result of the change should be improved learning outcomes for the learners. Clarke & Hollingsworth (2002) stress that the most immediate and significant outcome of any successful CPD is a positive impact in changing teachers’ knowledge and practice, which in turn should lead to improved learner performance. Unfortunately most CPD programmes for teachers fail to achieve this purpose and CPD programmes in Malawi are no exception.

In a research study on professional development of teachers reported by Guskey (2002), it was revealed that most teachers engage in CPD activities because they want to become better teachers. These teachers see professional development programmes as among the most promising and most readily available routes to growth on the job. It is also important to note that, for the vast majority of teachers, becoming a better teacher means enhancing student learning outcomes. Fullan & Hargreaves (1996); and Fullan (1999) also report similar findings that, teachers are attracted to professional development because they believe that it will expand their knowledge and skills, contribute to their growth, and enhance their effectiveness with students. Any development programmes therefore, that fail to address these needs, are unlikely to succeed (Fullan & Miles, 1992).

Craft (1996) captured in Mwanza (2008) has identified the following purposes for undertaking CPD for teachers:
i. to improve the job performance skills of whole staff and individuals;
ii. to develop the professional knowledge and understanding of an individual teacher;
iii. to extend the personal or general education of an individual;
iv. to make staff feel valued;
v. to promote job satisfaction among staff;
vi. to prepare teachers for change.

These purposes, however, accrue more to the individual teacher. Eraut (1995) emphasizes that in-service education raises the cultural and professional standard of the teaching force as a whole. Therefore, in-service education is also an indicator of the health of an education system as it contributes to a better teaching force and improved learner outcomes as noted earlier.

2. 2.4 Modes of delivering CPD

As noted in Chapter 1, two broad modes of delivering CPDs for teachers have been identified. These are on-school site and off-school site based CPD modes. The study looked at the implementation of both on-school site and off-school site based CPDs. These two modes are discussed below:

2. 2.4.1 On-school site based modes

The on-school site based modes are the school based CPD activities. As earlier noted, Back et al. (2009), explain that, in on-school site based CPDs, teachers within a school (or within several schools) jointly do their professional development. The CPD may sometimes be led or initiated by teacher educators. According to Back et al. (2009), examples of on-school site based CPDs may include peer review and coaching; mentoring; study groups; communities of practice; and action research. These approaches can be seen to share a common 'bottom across' approach. Teacher networking is another learning opportunity where teachers from different schools network and help each other grow professionally. Gray (2005)
reports that although these opportunities take relatively little time out of the teachers’ working lives, the teachers find them stimulating and refreshing, and that they assist their overall professional development. This argument links to the argument made by Wenger (1998), that engagement in social practice is the fundamental process by which we learn and gain a sense of identity - in this case, professional identity.

Action Research is another powerful tool of school based professional development (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2002). As its name suggests, action research concerns actors – those people carrying out their professional actions from day to day, in this case teachers. Its purpose is to understand and to improve those actions. It is about trying to understand professional action from the inside. Hence action research is research that is carried out by practitioners on their own practice (Water-Adams, 2006). It emphasizes the involvement of teachers in solving problems in their own classrooms. Action research can be conducted by individual teachers or by groups of teachers. Research has shown that action research is a successful model of CPD in that it allows teachers to ask critical questions of their practice (Kennedy, 2005).

However CPD activities in schools are a factor of how the administration of the school values them (Gold, 1998). If school administration do not value quality, it is difficult to foster a culture which ensures that the school is a vibrant and learning place where the ethos will be one which encourages talking, questioning, reflecting and discussing (Gold, 1998). Hence the school administration comprising the head teacher, the deputy head teachers as well as the section heads, have to ensure a culture of continuous learning amongst the teachers in their schools. Gold (1998) provides some roles of the school administration in as far as on-school site based CPD is concerned. Briefly Gold (1998) mentions the following:

i. to instil a culture of Continuous Professional Development among the teachers in the school. The administration should value the fact that teachers are lifelong learners. As such the school should provide opportunities in which teachers can continuously develop their professionalism.
ii. to develop Continuous Professional Development policies which are accessible and transparent and which influence all activities in the school. The administration has to ensure that the policies are enforced and followed.

iii. to transmit a sense of worth, value and excitement about learning to teachers and this should permeate to everybody in the school. This sense is detected in interactions taking place in the school community.

iv. to encourage teachers to plan for reflective observation and active experimentation. It is only by doing this that a teacher can devise strategies for change and put into practice new knowledge.

v. to promote team teaching and planning amongst the teachers. This instils a sense of confidence in the teachers in trying out new ideas. It also enhances reflection.

Young & King (2002) concur with Gold (1998) that one of the most important roles of the school administration is to promote an environment in which professional learning and innovation are encouraged and rewarded. In this aspect, Young & King (2002: 647 – 648) identify the following four methods by which the school administration can facilitate the process:

i. Providing teachers with blocks of time to work and learn collaboratively

ii. Developing strategies for team planning, sharing, learning, and evaluating

iii. Allowing access to successful models of practice

iv. Encouraging teachers to reflect upon their practices

According to Young & King (2002), this would ensure that classrooms are learner-centred and teachers are lifelong learners. Furthermore, effective leaders encourage their staff members to think, believe, and behave in ways that fulfill the needs of the entire organization, not just the needs of the individual (Young & King, 2002). In order to effect change and improve teacher performance and student achievement, school administrators must understand every facet of their role as institutional leaders (Young & King, 2002).
Fellow teachers have their own role to play in nurturing a school environment that fosters a culture of professional development. They need to cooperate, support and supplement the efforts of the administration in on-school site based CPDs. For instance, senior teachers should develop skills of critical thinking in younger teachers and support them in experimenting and practising those skills (Gold, 1998). However, the younger teachers should, also be willing to learn from the more senior and experienced teachers.

2.2.4.2 Off-school site based modes

As noted in Chapter 1, off-school site based modes imply CPD activities that take place outside the school sites. They usually come in form of workshops or seminars at venues designated by the CPD programme facilitators and implementers. Such programmes might focus on, for example, specific subject topics or strategies for teaching. They may also be associated with the implementation and revision of policy issues (Back et al., 2009). These approaches are sometimes described as ‘top-down’ and usually involve the cascade model of training. In the cascade model of training, messages "flow down" from experts and specialists, through several layers of personnel, and eventually to the teachers (Maheshwari & Raina, 1998). In this situation, a small group of specialists called Key Resource Persons are first oriented to the training design. These are then entrusted with the task of training larger numbers of middle-level personnel such as college lecturers or school functionaries, who form the Resource Persons. Resource Persons, in turn, train the teachers at local level.

The main weakness of the cascade model, as noted earlier, is the dilution effect that invariably takes place when the training design is passed down the various levels of personnel. Kennedy (2005) argues that the cascade model of training supports a technicist view of teaching, where skills and knowledge are given priority over attitudes and values. As such, the model neglects to consider the range of learning contexts on the assumption that it is the knowledge per se that is the important part of the process and not necessarily the context in which it is gained or used (Kennedy, 2005).
2.3 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS THAT GUIDE IMPLEMENTATION OF CPD PROGRAMMES

Successful CPD programmes have the ultimate goal of positively impacting and changing teachers’ knowledge and practice (Andreasen et al., 2007; Clarke & Hollingsworth, 2002; Guskey & Sparks, 2002). As earlier noted, this implies that CPD programmes should result in teacher change which consequently leads to improvements in student learning and performance. This study was guided by three different theories of CDP namely, Guskey’s (1986) theory of teacher change; Wengers’s (1998) theory of Practice; and Speck’s (1996) adult learning theory. The three theories are discussed below.

2.3.1 Theories on teacher change

Many theories of professional development evolve around the concept of teacher change. Guskey (1986) argues that significant changes in beliefs and attitudes are likely to take place only after student learning outcomes are evident. By implication, this model suggests that change in the teachers’ beliefs and attitudes, is primarily a result of rather than a cause of change in the learning outcomes of students. Its intrinsic goal is to help students learn and meet achievement goals. Guskey’s (1986) theory on teacher change was further refined by Guskey (2000) and again by Guskey (2002). Guskey (2002) notes that three major goals of professional development programmes are change in the classroom practices of teachers, change in their attitudes and beliefs, and change in the learning outcomes of students. Of particular importance to efforts to facilitate change, however, is the sequence in which these outcomes most frequently occur. Although the relationship among desired outcomes is reciprocal to some degree, efforts to facilitate change can and should consider the order of outcomes most likely to result in desired change and the endurance of that change (Guskey, 2000).
Hence, Guskey (2002) argues that professional development programmes based on the assumption that change in attitudes and beliefs comes first are typically designed to gain acceptance, commitment, and enthusiasm from teachers before the implementation of new practices or strategies. Such programmes often attempt to change teachers’ beliefs and attitudes, with the expectation that changes in beliefs and attitudes will lead to changes in classroom practices and behaviours. According to Guskey’s (2002) model, a significant change in teachers’ attitudes and beliefs occurs primarily after they gain evidence of improvements in student learning. These improvements typically result from changes teachers have made in their classroom practices, a new instructional approach, the use of new materials or curricula, or simply a modification in teaching procedures or classroom format.

The crucial point of Guskey’s theory is that it is not the professional development per se that changes teachers’ attitudes and beliefs but the experience of successful implementation of the programme (Guskey, 2002). Thus, according to the model, the key element in significant change in teachers’ attitudes and beliefs is clear evidence of improvement in the learning outcomes of their students (Guskey, 1986; 1989). This model of change is predicated on the idea that change is primarily an experientially based learning process for teachers. Practices that are found to work that is, those that teachers find useful in helping students attain desired learning outcomes, are retained and repeated. Those that do not work or yield no tangible evidence of success are generally abandoned. Demonstrable results in terms of student learning outcomes are the key to the endurance of any change in instructional practice.

Though result-oriented, Guskey’s kind of thinking is criticized for considering teacher change as a linear process (Clarke & Peter, 1993) yet there are so many complexities on the way to change. Clarke & Hollingsworth (2002) challenged Guskey’s perspective of taking improved outcomes for students as the ultimate goal of teacher professional development. They argued that though the view represents a plausible and legitimate educational agenda, it provides a misleading model of teacher professional development in its supposition of change as a linear process.
The researcher feels that Guskey’s (2002) model, has one major weakness. It assumes that the teacher will indeed put into practice whatever was learnt at the CPD programme so as to experience the improved learner outcomes and then change the beliefs and attitudes. The model is not saying much about the learning process itself, thereby assuming that the school environment will facilitate the implementation of what was learnt at the CPD training. This may not always be the case in schools. Within the same context, Cobb et al. (1990) propose their model of the process of teacher change which states that challenging teachers’ approaches prior to their attempt to modify their classroom practice could be an effective motivator for change. Much as the researcher would like to agree with Cobb et al. (1990) in terms of giving teachers a reason for change, this approach creates a cognitive conflict in the teachers’ minds and change will be a factor of how receptive the teachers are to the process of change.

Another school of thought on teacher change was highlighted by Johnson & Owen (1986). They suggested that teachers involved in change move through a number of identifiable stages, including recognition, refinement, re-examination, renovation and renewal. This is similar to Guskey’s thinking which considers change as a linear process but it has also some elements of Cobb’s et al. (1990) model as it seems to embed a continuous interplay between beliefs and practice (Clarke & Hollingsworth, 2002). Another theory of teacher change was developed by Clarke & Peters (1993) cited in Clarke and Hollingsworthy (2002). They called it the interconnected model of Teacher Professional Growth. The theory suggests that

*Change occurs through the mediating process of “reflection” and enactment” in four distinct domains which encompass the teacher’s world: the personal domain (teacher knowledge, beliefs and attitudes), the domain of practice (professional experimentation), the domain of consequence (salient outcomes), and the external domain (sources of information, stimulus or support) (p.950).*

This model shares similarities with Guskey’s model although its major characteristic appears to be its ability to recognize the complexity of professional growth through the identification of multiple growth paths between the domains.
Nevertheless, Guskey’s theory of teacher change guided this study. This was supplemented with some aspects of the theories of teacher change as viewed by the other writers discussed above. The reason for choosing Guskey’s (1986) theory was the emphasis of the theory on how teachers change, that is, the process of teacher change. Understanding the process of teacher change, helped the researcher determine how CPD programmes are currently being implemented in Zomba Rural Education District and how they should be implemented to effect teacher change. Hence, the main research question as well as other sub questions, were answered through this understanding.

It is also noteworthy that the process of teacher change progresses in stages. In a study reported by Andreasen et al. (2007), it was learnt that teachers may progress through at least four stages in making changes in their practice after undergoing training. These stages include:

i. Resistance to change

Teachers at this stage oppose making changes to their teaching practices. These teachers are comfortable doing things "the way they have always been done." To them, change will be a very gradual process.

ii. Talking about changing practice

Teachers’ perceptions at this stage are beginning to change. They are beginning to talk about what they "might do" and seem willing to try out new ideas. However, little or no evidence exists to show any change has actually occurred in their teaching practice. Here it is difficult to ascertain whether these teachers are just trying to impress their peers or if they are genuine in their desire to adopt a new way of teaching.

iii. Mimicking

At this stage the teachers try implementing what they have been introduced to by the professional development programme. They turn back to handouts and materials given to them by the facilitators.

iv. Changing Practice
In this last stage teachers take what they learn and apply it in their classroom with their students. Here there is evidence that the teachers have developed their own lessons that incorporate the change.

Professional development programmes need to address these issues. The stages of teacher change can be informative in designing professional development programmes. Sometimes the change can be met with resistance as noted by Janas (1998). However organizers of CPD programmes need to be aware that resistance to change is a large part of the gap between knowledge and practice, and between vision and reality. Janas (1998) further explains that resistance is not always a negative force and that durability and complexity of managing resistance, can be met with a proactive approach by staff development organizer. Janas (1998) captured in Andreason (2007) cites three strategies for combating resistance to change: (a) being aware of resistance --knowing that it is a fearful response to change and a natural part of any change process, (b) identifying sources and types of resistance --knowing that it is a normal and valued function of existence; and (c) developing strategies to minimize resistance before it evolves into a barrier to progress.

These strategies can help teachers realize that professional development is not something that is done "to them" but "with them". This would assist them to risk change in their classroom practice; thereby improving the teaching and learning process. This, consequently, would result in better learner performance and according to Guskey (2002), teacher change in their beliefs, attitudes and values would follow.

2. 3.2. Wenger’s (1998) theory of communities of practice

Wenger’s (1998) theory of communities of practice focuses on learning as participation, with emphasis on collaborative professional development and learning involving communities of practice. Wenger (1998) defines communities of practice as groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly. This theoretical perspective
emphasizes the negotiation of meaning (largely through talk) by members of a
community engaged in doing something together (Adger, Hoyle & Dickinson, 2004).
Noteworthy is the fact that not all groups can be communities of practice; neither
can all communities qualify to be communities of practice. According to Wenger
(1998) for a group to qualify to be a community of practice, the following three
characteristics must be evident:

i. The domain

A community of practice has an identity defined by a shared domain of interest.
Membership implies a commitment to the domain, and therefore a shared
competence that distinguishes members from other people.

ii. The community

In pursuing their interest in their domain, members engage in joint activities and
discussions, help each other, and share information. Members in a community of
practice interact and learn together though not on a daily basis.

iii. The practice

A community of practice is not merely a community of interest. Members of a
community of practice are practitioners. They develop a shared repertoire of
resources: experiences, stories, tools, ways of addressing recurring problems - in
short, a shared practice. This takes time and sustained interaction. According to
Wenger (1998), it is by developing these three elements in parallel that one
cultivates such a community. Learning is maximised if one maximises learners’
access to participation in, and the resources of, a community of practice in which
the development of identities in relation to that community are supported. Wenger’s
theory has been criticized by writers such as Graven (2004) for its emphasis on
learning while ignoring teaching. Graven (2004) feels the role of teachers is being
undermined here.

This theory of communities of practice may fall under the on-school site based CPD
within the school or among schools of common interest. Schools can be
communities of practice both for teachers and learners because they offer
opportunities for collaboration with colleagues. In the process, interpreting information and making meaning can result in mediation of new knowledge within the community (Falk & Dierking, 2000). Understanding how communities of practice work, and how they are being fostered through CPD programmes was advantageous to the researcher in this study on achieving the objectives on the challenges that teachers face when trying to implement what they learn from CPD programmes as well as how the CPD programme facilitators design or organize their programmes. Further this understanding was key in assessing how on-school site based CPDs are implemented in Zomba Rural Education District.

2.3.3 Speck’s (1996) theory of adult learning

Speck’s (1996) adult learning theory argues that adult learners need to see that professional development learning and their day-to-day activities are related and relevant. Hence, Speck (1996) warns providers of professional development to be mindful of adult learning theory when designing programmes for teachers and urges them to use the following “checklist” as both a guide when formulating professional development activities and as evaluation tools prior to actually conducting training with adults:

i. adults will commit to learning when the goals and objectives are considered realistic and important to them. Application in the ‘real world’ is important and relevant to the adult learners’ personal and professional needs.

ii. adults want to be the origin of their own learning and will resist learning activities they believe are an attack on their competence. Thus, professional development needs to give participants some control over the what, who, how, why, when, and where of their learning.

iii. adult learners need to see that the professional development learning and their day-to-day activities are related and relevant.

iv. adult learners need direct, concrete experiences in which they apply the learning in real work.
v. adult learning has ego involved. Professional development must be structured to provide support from peers and to reduce the fear of judgment during learning.

vi. adults need to receive feedback on how they are doing and the results of their efforts. Opportunities must be built into professional development activities that allow the learner to practice the learning and receive structured, helpful feedback.

vii. adults need to participate in small-group activities during the learning to move them beyond understanding to application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. Small-group activities provide an opportunity to share, reflect, and generalize their learning experiences.

viii. adult learners come to learning with a wide range of previous experiences, knowledge, self-direction, interests, and competencies. This diversity must be accommodated in the professional development planning.

ix. transfer of learning for adults is not automatic and must be facilitated. Coaching and other kinds of follow-up support are needed to help adult learners transfer learning into daily practice so that it is sustained.

This checklist also guided the researcher in the assessment of how CPD programmes for teachers are implemented in Zomba Rural Education District in Malawi, especially in the design of the programmes. Kolb’s (1984) cycle of learning also complements Speck’s theory of adult learning in that Kolb (1984) advocates the need to plan for different stages and styles of learning and to make sure that there are connections between them. As with Wenger’s theory of communities of practice, Kolb (1984) also emphasize learning rather than teaching (Gold, 1998). According to Gold (1998:50), Kolb’s (1984) learning cycle proceeds as follows:

i. Concrete experience

Planning for learning must include the opportunity for concrete experience. To make use of concrete experience, CPD programme designers can plan group learning activities which are linked with the classroom experience of teachers; or they can use participants’ work as bases for CPD activities.
ii. Reflective observation

CPD programme designers should bear in mind that an effective teacher is a reflective teacher, hence, CPD programmes should provide an opportunity for teachers to reflect on their concrete experiences. Participants should be encouraged to keep course diaries to enhance reflection. The programme should plan for small group work and individual reflection.

iii. Abstract conceptualization

CPD programme facilitators in their presentations should refer teachers to relevant recent readings and research findings so as to give them a clear understanding of the concepts being discussed. The facilitators should also give formal inputs to such readings.

iv. Active experimentation

Active experimentation provides an opportunity for participants to plan changes. To ensure this, CPD programme designers should make sure that they have space in every programme in which participants can make realistic and real plans for new strategies when they return to their schools.

v. Time to think and talk about the concrete experience, and so on.

In this stage, the teachers discuss the concrete experiences and strategise for change in their classroom practice.

What is noteworthy about many theories guiding Continuing Professional Development is the fact that they all seem to allude to the following:

i. in planning for professional development, teachers' existing beliefs and knowledge need to be considered, as these will influence the perspective the teachers take of an innovation and the sense they make of it.

ii. non-critical assistance and support can be invaluable in facilitating teachers' review and reflection upon their own practices and beliefs.
iii. opportunities to engage in professional dialogue with colleagues in similar situations, facing similar challenges, can provide encouragement, support and critical friendships.

iv. teachers need to feel a sense of responsibility for their own learning and development.

v. time, space and opportunity are needed for teachers to experiment with ideas and to reflect upon their experiences.

(Stein, McRobbie & Ginns 1999:2)

2.4 MODELS OF CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Various models for teacher professional development have emerged in literature. Literature has shown that there is obviously no one best model for in-service education programmes. This study was guided by three models of CPD as discussed by Fraser et al. (2007) but modified by the researcher. Given the complexity of professional development, Fraser et al. (2007) argue that any evaluation of CPD programmes needs to take into account the range of complex factors that impact on CPD, hence, they suggest the use of a composite framework drawing on three different ways of understanding CPD, namely;

i. Bell and Gilbert's three aspects of professional learning

ii. Kennedy's framework for analysing models of CPD.

iii. Reid's quadrants of teacher learning.

The significance of using these three different lenses through which to examine the different examples of CPD is that the combined insight that can be gained is much more relevant, significant and important than using any one of these frameworks alone. Below is a description of each of the three models and how they fit into this study.
2.4.1 Bell and Gilbert's aspects of professional learning

According to Bell & Gilbert (1996), teachers' professional learning can be thought of as comprising personal, social and occupational aspects that are inter-related (Fraser et al., 2007). Social aspects support personal learning, hence, learning in isolation is seen as 'problematic' (Bell & Gilbert, 1996). Therefore, communities of practice are advocated as one way forward to enhance professional learning and development (Lave & Wenger, 1991). According to Falk & Dierking, (2000) schools are potential communities of practice both for teachers and learners, where opportunities for collaboration with colleagues exist and where interpreting information and making meaning can result in mediation of new knowledge within the community. Hence, Bell & Gilbert (1996); and Solomon & Tresman (1999) acknowledge that working within a community reinforces shared beliefs and can contribute to the reconstruction of personal and professional identities.

It would appear the personal aspect embraces teachers' beliefs, values and attitudes. Interest and motivation need to be addressed as well. In the social aspect, relationships between individuals and groups need nurturing; and contexts need to be supportive to allow enactment and risk-taking. While in the occupational part, links between theory and practice need to be strong; and intellectual stimulation and professional relevance are required.

2.4.2 Kennedy's framework for the analysis of CPD models

Kennedy's (2005) analytical framework suggests that professional learning opportunities can be located along a continuum where the underpinning purposes of particular models of CPD can be categorised as 'transmissive', 'transitional' or 'transformative'. Models of CPD where the purpose is deemed to be transmissive rely on teacher development through externally delivered, 'expert' tuition (Sprinthall, Reiman, Theis-Sprinthall & Sikula, 1996), focusing on technical aspects of the job rather than issues relating to values, beliefs and attitudes. The cascade model is often used in the transmissive framework. This type of CPD does not support
professional autonomy; rather, it supports replication and, arguably, compliance (Kennedy, 2005). Within the transitional models, CPD has the capacity to support either a transmissive agenda or a transformative agenda, depending on its form and philosophy. Models that fit under this category include coaching/mentoring and communities of practice.

At the other end of the spectrum, transformative professional learning suggests strong links between theory and practice (Sprinthall et al., 1996), internalisation of concepts, reflection, construction of new knowledge and its application in different situations, and an awareness of the professional and political context. Transformative models of CPD have the capacity to support considerable professional autonomy at both individual and profession-wide levels. The Transformative model uses Action Research model, school-based CPD models and teacher networks.

In summary, Kennedy (2005) identified nine models which are further categorised into three groups depending on their purpose. Table 2.1 illustrates the models and their purpose

**Table 2.1: CPD models and their purposes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model of CPD</th>
<th>Purpose of model</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The training model</td>
<td>Transmission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The award bearing model</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The deficit model</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The cascade model</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The standards based model</td>
<td>Transitional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The coaching /mentoring model</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The community of practice model</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The action research model</td>
<td>Transformative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The transformative model</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Adapted from Aileen Kennedy’s (2005) framework*
This categorisation and organisation of CPD models in Table 2.1 suggests increasing capacity for teacher autonomy as one moves from transmission, through transitional to transformative categories. While this can be justified on one level in terms of the potential opportunities available for teachers to influence the agenda, Burbank & Kauchak (2003) argue that even within many collaborative forms of CPD, which might be represented in the ‘transformative’ category above, the parameters of the activity are defined by some external party, usually in a position of power. So while the capacity for professional autonomy is greater in transformative models, this does not in itself imply that the capacity will necessarily be fulfilled. Nevertheless, transformative and transitional models such as action research and communities of practice respectively have much potential in empowering and liberating the teachers as well as developing the teachers into reflective practitioners.

### 2.4.3 Reid's quadrants of teacher learning

Clearly, different professional learning experiences offer varying opportunities for attitudinal development. Fraser et al. (2007) propose an analysis of professional learning opportunities according to Reid's quadrants, comprising two dimensions: formal-informal and planned-incidental (McKinney, Fraser Kennedy, Reid, & Wilson, 2005). Formal opportunities are those explicitly established by an agent other than the teacher (e.g. taught courses), whereas informal opportunities are sought and established by the teacher (e.g. networking). On the other axis, planned opportunities may be formal or informal, but are characteristically pre-arranged (e.g. collaborative planning), whereas incidental opportunities are spontaneous and unpredictable (e.g. teacher exchanges during break time). According to Fraser et al. (2007) these descriptions represent polarised positions that encompass the range of learning opportunities encountered by teachers.

Table 2.2 gives a brief summary of the framework for studying CPD as advocated by Fraser et al. (2007)
Table 2.2: Summary of Fraser’s et al. (2007) framework for studying CPD

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Framework</th>
<th>Terms of categorisation</th>
<th>What is being categorised?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bell and Gilbert’s three aspects of professional learning</td>
<td>Personal / social / occupational</td>
<td>Domain of influence of professional learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kennedy’s framework for analysing CPD</td>
<td>Transmission / transitional / transformation</td>
<td>Capacity for professional autonomy and transformative practice supported by the professional learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reid’s quadrants of teacher learning</td>
<td>Formal / informal Planned / incidental</td>
<td>Sphere of action in which the professional learning takes place</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The researcher notes that the combination of all the three models as advocated by Fraser et al. (2007), takes into consideration the complexity of CPD programming which cannot be achieved by use of any one model. In any evaluation of CPD programmes, one has to consider how issues to do with the personal, social and occupational aspects of the teacher were integrated into the design of the programmes. Bell and Gilbert’s (1996) model can give guidance on this. Again in the evaluation of CPD programmes, one has to focus on the process of delivering CPD and how the programmes ensure transformative practices in the teachers. Kennedy’s (2005) framework for studying CPD is well placed to give guidance on this aspect. Lastly, in the evaluation of CPD programmes, one has to consider the kinds of opportunities (Fraser et al., 2007 call them spheres of action) for professional learning that the CPD programme implementers provided. Reid’s quadrant of teacher learning can facilitate this process.

Bell and Gilbert’s (1996) three aspects of professional learning model guided this study in that the researcher was interested in finding out how the teachers’ beliefs, values and attitudes including interests are taken care of in the design and implementation of CPD programmes and indeed how the communities of practice are being nurtured both at school and cluster levels. The researcher was also interested in seeing how the occupational part (links between theory and practice)
was being translated into practice and what challenges were being encountered along the way.

Kennedy's (2005) framework for analysing CPD was of great value to this study in that it enabled the researcher to judge which models are often used in CPD implementation in Zomba Rural Education District, how they are used, and their impact. Indeed, it guided the researcher in determining the implications of the models for teacher change and learner outcomes. Lastly, Reid's quadrants of teacher learning was of paramount importance in this study in that it guided the researcher in determining how different professional learning experiences in different settings offer varying opportunities for teacher development. This helped find appropriate CPD opportunities or models that can facilitate teacher change.

Chapter 3 is a continuation of the review of the literature.
CHAPTER 3: LITERATURE REVIEW ON FINDINGS FROM OTHER STUDIES ON CPD

Chapter 3 is a continuation of Chapter 2 on Literature review. It looks at challenges of CPD programme implementation, as unveiled by other studies elsewhere. It also highlights best practices for the effective implementation of CPD programmes that the literature has unveiled. In addition, it discusses findings from other studies on implementation of CPD programmes for teachers and identifies the gap in the literature into which the topic under study fits itself.

3.1 CHALLENGES OF CPD PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION AS UNVEILED BY OTHER STUDIES

This section discusses some important aspects of CPD programme implementation. These aspects if not well handled during CPD programme implementation, pose challenges to the successful implementation of the CPD programmes. These challenges relate to CPD implementation both for the programme facilitators / implementers and the teachers involved in the training. This part was worth unveiling as the researcher also intended to explore the challenges that are faced in CPD programme implementation in Zomba Rural Education District.

Different authors have written on a number of challenges in CPD implementation. These challenges deal with the duration of the CPD programmes; the quality of CPD programmes including the expertise of facilitators; the course content of CPD programmes; the travel difficulties; limited resources; and the use of the cascade mode of training. These challenges are discussed below.

3.1.1 Duration and time span of CPD programmes

Several authors including Penuel, Fishman, Yamaguchi & Gallagher (2007) have pointed out that a common criticism of professional development activities designed
for teachers is that they are too short and offer limited follow-up of teachers once they begin to teach. This results in teachers either assimilating teaching strategies into their current repertoires with little substantive change or rejecting the suggested changes altogether (Coburn, 2004; Tyack & Cuban, 1995). Brown (2004) argues that professional development that is of longer duration and time span is more likely to contain the kinds of learning opportunities necessary for teachers to integrate new knowledge into practice. This argument was supported by a study by Supovitz and Turner (2000) which employed hierarchical linear modeling to examine the relationship between professional development and the reformers’ vision of teaching practice. Supovitz and Turner’s (2000) study found that longer durations of professional development were needed to create "investigative cultures" in science classrooms, as opposed to small-scale changes in practice. Further, Armour & Yelling (2004) and Connelly & James (1998) quoted in Sinelnikov (2009) argue that evidence exists suggesting that sporadic ‘one-off’ professional development activities are unlikely to have lasting impact upon teachers’ practice.

Related to the duration of CPD programmes is the challenge of timetabling CPD programmes. Issues of timetabling of CPD programme activities to accommodate teacher preferences can contribute to the failure of the programme if it is not handled carefully. Sometimes providers are very unresponsive to the preferences of teachers when timetabling CPD activities (Gray, 2005). In such cases, training might be offered mid-term, during busy periods, or at long distances from schools. According to Gray’s (2005) findings, teachers usually prefer to engage in training when things were quieter at school, particularly at the beginnings and endings of school terms. Some teachers preferred ‘twilight’ sessions given after school, during the late afternoon and early evening, whereas others found these too draining after a full working day.

Further, Gray (2005) noted that some teachers were happy to give up a day or two of their holidays each year to attend conferences or training sessions. Others felt that they needed the holidays to recover from the demands of term time, or to care for dependants. Gray (2005) also reported teachers who preferred online learning, so they could participate in training at their own convenience, according to their own
interests. This was of particular value to some teachers with dependants, who described feelings of being ‘overlooked’ and ‘left out’ of career-related training owing to time and financial constraints associated with family life. However, this is only possible in countries which are technologically advanced and not countries like Malawi where internet services in rural schools are non-existent.

From the above discussion, it would appear that the duration or time span for CPD programme implementation is critical in achieving success of such programmes. The longer the duration for training, the greater the probability of such a training resulting in teacher change and consequent improvements in learning outcomes. Similarly, the shorter the duration for training, the lower the chances of such programmes resulting in teacher change. As noted earlier, it has to be borne in mind that the process of teacher change is a gradual process, hence, teachers need to be supported over a longer period of time during the implementation of what they learn from CPD programmes (Guskey, 2002). However, the major challenge to the design of CPD programmes that spread over longer periods of time, especially in many developing countries lies in the financial as well as material resources to sustain such programmes.

Further, teachers seem to have different preferences of timetabling the CPD programmes. Designers or providers of CPD programmes need to be aware of the individual preferences and to design their programmes in such a way that they take into account those individual preferences. They can offer a variety of courses throughout the year, to accommodate these different preferences as highlighted by Gray (2005). Otherwise the attendance of teachers of CPD programmes which do not fit into their schedules may be haphazard.

3.1.2 Quality of CPD programmes and expertise of facilitators

A good quality CPD programme leaves teachers satisfied and eager to implement what they have learned from the CPD programme whereas a poor quality CPD programme leaves teachers frustrated and full of regrets for having attended the
programme. In a study reported by Gray (2005) on participation in subject-based continuing professional development for teachers in the UK, it was divulged that head teachers expressed difficulty in linking the impact of CPD with classroom outcomes and wondered whether the impact of CPD justified the investment of resources. Teachers criticised training providers who were disorganised, rambling, poor at public speaking, cut sessions short, and who failed to take into account different learning styles, levels of ability and prior knowledge amongst the teachers attending the course (Gray, 2005). As educators themselves, teachers felt justified in demanding high standards of preparation and delivery. Wight & Buston (2003) concur with Gray (2005) when they assert that in-service education programmes often fail because they are built on a 'deficit model' and therefore emphasize inadequacies rather than identifying and developing teachers' existing strengths. In a deficit model, teachers' individual knowledge, understandings and beliefs are not sufficiently recognised by those designing the CPD courses.

Table 3.1 below, presented by Gray (2005), highlights what teachers feel about good and poor quality CPD programmes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Good quality provision</th>
<th>Poor quality provision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Economical in terms of time and money</td>
<td>Wasteful in terms of resources such as time, money and teacher enthusiasm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carefully researched, in terms of teacher needs</td>
<td>Insufficient planning and tailoring to teacher Needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Well-presented, preferably by a teacher or a cutting-edge research scientist with relevant teaching experience</td>
<td>Poor presentation skills; presenter not familiar with current classroom practices or curriculum content</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Giving plenty of fresh, relevant information</td>
<td>Duplicated or irrelevant information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offering opportunities during the day for reflection upon what was being learnt</td>
<td>Overloading teachers with information; teachers unclear about quality and relevance of information to them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likely to have immediate impact upon</td>
<td>Unclear or dubious relevance to classroom</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Teachers should see value in attending the CPD programme activities. CPD programmes which neglect to provide for the development of a sense of commitment and mutual support for the activities undertaken by the participants will not have long-term effects. Hence, any CPD activities which are imposed on teachers from above are destined for failure if they do not take into account the teachers’ perception of reality. The teachers may attend. They may even get involved to a certain degree, but if the activities do not deal directly with the teachers’ perceived reality, the activities will have little permanent effect on them. The challenge however for CPD programme implementers remains how to gear their programmes in such a way that they take on board all the elements discussed in this section.

### 3.1.3 Course content of CPD programmes

The literature, for instance, Clarke & Hollingsworth’s (2002); Cohen & Hill (1998); Guskey (1986); and Kennedy (1998), has emphasized the lack of success of most CPD programmes. Several explanations have been suggested, some at the individual and others at the school level. Some argue that teachers’ individual knowledge, understanding and beliefs have not been sufficiently recognised by those developing courses, since teachers will only adopt new ideas if they are fairly congruent with their own (Hamilton & Richardson, 1995). Some reasons have touched on the course content offered at the CPD programmes. For instance, Gray
(2005) writes of some teachers who criticised CPD providers for failing to tailor their courses sufficiently to the subject matter, instead, running the same course under different titles to maximise income. Gray (2005) had encountered teachers who described how they had left one course at lunchtime and gone back to school, as they felt it was of such a low standard that they could not justify spending time at the afternoon session. Teachers, being loyal to their learners, frequently describe feelings of guilt and professional negligence if they take a day away from the classroom to attend a course that fails to offer anything of use to their learners.

However, the challenge for CPD programme implementers is to tailor their course content in such a way that it takes into account inputs from teachers themselves; and that it meets the expectations of the teachers. Otherwise course content if not well designed, can be a challenge to the successful implementation of a CPD programme.

### 3.1.4 Travel difficulties

This is one common limitation to attending CPD programmes. Gray (2005) reports that some teachers based outside London had difficulties in finding the time and funding for travel costs to attend courses in the capital, and they expressed a preference for locally based training. Head teachers outside London also described the negative effect that high travel costs had on balancing CPD budgets within their schools. London based teachers described the difficulties in travelling around the capital, and the disproportionate amount of time that this could take.

Travel difficulties are a genuine concern and indeed they can be a challenge to both the CPD programme designers as well as the participants. This is especially the case with off-school site based CPD programmes where teachers operate from their working places to the training venues designated by the CPD programme facilitators (Back et al., 2009). In developing countries where teachers get low salaries that do not even suffice for their basic needs till the end of the month, teachers may face the challenge of how and where to get money for transport to the workshop (World
Bank, 2007). In typical rural schools, teachers and CPD programme facilitators may face problems of access to CPD programme centres, especially during the rainy season. Again in some rural schools where the main mode of transportation is hiring a bicycle, teachers may face problems of arriving at the workshop venues very late when sessions are already in progress.

3.1.5 Limited resources

Almost all CPD programmes need a certain amount of monetary and material inputs to run. It does not matter whether it is on-school or off-school site based CPD. Mohammed (2006) reports that budgets for CPD activities in Nigeria are often small and indeed rarely allocated and where available, funds are inadequate and often misused. In Zambia, due to limited resources for In-service training, the government has come up with strategic approaches to the provision of INSET that includes demand driven programmes, school focused programmes held in schools or resource centres, cascade models for special subjects and cost effective programmes (Tindi, Shanyinde, Banda & Banda, 2001). Similarly, in South Africa, the government adopted the cascade model of training teachers following curriculum reviews due to financial constraints. This is because the model is seen as cost effective (Shez, 2008).

Developed countries also face their own challenges when it comes to funding for CPD programmes. For instance, Merson (1989) bemoans the control of funding for INSET in the United Kingdom as well as the wide disparity among local authorities in the provision of INSET. Merson (1989) further writes that it could not be guaranteed that the funds calculated within the Rate Support Grant for Local Education Authorities expenditure in the UK on in-service training would in fact be used for that purpose. This is an indication that funds intended for CPD activities in different countries, may not necessarily be used for such a purpose and Malawi might not be an exception.

Without financial resources, CPD programmes cannot run. These programmes need financial resources for logistical purposes. These may include transportation,
buying of materials to use during and after the training, paying allowances to resource persons and participants and paying for accommodation of participants if the training is an off-school site based CPD programme. Governments need to commit themselves to CPD programme budgets and ensure that they are used for the intended purpose. Cost effective ways of running effective CPD programmes need to be explored so that the programmes do not suffer much due to limited funding.

3.1.6 The use of the Cascade mode of training

As earlier noted, in the cascade mode of training, the idea is that top-level personnel are trained intensively; they in turn train the next level personnel, and so on till all available personnel have been trained by the level above them (Dove 1983; Johnson, 2000; Hayes, 2000). The model assumes, of course, that 'top-down' training can disseminate good educational concepts and practices to successively larger numbers of personnel in a relatively short time. It is almost inevitable, given the gaps in professional expertise in primary teacher training running right through the system, that the dissemination of improved practices from top down will be rather weak. Dove (1983) alleges that new ideas and skills will be communicated only in so far as the trainers are fully at ease with them. Meanwhile, conventional ideas and habits will be discarded slowly. This is also supported by other studies which have criticized the use of the cascade model in most formal Continuing Professional Development programmes, claiming that the ‘cascading’ of information results in the ‘watering down’ and / or misinterpretation of crucial information. Hence, the messages become diluted and distorted at each level of the cascade model (Khulisa, 2001 cited in Engelbrecht, Ankiewicz, & de Swardt, 2007). Further, the trainers during workshops, especially those involved in the cascade model of training, lack confidence, knowledge and understanding to manage the training process (Engelbrecht et al., 2007).

In South Africa, this was the approach that the South African Department of Education relied on for In-service training of teachers when Outcome Based
Education (OBE) was introduced (Ono & Ferreira, 2010). At the top of the structure was the National Department itself which trained personnel from the Provinces, who in turn trained personnel from the Districts. The latter were charged with the responsibility of training personnel from circuits and key teachers, who were then expected to train colleagues at the school level for the implementation of change. Shezi (2008) conducted a study in South Africa which aimed at exploring the experiences of teachers in their training and development through the cascade model for the implementation of Integrated Quality Management Systems. The study found that the cascade model failed to yield effective learning on the part of the trainees and that, after training workshops, the teachers went back to their schools with some knowledge gaps.

From what has been discussed, it appears that the cascade model of training has been utilized in In-service education because of its cost effective nature, in that, those who have been trained can then train others, thus limiting expenses. In addition to being cost effective, the model allows for training in stages so that progress can be monitored and information can be disseminated quickly and to a large number of teachers within a short period of time. However, it appears that the use of the cascade model of training greatly challenges the successful implementation of a CPD programme because the quality of the information that is passed on to the teachers at the grassroots level is compromised. To expect teacher change through such a process is just being overly presumptuous.

3.2 BEST PRACTICES FOR EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF CPD PROGRAMMES

As noted in Chapter 1, literature shows that there has been an increase in focus on Continuing Professional Development for teachers worldwide. This is because CPD is continuously being viewed as a means of improving learner performance and the production of required skills (Coolahan, 2002; Fraser et al., 2007). Armour & Evans (2006) further add that effective professional development may have a positive effect on teacher knowledge and motivation as well as in improving students’ learning. However, despite the general acceptance of professional development as
essential to improvement in education, literature has consistently pointed out the ineffectiveness of most programmes (Clarke & Hollingsworth’s, 2002; Cohen & Hill, 1998; Kennedy, 1998). Different authors have suggested ways to effectively implement Continuing Professional Development of teachers. This section is a review of some of their work. The section was thought to be necessary because it served as a guide during the pursuit of this study, as a comparison was made between what constitutes effective CPD implementation and how CPD programmes are actually implemented in the district.

Guskey (2002) elaborates that CPD programmes that fail do not take into account what motivates teachers to engage in professional development, and the process by which change in teachers typically occurs. According to Guskey (2002), what attracts teachers to professional development, as noted earlier, is their belief that it will expand their knowledge and skills, contribute to their growth, and enhance their effectiveness with students. Fullan & Miles, (1992) note that what teachers hope to gain through professional development are specific, concrete, and practical ideas that directly relate to the day-to-day operation of their classrooms. Development programmes that fail to address these needs are unlikely to succeed. Lieb (1991) also realized the need for motivating participants and writes that:

If the participant does not recognize the need for the information or has been offended or intimidated, all of the instructor’s effort to assist the participant to learn will be in vain. The instructor must establish rapport with participants and prepare them for learning; this provides motivation (p.3).

Guskey (2002) further urges CPD programme implementers, apart from looking into the motivational factors, to also consider the process of change for teachers. Professional development activities frequently are designed to initiate change in the classroom practices of teachers, change in the learning outcomes of students and change in teachers’ attitudes and beliefs (Guskey, 2002). It has to be noted however that sustaining change is one of the most difficult aspects of professional development (Guskey, 2002). Hence, there is a need for professional development programme designers to see professional development as a process, not an event (Loucks-Horsley, Stiles, & Hewson, 1998). This calls for the provision of support for
a longer period of time to teachers who have attended CPD training. It is also imperative, that improvement be seen as a continuous and ongoing endeavour with assistance from CPD programme facilitators and school administrations.

According to Guskey (2002), the following three principles which stem from the model are believed to be essential in planning effective professional development programmes that result in significant and sustained educational improvements.

i. Recognize that change is a gradual and difficult process for teachers.
CPD programme providers should know that, learning to be proficient at something new and finding meaning in a new way of doing things requires both time and effort. Hence, any change that holds great promise for increasing teachers’ competence and enhancing student learning is likely to require extra work, energy and time. Furthermore, change brings a certain amount of anxiety and can be very threatening. This explains why teachers need support during the change process to encourage perseverance. Close collaboration between programme developers / researchers and teachers can greatly facilitate this process and help reduce the anxiety in the teachers (Ward & Tikinoff, 1982 captured in Guskey, 2002).

ii. Ensure that Teachers Receive Regular Feedback on Student Learning Progress
This principle is especially true of teachers, whose primary psychic rewards come from feeling certain about their capacity to affect student growth and development (Guskey, 1989). New practices are likely to be abandoned, however, in the absence of any evidence of their positive effects. Hence, specific procedures to provide feedback on results are essential to the success of any professional development effort. This implies that there is regular collaboration between CPD providers and the teachers involved in the CPD programme activities.
When teachers see that a new programme or innovation works well in their classrooms, change in their attitudes and beliefs can and will definitely follow.

iii. Provide Continued Follow-Up, Support and Pressure
Continued follow-up, support, and pressure following CPD training is very crucial. Support coupled with pressure is essential for continuing educational improvement.
Support allows those engaged in the difficult process of implementation to tolerate the anxiety of occasional failures, whereas pressure is often necessary to initiate change among those whose self-impetus for change is not great (Guskey, 2002). Support and pressure also provide the encouragement, motivation, and occasional nudging that many practitioners require to persist in the challenging tasks that are intrinsic to all change efforts. However, persistent pressure may be viewed as boring on the part of the teachers and can result in the teacher abandoning the whole process of bringing about change in their classrooms. Hence it has to be done with caution, care and love.

Further, Guskey (2000) captured in Lys, Ringler, & O'Neal (2009) outlined a five level framework for evaluating professional development, which should include: participants’ reactions, participants’ learning, organization support and change, participants’ use of new knowledge and skills, and student learning outcomes. He says each successive level leads professional development planners and participants closer to the ultimate goal of impacting student learning. Each level also allows the evaluators to collect different pieces of evidence to support the value of the activity to the teacher participant, school community, and student.

Considering participants’ reactions prior, during and after CPD programme implementation, gives feedback to the organizers regarding the impact of their CPD programmes. Hence, the organizers should, at every stage of the CPD programme implementation, observe both verbal and non-verbal feedback from the participants and make use of it to improve on the delivery of their programmes. Participants’ learning is also very critical to the success of any CPD programme, in fact, that is the essence of running a CPD programme. After learning, they should be transformed and this should translate into improved learner outcomes in their classrooms. This, calls for organizers to gear their CPD programmes towards making participants learn. They should take into account how adults (in this case, teachers) learn. Speck’s (1996) theory of adult learning, should guide the design of their programmes.
Organizational support also has to be considered in any CPD programme implementation because, without support, it is very difficult to realize and sustain teacher change. CPD programme facilitators and school administrations as well as colleagues in the schools should provide the support that the teacher needs to feel confident to implement whatever was learnt on the CPD programme. Further, the participant should have intrinsic motivation and determination to take risks by trying to bring about change in his/her own classroom practice through making use of the new knowledge and skills got from the training. In addition to what Guskey (2002) argued about what makes a CPD programme effective, Coolahan (2002:27) identified certain desirable characteristics associated with successful in-service provision as follows:

i. It should incorporate both on and off-school site dimensions;

ii. Teachers should have a greater role in setting the agenda and being actively engaged in the experiential process.

iii. In many countries, through training of trainers' courses, teachers have been assisted to work with their peers as facilitators and team leaders. This gives rise to a sense of empowerment and confidence building.

iv. Collaborative and interactional techniques, are very much favoured, rather than lectures to large groups.

According to Coolahan (2002), it is also recognised internationally that teacher development is often best promoted within the context of school development, with more and more schools being encouraged to engage in collaborative development planning.

WestEd (2002) describes an effective professional development programme as one that:

i. Focuses on teachers as central to student learning, yet includes all other members of the school community

If CPD programmes embrace a holistic approach to their training, where stakeholders involved in student learning all partake in the training, it would be easier to solicit stakeholders’ support in the implementation of whatever was learnt during the training. However, a challenge remains in the resources to cater for all these people during the training.
ii. focuses on individual, collegial, and organizational improvement. On-school site based CPD programmes can easily achieve this since it is easier to include all teachers at the school in CPD training. Off-school site CPD will have to spend more resources if they are to cater for such organizations.

iii. respects and nurtures the intellectual and leadership capacity of teachers, principals, and others in the school community. If teachers’ views and opinions are respected and considered in the design and implementation of CPD programmes, they get motivated. This can result in teacher learning.

iv. reflects best available research and practice in teaching, learning, and leadership. CPD programme facilitators should have up-to-date content for them to be respected and listened to. They should frequently refer participants to current research and assist them on how to access the current information. They should also be informed by the current practices in the Teaching / Learning process and make reference to them during their training.

v. enables teachers to develop further expertise in subject content, teaching strategies, uses of technologies, and other essential elements in teaching to high standards. Teachers should see value in attending CPD programmes. They should feel transformed after undergoing training. They should gain what they would have missed if they had not attended the training. In short, they should be well equipped to face the classroom challenges by the end of a CPD programme training.

vi. promotes the continuous inquiry and improvement embedded in the daily life of schools. This is to say that a teacher should be a researcher. Each day a teacher experiences challenges in his / her classroom settings. These challenges need solutions. If the teacher does not reflect and do research on how to deal with those challenges, his / her learners may not experience improvements in their learning outcomes. CPD programme designers should foster this sense of reflection in the teachers. CPD programmes for teachers should aim at assisting the teachers to become more effective in their work.

vii. is planned collaboratively by those who will participate in and facilitate that development.
Collaborative planning ensures ownership of the programme. If teachers participate in the planning of what concerns them (the CPD programme), they will value the training and indeed will implement whatever they get from the training because of their input into the training. CPD programmes for teachers should be based on a felt need and started from the expressed desires of the participants. Certainly a desire for improvement should be a prime requisite in initiating such activities.

viii. requires substantial time and other resources.

Indeed if a CPD programme is to make an impact, it has to spread over a longer period of time. It is better to use more resources if they are available than to compromise quality. Resources can be in terms of financial, material or human resources.

ix. is driven by a coherent long-term plan.

Change is a gradual process, hence, it needs to be given more time during which the teachers are monitored and given necessary support.

x. is evaluated ultimately on the basis of its impact on teacher effectiveness and student learning; and this assessment guides subsequent professional development efforts.

Teacher change and consequent improvements in learner performance are the ultimate goals of any CPD programme for teachers. If this is not achieved, then the programme is said to have failed. Desimone (2009), also highlighted some characteristics of professional development that are critical to increasing teacher knowledge and skills and improving their practice, and which hold promise for increasing student achievement. She identified them as content focus, active learning, coherence, duration, and collective participation. These characteristics are elaborated below.

i. Content focus

The content focus of teacher learning may be the most influential feature. A compilation of evidence in the past decade points to the link between activities that focus on subject matter content and how students learn that content and increases in teacher knowledge and skills, improvements in practice, and, to a more limited extent, increases in student achievement (Desimone, 2009). In addition, Penuel et al. (2007), raise the point that some mix of focus on content and strategies, is
undoubtedly necessary to help support successful implementation. There is extensive support both for a focus on content knowledge in general and on specific forms of content that best support teaching practice (Hill, Rowan, & Ball, 2005). This is consistent with evidence in support of professional development that is closely aligned with practice, helping teachers to focus on what students are expected to know and the nature of common student misconceptions.

ii. Active learning

According to Desimone (2009) opportunities for teachers to engage in active learning are also related to the effectiveness of professional development. Active learning, as opposed to passive learning typically characterized by listening to a lecture, can take a number of forms, including observing expert teachers or being observed, followed by interactive feedback and discussion; reviewing student work in the topic areas being covered; and leading discussions. Penuel et al. (2007) add that some research studies such as the one by Fishman & Krajcik (2003) have presented evidence that supports the strategy of more hands-on and active learning, in that they have found a relationship between professional development activities in which teachers engage in inquiry and positive student-achievement outcomes.

iii. Coherence

The third core feature emphasized in the literature is coherence, the extent to which teacher learning is consistent with teachers’ knowledge and beliefs. The consistency of school, district, and state reforms and policies with what is taught in professional development is another important aspect of coherence. Penuel et al. (2007) define coherence as referring to teachers’ interpretations of how well aligned the professional development activities are with their own goals for learning and their goals for students. Hence, Lumpe, Haney, & Czerniak (2000) explain that if teachers perceive the demands to be aligned with their district’s goals and with social pressures within the schools, they are more likely to perceive professional development focused on a particular innovation as congruent with their own goals and thus commit to adopting or adapting the innovation.

iv. Duration
Research shows that intellectual and pedagogical change requires professional development activities to be of sufficient duration, including both span of time over which the activity is spread and the number of hours spent in the activity (Cohen & Hill, 2001; Fullan, 1993; Guskey, 1994; Supovitz & Turner, 2000). Research has not indicated an exact “tipping point” for duration but shows support for activities that are spread over a semester (or intense summer institutes with follow-up during the semester) and include 20 hours or more of contact time (Desimone, 2009).

v. Collective participation

Another critical feature is collective participation. This feature can be accomplished through participation of teachers from the same school, grade, or department. Such arrangements set up potential interaction and discourse, which can be a powerful form of teacher learning. Penuel et al. (2007) define the construct of ‘collective participation’ in research as referring to professional development in which teachers participate alongside colleagues from their school and district. Evidence from a wide range of studies of schools engaged in reform suggests that those that make extensive use of teacher collaboration are particularly successful in promoting implementation, in part because reforms have more authority when they are embraced by peers (Bryk & Schneider, 2002). Teachers who get help from colleagues who are more expert than they are may also gain important new information from those interactions that extends what they learn from formal professional development experiences. Having multiple participants in professional development from a single school helps build these kinds of trust and support relationships.

In summary, collective participation, where a number of teachers from the same school simultaneously attend a CPD programme, is ideal in respects highlighted above. However, the researcher feels it has the major drawback of leaving learners unattended to during the course of the programme especially if it takes place when schools are in session. This might impact negatively on the very reason for conducting CPD programmes, that of “improving learning outcomes”.

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From the discussion above on best practices for conducting CPD programmes for teachers, the researcher concurs with Kerr’s (1997) summary on what the literature on teachers’ continuing professional development suggests about “best practices” that should likely be incorporated in CPD programmes. Briefly, the researcher elaborates the following points as highlighted by Kerr (1997:2).

i. the necessity of treating in-service professional growth as a process that continues over time, and that needs regular and long-term support. The support should be provided by CPD programme providers whether at school, district, or national level. This will ensure that the programme is productive. “One-shot” workshops of a few hours cannot benefit the teachers much.

ii. the value of encouraging teachers to work in groups, and to form professional networks to exchange information about their school and their work. Communities of practice as suggested by Wenger (1998) including class or school visitations and other forms of professional sharing among teachers from different schools or within the school should be encouraged and indeed be fostered by CPD programme designers. This gives teachers the confidence to risk change in their classroom practices.

iii. the value to teachers of having opportunities to carefully reflect on their practice, and of their being given the chance and the encouragement to do so. It goes without saying that “a life without reflection is a life not worth living”. This applies to professions as well, including teaching. Teachers need to reflect on their practice so as to come up with solutions to the challenges they face in the classrooms. CPD programme providers need to foster a spirit of reflection in teachers.

iv. the power of reaching teachers where they work, that is, in sites that are at or near their own schools. Though this is not always possible for logistical reasons, it is equally important. Teachers should be reached close to where the action takes place. Where this is not possible, it is important that CPD providers find time to visit the teachers in their schools to monitor implementation.

v. the centrality of treating teachers as colleagues, and involving them in the process of their own development, rather than immersing them in
programmes that they themselves characterize as "set and get," "sit and stew," etc. This is very important and indeed critical to the success of any CPD programme. CPD programme providers should take input from teachers. This ensures that teachers accept the programme and willingly put to use what they learn from the programme. They should not be treated as passive listeners. Speck's (1996) theory of how adults learn should be put to maximum use.

vi. mirroring the recent national growth of concern about standards and student performance. Newer approaches to teachers’ in-service education now seek to link it with changes in student learning or in the functioning of school organization. Some recent studies and position papers on staff development emphasize that its goals should be student improvement, staff and organizational performance - so the critical evaluation is whether student learning has benefited. This is in line with the broader aim of any CPD programme – that of ensuring teacher change and improving learning outcomes. The CPD providers should have the learner in mind when designing their programmes. They should think of how they will get to the learner through the teachers participating in their programmes.

In all, this section gave the researcher in this study, some insights into what to look for in the assessment of the implementation of CPD programmes in Zomba Rural Education district in Malawi. The issues that have been discussed as best practices in this section, need to guide any CPD programme meant for teachers. Hence, the researcher in this study was guided on how those issues are taken on board by CPD providers in the design of their programmes as well as how teachers perceive them.

3.3 FINDINGS FROM OTHER STUDIES ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF CPD PROGRAMMES FOR TEACHERS

This section discusses studies conducted elsewhere on Continuing Professional Development for teachers. The researcher was interested in the findings of those
studies as far as the implementation of CPD programmes is concerned. This section was deemed relevant for this study because it informed the study on implementation issues as they relate to teacher change and consequent improvements in learner outcomes. This assisted in responding better to some of the research questions that guided this study. Hence, the section discussed some studies that gave insights on the following issues as they relate to effective implementation of CPD programmes: the process of teacher change; CPD subject content; collective participation; teacher networking; budgets for CPD activities; professional experiences / qualifications of facilitators; and time and duration for CPD programmes.

3.3.1 The process of teacher change

Teacher change is a complex process as highlighted by writers such as Andreasen et al. (2007); Clarke & Peter (1993); Clarke & Hollingsworth (2002); Cobb, Wood, & Yackel (1990); Desimone (2009); and Guskey (1986) among others. CPD programme implementers need to be aware of what is involved for teachers as well as the CPD providers to achieve the goals of an effective CPD programme. These goals include the need to initiate change in the classroom practices of teachers, change in their attitudes and beliefs, and change in the learning outcomes of students. They also need to be aware of the order in which the change progresses, According to Guskey (1986), significant change in teachers’ attitudes and beliefs occurs primarily after they gain evidence of improvements in student learning. These improvements typically result from changes teachers have made in their classroom practices.

Guskey’s (1986) assertion was further verified by a study conducted by Sinelnikov (2009) which aimed at providing a description and evaluation of an on-site professional development programme and its essential elements for Russian Physical Education teachers as they learned to teach a novel curriculum. The results of the study supported the notion of a gradual process of teacher change in line with Guskey’s model of teacher change (Guskey, 1986; 2002) which states that there is a certain order to the sequence of the three major outcomes of professional
development. The significant changes in teacher beliefs and attitudes occur after they gain evidence of improvements in student learning. In turn, the improvements in student learning result from the teacher changing his/her classroom practices. Sinelnikov (2009) affirms that the study provided empirical evidence for this notion as teachers had difficulty letting go of the control of the events that transpired ‘in the gym’ until they saw evidence of the desired outcomes in student learning. This confirmation resulted in teachers attempting a different approach to teaching and developing a partnership with the students, which in fact is an alteration of teachers’ prior beliefs about order and life in the gym.

The findings also suggest that the process of teacher change may be more difficult for more experienced teachers. Unfortunately the study did not go further to articulate how CPD programmes for such experienced teachers that resist change should be conducted. This study gives some insights into CPD programmes that cut across all the stages of teacher development. Realizing the complexity of the process of teacher change and the value of professional development for teachers, Gray (2005) in her study on a decline in participation in subject-based continuing professional development for teachers, recommended that each teacher have a personal entitlement that would allow her/him to engage in subject-based training, relevant to his/her own skills and the needs of the learners as the teacher perceives them. This could be supplemented by a professional entitlement that promotes generic training, if necessary to fit in with the needs of school development plans and Government policy as appropriate. Gray (2005) argues that the introduction of a personal entitlement would also help to ensure equality of access to training, offering scope for monitoring participation in CPD according to gender, race, or disability, amongst other things.

Though Gray (2005) advocates giving teachers personal and professional entitlements to ensure that they attend subject-based CPD programmes, the researcher feels that this recommendation is valid in countries where primary school teachers specialize in subjects to teach. It does not hold for teachers in countries like Malawi where primary school teachers do not specialize but teach all the subjects offered in the specific classes they are teaching. Nevertheless, Gray’s
(2005) recommendation gives guidance on how CPD programmes should be conducted to ensure that each teacher gets a chance to participate.

3.3.2 CPD subject content

The literature has shown that adults, like children, need to be motivated to learn (Speck, 1996). This chapter has highlighted some of the factors that motivate adults to learn. CPD providers need to take them into consideration when planning and designing CPD programmes for teachers. For instance, adults must see the benefit of learning in order to motivate themselves to learn the subject (Lieb, 1991). Guskey (2002) argues that

*What attracts teachers to professional development is their belief that it will expand their knowledge and skills, contribute to their growth, and enhance their effectiveness with students. What they hope to gain through professional development are specific, concrete, and practical ideas that directly relate to the day-to-day operation of their classrooms. Development programmes that fail to address these needs are unlikely to succeed (p.382).*

Hence, Birman, Desimone, Porter & Garet (2000) argue that targeting a professional development activity on a specific subject area or subject specific teaching method is preferable. In a study on Sport Education by Sinelnikov (2009) which focused on content specific to Sport Education (such as team affiliation, responsibility, etc.) and specific teaching and management strategies for sport education, it was noted that teachers utilizing Sport Education specific pedagogical behaviours, considered benchmark elements of Sport Education during their teaching.

Similarly, Desimone, Porter, Garet, Kwang Suk Yoon, & Birman (2002) in their longitudinal study of the Effects of Professional Development on Teaching Practice established that professional development focused on specific teaching practices, increased teachers’ use of those practices in the classroom. One important feature of Desimone’s *et al.* (2002) study was the monitoring and support strategies that were inbuilt into their CPD programme. Without that, it would not have been easy to
make conclusions that, specific teaching practices, increase teachers’ use of those practices. This shows how important it is for CPD providers to monitor how teachers put into practice what they learn from the CPD programmes. This study also sought to find out the monitoring and support mechanisms that are in place to facilitate implementation of CPD programmes in Zomba Rural Education District in Malawi. Desimone’s et al. (2002) further concluded that, in addition to content focus, five key features of professional development are effective in improving teaching practice and these include reform type, duration, collective participation, active learning and coherence. These features have already been discussed in the preceding sections.

Further, researchers worldwide including Armour & Makopoulou (2006) and Birman et al. (2000); advocate active learning in CPD programmes. They believe that when teachers are involved in active learning during their professional development, they are more likely to increase knowledge and change classroom practices. Active learning, according to Birman et al.(2000), includes opportunities to observe and be observed teaching; to plan classroom implementation; to review student work; and to present, read, and write’. In a study by Sinelnikov (2009), the results supported this notion of providing opportunities to observe. Specifically, in Sinelnikov’s study, teachers reported a need for observation of a number of sample lessons taught in accordance with key principles of Sport Education prior to the start of their own teaching. The data also suggested the need of those observations to have a clear focus on specific pedagogical strategies that are novel or that extend outside of common teaching practices currently utilized by teachers. One other aspect of active learning included the opportunity for teachers to obtain coaching and feedback on their teaching (Little & Houston, 2003).

The findings of Sinelnikov’s (2009) study suggest that regular lesson observation as well as briefing and debriefing sessions may provide the feedback necessary for teachers to provide validation of the congruence of their teaching to Sport Education. The data also suggest that regular teaching-to-model congruence validation between the teacher and a person delivering professional development contributes to the effectiveness of the programme.
These studies have illustrated how critical it is to provide support to teachers as they engage in a process of teacher change. Concrete experiences such as teachers observing CPD facilitators teach specific teaching skills is very important for the teachers to risk trying out change in their classroom practice. It is also important that teachers are observed teaching and given supportive feedback on the process. This motivates them and gives them the confidence to implement what they learn from CPD programmes. However, the researcher feels that effectiveness of this assertion depends very much on the expertise of the CPD facilitators. In the cascade mode of training, it has been reported that some facilitators lack confidence, knowledge and understanding to manage the training process (Engelbrecht et al., 2007). In such cases, one wonders how such facilitators can be role models to the teachers.

Nevertheless, the argument posed here guided the researcher in this study to solicit views from teachers about how involved they are in active learning during CPD programmes and the type of feedback, if any, that they receive from the CPD facilitators. In addition they guided the researcher on support mechanisms that are in place for teachers that have attended CPD programmes. The responses helped supplement the answers to some of the questions of this study, such as the one on how CPD programme facilitators impart knowledge and skills to teachers during CPD training.

3.3.3 Collective participation

CPD programme providers can deliberately plan for CPD programmes to include a number of teachers from the same school / department/ subject / grade or from nearby schools so that they support each other in line with what they learned from the CPD programme. This is called collective participation according to Bernauer, (2002). The benefit of collective participation, or ‘participation of teachers from the same department, subject, or grade lies in the contribution to a shared professional culture and will more likely result in active learning opportunities (Birman et al., 2000). Sinelnikov’s (2009) study on Sport Education also touched on the same point when it found that collective participation encouraged sharing knowledge, provided
the basis for peer support, and stimulated teacher reflection. In addition, teachers in the study developed a common understanding of goals, objectives, instructional strategies, and shared understanding of how to support effective student learning which allowed for considerable cooperation between teachers and created a sense of shared professional culture.

In an evaluation of a national Physical Education and school sports professional development programmes in the United Kingdom, Armour and Makopoulu (2006) also confirmed the ability of teachers to engage in effective and sustained learning when teachers from the same school participate together in a continuous professional development activity. There is also some evidence suggesting that such an effect is long-term (Armour and Makopoulu, 2006).

Further, Desimone et al. (2002) in their longitudinal study of Effects of Professional Development on Teaching Practice established that professional development is more effective in changing teachers' classroom practice when it has the collective participation of teachers from the same school, department, or grade. Adey, (2004) concurs with the above authors in emphasizing the need for a supportive change environment and that there must be collegiality among the teachers, the support of school management and, again, a strong sense of ownership. Adey (2004) further noted the fragility of sustained change in schools with high teacher turnover.

From this discussion, it shows that several authors including the researcher in this study agree that collective participation is very important in ensuring a supportive environment for teachers to implement what they learn from CPD training. However, the above studies have ignored the importance of teacher relationships within and outside the school. Teacher relationships play a great role if collective participation is to yield fruits in the schools. If teachers are not on good terms with each other, it will be difficult for them to support each other in implementing what they learn from the CPD training even if they all participated in the training. Nevertheless, the findings on collective participation by the above studies were an inspiration for this study in that the researcher was guided on how CPD programmes should be conducted.
3.3.4 Teacher networking

Teacher networking according to Gray (2005) is another learning opportunity where teachers from different schools network and help each other grow professionally by sharing experiences, doing team teaching, observing each other teach, planning lessons together and doing many more things related to their profession together. In a study in the UK, conducted by Gray (2005) on teacher networking, it was observed that teachers were enthusiastic about networking and learning opportunities that took place outside school. They reported that although these opportunities took relatively little time out of their working lives, they found them stimulating and refreshing, and that they assisted in their overall professional development. Studies conducted by Wenger (1998), and Riding (2001) found similar results. Gray (2005) also noted that many teachers expressed great enthusiasm for observing peers teaching the same or similar subject areas. The ability to visit other schools was felt to be extremely important, as it prevented staff teams from becoming too introspective. Teachers felt that peer observation was an extremely cost-effective and time-effective professional development opportunity. They argued that, in the present uncertain funding climate for CPD programmes in most countries, this was one method of training that could play a more important role within schools.

Further, in networking, there is collaboration. Ashton & Webb (1986) captured in an Advisory Committee of Mathematics Education (ACME) Report (2006) on ensuring effective Continuing Professional Development for teachers of Mathematics in primary schools in the UK, argue that collaboration encourages risk taking, learning from mistakes and sharing strategies. This has arisen from concerns that

*Opportunities for teacher learning focus almost exclusively on activities or methods of teaching and seldom attempt to help teachers develop their own conceptual understanding of the underlying mathematical ideas, what students understand about those ideas, or how they learn. ... programmes that provide readymade, worked-out solutions to teaching problems should not expect that teachers will see themselves as in control of their own learning (p.20).*
Recently, researchers have been turning their attention to investigating what forms of primary mathematics CPD are ‘generative’; that is, those that continue beyond the ‘life’ of professional development. Collaborative CPD with colleagues would seem to be one approach (ACME report, 2006).

From this discussion, teachers value networks and find them useful in improving their classroom practices. They provide them with an opportunity to go out to other schools on education visits and learn from colleagues how they handle similar classroom challenges. Above all, teachers in networks encourage each other on how best to deal with issues that negatively impact the teaching and learning process. Noteworthy, however, is the fact that the effectiveness of teacher networks is dependent on a number of factors, one of which could be how conversant the teachers are with the issues that they want to address through the network. If all the teachers in a given network are limited in content or pedagogical skills and other skills required in solving their challenges, then the network would be rendered useless. Nevertheless, networks are asserts in the effective implementation of CPD programmes as they provide a foundation for collaboration and support. Hence this study was guided by the findings of the other studies on teacher networks to respond to some of the research questions of the study on monitoring and support mechanisms; challenges faced in implementation of CPD programmes; and on best practices on implementation of CPD programmes.

3.3.5 Budgets for CPD activities

Money is a valuable resource as far as professional development is concerned (Gray, 2005). Without money CPD programme implementation will be a non-starter. It does not really matter whether it is off-school site or on-school site based CPD – both forms of CPD require money. However, money like time, is a scarce resource and usually a limiting factor in the implementation of most CPD programmes for teachers. In a study in the UK, conducted by Gray (2005), it was found that teacher enthusiasm for CPD was tempered in many cases by frustration at existing structures for planning, resourcing and delivering CPD. Emphasizing this point, Gray (2005) writes that
Unregulated free market with no system of quality assurance meant that time and money was being wasted on courses of dubious quality. Erratic funding patterns meant that it was hard to plan effective CPD programmes from year to year. Varying distribution of CPD funding across the regions has resulted in a ‘postcode lottery’ of provision, with some teachers feeling overlooked, and others feeling barely able to address their CPD needs on top of their already considerable workloads (p.26).

In this study, the researcher was also interested in finding out the funding modalities that are put in place to ensure that CPD programme activities are implemented as planned. The study was also concerned with how and by whom the funding is done and how it is monitored to ensure that the money is used according to plan. Further, the study was interested to know the challenges that ensue due to funding problems. Results of the studies discussed above guided the researcher in responding to questions about funding modalities for CPD training in the Zomba Rural Education District.

### 3.3.6 Professional experiences / qualifications of CPD programme facilitators

One of the major determining factors of good quality CPD programmes for teachers is the professional experiences / qualifications of the CPD programme facilitators. Just like in a study conducted by Burchinal, Cryer, Clifford, & Howes (2002) which confirmed that the quality of early education programmes is strongly associated with the qualifications of the programmes’ teachers, the same applies to the quality of CPD programmes for primary school teachers. Experience coupled with good professional qualifications of the CPD programme facilitators play a role in the good delivery of lessons during the training. Similarly, a study conducted by Neuman & Cunningham (2009) in Michigan on the impact of professional development on teacher knowledge and quality early language and literacy practices in centre - and home-based care settings, suggested that, to meet the demands of quality teaching, trainers need to know not only what to teach but how to teach it effectively. They need to understand what individual teachers bring to the training, their cultural histories, building upon their prior knowledge in a way that engages the teacher’s
understanding of the concepts at hand. All this is not possible if the facilitators are limited in both subject and pedagogical content. Hence, this study endeavoured also to find out the professional experiences as well as qualifications of the CPD facilitators in Zomba Rural Education District, as this plays a critical role in the successful implementation of CPD programmes.

### 3.3.7 Time and duration for CPD programmes

This chapter has already unveiled the necessity of treating in-service professional growth as a process that continues over time, and needs regular and long-term support. This has been verified by different studies. One such study was conducted by Wiesenmayer & Koul (1999) in West Virginia, on the Level of Internet use among Science Teachers involved in a Professional Development Project. The study found that there was a significantly higher level of Internet use among completers of the Rural Net courses (those that were exposed to a longer period of training, in this case, one year of training and support), implying that sustained in-service teacher training helps teachers to develop the most effective ways to use network technologies with students.

Similar to these findings was that of Sinelnikov (2009) on a study of Sport Education in Russia. The study involved teachers and researchers holding briefing and debriefing meetings twice a week prior to and after the teachers taught the lessons. Similar to findings from other projects such as Project Science (Birman et al., 2000), such extensive involvement resulting from an extended duration contributed to and facilitated the high-quality substance of the programme. Askew, Brown, Rhodes, Wiliam & Johnson (1997) captured in an ACME Report (2006) on ensuring effective Continuing Professional Development for teachers of Mathematics in primary schools report on extended CPD of at least 14 days, as having a statistically significant effect on teachers’ beliefs and practices and on children’s learning. Furthermore, the report indicates that at least 2 years is needed for real change to come about, and that new classroom practices only become embedded after around 30 hours of trying them out (Adey, 2004). However, Desimone (2009) notes that though research has not indicated an exact duration for effective CPD training,
there is evidence that activities that are spread over a semester (or intense summer institutes with follow-up during the semester) and include 20 hours or more of contact time are more effective.

In addition to CPD programme providers taking into consideration the length of CPD programmes, other writers have suggested that In-service meetings need to be held at times that do not disrupt teaching, for example, after school hours or during weekends (NSTED, 2007).

The findings of the different studies above on the time and duration of CPD programmes, identify time as another very valuable resource as far as effective implementation of CPD programmes is concerned. CPD programme providers need to be aware of when and how long to conduct their CPD programmes so as to achieve their intended purposes. “One shot off” workshops of just a few hours or days do not mean much to teachers and they are considered a waste of the teachers’ valuable time. The findings of different studies discussed above guided this study in determining how much time is allocated for CPD activities in Zomba Rural Education District as well as gaining input from teachers on their feelings about the time and their preferences in terms of how long CPD activities should be conducted in the district. The findings of the other studies were used as benchmarks in responding to the question of how much time is allocated for CPD activities in the Zomba Rural Education District.

3.4 SUMMARY

In summary, the literature on past studies on Continuing professional Development for teachers informed this study in a number of ways as described above. Most importantly, it was informative on the current methodological approaches in assessing CPD programme implementation. The review has also identified some of the key areas of focus when assessing CPD programme implementation for teachers. Further, the review has brought to the light some of the challenges faced in the implementation of CPD programmes for teachers that result in change. These challenges were an added asset in assessing the challenges that teachers in the
Zomba Rural Education District face when trying to put into practice what they learn from CPD programmes. In addition, the best practices that the literature has unveiled on the effective implementation of CPD programmes for teachers informed this study on exactly what is happening on the ground regarding the implementation of CPD programmes.

From the literature, one is tempted to think that a lot has already been researched on Continuing Professional Development for teachers. But a critical eye and mind will note that none of the studies has assessed the implementation of CPD programmes for primary school teachers in Malawi, let alone Zomba Rural Education District. Most of those studies have been conducted in developed countries such as the United Kingdom and the United States of America. But, as argued by Roberts and Dyer (2001), dissimilar groups of teachers have dissimilar in-service needs, and Washburn et al (2001) add that in-service needs vary by geographical location. Hence, it is not guaranteed that what works in the United States or United Kingdom, will work in Malawi. Furthermore, most of the studies on CPD have focused on specific subject areas or aspects of CPD, this has left a gap in the literature on a holistic approach that broadly looks into issues of implementation of CPD programmes for primary school teachers. This study is intended to fill this gap and add to the literature on CPD implementation nationally, regionally and globally. This has also been observed by Frechtling, Sharp, Carey, & Vaden-Kiernan (1995) and Guskey, (2000) captured in Desimone (2009) who have written that

For decades, studies of professional development consisted mainly of documenting teacher satisfaction, attitude change, or commitment to innovation rather than its results or the processes by which it worked (p.181)

The next chapter, that is chapter four, highlights the methodology that was used in this study.
4.1 INTRODUCTION

Methodology in research refers to the strategy or plan of action that links methods to outcomes and governs the choice and use of methods (Creswell, 2003). Dick & Swepson (1997) argue that good research is research which uses a methodology which fits the situation and the goals being pursued. This chapter discusses all the technological aspects that guided the research process. These include the research paradigm; research design; population, sample and sampling techniques; data collection instruments; issues of validity / reliability / trustworthiness; data analysis; ethical considerations; and limitations of the study. Below is a brief discussion on each.

4.2 RESEARCH PARADIGM

Maree (2007) defines a paradigm as a set of assumptions or belief about fundamental aspects of reality which gives rise to a particular world view. According to Maree (2007), paradigms serve as the lens or organizing principles by which reality is interpreted. Paradigms have to do with knowledge claims. Creswell (1994) captured in Khumwong (2004) writes that philosophers and researchers make claims about what knowledge is (ontology), how we know it (epistemology), what values go into it (axiology), how we write about it (rhetoric), and the process for studying it (methodology). There are different paradigms or knowledge claims that have taken root in today’s research namely, positivism; interpretivism; and post-positivism among others. Below is a brief explanation of each of the paradigms as well as a detailed description of the paradigm that guided this study.
4.2.1 Positivism

The positivist paradigm of exploring social reality is based on the philosophical ideas of the French philosopher August Comte, who emphasized observation and reason as means of understanding human behaviour (Dash, 2005). According to Comte, true knowledge is based on experience of the senses and can be obtained by observation and experiment. So, positivistic thinkers adopt his scientific method as a means of knowledge generation. In this way, positivism is understood within the framework of the principles and assumptions of science. Gephart (1999) alludes to these principles when he posits that positivism assumes an objective world which scientific methods can more or less readily represent and measure, and it seeks to predict and explain causal relations among key variables. In line with Gephart (1999), Kim (2003) notes that positivism asserts that knowledge and truth are questions of correspondence in that they relate to an external referent reality. This correspondence theory of truth stipulates that the source of truth is in reality; therefore, a statement is proved to be true if it agrees with an independently existing reality and is false if it does not.

Further, Trochim (2000) contends that positivism is a position that holds that the goal of knowledge is simply to describe the phenomena that we experience and the purpose of science is simply to stick to what we can observe and measure and so knowledge of anything beyond that, a positivist would hold, is impossible. Trochim (2006) writes that the positivists believe in empiricism, that is, the idea that observation and measurement are the core of the scientific endeavour. The key approach of the scientific method is the experiment, that is, the attempt to discern natural laws through direct manipulation and observation. Ryan (2006:15) writes that within positivism, knowledge has been treated as follows:

i. What counts is the means (methodology) by which knowledge is arrived at. These means must be objective, empirical and scientific;

ii. Only certain topics are worthy of enquiry, namely; those that exist in the public world;
iii. The relationship between the self and knowledge has been largely denied – knowledge is regarded as separate from the person who constructs it. The political is separate from the personal;

iv. Maths, science and technical knowledge are given high status, because they are regarded as objective, separate from the person and the private world;

v. Knowledge is construed as being something discovered, not produced by human beings.

Noteworthy however is the fact that, in the positivist view of the world, science is seen as the way to get at truth, to understand the world well enough so that we might predict and control it. Thus, positivism emphasizes the objectivist approach to studying social phenomena and gives importance to research methods focusing on quantitative analysis, surveys, experiments and the like (Dash, 2005). However this lens of viewing the world and the nature of its epistemologies is under heavy criticism for its insistence on divisions between objectivity and subjectivity, or public and private knowledge, or scientific and emotional knowledge (Ryan, 2006). Anti-positivists argue that knowledge cannot be divorced from ontology (being) and personal experience. So this view is inadequate when it comes to learning about how people live, how they view the world, how they cope with it, how they change it, and so on (Ryan, 2006).

In addition, Guba & Lincoln, (1994) argue that positivistic methods strip contexts from meanings in the process of developing quantified measures of phenomena and the quantitative measures often exclude members' meanings and interpretations from data which are collected. These methods impose outsiders' meanings and interpretations on data. They require statistical samples which often do not represent specific social groups and which do not allow for generalization to or understanding of individual cases (Gephart 1999). Further, Kim (2003) contends that blind faith in the positivistic approach can potentially jeopardize the soundness of research in the social sciences because influential contextual factors in organizations can be ignored by methods aiming to draw causal inferences through examining only phenomena that are readily observable.
4. 2.2 Interpretivism

Interpretivism emphasizes that social reality is viewed and interpreted by the individual according to the ideological positions the individual possesses. Therefore, knowledge is personally experienced rather than acquired from or imposed from outside (Dash, 2005). The interpretivists believe that reality is multi-layered and complex (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2000) and a single phenomenon has multiple interpretations. They emphasize that the verification of a phenomenon is adopted when the level of understanding of a phenomenon is such that the concern is to probe into the various unexplored dimensions of the phenomenon rather than establishing specific relationship among the components, as happens in the case of positivism. Dash (2005) adds that interpretive researchers have often preferred meaning (versus measurement) oriented methods. They assume that knowledge and meaning are acts of interpretation; hence, there is no objective knowledge which is independent of thinking or human reasoning. Further, Orlikowski & Baroudi, (1991) captured in Dobson (2002), add that interpretivism asserts that reality, as well as our knowledge thereof, are social products and are, hence, incapable of being understood independently of the social actors (including the researchers) that construct and make sense of that reality.

While positivism stands for objectivity, measurability, predictability, controllability and constructs laws and rules of human behavior, interpretivism essentially emphasizes understanding and interpretation of phenomena and making meaning out of this process. According to Dash (2005), interpretivism which stresses the subjectivist approach to studying social phenomena, attaches importance to a range of research techniques focusing on qualitative analysis. These include personal interviews, participant observations, accounts of individuals, personal constructs etc. In the same vein, Gephart (1999) writes that in the interpretivist approach, data collection and representation have been accomplished with informant interviewing, ethnography, or the thick description of cultures based on intimate knowledge and participation. Sometimes the approach uses ethnographically-linked textual analyses which use transcripts or verbal protocols of meetings as data. According to
Gephart (1999), such verbal or conversational data are collected to represent interactions in important, naturally occurring social settings.

In terms of assessment, interpretive research differs from positivist theory assessment. Positivists seek rigour using statistical criteria and conceptions of reliability and validity to evaluate the quality of quantitative findings (Gephart, 1999). Sample size, common methods bias and sampling error are common concerns. In contrast, meaning focused research in the interpretive tradition is assessed in terms of trustworthiness criteria including credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability and authenticity criteria including fairness and ontological, catalytic and tactical authenticity (Guba & Lincoln, 1994).

Interpretivism has its greatest strength in the richness and depth of explorations and descriptions it yields through its qualitative approach to research. However, it is criticized for its subjectivity and the failure of the approach to generalize its findings beyond the situation studied (Maree, 2007).

### 4.2.3 Post-positivism

Post-positivism is a shift away from positivism. In fact Trochim (2006) refers to it as a wholesale rejection of the central tenets of positivism in the same way Creswell (2003: 7) calls it “the thinking after positivism”. Thus, post-positivism is a knowledge claim that challenges the absolute truth and recognizes that we cannot be “positive” about claims of knowledge when studying the behaviours and actions of humans because we are all biased and all of our observations are affected (Ryan, 2006). Eriksson & Kovalainen (2008) argued that in post-positivism, the knower and the known cannot be separated as is the case in positivism; and that, although human beings cannot perfectly understand reality, researchers can approach it with rigorous data collection and analysis. Hence, post-positivistic approach to research opens the door to multiple methods and different worldviews as well as to different forms of data collection and analysis so as to provide and justify that rigour in the process of carrying out the research. Similarly, Trochim (2006) acknowledged that
the post-positivist emphasizes the importance of multiple measures and observations, each of which may possess different types of error, and the need to use triangulation across these multiple errorful sources. Hence, the use of both quantitative and qualitative means of data collection in the same study is encouraged.

Critics of post-positivism (usually positivists) direct their criticisms towards the interactive and participatory nature of quantitative and qualitative methods used in this approach. They argue that post-positivists use methods that are merely an assembly of anecdotes and personal impressions which are highly suspicious in terms of research subjectivity and researcher bias (Maree, 2007). However, the bias is compensated for in the use of multiple methods in the data collection process.

Similar to Post-positivist ideologies are the views in the realism and pragmatism knowledge claims. Realism concerns multiple perceptions about a single, mind-independent reality (Healy & Perry, 2000). Rather than being supposedly value-free, as in positive research, or value-laden as in interpretive research, realism is, instead, value cognizant; conscious of the values of human systems and of researchers (Krauss, 2005). Realism recognizes that perceptions have certain plasticity and that there are differences between reality and people’s perceptions of reality (Bisman, 2002). Dobson (2002) contends that the critical realist agrees that our knowledge of reality is a result of social conditioning and, thus, cannot be understood independently of the social actors involved in the knowledge derivation process. Hence within a critical realism framework, both qualitative and quantitative methodologies are seen as appropriate for researching the underlying mechanisms that drive actions and events (Healy & Perry, 2000).

In pragmatism, the concern is “what works” best for understanding a particular research problem. Instead of “methods” being important as is the case in the positivism knowledge claims, the pragmatist views the “problem” as the most important part, hence, researchers should use all approaches to understand the problem (Creswell, 2003). That is, what works is what is useful and should be used regardless of any philosophical assumptions, or any other type of assumptions (Johnson & Turner, 2003). According to Patton (2002) captured in Mwanza (2008), a
pragmatic position implies the choice of a method that considers what will work best in a given situation to meet practical issues faced in an inquiry and thereby answer the research question. This is to say, the research question dictates the methods and not the paradigm or method. Hence, data collection and analysis methods are chosen because they are most likely to provide insights into the problem with no philosophical loyalty to any alternative paradigm (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006). Flick, Von Kardorff & Steinke (2004) acknowledge, that, pragmatism, like realism and post-positivism, opens the door to multiple different worldviews and different assumptions as well as to different forms of data collection and analysis methods.

From this discussion, it may appear difficult to separate the philosophies embedded in post-positivism, realism and pragmatism. This may explain why some authors write that realism can also be called post-positivism (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Others claim that realism is a branch of post-positivism (Maree, 2007), hence, the weaknesses associated with post-positivism may also apply to realism and pragmatism.

In conclusion, each of the schools of thought or knowledge claims discussed above has its own strengths and weaknesses. Many of the criticisms made of one knowledge claim may apply equally to another. For practical research purposes, there is not an automatic preference for one technique above another. The purpose of the study and the research question would determine which technique is most appropriate.

4.2.4 Paradigm that guided the study

The choice of a paradigm to guide this study was influenced by the nature of the problem being investigated. The main objective of the study was to assess how Continuing Professional Development programmes for teachers in Zomba Rural Education District in Malawi are implemented. To get a more holistic picture of how the CPD programmes are implemented, there was need for the researcher to be objective and to minimize the researcher’s biases and, at the same time, to be
subjective enough to have a deeper insight into the issues surrounding the implementation of CPD programmes in Zomba Rural Education District. Thus, a paradigm that adequately supports both positivistic and interpretivistic ideas was considered appropriate to guide the study. Hence, post-positivism paradigm was the philosophical foundation, which supported the design of the research in this study because of its flexibility in the use of both qualitative and quantitative approaches to research.

The post-positivism paradigm was preferred because the researcher wished to maintain an interest in some aspects of quantification (positivism) yet at the same time, incorporate interpretivist concerns around subjectivity and meaning. Furthermore, the researcher was interested in the use of the pragmatic combination of qualitative and quantitative methods to understand the phenomenon of interest better (Maree, 2007). The post-positivism paradigm fitted well with the study because, as noted earlier, the paradigm opens the door to multiple methods and different worldviews as well as to different forms of data collection and analysis.

This study focused on assessing the implementation of CPD programmes in Zomba Rural Education District. To understand the issues in greater depth, one needed to use different approaches. This is also supported by Trockim (2006) who says that the post-positivist emphasizes the importance of multiple measures and observations, each of which may possess different types of error. There is need therefore to use triangulation across multiple sources to get the actual meaning of what is happening in reality. Post-positivists acknowledge that people are all biased and all of their observations are affected (theory-laden), therefore, their best hope for achieving objectivity is to triangulate across multiple fallible perspectives (Trockim, 2006).

4.3  RESEARCH DESIGN / APPROACH

Trockim (2006) defines research design as the structure of research, that is, the "glue" that holds all of the elements in a research project together. A research
approach or design can be qualitative, quantitative or a mixed method approach depending on answers sought by the researcher to the following three questions as suggested by Creswell (2003):

i. What knowledge claims are being made by the researcher (including theoretical perspective)?

ii. What strategies of inquiry will inform the procedures?

iii. What methods of data collection and analysis will be used?

(p.5)

The knowledge claims are as discussed in the section on research paradigms, that is, positivism, interpretivism and post-positivism including realism and pragmatism, among others. The strategies of inquiry or traditions of inquiry or methodologies as they are sometimes called, provide specific direction for procedures in a research design. The strategies can be experiments, quasi experiments, or surveys in the case of quantitative studies; or they can be ethnographies, case studies, or phenomenological research, if it is a qualitative study (Creswell, 2003). A mixed method approach includes strategies from both qualitative and quantitative approaches. The methods of data collection imply the instruments used in the data collection process and may include interviews, questionnaires, focus group discussions, observations and others, depending on whether the study is qualitative, quantitative or a mixed method study.

Below is a discussion of each of the three approaches to a research study.

4. 3.1 Qualitative Research design

In general, qualitative research is based on a relativistic, constructivist ontology that argues that there is no objective reality; rather, there are multiple realities constructed by human beings who experience a phenomenon of interest (Krauss, 2005). People impose order on the world as they perceive it in an effort to construct meaning. Meaning lies in cognition not in elements external to us. Information impinging on our cognitive systems is screened, translated, altered, and perhaps
rejected by the knowledge that already exists in that system. The resulting knowledge is idiosyncratic and is purposefully constructed (Lythcott & Duschl, 1990). This type of research is primarily subjective in approach as it seeks to understand human behavior and the reasons that govern such behavior. Researchers have the tendency to become subjectively immersed in the subject matter in this type of research method.

Ryan (2006:21) gives the following characteristics of qualitative research:

- It seeks to provide an in-depth picture;
- It generally deals with smaller numbers than quantitative research;
- It tries to interpret historically or culturally significant phenomena;
- It can be used to flesh out quantitative data;
- It tries to isolate and define categories during the process of research;
- It is appropriate when the questions posed by the researcher are difficult for a respondent to answer precisely;
- It tries to illuminate aspects of people’s everyday lives;
- It values participants’ perspectives on their worlds;
- And it often relies on people’s words as its primary data.

According to Creswell (2003), qualitative research uses strategies of inquiry such as narratives, phenomenologies, ethnographies, grounded theory studies or case studies. In this type of research, the researcher collects open-ended emerging data with the primary intent of developing themes from the data. However, findings from a qualitative research are often not generalizable because of the small numbers and narrow range of participants used in the data collection process.

### 4.3.2 Quantitative Research design

Maree (2007) describe quantitative research as a process that is systematic and objective in its ways of using numerical data from only a selected subgroup of a universe (or population) to generalize the findings to the universe that is being studied. As can be deduced from the definition, the three most important elements of quantitative research are: objectivity, numerical data and generalisability. According to Maree (2007), in quantitative research, researchers tend to remain objectively separated from the subject matter. This is because quantitative research is objective in approach and it only seeks precise measurements and analysis of target concepts to answer the inquiry.
Ryan (2006) looks at quantitative research as research that: tries to link variables (features which vary from person to person); tries to test theories or hypotheses; tries to predict; and tries to isolate and define categories before research starts and then to determine the relationships between them. The quantitative data collected through this type of research can reveal generalisable information for a large group of people. However, quantitative research is criticized for its inability to look at individual cases in any detail and also that its highly structured nature prevents the researcher from following up unexpected outcomes or information (Ryan, 2006). In addition, quantitative data often fail to provide specific answers, reasons, explanations or examples.

4.3.3 The mixed methods research design

The mixed methods research builds on both the quantitative and qualitative approaches and uses them both in a single study (Johnson, 2003). Both qualitative and quantitative methods have strengths and weaknesses and when used together, these methods can be complimentary and allow for a more complete analysis of the research situation (Tashokkori & Teddie, 1998). This means the data collection process in the mixed methods approach involves gathering both numerical information as well as text information so that the final database represents both quantitative and qualitative information (Creswell, 2003). The mixed methods design is supported by post-positivistic as well as the pragmatic and realism ideals as they advocate the use of multiple measures and observations, each of which may possess different types of error, and therefore require triangulation to get reality (Trochim, 2006).

The collection of data in a mixed method approach can either be sequential or concurrent. According to Maree (2007), sequential procedures imply that the researcher collects both the quantitative and qualitative data in phases (sequentially) while concurrent procedures, means that the researcher will collect both quantitative and qualitative data at the same time (concurrently). When the data were collected in phases, either the qualitative or quantitative data can come first, depending on the initial intent of researcher. However, concurrent procedures
are less time-consuming than sequential procedures. Integration of the two types of data can occur at several stages in the process of research; that is, the data collection (combining open ended questions in a survey with closed ended questions); the data analysis and interpretation (transforming qualitative themes or codes into quantitative numbers and comparing that information with quantitative results; or some combination of places (both during data collection and analysis).

It is noteworthy that researchers interested in the use of the mixed methods approach are cautioned to be mindful that the approach calls for extensive data collection. Furthermore it is time-intensive in that it requires analysis of both text and numerical data; and that it requires the researcher to be familiar with both quantitative and qualitative forms of research (Creswell, 2003).

4.3.4 The research design / approach that guided the study

This study employed a Triangulation Mixed Method approach for the collection of data that gave useful information about the implementation of CPD programmes in Zomba Rural Education District. The strategy used was the Concurrent Triangulation strategy which uses both quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection concurrently in order to best understand the phenomenon of interest (Creswell, 2003). Concurrent procedures entail collecting both quantitative and qualitative data at the same time during the study and then integrating the information in the interpretation of the overall results (Creswell, 2003). In this study, the researcher used both quantitative and qualitative methods in an attempt to confirm, cross validate or corroborate the findings.

The quantitative approach enabled the researcher to generate a large amount of data within a short time, thus, facilitating the conduct of the study within the time limits of the study programme. Further, this approach gave opportunities to all teachers in Zomba Rural Education District to give their views on the implementation of CPD programmes in the district, thereby increasing the reliability and generalizability of the results. Additionally, the quantitative approach guaranteed a shorter time for data analysis as the researcher used SPSS to facilitate the statistical analysis process.
The various methods of data collection yielded both qualitative and quantitative data. In some cases the qualitative data was used to triangulate the quantitative data while in other cases it was the reverse. In this way, the data supplemented each other during the data collection, data analysis and interpretation process to give a good picture of how CPD programmes are implemented in Zomba Rural Education District. Dick and Swepson, (1997) alludes to this when they note that a mixed method approach is advisable as it provides a good basis for data triangulation and so adds to the overall reliability of the research process.

The mixed method approach fitted well with this study as the main goal of the study was to get a deeper understanding of how CPD programmes are implemented in Zomba Rural Education District, which according to the researcher, no single method can do. The mixing of both qualitative and quantitative methods in the data collection process as well as the use of multiple sources of information enabled the researcher to solicit enough views from different data sources that gave adequate insights into the issues of implementation of CPD programmes in Zomba Rural Education District. Further, the mixed method approach ensured that biases that might be inherent in any single method neutralize or cancel the biases of other methods (Creswell, 2003). Tashakorri & Teddlie (2003) concur with this when they say that the mixed methods approach provides strengths that offset the weaknesses in the use of either the quantitative or qualitative approach alone. The concurrent mixed methods approach also reduced the time for data collection (Creswell 2003) and hence enabled the researcher to complete the study in the given period of time.

4.4 POPULATION, SAMPLE AND SAMPLING

4.4.1 Population

A population is defined as the total quantity of things or cases of the type which is the subject of a study (Walliman 2006). A population can refer to a group of people that share one or more characteristics from which data can be gathered and analyzed. According to the 2009 Education Management Information Systems (EMIS), in Zomba Rural Education District, there are 191 primary schools; 17
education zones; and 1684 primary school teachers. In this study the population entailed teachers, head teachers, Primary Education Advisors, CPD programme facilitators, District Education Managers, Coordinating Primary Education Advisor and Director of Department for Teacher Education Development (DTED).

4. 4.2 Sample and sampling

Zomba Rural Education District is one of the 34 Education Districts in Malawi. The district has been preferred in this study because it is one of the rural education districts and has received substantial attention in terms of being considered for CPD programme implementation. This is because of its proximity to most educational institutions such as the University of Malawi, the Malawi Institute of Education (which handles curriculum issues), the Domasi College of Education (which also conducts INSETS), and the Malawi National Examinations Board (an assessment board). Further, the researcher for this study is based in Zomba district and so, it was convenient for her in terms of money and time to conduct the study in Zomba.

As noted earlier, Zomba Rural Education District has 17 educational zones. This study targeted all the 17 zones but then purposively selected two schools from each of the 17 zones to be included in the sample for the qualitative data. Thus, a total of 34 primary schools of Zomba Rural Education District were involved in the study. The 34 primary schools represented a 17.4% of the total number of schools in Zomba Rural Education District. Purposive sampling involves selecting subjects because of some characteristic they possess (Patton, 1990). The purposive selection of the schools is justified in this study because there was a set of criteria that was followed in the selection of the schools as follows:

i. The school should have not less than four teachers (excluding the head teacher) teaching at the school. This is because the researcher conducted focus group discussions with the teachers. A focus group is conducted with at least 4 to 12 people (Krueger & Casey, 2009)

ii. The researcher was very interested in teachers who had attended many CPD programmes. So the purposive sampling helped to include schools that had many teachers who had attended a number of CPD Programmes.
Some rural schools are very inaccessible. Purposive sampling helped the researcher to target schools that could be reached fairly easily.

Further, a minimum of 3 teachers from each of the selected schools was purposively sampled to form the group for the focus group discussions. The purposive sampling of the teachers was based on the number of times the teacher had attended CPD programmes. The higher the number of times the teacher had attended CPD training, the higher the probability of the teacher being included in the sample. Again, consideration was given to the sections (refer to chapter 1) the teachers were teaching. This was done in order to get views from teachers across all the three sections of the primary education system. It was assumed that the sampled teachers had much first hand information on the implementation of CPD programmes in the district.

The sample for the qualitative data included all the 17 Primary Education Advisors in the district; the Head teachers of the 34 selected schools; the CPD programme facilitators from Non-Governmental Organizations; the District Education Manager (DEM); and the Coordinating Primary Education Advisor (CPEA). The coordinator for PCAR and the Director of Department for Teacher Education Development were also interviewed (see appendix 10 for list of respondents). All these are key people as far as implementation of CPD programmes for teachers in the district is concerned. The quantitative data targeted all the primary school teachers in the district.

4.5 DATA COLLECTION METHODS

Since the study used a mixed method approach to collect both qualitative and quantitative data, the researcher found the use of interviews, focus group discussions, questionnaires, observations and document reviews as ideal data collection methods for the study. Below is a brief description of the research methods that were used.
4.5.1 Key informant interviews

An interview is a two-way conversation in which the interviewer asks the participant questions to collect data and to learn about the ideas, beliefs, views, opinions and behaviours of the participant (Maree, 2007). Basically, interviews aim at collecting rich descriptive data that help the researcher to understand the participant’s construction of knowledge and social reality. Maree (2007) categorizes interviews into three groups. These are, open ended interview; semi-structured interview; and structured interview. In open ended interviews, the focus is on the participant’s perceptions of an event or phenomenon being studied. To avoid bias in the data collected, it is advisable to conduct the interviews with more than just one informant.

In semi-structured interviews, the participant is required to answer a set of predetermined questions that define the line of inquiry. Probing and clarification of answers are allowed. In this type of interview, the researcher needs to be very attentive to the responses given by the interviewee so as to identify new emerging lines of inquiry that are directly related to the phenomenon being studied. In structured interviews, the questions are detailed and developed in advance just like in survey research (Maree, 2007). There is not much probing in structured interviews since the questions are overly structured. This kind of interviews is used frequently in case studies or when dealing with large sample groups to ensure consistency.

This study used open-ended Interviews to collect data that gave useful insights into the implementation of CPD programmes in Zomba Rural Education District. The interviews were conducted with the key informants concerned with the implementation of the CPD programmes such as: PEAs; Head teachers; CPD programme facilitators; DEM; CPEA; PCAR coordinator and Director of DTED. Open-ended interviews were preferred to other forms of interviews in this study because they offer a platform for conversation. The researcher’s intention was to explore with the participant his or her views, ideas, beliefs and attitudes concerning the implementation of the CPD programme. In so doing, the researcher saw the world, that is, (implementation process of CPD programmes) through the eyes of
the participants (Maree 2007). The researcher was aware of the limitation of not getting comprehensive answers to the questions. When that was the case, the researcher tried to probe more into the responses and made sure that the questioning techniques guided the interviewee to give comprehensive answers.

4.5.2 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)

Focus group discussions with teachers were an essential data gathering tool for this study in that the responses provided an in-depth view about the implementation of CPD programmes which would otherwise not have been got through individual interviews or any other data gathering instrument. Focus groups can be viewed as group interviews, except that focus groups do not rely on question and answer format as is the case of group interviews. Rather, they rely on the interaction within the group (Krueger & Casey, 2009). In this case, the researcher needs to create an environment that is conducive to participation of members involved in the group discussion so as to solicit enough views on the subject under discussion. Krueger & Casey (2009) note that focus group interviewing is about

Paying attention to what people have to say and being non-judgemental. It is about creating a comfortable environment for people to share. It is about being careful and systematic with the things people tell you. And people go away feeling good about having been heard

(p. xiii).

It is for this reason that Krueger & Casey (2009:2) define a focus group discussion as a carefully planned series of discussions designed to obtain perceptions on a defined area of interest in a permissive and non-threatening environment.

Focus groups in research are known to be especially effective in studying professional practices (Barbour, 2008). This explains the fact that the researcher in this study opted for focus group discussions as one of the data gathering methods because the study concerns a professional practice, that is, how CPD programmes for primary school teachers in Malawi are implemented. The group interactions during the focus group discussions were productive in widening the range of
responses, activating forgotten details of experience and releasing inhibitions that may otherwise have discouraged the participants from disclosing information about how CPD programmes are implemented in Zomba Rural Education District (Maree 2007). This yielded data that gave insights into the implementation process of CPD programmes in terms of time allocation; the methods that are used during CDP training; the expertise of facilitators; how the teachers implement what they learn from the training programmes; monitoring and support mechanisms; the challenges the teachers face in CPD implementation; as well as suggestions on how to implement CPD activities so that they result in teacher change.

The focus group discussions with teachers comprised a minimum of 3 teachers per school. These teachers were representative in terms of gender and section, where possible. Though focus groups may have limitation of getting biased information as some members dominate the discussions (Maree 2007), the researcher overcame this by encouraging contribution from every member and maintaining focus on the topic under discussion. In addition, the researcher was careful in her choice of respondents, where possible. They had to be conversant with the topic at hand. This ensured that everybody participated.

4.5.3 Semi-structured questionnaires

Collecting data through questionnaires is one of the most widely used methods of gathering information from people. Questionnaires can be used to collect both quantitative and qualitative data from large samples of people in survey designs. Maree (2007) identified at least four methods as the most commonly used methods of collecting data from respondents through questionnaires. These include group administration of questionnaires; postal survey; telephone survey; and face-to-face survey. In group administration, the researcher waits while a whole group of respondents complete questionnaires. This has the advantage of having many respondents complete the questionnaire within a short space of time as well as reaching respondents across long distances and also the researcher can clarify issues which are unclear to the respondents. However, this method has the disadvantage of getting different responses if different administrators administer the
questionnaires. Furthermore, the primary researcher has limited control over what happens in the field.

In postal surveys, questionnaires are mailed to respondents who have to read instructions and answer the questions. This has the advantage of being relatively cheap and easy to do. Again the respondents fill the questionnaire in a more relaxed atmosphere as there is no interviewer to influence their responses (Maree 2007). The respondents can go as far as checking their records, if necessary, to respond accurately to the questions. Good as it may sound, it is limited, in that, the response rate may be low; and the conditions for completing the questionnaire are not controlled (Maree, 2007). In Telephone surveys, respondents are phoned by interviewers who ask the questions and record the answers. With phone calls, the survey can be relatively quick and the response rate is usually high. However, the cost is relatively high; and the questionnaire has to be short. Interviewer bias is very high in telephone surveys as the interviewer may influence responses during the phone conversation (Maree, 2007).

As for face-to-face survey, well trained interviewers visit the respondent, ask the questions and record the answers. This method has the highest response rate and like the group administration, the interviewer can assist with issues that are not clear to the respondent. Nevertheless, face-to-face interviews are also limited in that they are costly; the interviewers have to be well trained; and interview bias is a great risk (Maree, 2007).

This study used the postal survey method of administering the questionnaire. Questionnaires for each school were sealed in an envelope and left at the District Education Manager’s office, specifically in the hands of the Coordinating Primary Education Advisor. Primary Education Advisors from the zones then collected the envelopes from the CPEA’s office and distributed them to their teachers at their schools through the head teachers. After the teachers had responded to the questionnaires, the head teachers then took them back to the District Education Manager’s office through the Primary Education Advisor. Thereafter the researcher collected the filled in questionnaires from the Coordinating Primary Education Advisor’s office.
All the 1684 teachers from the 191 schools of Zomba Rural Education District were issued a questionnaire to respond to. However, since its administration was not compulsory, 798 filled in the questionnaires and these reached the researcher within the time frame for the data collection exercise for the study. Still, this was a good number to warrant quantitative analysis. Questionnaires had the advantage of eliciting many teachers’ views on CPD. This enabled the researcher to get a wider view on the implementation of the CPD programmes. Among other things, the questionnaire collected information on the venues, the focus, the methods, the duration, the expertise of facilitators, consultations, monitoring and support mechanisms as well as challenges faced in the implementation of the CPD programmes. In addition, the questionnaires solicited suggestions and preferences of teachers on how CPD programmes should be implemented so as to result in teacher change.

The large numbers also contributed to the reliability of the results. The researcher made follow-ups with the Primary Education Advisors as well as the head teachers to ensure that the questionnaires were returned. This to some extent overcame the problem that usually arises with the use of questionnaires, which is that a large number of respondents might not return the questionnaires (Maree 2007).

Noteworthy is the fact that the questionnaires were pilot-tested before their full scale use in the schools. This ensured that the language used was understandable and that the categories used were not confusing to the respondents. Questions that tended to source for the same answers were eliminated. The feedback from the respondents in the pilot study led to some adjustments to the questionnaire. This helped to improve the questionnaire.

4.5.4 Observations

This is a qualitative data gathering technique where the observer uses the senses to gather bits of data (Maree, 2007). According to Maree (2007), observation is the systematic process of recording the behavioural patterns of participants, objects and occurrences without necessarily questioning or communicating with them. Gorman & Clayton (2005) define observation studies as those that involve the
systematic recording of observable phenomena or behaviour in a natural setting. The value of observation is that it permits researchers to study people in their native environment in order to understand "things" from their perspective (Baker, 2006). Observation is a complex research method because it often requires the researcher to play a number of roles and to use a number of techniques; including her/his five senses to collect data (Baker, 2006). In observations, the researcher must always remember her/his primary role as a researcher and remain detached enough to collect and analyze data relevant to the problem under investigation. Generally, there are four types of observations that are used in qualitative research (Maree, 2007). These are, complete observer; observer as participant; participant as observer; and complete participant.

In the complete observer approach, the researcher is a non-participant looking at the situation from a distance (Maree, 2007). The researcher is present on the scene but does not participate or interact with insiders to any great extent (Gorman & Clayton, 2005). Her/his only role is to listen and observe. Of course, this is the least obtrusive but it may be limited, in that, the researcher may not really understand what he or she observes (Maree, 2007). Further, Baker (2006) writes that one advantage of being a complete observer is that the researcher can remain completely detached from the group. Detachment, however, is also a major disadvantage because it could prevent the researcher from hearing entire conversations or grasping the full significance of an information exchange. She/he cannot ask insiders any questions to qualify what they have said, or to answer other questions that his observations of them have brought to mind.

In the observer as participant approach, the researcher goes into the situation but focuses mainly on his / her role as observer in the situation (Maree, 2007). There is more observation than participation in this kind of approach. The researcher in this category does not influence the dynamics of the setting. Rather, the researcher advances very slightly in her/his involvement with the insiders. While still mostly involved in observing, the researcher may conduct short interviews. The disadvantage of this role is that the brief encounters with insiders limit opportunities for gaining knowledge of total situations. Furthermore, the brief interviews can
contribute to misunderstandings or misconceptions of which the researcher may not be aware until it is too late to correct or address them (Maree, 2007).

In the participant as observer approach, the researcher becomes part of the research process and works with the participants in the situation to design and develop intervention strategies. This is more common in action research projects. During this period of observation, the researcher may develop relationships with the insiders, such that they become "friends" (Baker, 2006).

In the complete participant approach, the researcher gets completely immersed in the setting to the extent that those being observed do not know that they are the subjects of the observation (Maree, 2007). In fact, this is the ultimate level of involvement as the researcher goes native and studies a group in which she/he is already a member (Baker, 2006). In this role, the identity of the complete participant is unknown to the insiders, which can be problematic for the researcher who may become so self-conscious "about revealing his/her true self" that she/he becomes "handicapped when attempting to perform convincingly in the pretended role. Hence, researchers in this group tend to risk objectivity.

This study used the “observer as participant approach”. The researcher did not influence the settings. She just sat in and observed how the training was being conducted. Occasionally she would move round the groups and ask the participants questions or share ideas when asked by the participants. With this approach, the observations enabled the researcher to gain a deeper insight and understanding of the phenomenon being observed, in this case, the implementation of CPD programmes for primary school teachers in Zomba Rural Education District. The researcher in this study attended three CPD programmes or workshops that took place during the period of the data collection exercise. This enabled her to have firsthand experience on how CPD programmes are conducted in terms of the methods used to impart the knowledge and skills to the teachers; the materials given to teachers; the expertise of the CPD facilitators; the logistical arrangements of the workshops; and any other issues that were of interest to this study.
4.5.5 Document analysis

In document analysis as a data gathering instrument, the researcher focuses on all types of written communications that may shed light on the phenomenon that the researcher is investigating (Maree, 2007). This includes published and unpublished documents; company reports; memoranda; agendas; administrative documents; letters; reports; newspaper articles; minutes of meetings; or any other document that is connected to the investigation (Maree, 2007). However, the researcher has to be cautious of the authenticity and accuracy of the records before using them. Nevertheless documents reveal what people do or did and what they value. In addition the behaviour occurred in a natural setting, so the data have strong validity (Maree, 2007).

The researcher is aware that document analysis is another important supplementary tool for the gathering of data in studies of this kind. The researcher accessed CPD implementation reports from CPD programme facilitators. These reports were scrutinized to get a good view of the implementation process. Documents pertaining to teachers’ professional development were also analyzed to identify gaps if any, between theory and practice. Visitor’s books in schools that were visited were also checked for frequency of visits of CPD facilitators and the main purpose of their visits.

4.6 TRUSTWORTHINESS / VALIDITY / RELIABILITY ISSUES

The validity and reliability of the instruments used in this study were tested before their administration, to reduce errors. According to Kothari (2004), Maree (2007) and Mark (1996), validity refers to the degree to which an instrument measures what it is supposed to measure. Reliability has to do with the consistency or repeatability of a measure or an instrument and high reliability is obtained when the measure or instrument gives the same results if the research is repeated on the same sample (Maree, 2007). However, total reliability is difficult to achieve since
human beings are not static. One cannot expect to have the exact findings in subsequent data collection procedures even though the sample is the same. Nevertheless, researchers need to strive towards achieving validity and reliability in research.

Thus, in this research, the face and content validity of the data collection instruments were ascertained by a panel of experts in education including the supervisor of the researcher. Their main function was to add, edit or eliminate irrelevant items from the initial pool of items and ensure that there is adequate coverage of the topic being studied. In addition, a team comprising critical colleagues also validated the instruments. The team included fellow students in the PhD programme and workmates at the University of Malawi. This team reviewed the items with respect to readability, clarity, format, ease and adequacy of items and responses.

Further the issues of trustworthiness / validity / reliability in this study were addressed through the use of multiple perspectives in data collection and also a large sample of respondents. Triangulation of the different forms of data that were collected also added to the reliability and validity of the research process and the findings. Further, the study used more than three different data sources. The piloting of the questionnaire also rendered the instrument as well as the data collected, reliable and valid.

4.7 DATA PROCESSING AND ANALYSIS

The quantitative and qualitative data that were collected in this study were raw and so had to be processed or prepared for analysis. This process assembled the data so that they answered the research problem or topic under investigation. According to Kothari (2004), data processing implies editing, coding, classification and tabulation of collected data. The section below describes each of the data processing steps as presented by Mwanza (2008) in his dissertation and modified by the researcher.
4.7.1 Editing

Data editing is a process of examining the raw data to detect and correct errors and omissions (Kothari, 2004). Sindhu (2003) concurs that editing implies the checking of data for accuracy, utility and completeness. Hence, in this study, editing involved identifying errors and omissions in the raw data, eliminating incomplete or invalid information and making corrections wherever possible to ensure accuracy, consistency with other data gathered, and uniformity of entries to facilitate coding and tabulation. Wrong entries were corrected by cross-checking the consistency of answers against responses to preceding and proceeding questions. However, where it was not possible to correct the data, the data for that item were regarded as missing data. As argued by Soriano (1995), missing values in a research survey are, more often than not, ignored.

The qualitative data from the interviews, focus groups discussions and observations were collected in the form of handwritten notes. For the handwritten notes, field editing involved completing, translating and re-writing the handwritten notes immediately after coming back from the field so that the notes make sense. Thereafter, the notes were categorized thematically and entered on Microsoft word and backed up in multiple sources including flash disks and forwarding copies to the researcher’s email address.

4.7.2 Coding

Kothari (2004) defines coding as the process of assigning numerals or symbols to answers so that responses can be put into a limited number of categories or classes appropriate to the research problem. In this study, the quantitative data were coded by assigning both symbols and numerals. Thus, all the question numbers and options were assigned codes and data labels accordingly.
4. 7.3 Classification

Classification was done mainly on the qualitative data. As defined by Kothari (2004), data classification is simply the process of arranging or placing data in groups or classes on the basis of common characteristics. Thus, the qualitative data were re-read and code words assigned to each text segments using the verbatim coding method. According to Soriano (1995), verbatim coding involves looking through interview responses for information that is directly pertinent to the objectives of the study. Later the codes were collapsed into themes and categories.

4. 7.4. Data file creation

The other activity in the data processing was to create a data file or data template. The data file creation involved entering the coded quantitative data into a computer package known as the Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS). The data file was also stored on a USB, the hard drive and a copy was also sent to the researcher’s email account for back-up. The hard copy responses to the questions were, however, filed in envelopes which were safely stored in steel cabinets.

4.7.5 Tabulation

Tables and figures were constructed from the SPPS data file to facilitate further analysis of the data.

4.7.6 Data analysis

Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected in this study. Consequently the emergent data were analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively. The quantitative data collected via the questionnaires were coded and entered under SPSS. The researcher then applied a few analytical techniques to sum up the indicators. The analysis took the form of a univariate analysis such as frequency counts, percentages, and the calculation of appropriate indicators. Where appropriate, cross tabs were applied.
The qualitative data collected were reduced by clustering common themes as well as writing stories and tallying and ranking the responses to uncover the main issues that were arising. The issues arising from the focus group discussions, the interviews, the questionnaires, the observations and the document analysis, were put together as findings of the study.

4.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Water-Adams (2006) writes that any research which involves other people in some way has ethical implications. Because education is a social action, data gathering and analysis within this study inevitably impacted on the lives of other people involved in the study. Taking this enlightenment into consideration, it was only proper that this study abided by ethical considerations as contained in the Faculty of Education Handbook of Post Graduate Qualification Policies and Procedures so as to ensure that individual rights were not infringed upon and to promote fairness in the interpretation of data. Principles such as obtaining informed consent; respecting the right to privacy and participation, anonymity, confidentiality; avoiding harm to participants; and other principles as highlighted by Cohen et al. (2000), were adhered to during the data collection process, data analysis and interpretation.

4.8.1 Right to privacy and participation

In this study the right to privacy and participation was ensured in a number of ways. First, the researcher ensured that participants were never forced to participate in the study. The researcher held a briefing meeting with the teachers to brief them on the purpose of the study, reasons for and benefits of their participation and their right to participate or not. Then the teachers were given an opportunity to indicate their willingness to participate in the study. During interviews and focus group discussions, the researcher discussed with the respondents the contents of the consent form. For the questionnaire, a consent form was attached to each questionnaire and sent together with the questionnaire to the teachers. Those who agreed to participate freely signed the consent form and participated in the study.
After all, Sallant and Dillman (1994) contend that researchers must respect anyone who decides not to participate in the survey. Creswell (2003) agrees that participants have a right to participate voluntarily and the right to withdraw at any time.

In line with the right to privacy and participation, is the idea of accessing entry into the schools where the data were collected. In this study, the researcher had to negotiate with gatekeepers for permission to access participants at research sites. In this case the gate keepers were the District Education Manager for Zomba Rural Education District as well as the Primary Education Advisors and Head teachers in the sample schools. This is as highlighted by Creswell (2003) that researchers need to respect research sites so that the sites are left undisturbed after the research study.

4.8.2 Right to confidentiality and anonymity

The right to confidentiality and anonymity are somehow related. In research, the right to confidentiality and the right to anonymity put the respondents at ease to give information which might otherwise be regarded as sensitive. Hence, it is important that respondents be assured of the researcher’s adherence to issues of confidentiality and anonymity. Confidentiality means protecting the privacy of respondents by keeping the data sources as confidential as possible while anonymity deals with disguising the identity of the respondents (Cohen et al., 2000). For the sake of confidentiality and anonymity in this study, no names of respondents were taken or recorded. Further, the use of group data rather than individual data facilitated the retention of participant anonymity.

4.8.3 Avoiding harm or damage to participants

It is important that a research study should not inflict harm or damage on those involved in an investigation (Flick et al., 2004). In any study, if the researcher is not careful, it is possible to harm informants not only by exposing information about
individuals but also by discussing them as a group, in a publication in a way which they may find harmful or which actually disadvantages them (Flick et al., 2004). The researcher in this study adhered to issues of confidentiality as discussed under the section on “right of confidentiality and anonymity”.

4.9 SUMMARY

This chapter has discussed all the technological aspects that guided this study. The chapter looked at the different research paradigms that exist in nature and placed this study in the post-positivism paradigm due to its use of both quantitative and qualitative approaches to research. The chapter further examined the different research designs in an effort to locate the study into its suitable context. After a thorough examination of the designs, the study fitted into the mixed method design that uses concurrent procedures in the collection of both quantitative and qualitative data. The chapter also went further to look into the population, sample and sampling techniques that were involved in the study. This gave insights into the population from which respondents were solicited. The chapter then defined the actual sample and the techniques that were followed to arrive at sample. Thereafter data collection instruments were detailed and these included questionnaires, interviews, focus group discussions, document reviews as well as CPD observations. Issues of validity / reliability / trustworthiness; data analysis; ethical considerations were also discussed in the chapter.

The following chapter (chapter five) is on Data Presentation and Analysis.
CHAPTER 5: DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents and analyzes data that were collected for this study on the implementation of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) programmes for primary school teachers in Zomba Rural Educational District in Malawi. Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected. The quantitative data were collected through questionnaires administered to the teachers, while the qualitative data were collected through focus group discussions with teachers and interviews with head teachers, CPD programme facilitators and Ministry of Education officials. CPD observations and document reviews on CPDs also supplemented both the quantitative and qualitative data. The quantitative data collected through the questionnaires were coded and entered under SPSS. The researcher then applied analytical techniques to sum up the indicators. The analysis took the form of univariate analyses such as frequency counts and percentages. Where appropriate, cross tabs were also applied. The qualitative data were reduced by the clustering of common themes and the ranking of the responses to uncover the main issues that arose. The issues arising from the questionnaires, the focus group discussions, the interviews, the observations and the document reviews, were then put together as findings of the study.

The data are presented and analysed in line with the main objective of the study which was to assess how Continuing Professional Development programmes for primary school teachers in Zomba Rural Education District in Malawi are implemented. This was guided by the specific objectives of the study which were to:

i. find out monitoring and support programmes that are put in place to ensure that teachers practice what they learn from CPD programmes
ii. examine the challenges that are faced in the implementation of CPD programmes
iii. explore effective ways of implementing CPD programmes in Malawi
In addition to the objectives of the study, the presentation and analysis of the data were facilitated by the research questions of the study. The major research question was: How are Continuing Professional Development programmes for primary school teachers in Zomba Rural Education District implemented? The sub research questions were:

i. how do CPD programme facilitators impart knowledge and skills to the teachers during the CPD programme training?

ii. what are the professional experiences and qualifications of the CPD programme facilitators?

iii. what monitoring and support mechanisms are put in place to ensure that: teachers practise what they learn from CPD programmes?

iv. what challenges are faced in the implementation of CPD programmes in Zomba Rural Education District?

v. what can be learnt from the findings of the study regarding different models for the implementation of CPD programmes in enhancing teacher change?

With the objectives and research questions of this study in mind, the chapter has been divided into four sections. The first section examines the biographic information of the respondents. This section was considered necessary as some trends in behaviours of certain variables in implementation of CPD programmes can better be explained through reference to the biographic information of the respondents. The second section presents and analyzes data on how CPDs are implemented in Zomba Rural Education District and so covers variables or indicators of CPD implementation. Challenges faced by teachers as they try to implement what they learn from CPD training are presented in section three. The fourth section of the chapter presents and analyzes data on teacher preferences on how CPDs should be implemented in Zomba Rural Education District for them to result in teacher change.

As noted earlier, the words CPD, In-service education and INSETs are used interchangeably in this study to mean the same thing.
5.2 BIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION OF RESPONDENTS

The biographic data examined variables pertaining to the respondents such as the number of teachers who responded to the questionnaire, the gender of the respondents, the age of the respondents and the years of their teaching experience. The type of teacher training programme the respondents attended as well as their academic qualifications and the classes or standards the teachers teach were also among the examined biographic variables. Below are the data on each of the variables.

5.2.1 Number of respondents

As noted earlier, Zomba Rural Education District, where the study took place, has 1684 primary school teachers and 191 primary schools distributed across 17 education zones (EMIS 2009). For the quantitative data, questionnaires were sent to all teachers in the district. However, 798 teachers, representing 47% of the teachers in the district, responded to the questionnaire. Responding to the questionnaire was not compulsory and teachers were not under any obligation to fill the questionnaires as there were no direct benefits attached. However, satisfaction for the teachers was derived from the fact that, by participating in the study, they had contributed to knowledge in an area that affects them as teachers. Such a knowledge base widens understanding of the issues that affect education in general and the provision of In-service education, in particular. Furthermore, their motivation to participate was their will and zeal to help improve the quality of education offered to our learners in Malawi. Nevertheless, this was representative sample and the researcher insured that there was a representation of teachers filling in the questionnaires from each of the 17 education zones of the district.

Table 5.2.1.1 gives details of the respondents to the questionnaire per zone. A zone on average is made up of not more than 15 schools.
### Table 5.2.1.1: Number of teachers from schools that filled questionnaires in each education zone

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Zone</th>
<th>Number of Schools where teachers filled the questionnaires</th>
<th>Number of teachers that filled the questionnaires</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Namiwawa</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nsondole</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ntungulutsi</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chilipa</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Songani</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Martins</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Namadidi</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mchengawedi</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chimwalira</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Michaels</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ntonda</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St.Pauls</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chingale</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Namatapa</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chikala</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St.Anthony</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chikomwe</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>117</strong></td>
<td><strong>798</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition to collecting the quantitative data through the questionnaire, the researcher also collected qualitative data through interviews, focus group discussions, CPD observations and document reviews. In total, the researcher conducted 34 interviews with head teachers; 12 interviews with Primary Education Advisors\(^1\); and 3 interviews with CPD facilitators from Non-Governmental Organizations. Other interviews were conducted with the District Education Manager; the Coordinator for Primary Curriculum and Assessment Reform (PCAR); the Coordinating Primary Education Advisor; and the Director for Department for Teacher Education Development. This was in addition to 34 focus group discussions with 113 teachers from selected schools in the district. An average of 3 teachers participated in each focus group discussion. Further, the researcher observed 3 CPDs in different education zones of the district. Table 5.2.1.2 displays the codes of the respondents for the qualitative data.

---

\(^1\) Primary Education Advisors can be considered as CPD facilitators for Primary school teachers within the Ministry of Education set up
Table 5.2.1.2: Codes of respondents for the qualitative data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data collection instrument</th>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>Codes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Focus group discussions</td>
<td>Teachers from 34 primary schools</td>
<td>FGD 1 – FGD 34 (where FGD 1 = focus group discussion with teachers from school number 1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviews</td>
<td>Head teachers from 34 primary schools</td>
<td>HT 1 – HT 34 (where HT 1 = interview with Head teacher from school number 1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Primary Education Advisors from 12 education zones</td>
<td>PEA 1 – PEA 12 (where PEA 1 = interview with Primary Education Advisor from zone number 1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPD Observations by researcher</td>
<td>CPD facilitators from NGOs</td>
<td>NGO 1 – NGO 3 (where NGO 1 = interview with CPD facilitator from NGO number 1)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.2.2 Gender of respondents

Gender has a bearing on how events are interpreted. Turner (1996) argues that people’s attitudes, opinions and values are also influenced by their gender. Involvement of both male and female respondents in this study ensured that different opinions across gender are represented. Disaggregating information by gender in studies of this kind is necessary, especially when comparing trends across genders to make judgments of which gender is being disadvantaged in one way or the other. Of the 1684 teachers in Zomba Rural Education District, 1102 are male while 582 are female (EMIS, 2009). Five hundred and four male teachers, representing 46% of the male teachers and also 269 female teachers, representing 46% of the female teachers in the district, responded to the questionnaire for this study. Twenty five teachers, representing 8% of the total questionnaire respondents, did not indicate their gender. The focus group discussions with teachers in the 34 selected primary schools also considered gender representation. Of the 113 teachers who participated in the focus group discussions, 48 teachers, representing 42% of the teachers were female.
5.2.3 Age of respondents

Teaching as a profession requires mature minds to comprehend and discern what is involved in the teaching process including issues of Continuing Professional Development. Age is one such indicator of readiness for the teaching profession. The Malawian education system demands that entry age for primary schooling be 6 years. This is followed by 8 years of primary schooling and then 4 years of secondary schooling. In the case of a primary school teacher, one has to undergo a further 2 years of training as a teacher at a Teacher Training College (TTC). Hence when added up, the minimum age at which a person can qualify as a primary school teacher in Malawi is 20 years. Table 5.2.3.1 illustrates the age categories of the respondents to the questionnaire.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age category</th>
<th>Number of teachers</th>
<th>Percentage of teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>19 years or less</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between 20 and 29 years</td>
<td>193</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between 30 and 39 years</td>
<td>271</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between 40 and 49 years</td>
<td>227</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 years and over</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not indicated</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As can be seen from Table 5.2.3.1 the age range of respondents to this study was from below 20 years to above 50 years. The distribution of the respondents by age range revealed that 34%, 28%, and 24% were in the 30 to 39 years, 40 to 49 years, and 20 to 29 years age bracket respectively. Only 1% of the teachers were below the recommended 20 years of age. This means that the teachers were mature enough for the teaching profession and indeed mature enough to comprehend the issues around CPD implementation. Similarly the focus group discussions were held with teachers across all age groups.
5.2.4 Years of experience

CPDs are meant to be attended by any teacher regardless of length of service in the profession. Hence under normal circumstances, it is expected that the more the years of experience in the service, the more the number of CPDs attended and the more well informed about CPD implementation issues the person is. Among the respondents of the questionnaire, it was noted that 31% of them had less than 5 years experience; 11% had over 20 years of experience; and 54% had between 5 and 20 years teaching experience. Refer to Table 5.2.4.1

Table 5.2.4.1: Years of experience (N =798)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years of experience</th>
<th>Number of teachers</th>
<th>Percentage of teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 5 years</td>
<td>249</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between 5 and 10 years</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between 11 and 15 years</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between 16 and 20 years</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 20 years</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not indicated</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the data in Table 5.2.4.1, the majority of the respondents had enough experience in the teaching profession to articulate issues of CPD implementation. For the focus group discussions, the researcher also ensured that the selection of teachers to participate in the discussions considered the experience of some of the teachers. This was seen as necessary because this study was both a quantitative and qualitative study. The qualitative part, dwell on narrations from participants. For one to give detailed narrations of events, experience plays a very important role (Seale, 2004).

5.2.5 Type of teacher training programme attended

Since 1964, there have been various teacher education programmes in operation for primary school teachers in Malawi (NSTED, 2007). The first teacher training programme was a two-year residential programme. This was followed by the Malawi Special Teacher Education Programme (MASTEP), an initiative which offered a three-year course integrating residential and distance modes of delivery, aimed at upgrading the large number of untrained teachers serving in the system. The third
programme was a one-year residential programme, leading to the award of the same certificates as in the two-year face-to-face training mode.

The declaration of Free Primary Education (FPE) in 1994 brought in the largest number of untrained and under-qualified teachers. Government then adopted a new model of teacher education called the Malawi Integrated In-service Teacher Education Programme (MIITEP) in an effort to train the untrained teachers in the shortest period possible. Under this design, the previous ways of preparing teachers were suspended in all Teacher Training Colleges to give way to this new training model (NSTED, 2007). This model comprised a combination of distance and residential delivery modes. During the residential period student teachers were given basic introductory lectures in teaching, reading material and assignments to do when they went back to their schools which constituted the distance learning component (NSTED, 2007).

Now teachers are being trained under the Integrated Programme for Teacher Education (IPTE) and Open and Distance Learning (ODL) Programme. The IPTE training programme implies one year in college and another year in school under the supervision of the head teachers and college tutors. The ODL programme is a distance learning programme where new recruits are just oriented to the teaching profession for a short period then sent to schools to teach. Head teachers supervise them while on the job. During holidays, they go for short term courses in teacher training programmes.

Table 5.2.5.1 displays the data on respondents by type of teacher training programme the teachers attended.
Table 5.2.5.1: Type of teacher training programme attended

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of training programme</th>
<th>Number of teachers</th>
<th>Percentage of teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MITTEP</td>
<td>284</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPTE</td>
<td>209</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two years training programme</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One year programme</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MASTEP</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ODL</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not indicated</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not applicable</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>798</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are more MITTEP teachers in the system and this explains why, as illustrated in Table 5.2.5.1, more MITTEP teachers filled the questionnaires than any other category of teachers. These are followed by IPTE teachers.

It is assumed that the differences in the type of teacher training programmes attended may have an impact on the quality and calibre of teachers in the system. Hence, it was important in this study also to disaggregate the data by type of teacher training programmes attended as this might have an influence on the teachers’ views in implementation of CPD programmes.

### 5.2.6 Academic qualification of teachers

Academic qualification was seen to be an important variable in this study because the interpretation and understanding of issues to do with implementation of CPD programmes requires some level of academic qualification. The current policy on teacher education demands that the minimum entry academic qualification for the teaching profession should be Malawi School Certificate of Education (NSTED, 2007). However, data from the respondents in this study indicated that 72% of the teachers had Malawi School Certificate of Education (MSCE); 25% had Junior Certificate of Education (JCE); and 1% still uses a Primary School Leaving Certificate (PSLCE). A further 2% of the respondents did not indicate their academic qualification (Refer to Table 5.2.6.1).
Table 5.2.6.1: Academic qualifications of respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualification</th>
<th>Number of teachers</th>
<th>Percentage of teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MSCE</td>
<td>572</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JCE</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSLCE</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diploma</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not indicated</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note that Malawi School Certificate of Education is awarded after successful completion of four years of secondary schooling while Junior Certificate of Education is awarded after successful completion of two years of secondary schooling. Primary School Leaving Certificate is given after successful completion of eight years of primary education. At each level, one sits for a national examination administered by the Malawi National Examination Board (Devolution guidelines, 2008). From Table 5.2.6.1, the majority of the teachers (72%) in the sample for this study as well as in the system has the necessary qualification. The current stand of the Ministry of Education is that teachers without the Malawi School Certificate of Education should be encouraged to upgrade so that they obtain the current minimum academic qualification requirement for primary school teaching (NSTED, 2007).

5.2.7 Class allocation

The study also established the classes that the respondents were teaching. Table 5.2.7.1 illustrates the percentage of teachers, out of the total of 798, that were teaching particular grades.

Table 5.2.7.1: Class allocation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard</th>
<th>Number of teachers</th>
<th>Percentage of teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Std 1</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Std 2</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Std 3</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Std 4</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Std 5</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Std 6</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Std 7</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Std 8</td>
<td>205</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The data on class allocation also show that some of the teachers were teaching multiple classes, that is, more than one class. When calculated against the total number of respondents, it was found that 28% of the teachers were teaching multiple classes. Some were floating across two classes while others were floating across more than two classes. This also has its own effects on the implementation of what was learnt from CPD training. Further, the focus group discussions also took into account the classes the teachers were teaching. This ensured that views about each and every class are represented as some CPDs target teachers teaching particular grades\textsuperscript{2}. The teachers were drawn from all the sections of the primary education system, that is, infant, junior and senior sections. As noted in Chapter 1, the infant section comprises standards 1 and 2; the junior section is made up of standards 3, 4 and 5 while the senior section includes standards 6, 7 and 8.

5.3 IMPLEMENTATION OF CPD PROGRAMMES IN ZOMBA RURAL EDUCATION DISTRICT

This section presents and analyzes data on how CPDs are implemented in Zomba Rural Education District. It covers variables of CPD implementation such as number of CPDs attended by teachers, organizers of the CPDs, focus of the CPDs, professional experiences and expertise of the facilitators, methods used by the facilitators and duration for conducting the CPDs. The section further presents data on funding for the CPDs, material resources for CPDs, consultation processes in CPD design and monitoring and support mechanisms for CPD implementation. The level of implementation of what teachers learn at CPD training is also among the CPD implementation variables presented in the section. Below are the data on each of these variables.

5.3.1 Number of CPDs attended by teachers

As presented in Chapter 1, this study was interested in both on-school site and off-school site based CPD programmes. On-school site based CPD programmes are

\textsuperscript{2} In Malawi, grades are referred to as standards or classes. In Table 4.1.7.1, Std refer to standard
school based CPD activities where teachers within a school (or within several schools) jointly undertake their professional development, sometimes led or initiated by teacher educators (Back et al., 2009). As earlier noted, examples of on-school site based CPDs include peer review and coaching, mentoring, study groups, communities of practice and teacher networking (Back et al., 2009; Gray, 2005). The off-school site based CPD programmes are CPD activities that take place outside the school sites at venues designated by the CPD programme facilitators and implementers such as, in the case of Malawi, Teacher Development Centres (TDCs), Malawi Institute of Training (MIE) and other venues. Such CPDs usually come in the form of workshops or seminars.

The study established the number of on-school site based and off-school site based CPD programmes that the teachers had attended since they joined the service. This was necessary as it gave an indication of how frequently CPDs are conducted in the district. Data on the number of on-school site and off-school site based CPD training are presented below.

5.3.1.1 Number of on-school site based CPDs attended by teachers

This variable assisted in establishing the frequency of on-school site based CPDs. By establishing the number of CPDs attended by the teachers, the frequency with which the CPDs are conducted can be determined. Teachers were asked to indicate the number of on-school site based CPDs they had attended since they joined the teaching profession. Table 5.3.1.1.1 displays the data.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of on-school site based CPDs</th>
<th>Number of teachers</th>
<th>Percentage of teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 3</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between 3 and 5</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between 6 and 10</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above 10</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never attended</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data in Table 5.3.1.1.1 show that the majority of teachers (31%) has attended less than 3 on-school site based CPDs in their career as primary school teachers. A
further 25% had attended between 3 and 5 CPDs. Only 16% of the teachers had attended above 10 on-school site based CPD training. Twelve percent of the teachers had never attended any on-school site based CPD training. From these indications, one gets an impression that CPD training at school level are not regular. The focus group discussions gave the same impression. Teachers bemoaned the lack of frequency of on-school site based CPDs. For instance teachers gave the following comments

**FGD 2:** All the CPDs we have attended were off-school site based CPDs. On-school site based are not regularly conducted and this trend is not only at this school but in other schools as well.

**FGD 3:** We do not hold regular formal on-school site based CPDs at this school. If anything, some very pertinent issues are discussed during staff meetings.

Teachers at FGD 9 advised that administrators of schools be vigilant and conduct regular on-school site based CPD training. This was also echoed by the District Education Manager who emphasized that

*On-school site based CPDs are beneficial for teachers’ professional growth but head teachers and teachers seem not to be serious in conducting frequent on-school site based CPD training.*

When teachers were asked about the forms of on-school site based CPDs they had attended, they mentioned those CPDs organized by head teachers and PEAs at school level. Communities of practice and teacher networking were rarely mentioned. Nonetheless, communities of practice organized at cluster level by one of the Non-Governmental Organizations working in the district were noted in two or three educational zones. Teachers in those educational zones acknowledged the cluster level CPDs and appreciated their contribution to improving teacher professionalism. For instance, teachers at FGD 5 had this to say

*The common on-school site based CPD that teachers attend in this school and off course in the zone as a whole, are those CPDs initiated by Save the Children and take place at cluster level. In those CPDs we share common problems and discuss solutions; thereby sharpening our skills and improving our professionalism. However such opportunities are not held on a regular basis.*
Though there is no policy benchmark as to how many on-school site based CPD training teachers should attend in a year, the general feeling is that they should be as regular as possible.

Further, the teachers, through the questionnaire were asked to indicate how satisfied they were with the on-school site based CPD training that they had attended. Teachers were asked to rate the CPDs according to how satisfied they felt with the CPD training. Table 5.3.1.1.2 indicates the satisfaction levels of teachers with on-school site based CPDs as rated by 615 teachers in the district.

Table 5.3.1.1.2: Satisfaction levels with on-school site based CPDs (N= 615)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of satisfaction</th>
<th>Number of teachers</th>
<th>Percentage of teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 25%</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between 25 and 50%</td>
<td>221</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between 51 and 75%</td>
<td>290</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 75%</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As the data in Table 5.3.1.1.2 display, 43% ie (7% and 36%) of teachers rated their satisfaction levels for on-school site based CPDs as below average (50%). Only 10% rated their satisfaction as over 75%. Though 57% ie (47% and 10%) of the teachers were satisfied with the on-school site based CPD training, a good number also (43%) did not derive satisfaction from the trainings. That is of major concern because the implementation of what was learnt at the CPD training depends heavily on one’s satisfaction with the training itself.

5.3.1.2 Number of off-school site based CPDs attended

Similarly, in addition to establishing the frequency of conducting off-school site based CPD training, this variable was felt useful in enabling the researcher to gauge if the policy on In-service Education for teachers is followed or not. The policy states that every teacher is entitled to at least three off-school site based In-service education training sessions per year (NSTED, 2007). Table 5.3.1.2.1 highlights the data on the number of off-school site based CPD training that the teachers had attended.
Table 5.3.1.2.1: Number of off-school site based CPDs attended (N= 748)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Number of teachers</th>
<th>Percentage of teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 3</td>
<td>238</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between 3 and 5</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between 6 and 10</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above 10</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never attended</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the data in Table 5.3.1.2.1 the majority of the teachers (32%) has attended less than 3 off-school site based CPDs since they joined the teaching profession. Twenty-five percent have attended between 3 and 5 times. Very few teachers (15%) have attended over ten (10) CPDs. Twelve percent of the teachers have never attended any off-school site based CPD training. Cross-tabbing the number of CPDs attended against the years of experience of the teachers gives the same impression of very few INSETs attended to match the policy requirement (refer to Table 5.3.1.2.2)

Table 5.3.1.2.2: Number of off-school site based INSETs attended against years of service of teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years of service</th>
<th>Number of INSETs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>less than 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>less than 5 years</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>between 5 and 10 years</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>between 11 and 15 years</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>between 16 and 20 years</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>over 20 years</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data in Table 5.3.1.2.2 illustrates that the number of INSETs attended, do not tally with the number of years of experience of the teachers. For instance, according to the policy, a teacher who has served for 5 years is expected to have attended at least 15 off-school site based CPDs. This is not the case according to what is illustrated in Table 5.3.1.2.2. For instance only 2% of the teachers of less than 5 years teaching experience, had attended more than 10 CPDs in their career. The majority (70%) had attended less than 10 CPDs while 28% had never attended any off-school site based CPD training.
As noted earlier, the National Strategy for Teacher Education and Development mentions the fact that, as curricula change, teachers need to keep pace with the changes and the new demands placed upon them. Teachers need to continue to learn about how to teach effectively (NSTED, 2007). This can most be realized through In-service education. From these data, the policy of teachers attending at least 3 off-school site based In-service education training per year is not satisfied.

The focus group discussions with teachers indicated that INSETs are not regularly conducted in the district. The following were some of the teachers’ responses

**FGD 24: INSETs are not conducted regularly, as a result, it takes a very long time before one can attend an INSET.**

**FGD 17: INSETs are rarely conducted. Had it not been for the orientation to the new curriculum, most of us would have said we have never attended any In-Service Education training.**

Primary Education Advisors also concurred with the teachers that off-school site based CPDs are not regularly conducted in the district. Some PEAs gave the following responses

**PEA 7: Much as we would want to conduct INSETs for our teachers as often as possible, we cannot do that because we are financially constrained. So INSETs are indeed irregular.**

**PEA 8: Zones are not funded. This makes it difficult for PEAs to conduct regular INSETs for teachers. The little we generate through revolving fund can not suffice the requirements for a number of INSETs per term.**

Worse still this study established that there were some teachers who indicated having never attended any CPD training since they joined the teaching profession. Of course, 75% of those teachers had less than 5 years teaching experience (see Table 5.3.1.2.3)
Table 5.3.1.2.3: Teachers who have never attended any off-school site based CPD (by years of experience)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Number of teachers</th>
<th>Percentage of teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>less than 5 years</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>between 5 and 10 years</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>between 11 and 15 years</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>between 16 and 20 years</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>over 20 years</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As already stated, it is assumed that the more the number of years of service, the more the number of INSETs the teacher should have attended. This possibly explains why the majority of the teachers who had never attended any CPD training were in the category of less than 5 years of experience. Further, disaggregating the data of the teachers who have never attended any CPD training by teacher training programme they had attended, yielded the results displayed in Table 5.3.1.2.4

Table 5.3.1.2.4: Teachers who have never attended any off-school site based CPD (by type of teacher training programme)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Number of teachers</th>
<th>Percentage of teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IPTE</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MITTEP</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>two years training programme</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>one year programme</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MASTEP</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As the data in Table 5.3.1.2.4 show, the majority of the teachers (66%) who had never attended any off-school site based CPD training had attended the IPTE teacher training programme. This teacher training programme just started a few years ago and that should possibly explain why a good number of the IPTE teachers have not yet attended any CPD training. In fact, one of the IPTE teachers at FGD 18 gave the following remarks on number of off-school site based CPDs attended

> I have never attended any off-school site based CPD training but I know it is because I have been in the system for just one year. As you know with our system, it takes some time before one can find an opportunity to attend an off-school site based CPD.
Similar sentiments were given by the Coordinating Primary Education Advisor when asked why some teachers had not attended CPD training. In his response, he indicated that

*All teachers are entitled to In-service Education Training. It is just that these trainings are not regularly conducted. As such some teachers may not have attended any, especially the IPTE teachers as they have been in the system for just a short period of time.*

From the revelations on the number of INSETs that teachers have attended, both on-school site and off-school site, surely, something needs to be done if teachers are to be kept abreast with issues concerning their profession. The evidence points towards such an irregular administration of INSETs that the required number of INSETs to be attended by each teacher in a year is not met. Further, communities of practice at school level seem not to be nurtured, as opportunities for such gatherings in the form of CPDs at school level, are not provided regularly.

Teachers were also asked to rate their satisfaction with the off-school site based CPD training that they had attended. Table 5.2.1.2.5 displays the quantitative data.

**Table 5.3.1.2.5: Satisfaction levels with off-school site based CPDs (N= 578)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of satisfaction</th>
<th>Number of teachers</th>
<th>Percentage of teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 25%</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between 25 and 50%</td>
<td>191</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between 51 and 75%</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 75%</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data in Table 5.3.1.2.5 show that 42% ie (9% and 33%) of teachers are dissatisfied with the off-school site based CPD training that are conducted for them. If a teacher is dissatisfied with a CPD programme surely implementation of what was learnt at the CPD training in classroom practice is compromised. Usually satisfaction is a measure of how a programme achieved its intended goals. If teachers are not satisfied with a CPD programme, in a way, it reflects the failure of the programme to meet their expectations. As a result, the programme may not achieve its objectives fully. Hence, implementation at classroom level of what was learnt at such a CPD programme may be problematic.
Teachers were also asked a question on helpfulness of the CPDs. Eighty-one percent of the teachers rated the CPDs as helpful; 17% rated the CPDs as slightly helpful while only 2% rated the CPDs as not helpful (see Table 5.3.1.2.6)

Table 5.3.1.2.6: Responses of teachers on helpfulness of CPDs they had attended (N = 694)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of teachers</th>
<th>Percentage of teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not helpful</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slightly helpful</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helpful</td>
<td>373</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very helpful</td>
<td>192</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Revelations in Table 5.3.1.2.6 portray a message that, if implemented, the majority of the teachers (81%) find the content of CPD programmes to be helpful in the teaching and learning process. However, the challenge remains in translating what was learnt at the CPD training into their classroom practice. Teachers at FGD 6 commented that:

*CPDs are very helpful; unfortunately due to the many challenges we experience in our classroom settings such as large classes and limited teaching and learning resources, it is difficult to implement what we learn from the CPD training.*

Further, when the teachers were asked to rate if all the In-service training programmes they had attended were successful, only 40% said they were successful while 60% indicated that the CPDs they had attended were not successful (see Table 5.3.1.2.7)

Table 5.3.1.2.7: Responses of teachers on whether all the In-service training programmes they had attended were successful

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of teachers</th>
<th>Percentage of teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All CPDs were successful</td>
<td>275</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not all CPDs were successful</td>
<td>414</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As with satisfaction, teachers will find a CPD to be successful if the CPD achieved its goals as well as when their expectations of the CPD are met. From Table 5.3.1.2.7, the majority of the teachers (60%) felt the CPDs were unsuccessful. Similar sentiments were echoed by teachers in the focus group discussions. Teachers indicated that some CPD sessions were successful while others were not and teachers felt it was just a waste of their valuable time to attend such INSETs. The following were some of their responses

*FGD 1*: *It depends on how the training was delivered. If the expectation was met, teachers would say the training was successful and vice versa.*

*FGD 2*: *Sometimes the expectation can be met, that is, the facilitation can be good but implementation of what was learnt at the CPD training at classroom level, is situational due to the many challenges that teachers face in schools.*

Much as teachers may want to apply what they learn from CPD programmes to the classroom setting, it appears they are handcuffed by challenges at school level, some of which they have no control over. The challenges will be presented in section 5.4

Teachers were further asked about their reasons for participating in CPD training. Through the questionnaire, teachers were asked to choose among a given list of options, their main reason for participating in In-service education. Table 5.3.1.2.8 displays the data

**Table 5.3.1.2.8: Main reason or expectation for participation in CPD (N = 611)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Number of teachers</th>
<th>Percentage of teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To increase professionalism</td>
<td>249</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To increase knowledge of subject matter</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To be updated on current developments</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To share experiences with colleagues</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other reasons</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As can be seen in Table 5.3.1.2.8, the majority of the teachers (41%) indicated that their main reason for attending CPDs is to increase their professionalism. Increasing professionalism is broad as it encompasses all aspects of the teaching
profession. Hence this expectation by the teachers simply indicates the value that teachers attach to CPDs as well as the subsequent value that CPDs can add to the quality of education offered to the learners. The qualitative data also concurred with the quantitative data on increasing professionalism as the main reason for attending an INSET. Other responses that were given by teachers as reasons for attending CPD training included: to share experiences with colleagues; to get an allowance (in form of money) and to add to one’s Curriculum Vitae (CV). Additional responses from teachers included

*FGD 1: to be a Trainer of Trainers (TOT) in the future*

*FGD 4: to get materials to use in my classroom*

*FGD 13: to present our concerns to higher officials*

*FGD 30: to be specialists in certain aspects of the profession*

However, when teachers were asked if their expectations were met at the CPD training, none of the respondents conclusively said they were met. Over 75% of the FGDs conducted indicated that they were “partially met”. For instance FGD 6 responded that

*Expectations are not 100% met at CPD training. There is a trail of challenges that hinder our expectations to be met such as time constraints and poor facilitation.*

Head teachers also expressed similar sentiments. They point to the many challenges at the CPD training that prevent expectations from being met. The reasons are highlighted as challenges in section 5.4.

Similarly, CPD facilitators such as PEAs and those from NGOs such as Save the Children, World Vision International and CRECCOM were asked the same question. They were asked to give their expectations in conducting CPDs. As in the case of teachers, their overall aim is improving the professionalism of the teachers. Specifically, PEAs mentioned addressing common problems in schools; sharing experiences; and improving the quality of education through improved learner performance among other reasons. Other specific reasons as given by some PEAs included
PEA 2: for uniformity purposes from teacher to teacher in scheming and lesson planning as per the demands of the new curriculum and also to enhance understanding of issues discussed during main INSETs organized by other stakeholders as time allocated for such workshops is usually limited.

PEA 7: to address certain identified needs and give skills to teachers to deal with the challenges so as to improve learner performance.

Additionally, CPD facilitators from NGOs mentioned the following:

NGO 2: To empower teachers with skills to ensure learners are learning. Hence bringing teachers closer to the learners with the right pedagogies is our concern.

NGO 3: to motivate teachers to address particular problems.

The PCAR Coordinator mentioned the preparation of teachers before the implementation of a new curriculum as the main reason for conducting CPD training, while the District Education Manager, the Director for Teacher Education Development and the CPEA mentioned imparting knowledge and skills to teachers so that the teachers could use them to improve their classroom practice as their concern for CPD training. When asked if their expectations are met, none of them indicated that they are fully met. They attributed the gap to a number of challenges that are faced both at the CPD venues and at the schools.

5.3.2 Organizers of CPDs

Organizers are basically the initiators of the CPDs. The study established the organizers for both the on-school site and off-school site based CPDs. This variable was felt necessary as it determines the level of seriousness that is rendered to CPD training by those that are mandated to initiate CPDs for teachers.
5.3.2.1 **Organizers of on-school site based CPD training**

The focus group discussions and interviews with head teachers and PEAs concurred, that on-school site based CPDs are usually initiated by head teachers and heads of section after identifying a gap they want to fill at their schools. From the focus group discussions, it appears that on-school site based CPDs are conducted only when there is a pertinent and urgent issue to orient the teachers on. Scheming and lesson planning were given as some of the common issues that on-school site based CPDs usually address. Some of the responses from the focus group discussions on who organizes on-school site based CPDs were as follows

*FGD 7: head teachers do conduct on-school site based CPDs especially on lesson planning and scheming. Sometimes they also include assessment in their training.*

*FGD 5: apart from head teachers, heads of sections sometimes are also involved in initiating on-school site based CPDs.*

Head teachers acknowledged being organizers of on-school site based CPD. HT 13 for instance, gave the following response

> As head teacher, I sometimes organize on-school site based CPDs on record keeping as well as scheming and lesson planning.

PEA 3 and PEA 4 also alluded to the views given by the teachers and the head teachers that on-school site based CPD organization is the responsibility of the head teachers, deputy head teachers, section heads and the teachers. If anything, the PEAs just come to support the process and may participate as resource persons in clarifying issues unclear to the facilitators of the CPD.

The study further learnt that in some cases, PEAs and NGOs gather a limited number of teachers from surrounding schools for an INSET aimed at addressing a similar problem in the schools. For instance, how to teach reading and writing using the approach advocated by the new curriculum. Usually such on-school site based CPDs take place at cluster level. FGD 5 pointed out that in such cases, NGOs

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3 A cluster comprise of three or four Primary schools
such as Save the Children train selected head teachers and mentor teachers to organize and facilitate such cluster level CPD training. One of the teachers at FGD 5 who is also a mentor teacher had the following to say about the organizers of cluster level on-school site based CPD training:

*Head teachers and mentor teachers are invited to attend workshops organized by Save the Children. After the training we are required to organize teachers at cluster level and train them on what we learnt from the Trainer of Trainers’ workshop.*

All the head teachers of schools in the catchment area of Save the Children also affirmed the same facts about Save the Children. When contacted, the Coordinator for education programmes for Save the Children gave the following response:

*We do conduct in-service training programmes mostly during school holidays using a Cascade model. A selected group of professionals team up with our staff. These professionals include tutors from Teacher Training Colleges, staff from MIE and Primary Education Advisors from the impact area. Then this team is deployed as Trainer of Trainers of selected head teachers and mentor teachers from various schools in the zone. Three or four neighboring schools form a cluster from which a trainer head and a mentor teacher are selected. After the training of trainers is done the trainer head and the mentor teacher train teachers at cluster level.*

The researcher noted that all the three CPD observations she made in this study were conducted at cluster level and involved teachers from three or four surrounding schools. Though they were initiated by the Ministry of Education, PEAs and their assistants facilitated the training. Similarly these training sessions complemented the zonal based CPD training on how to handle the new curriculum, especially in the areas of teaching reading and writing. When PEA 1 was asked the intent of the cluster level CPD training she was facilitating, her response was:

*These workshops have been initiated after noting that teachers are still having problems in the teaching of the new curriculum despite attending the training we carry out at zonal level. One major problem encountered is in the teaching of learners on how to read and write since it is very different from the approach teachers were using before the change in curriculum. So these workshops are basically*
equipping the teachers with skills on how to teach reading and writing.

Contrary to the qualitative data, the quantitative data showed that PEAs are the main organizers of on-school site based CPDs (refer to Table 5.3.2.1.1).

Table 5.3.2.1.1: Organizers of on-school site based CPDs (N= 684)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Number of teachers</th>
<th>Percentage of teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PEA</td>
<td>392</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head teacher</td>
<td>356</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO’s</td>
<td>305</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From Table 5.3.2.1.1, 57% of the respondents indicated that the PEA organizes on-school site based CPDs while 52% affirmed that the head teacher organizes the CPDs. Forty-five percent mentioned NGOs as the organizers of the on-school site based CPDs while 24% mentioned teachers as organizers of on-school site based CPDs. There seems to be a contradiction between the quantitative data and the qualitative data on the main organizer of on-school site based CPDs. The qualitative data pointed to head teachers as the main organizers while the quantitative data point to PEAs as the main organizers. It could be that during the focus group discussions, teachers ignored the cluster level CPD training. They might have thought on-school site based CPD training meant those CPDs initiated by the head teachers, section heads or teachers at the school. Nevertheless, both types of data allude to the fact that both head teachers and PEAs organize on-school site based CPDs.

5.3.2.2 Organizers of off-school site based CPDs

For off-school site based CPDs, it was learnt that these are usually the responsibility of the PEAs and NGOs. The quantitative data indicate that the PEA is the main organizer followed by NGOs (Refer to Table 5.3.2.2.1).
Table 5.3.2.2.1: Organizers of off-school site based CPDs (N = 643)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Number of teachers</th>
<th>Percentage of teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PEA</td>
<td>465</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO’s</td>
<td>347</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head teacher</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As Table 5.3.2.2.1 displays, PEAs are the main players in conducting off-school site based CPD training. As highlighted earlier, off-school site based CPDs organized by PEAs are conducted at zone level and draw targeted teachers from schools in the zone. The PEAs can initiate their own CPDs or they can be engaged by the Ministry of Education to facilitate CPDs for the teachers at zone level. Orientation to the new curriculum is one good example where the Ministry of Education engaged the services of the PEAs. From the data in Table 5.3.2.2.1, NGOs are also in the forefront in organizing off-school site based CPD training. Teachers admitted to having attended CPD training organized by different NGOs and institutions. The researcher noted the following amongst others:

**FGD 1:** three teachers from this school attended Action Research workshop organized by the Centre for Educational Research and Training from the University of Malawi.

**FGD 3:** Malawi Institute of Education organized a workshop on Teaching and Learning Using Locally Available Resources (TALULAR) and some teachers from this school attended the workshop.

**FGD 10:** a good number of teachers from this school attended a workshop on special needs learners organized by Sight Savers.

**FGD 25:** Some teachers from this school participated in a workshop on promoting Girls’ Education by Creative Centre for Community Mobilization (CRECCOM).

Interviews with the District Education Manager as well as the Coordinating Primary Education Advisor and PEAs in the district mentioned the following organizations as working in the area of In-service teacher education in Zomba Rural Education District: Save the Children; World Vision International (WVI); Creative Centre for Community Rehabilitation (CRECCOM), Inter Aid; Millennium Villages Project;
Association of Christian Educators in Malawi (ACEM); Centre for Educational Research and Training (CERT) – University of Malawi; Chancellor College; Malawi Institute of Education (MIE); PLAN Malawi; National Library Services; GTZ; Youth Net and Counselling; Centre for Human Rights and Rehabilitation; and Sight savers; among others. The study further learnt from the Coordinating Primary Education Advisor (CPEA) that other off-school site based CPDs conducted at district level are usually organized and facilitated by the CPEA or the District Education Manager (DEM). Sometimes, if need be, any other resource person in the subject area may be identified and engaged to facilitate the training.

In terms of the general logistical organization of the CPDs, the study noted that it varied from one CPD organizer to the other and also depended on the need for the CPD. Usually CPDs initiated by PEAs follow a needs-identification analysis exercise by the PEAs in the schools in their areas of jurisdiction. After the needs-analysis, the teachers concerned are invited for workshops at the Teacher Development Centre from where the PEA operates, or some venue/school that the PEA feels is convenient for the selected group of teachers. For instance, PEA 8 pointed out that

\[ I \text{ go round the schools supervising teachers. When I note a common problem in the zone for instance use of assessment records, I organize a workshop at zone level or cluster level to sharpen the skills of the teachers on the area. } \]

CPDs initiated by the Government, are usually to do with new curriculum orientations. Other emerging or policy awareness issues are also facilitated by PEAs after undergoing a Trainer of Trainers (TOT) training. The workshops may be held during the week or at weekends depending on the situation on the ground.

PEA 4 commented that

\[ \text{Sometimes due to the pressure of work we do not have choices but to conduct the training over the weekend.} \]

Similarly, NGOs have their own ways of organizing the CPD training. They use their own staff for facilitating the CPDs, though the study noted that in some cases they find it inevitable to do the training without engaging the services of the PEAs. In the words of NGO 2

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Much as we use our own staff to facilitate our workshops, we must admit that it is inevitable sometimes to conduct the training without the PEAs as we always fall on them for monitoring and sustainability of the programmes.

However, the study noted some challenges in the way the CPDs are organized. The focus group discussions with the teachers as well as the interviews with the stakeholders complained of poor logistical arrangements for CPD programmes. Teachers complained of having too many participants attending a CPD at one given session and when that happened, it was learnt that participation of some passive participants was to some extent limited. For instance, teachers at FGD 1 complained that

*Teachers are diverse in ability as well as character. When so many teachers are lumped together at a given training, participation of less able teachers and shy teachers is usually limited. This compromises the level of content and skills that such teachers take home from the training.*

Further, teachers indicated that in some instances where participants were many in a given training session, resources to cater for all those participants were inadequate. In addition, groups in such environments were either too large for effective interaction or too many for effective management by the facilitators. In the words of teachers at FGD 4

*Due to large numbers of participants in some of the training sessions, resources were not enough to cater for each and every participant as a result we had to share the few available resources. This inconvenienced us.*

An example was given of training manuals which, in some training workshops, were not enough for every participant to get a copy. Similarly, HT 7 complained that

*Too many participants in a training session lead to congestion and poor participation of participants during group work. Only those that are outstanding in performance dominate not only the group discussions but also the open discussions.*
The ineffective interaction among participants in large groups was also noted by the researcher at RO 2 where groups comprised over 7 participants. All these lead to poor acquisition and retention of knowledge and skills by the teachers, the core objective that the CPD programmes intend to achieve.

In addition to the number of participants, teachers also complained of CPD venues that were not conducive to CPD training. Teachers made reference to CPD venues near entertainment centres, a situation that interfered with the concentration and participation of the participants. Teachers at FGD 25 commented that

\textit{Some CPD training sessions take place at venues close to entertainment places such as beer halls and cinemas. The music disturbs concentration of participants to the training. Sometimes some participants are tempted to go and drink beer during training time.}

Furthermore welfare of participants in some CPD training was also learnt to be problematic. Teachers bemoaned a tendency of participants arriving at CPD training venue and finding nobody to welcome them and tell them what to do. One of the teachers at FGD 23 reported that

\textit{In one of the workshops I attended, when we arrived at the venue, there was nobody to welcome us and attend to our welfare. As a result we slept in a classroom because the organizers never turned up on the day of our arrival. Those participants who did not have money on this day slept on empty stomachs as they could not afford a meal.}

This was confirmed by HT 23 including some PEAs.

On access to the CPDs upon invitation by the CPD programme organizers, it came to light that attendance at the CPDs is not a problem. Teachers always turn up at workshops unless they have valid reasons not to. Such reasons include illness and bereavement. The CPEA stressed that

\textit{Teachers always want to attend an In-service education. Once you invite them for an INSET, they always turn up unless there is a funeral or an illness.}

FGD 3 aired similar sentiments that
Unless the teacher is ill or there is a funeral to attend, teachers will always turn up for an INSET.

The researcher also confirmed this in all the three CPD observations she made. There was an almost 100% turn out of participants. NGO 1 also mentioned the same thing. He attributed the 100% turn out of participants at their CPD training to the fact that the training is done during holidays. He responded

*We do not face problems of access to our CPD training. This is because our training are done during the holidays and are conducted at cluster level. This makes it easy for teachers to commute to and from the training centres*

Nevertheless teachers in some of the focus group discussions mentioned that there is still an array of factors that prevent teachers from attending CPD training. Biased recruitment and poor communication were some of the reasons that were given. On biased recruitment, it was learnt that the criterion used to select which teachers to attend a given CPD training, is not transparent enough. Teachers just see colleagues going for an INSET and in some cases it is the same teachers being invited to attend the CPDs. This makes them wonder how the selection is done. Hence teachers at FGD 30 advised that

*Selection of teachers to attend a given CPD should be fair. It should not be the same people going for an INSET. Every teacher needs exposure.*

This was also expressed by teachers at FGD 28 who commented that

*CPDs should reach out to every teacher, not always the same teachers attending CPDs.*

Further, the tendency of not relaying information in good time about invitations to CPDs was mentioned as one of the challenges that affect teachers’ participation in CPD training. It was learnt that some head teachers neglect to inform teachers about their participation in a workshop until a day or two before the workshop. This was confirmed by the researcher at RO 3 where some of the teachers she talked to during the observation said they had been informed about their participation in the workshop the previous day. Teachers at FGD 22 expressed that
When we do not get information about our participation in a CPD training in good time, we cannot prepare our mind set very well for the workshop and this affects our participation and acquisition of skills during the training.

Teachers at FGD 33 added that:

*We cannot even source materials and information for the workshop beforehand when we do not get the invitation in good time and this limits active participation during the training.*

When triangulated with the quantitative findings on factors that prevent teachers from attending CPD training, the researcher noted similar results especially on biased recruitment (Refer to Table 5.3.2.2.2)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of teachers</th>
<th>Percentage of teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Biased recruitment process</td>
<td>171</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large workload</td>
<td>147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long distance to training venue</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improper arrangements</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No or late information about In-service training</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsuitable time of the year</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of interest in In-service training</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As can be seen in Table 5.3.2.2.2 biased recruitment process was rated highest (26%) among a given list of seven options on reasons for not attending CPDs. It appears that sometimes, the process of recruitment is marred by irregularities. Large workloads and long distance to training venues were other frequently given reasons and they scored 22% and 17% respectively. Only 3% of the respondents to this question would not attend an In-service education because of lack of interest in the training. This is an indication that teachers in Zomba Rural Education District are willing to attend CPD training.

When the organizers of the CPDs were contacted on the criteria they use in selecting teachers to attend CPDs, they indicated that the CPDs normally target a particular group of teachers to attend. For example, it could be teachers teaching a certain section (infant, junior or senior section); teachers teaching a particular
grade; patrons to given clubs; and so on. The responsibility of informing those teachers rests in the hands of the head teachers of the schools. This is an indication that if there are anomalies in the selection and communication process it is the head teachers who should bear the blame. Nevertheless, on the issue of communication, the head teachers tossed the ball back to the organizers to say they also do not send the communication in good time to the head teachers. HT 13 revealed that

_Immediately I receive communication about my teachers to attend a CPD training, I pass over the information to the concerned teachers so that they prepare. Unfortunately, sometimes we also do not get the information in good time and when that happens, teachers think we sit over the information._

5.2.3 Focus of CPDs

CPDs are meant to address certain gaps that teachers are lacking in the teaching and learning process. They might not have learnt them during their pre service training or they may have learnt them but with time in the service, the knowledge might have become stale. This is why the National Strategy for Teacher Education Development in Malawi (2007), as earlier noted, emphasizes that initial teacher preparation will never be sufficient as far as effective teaching is concerned. It is Continuing Professional Development which enables a teacher to go on teaching effectively (NSTED, 2007). Hence, this study also examined the focus of the CPDs that are conducted in Zomba Rural Education District in Malawi.

5.2.3.1 Focus of on-school site based CPDs

In the questionnaire that collected quantitative data, teachers were asked to indicate the focus of on-school site CPDs they had attended. Areas of focus that were given included orientation to new curriculum; methods of teaching; teaching / learning resources; and subject content. Analysis of the quantitative data on focus of on-school site based CPDs shows that 78% of the teachers had attended CPDs focusing on the orientation to the new curriculum. Sixty-nine percent had attended CPDs on methods of teaching while 59% of the teachers had attended CPDS on
Teaching and Learning Using Locally Available Resources (TALULAR). Forty-three percent had attended CPDs focusing on subject content (see table 5.3.3.1.1)

### Table 5.3.3.1.1: Focus of on-school site based CPDs (N= 685)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus of CPDs</th>
<th>Number of teachers</th>
<th>Percentage of teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Orientation to new curriculum</td>
<td>535</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methods of teaching</td>
<td>474</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching / Learning Resources</td>
<td>403</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject content</td>
<td>296</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data in Table 5.3.3.1.1 show that most CPDs are conducted on the orientation to the new curriculum as well as on methods of teaching and teaching / learning resources. Few on-school site based CPDs target subject content.

When teachers, head teachers, PEAs and other CPD facilitators were asked about the focus of on-school site based CPDs, a variety of responses were given. Scheming and lesson planning were mentioned as the major focus of on-school site based CPD training. Over a third of all the focus group discussions held, mentioned scheming and lesson planning as taking central focus of on-school site based CPD training. Assessment and TALULAR were also among the areas of focus of on-school site based CPD training. The following are some of the responses of the teachers on the focus of on-school site based CPDs

**FGD 6**: basically the on-school site based CPDs focus on orienting teachers to perfect their skills in writing and updating schemes of work and lesson plans.

**FGD 17**: usually on-school site based CPDs focus on scheming and lesson planning. Of course sometimes they may focus on other areas like assessment and TALULAR but their main focus is on scheming and lesson planning.

**FGD 25**: scheming and lesson planning is the major focus of on-school site based CPDs. With the change in curriculum, the scheming and format for lesson planning has also changed. So it is necessary that teachers acquire and internalize skills on scheming and lesson planning in line with the new curriculum.
FGD 33: In addition to scheming and lesson planning, on-school site based CPD training also focuses on TALULAR, assessment and occasionally on teaching methods.

Head teachers also confirmed having facilitated on-school site based CPDs on scheming and lesson planning. Some mentioned facilitating CPDs on assessment while others mentioned that their schools organized training for teachers on TALULAR. Below are some of the responses from the head teachers

HT 13: I sometimes organize training for my teachers on how to properly write and update the schemes outcomes of work including lesson planning.

HT 22: with the change in curriculum, formats for scheming and lesson planning have also changed. So I sometimes update my teachers on the new formats.

HT 27: the new curriculum has brought with it some new assessment records which teachers find it very difficult to use. So I sometimes organize training on how to use the assessment records.

HT 29: the scarcity of teaching and learning materials in schools has left us with no choice but to be vigilant in use of locally available teaching resources. Some teachers do not have the skills of sourcing, making and using TALULAR. This triggered us to organize workshops at school level aimed at equipping each other with skills on TALULAR.

Almost all the PEAs confirmed having participated in on-school site based CPDs on the above mentioned areas; for example, PEA 3 and PEA 4 said

PEA 3: some of the schools organize some on-school site based CPDs on scheming and lesson planning, methods of teaching, assessment, TALULAR and other areas. I sometimes attend such CPDs when invited.

PEA 4: I have in some occasions, organized on-school site based CPDs on scheming and lesson planning including assessment after I observed that teachers were having problems on these aspects.

From the data, on-school site based CPDs appear to basically focus on scheming and lesson planning, methods of teaching and learning; assessment; and Teaching and Learning Using Locally Available Resources among other areas. It was also learnt that some NGOs have supplemented the government’s efforts in orienting
teachers on how to handle the new curriculum. When asked the question on the focus of on-school site based CPDs for teachers in Zomba Rural Education District, NGO 1 gave the following response:

*Our CPD programmes focus on improving the quality of teaching and learning through use of participatory and creative methods. All teachers in the impact area are involved in the CPD programmes although the emphasis is on the lower primary (standards 1-4). In recent years our focus has also been to support the implementation of the new curriculum.*

5.3.3.2 Focus of off-school site based CPDs

Through the questionnaires, teachers were asked to indicate the focus of the CPDs they had attended from a given list of three areas; namely, orientation to new curriculum, methods of teaching and subject content. They were also given an “other” option so as to specify focus of any other CPD they had attended that does not appear on the given list. Table 5.3.3.2.1 displays the data.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus of CPDs</th>
<th>Number of teachers</th>
<th>Percentage of teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Orientation to new curriculum</td>
<td>503</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methods of teaching</td>
<td>419</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject content</td>
<td>271</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Looking at the quantitative data in Table 5.3.3.2.1, one notes that many teachers (78%) had attended the orientation to the new curriculum. This orientation was mainly conducted at zonal level and facilitated by the PEAs. Orientation to the new curriculum follows any curriculum reviews so as to sensitize and orient the teachers on how to best handle the new curriculum. For instance in Malawi, the primary schools are following a new outcome based curriculum popularly known as PCAR. There was need for teachers to be oriented to this new curriculum. Apparently it is assumed that all teachers have been oriented to the new curriculum as expressed by teachers in almost all the focus group discussions held. Those that indicated
they did not attend an orientation to the new curriculum, were presumably IPTE teachers who were in College during the time these orientations took place. Fortunately these teachers went through the same curriculum in College. This was confirmed at FGD 13 where an IPTE teacher was quoted saying

*I have not attended any PCAR training because I have just been in the system for one year. Fortunately we went through the same curriculum while in the Teacher Training College.*

Teachers were oriented to the new curriculum at Zone level. However, the study learnt that orientation continued at school level to enhance the understanding of the new concepts. Head teachers, mentor teachers, PEAs and NGOs took part in the orientations at school level as highlighted in the above sections.

Again, a good percentage of teachers (65%) had attended CPDs focusing on methods of teaching. These CPDs are basically to do with participatory methods of teaching and learning so as to actively engage the learner for better and effective teaching and learning. Non-Governmental Organizations also are in the forefront of refreshing teachers on how to teach specific subjects as noted at FGD 9 where teachers indicated that

*Save the Children sometimes conducts INSETs on how to teach English and Mathematics.*

Further, 42% of the teachers had attended CPDs focusing on subject content. Respondents referred to subjects such as life skills, HIV/AIDS, Creative arts, English and Mathematics as taking central focus. Below are responses from some FGDs

*FGD 2: some of us attended a CPD training in life skills at Zone level. It was organized by a certain Non Governmental Organization but facilitated by the PEA for the zone.*

*FGD 5: Some teachers at this school have attended workshops on HIV/AIDS organized by the PEA and also by Non-Governmental Organizations*

*FGD 9: Creative Art is also one of the difficult subjects to teach as such teachers have attended workshops on teaching of creative arts in schools.*

Noted also were some CPDs that focused on Teaching and Learning Resources (TALULAR). According to teachers at FGD 7, TALULAR spices the teaching and
learning process. It motivates learners and keeps them active throughout the learning process (FGD 10). It actively involves the learner in the lesson (FGD 15). Surely, with this kind of involvement, learning is guaranteed. Hence, teachers are also trained on how to make and use TALULAR through some CPDs. From the qualitative data, off-school site based CPDs focus on a wide variety of areas. In addition to focusing on orientation to the new curriculum, methods of teaching, subject content and TALULAR, off-school site based CPDs also focus on school management, gender issues / girls’ education, questioning techniques and action research. Other areas that were mentioned included guidance / counselling, literacy boost, leadership, school health and nutrition, human rights, child friendly schools, class management, sanitation and Sports. HT 32 added that

*The school management and leadership workshops normally target head teachers, deputy head teachers and section heads. While the sports workshops target teachers who are responsible for extracurricular activities.*

From what has been presented, off-school site based CPDs target different areas that are felt to be necessary to equip teachers with skills to enable them be better teachers. However, teachers were presented with a list of suggested areas worthy of a CPD training and asked to indicate the CPD that they would attend if given a choice. The highest rating was given to a CPD focusing on learner assessment (29%) followed by one focusing on teaching and learning resources (21%) then by one on methods of teaching (20%). Table 5.3.3.2.3 highlights the teacher priority areas for CPD.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 5.3.3.2.2: Priority areas of teachers for CPDs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number of teachers</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One focusing on learner assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One focusing on teaching and learning Resource</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One focusing on methods of teaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One focusing on classroom Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One focusing on subject content</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One focusing on other things</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The data in Table 5.3.2.2 give an indication that teachers have their own priority needs for CPDs. CPD programme initiators and facilitators need to take into account teachers’ needs when designing their CPDs. For instance, the data gathered for this study do not show that many CPDs focused on assessment, yet teachers see assessment as one of the critical areas that need to be addressed in CPDs. When asked to explain why they feel learner assessment is a critical area that needs to be addressed, teachers gave the following responses

i. learner Continuous Assessment is a new concept brought with the new curriculum (PCAR) and is difficult to translate, hence, needs more training.

ii. there are some misunderstandings on the use of some assessment tools such as the checklists, rubrics and others. Teachers need to be clarified on those misunderstandings.

iii. with large classes that we have in Malawi, especially in the infant and junior sections, it is difficult to use continuous assessment in those classes hence teachers need a thorough orientation on how to employ the PCAR assessment tools in such classes

iv. assessment determines learner promotions to the next class; hence, very critical. This calls for a systematic and consistent use of the tools which is not the case at the moment as teachers are finding the tools not to be user friendly.

The above responses give more evidence as to why a needs-assessment in terms of areas of focus of CPDs is important. Hence, consultations in CPD designs are critical. Unfortunately, CPD facilitators do not do robust consultations to establish the critical areas that need to be addressed.

5.3.4 Methods used by facilitators in on-school site and off-school site based CPD training

Teachers were asked to mention methods that are commonly used in both on-school site and off-school site based CPD training. Triangulation of the responses got from the different qualitative data sources indicated that the following are some of the commonly used methods: group work, demonstration, question and answer, lecturing, role playing and brainstorming. Other methods mentioned included case
studies (read and present), individual work, singing, explanations, discussions, future's wheel, pair work, observations, games and dances. Table 5.3.4.1 shows the data on the rating of the teacher responses as collected through the questionnaire.

Table 5.3.4.1: Methods used by facilitators in CPD training (N = 730)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Number of teachers</th>
<th>Percentage of teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group work</td>
<td>692</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question and Answer</td>
<td>519</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrations</td>
<td>496</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lecturing</td>
<td>263</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other methods</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As can be seen in Table 5.3.4.1 the quantitative data reveals that group work is the most commonly used method. Ninety-five percent of the 730 respondents to this question affirmed that CPD facilitators use group work during the CPD delivery. Other common methods include the Question and Answer method and the demonstration method which scored 71% and 68% respectively. The CPD observations that the researcher made, also had similar findings on the methods that CPD facilitators use in CPD delivery. The researcher observed that question and answer was among the most common methods. Lecturing was inevitable while group work took the central focus in all the CPDs she observed. However, contrary to Speck's theory of adult learning that adults learn better in small groups, some of the groups were too big to be termed small groups. Some groups at one CPD venue had about 10 teachers in one group. Nevertheless, such groups were not a common scene in most of the CPDs observed as the trend was only observed in one of the three CPD training sessions that the researcher observed.

The methods presented above are interactive methods. Interactive or participatory methods are deemed to enhance effective learning. Where possible, teachers need to apply them in the teaching and learning process in their classroom settings to facilitate better learning.
5.3.5 Professional experiences and expertise of CPD facilitators for on-school site and off-school site CPDs

The professional experience and expertise of CPD facilitators to a larger extent determine how well a CPD programme will be delivered. From what has already been presented, on-school site based CPD programmes are facilitated by head teachers, mentor teachers and PEAs while off-school site based CPDs at zone level are facilitated by the PEAs. The PEAs sometimes use the services of outstanding teachers for that particular subject in the zone. NGOs identify their own facilitators, though, more often, they seek the services of PEAs, head teachers and mentor teachers.

Professionally PEAs are qualified primary school teachers who ascend to the position through promotion. The CPEA confided that experience, commitment to duty and impressive performance, play a great role in the promotion to a PEA. With such qualities, coupled with the experience accumulated on the job as PEA, it can be assumed that the PEAs would be well placed to be facilitators in In-service training meant for primary school teachers. When some PEAs were asked about their professional qualifications, and how they became PEAs, they gave the following responses

   **PEA 1:** am not sure of the criteria they used, but I guess it is because of my dedication to duty in addition to the qualification I possess.

   **PEA 7:** am very hard working. I think it is this attribute coupled with my experience and qualifications that tempted them to promote me to this position. My zone has very distant schools and some schools are right on an island on Lake Chilwa such that I have to reach those schools by boat. That definitely needs commitment.

Similarly, head teachers are teachers by profession and they ascend to the position of headship through promotion after serving for over three years as teachers. Mentor teachers are those teachers who are identified to be resource persons to fellow teachers, following their outstanding performance in the schools they are
teaching. HT 7 gave the following response to the question on her qualifications and how she was promoted to headship

_ I possess Malawi School Certificate of Education and have been in the system for quite a long period of time. I am also committed to my work and have leadership qualities. They might have considered these factors in my promotion._

When the Coordinating Primary Education Advisor was asked about the criteria used in identifying CPD facilitators in the district, he was not very specific. He mentioned that familiarity of the facilitator with the material is key in the selection of CPD facilitators, notwithstanding the fact that the nature of the topic dictates who to contact for a good job on the CPD. He was quoted saying

_ Depending on how difficult the topic is, sometimes we go as far as involving personnel from the Education Division such as the Primary Education Methods Advisor to assist in the facilitation of a CPD._

However, the system for identifying CPD facilitators from a pool of teachers especially for NGOs, needs to be treated with caution as some teachers, for instance, at FGD 25, pointed out that there is no transparency in CPD facilitator appointments. This becomes an issue when such facilitators do not deliver on their mandate, as required of facilitators. This was noted at FGD 5 where the teachers stated that

_ The expertise of some facilitators was sometimes frustrating and questionable and one wonders how they were chosen. Content delivery of such facilitators was not as expected. They were disorganized and the information was just rushed through. They were just reading from the manuals without clearly elaborating on what they were reading._

Reference to the above quotation was specifically made to some of the mentor teachers who could not deliver as expected of mentor teachers and participating teachers speculated that they were engaged because they were related in one way or the other to the organizers.
When asked about the expertise of the facilitators in the delivery of the CPDs, some teachers were quick to mention that some of the facilitators were competent while others were not competent. When probed on workshops where facilitators were competent, teachers mentioned the action research workshop and other workshops that were directly delivered to the teachers by specialists in the field without use of the cascade model. Below are some of their remarks on such workshops

**FGD 16: The action research workshop was organized by lecturers and researchers from the University of Malawi. These people were experts in their field and they really knew what they were doing. They even followed us to our schools and gave us the support we needed to effectively implement our action research projects. Because of their support teachers that were involved in this project implemented what was learnt at the training and indeed their classroom practice improved as well as performance of the learners.**

**FGD 24: Usually facilitators who are specialists in their fields do not display knowledge gaps. Problems come in when the cascade model is involved and the facilitators were not thoroughly oriented during the Trainer of Trainers workshops.**

Over 70% of the focus group discussions held expressed dissatisfaction with the expertise of facilitators. It was reported that such facilitators gave conflicting information on their topics of facilitation as they kept on changing information. When participants asked them for clarity, they got angry. Some of them were disorganized and even came late for the training. Others did not even want to divert from the training manuals for fear of giving inaccurate information. Quoted were some teachers who had this to say on the expertise of facilitators

**FGD 12: Sometimes facilitators were giving contradicting information; sometimes they kept on changing information; for instance, on rubric tools. This was very confusing as the information was not uniform. Sometimes they were just reading from manuals.**

**FGD 20: Some facilitators were not very elaborate in their explanations; as a result when they were asked questions for clarification, they would say “Go and read these manuals – you will understand”.**

**FGD 23: Facilitators were oriented and they just covered what they were oriented on, questions outside their orientation met resistance.**
Head teachers also concurred with the teachers and questioned the expertise of some of the facilitators. Some head teachers gave the following remarks

HT 2: *Some facilitators hated being asked questions. When you ask them questions, they referred you back to the manual or hand out and tell you that “We were also not given much time to comprehend what is in the manual, so find time to read and try to understand what the manual is saying”.*

HT 21: *When PEA s were orienting teachers to the new curriculum (PCAR), they displayed some knowledge gaps in some topics. This was because they also were not thoroughly trained by the specialists because of inadequate time allocated for their training.*

HT 24: *When we asked them questions, they threw the questions back to the participants in the name of participatory learning, yet they do not have answers to the questions themselves.*

However, an analysis of the quantitative data on the expertise of facilitators did not align much with the qualitative findings, as only 29% of the teachers were not comfortable with the expertise of the facilitators. Table 5.3.5.1 displays the quantitative results.

### Table 5.3.5.1: Level of expertise of facilitators (N = 647)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of expertise of facilitators</th>
<th>Number of teachers</th>
<th>Percentage of teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very conversant</td>
<td>349</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conversant</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slightly conversant</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not conversant</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As Table 5.3.5.1 displays, 71% of the teachers appeared to be comfortable with the expertise of the facilitators and 54% found the facilitators to be conversant with the material they were presenting. Further, 24% of the teachers judged facilitators as slightly conversant and only 5% felt the facilitators were not conversant with the material. The quantitative data on expertise of facilitators seem to contradict the qualitative data where over 70% of the focus group discussions appeared not to be happy with the expertise of facilitators. This gives an impression that, during the focus group discussions, there could have been other factors that teachers were
considering on expertise of facilitators after being probed on the question. Nevertheless, the focus group discussions with the teachers and interviews with the head teachers as well as the quantitative data from the questionnaires established that some facilitators had the expertise to competently handle the topics for the CPDs while others did not possess the expertise. Needless to say, teachers prefer facilitators who are experts in their area of training, be it content, methods, TALULAR, assessments or others. Hence, teachers despised the use of the cascade mode. Unfortunately the study noted that the cascade mode is the most widely used mode in CPD training for teachers in the district.

The cascade mode of training was used in the orientation to the new curriculum and other workshops organized by Non-Governmental Organizations for both off-school site and on-school site based training. It was learnt from the DEM as well as the CPEA and the PEAs that during the orientation to the new curriculum, a small group of specialists called Key Resource Persons were first oriented to the training design. These were then entrusted with the task of training larger numbers of middle-level personnel such as Primary Education Advisors, who formed the Resource Persons. The PEAs in turn, trained the teachers at local level. Sometimes the cascading would go as far as PEAs training head teachers who in turn trained teachers at school level. NGO 1 also confirmed that the cascade mode of training was also employed in the CPD programmes that used mentor teachers and head teachers as facilitators. This was because the mentor teachers and head teachers were first exposed to training by key resource persons in the subject, after which they were expected to train the teachers at the grass roots level.

Teachers expressed dissatisfaction with the use of the cascade mode of training as they partly attributed the ineffectiveness of the CPD training to the weaknesses associated with the cascade model. Such weaknesses, as earlier noted, include the watering down of information that takes place when the training design is passed down the various levels of personnel (Khulisa, 2001 cited in Engelbrecht, Ankiewicz, & de Swardt, 2007). Teachers stressed that they also want to be exposed to and trained by the experts not through the cascade mode of training. They expressed concern that if the Trainers of Trainers were not well trained during their training, knowledge gaps pass on through each level of the cascade down to the learner in
the classroom. Below are some of the comments from the teachers regarding the use of the cascade mode of training

**FGD 13:** *the cascade mode used in the orientation to the new curriculum, left participants unsure of how to implement what was learnt at the training.*

**FGD 22:** *cascade mode of training is less effective, in fact it is causing many problems as far as CPD programme implementation is concerned.*

**FGD 32:** *the CPD programme organizers should avoid use of cascade mode of training. They should let the experts or specialists reach out to the teachers themselves. This way the knowledge gaps will be avoided.*

The coordinator for education programmes for NGO1 also referred to this when he said

> *The cascade model is cost effective but runs the risk of compromising quality of delivery. The use of a teacher to teach another teacher may not always work.*

While the cascade mode is cost effective, it needs to be used with caution. Adequate time needs to be allocated to the Trainer of Trainers for thorough coverage and understanding of the material. As Kennedy (2005) puts it, the cascade mode falls within the transmissive model of delivering CPD programmes. Transmissive models are not as powerful as transitional and transformative models in giving the teachers the opportunity for professional development and growth (Kennedy, 2005). Hence, it is necessary that the transmissive model that uses the cascade mode of training be supplemented with transitional models such as communities of practice; and transformative models such as action research at school level.

In this study, good stories were told about use of transitional models such as communities of practice where teachers met at cluster level and shared experiences on some challenges they were facing in the implementation of the new curriculum. The researcher learnt that those activities were organized by one of the Non-Governmental Organizations working in the district. Teachers found the activities helpful as they supplemented what the teachers learnt from the CPD training
sessions that oriented them to the new curriculum. For instance, teachers at FGD 5 remarked that

*The cluster-based training sessions were useful in that we did not have enough time when we were being oriented to the new curriculum at zone level. So the cluster workshops helped us to learn from each other what we did not clearly grasp at the zonal workshops.*

This is an indication that transitional models can complement transmissive models to ensure internalization of concepts that were not thoroughly taught during off-school site based CPD training.

Similarly, the power of transformative models that use action research was also acknowledged by the teachers themselves when they positively talked about an action research project that some of them participated in. This project was initiated and facilitated by the Centre for Educational Research and Training (CERT), a department responsible for educational research in the University of Malawi. Lecturers and Research Fellows from the University of Malawi facilitated its workshops. The researcher learnt that the project used action research to deal with some of the issues impinging on quality of primary education. Selected teachers were oriented on how to use action research as a tool to handle some of the challenges they face in the teaching and learning process. Following the orientation, teachers were frequently and continuously monitored and supported at classroom level on the projects the teachers themselves initiated based on the challenges they wanted to deal with in their classrooms. This was done for almost a year. It was learnt that the results of the project were very positive. Below are some of the comments from some of the teachers who participated in this project

*FGD 8: I sincerely thank CERT for coming up with the action research project. It was very useful. It opened me up such that I am now able to identify learners’ needs in my class and devise strategies on how to deal with their needs.*

*FGD 22: The action research project by CERT was really well designed; as a result it was successful. It involved teachers and head teachers from the beginning. The Lecturers and Research Fellows followed and*
supported the teachers at classroom level where the projects were implemented. I wish other CPDs could follow this example. This project helped teachers to improve their classroom practice.

However, due to limited funds, it was learnt that the project was done on a small scale as it involved only 30 teachers from 10 schools in Zomba Rural Education District.

5.2.6 Duration of on-school site and off-school site CPDs

The amount of time allocated for any CPD programme implementation is critical to the achievement of the success of such programmes. Therefore, the time over which CPD activities are spread plays a great role in determining the achievement of objectives of such CPDs. The qualitative data from all the 34 FGDs conducted for this study established that just a few hours in one day are allocated for on-school site based CPDs. For instance, teachers at FGD 5 indicated that

On-school site based CPDs are conducted within hours.

HT 11 specified the number of hours when he said:

On-school site based CPDs run for just 1 to 2 hours.

However, the cluster based on-school site based CPDs that were initiated by Save the Children were held for three days as noted in the following quotation by the coordinator for education programmes:

We run CPD programs three times a year. We allocate 3 days of TOT training and 3 days of cluster training each quarter.

From the qualitative data, off-school site based CPDs are usually allocated from one day to a maximum of 3 days. However, the maximum time allocation for the orientation to the new curriculum (PCAR) was 5 days. This was echoed in almost all the focus group discussions the researcher held with the teachers. For instance, teachers at FGD 5 indicated that
For the off-school site based CPDs, the duration ranges from a day to 3 days. As for PCAR, the orientation was allocated a maximum of 5 days.

Head teachers concurred with the teachers on the time span of the CPDs. For example, HT 9 acknowledged that

Depending on the nature of the workshop and most importantly availability of financial resources, most off-school site based CPD trainings range between a day and 3 days. However the orientation to the new curriculum was allocated a maximum of 5 days.

CPD programme facilitators gave similar sentiments. For instance, PEA 2 remarked that

The CPDs that I initiate for my teachers in my zone usually are carried out for a day or two. Those that we facilitate but are initiated by the government e.g. the orientation to the new curriculum were allocated a maximum of 5 days.

An analysis of the quantitative data collected for this question shows that 69% of the 678 teachers that responded to this question had attended off-school site based CPD programmes that were held for not more than 3 days. Twenty-six percent of the teachers had attended CPDs held between 4 and 6 days while only 2% had attended CPDs that were spread over a 2 week period. Just 1% of the teachers had attended CPDs held for a month and a further 1% attended CPDs that were conducted for over a month (refer to Table 5.3.6.1).

Table 5.3.6.1: Time allocation to off-school site based CPD’s (N = 678)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Length of time</th>
<th>Number of teachers</th>
<th>Percentage of teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 day</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 days</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 days</td>
<td>198</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 days</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 days</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 days</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 weeks</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 weeks</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 month</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>over one month</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
From Table 5.3.6.1, one gets the impression that CPDs that extend over a period of more than 3 days are not common in Zomba Rural Education district.

When asked if the time allocated to CPDs was adequate for thorough coverage of material at hand, nobody (including the CPD facilitators) agreed that time was adequate. The qualitative data asserted that CPDs are not given enough time to result in teacher change. Teachers were bitter about this, especially with the orientation to the new curriculum and some of them made the following remarks:

**FGD 15:** Time allocated for CPDs is usually not enough for thorough coverage of material. Too much work covered in too short a time leads to knowledge gaps and minimal implementation if any. Facilitators panic to finish. As a result, they just rush through! Most CPDs are like crush programmes.

**FGD 28:** One of the very reasons why CPDs do not meet our expectations is because of the short time that is allocated for conducting the CPD programmes. We are the implementers, yet we are not given enough time to assimilate what they want us to implement in our classroom settings, how can we then implement it?

Even the PCAR coordinator at the Malawi Institute of Education as well as the director for Department of Teacher Education Development (DTED) concurred with the teachers that the time allocated for CPDs, in this case, the orientation to the new curriculum, is not usually adequate. The PCAR coordinator gave the following sentiment:

*The content to be covered on PCAR orientation was just too much to be done in 5 days. A period of 3 weeks would have sufficed for adequate coverage of such content.*

The CPD observations that the researcher held were allocated two days but the manual to be covered was rather thick to be thoroughly covered in 2 days. As a result the facilitators were seen panicking and rushing through the material so as to finish within the given period of time.

Further, teachers could not understand why during the use of the cascade mode of training, teachers who are the implementers are given less time for training than the
trainers. It was learnt that the Trainers of Trainers for the new curriculum had more days of training compared to the number of days for training the teachers. In fact, teachers at FGD 10 commented that

*PCAR had 9 subjects including lesson planning and scheming but only allocated 3 to 5 days. The Trainers spent longer periods during their training (two weeks to be specific) than the implementers.*

The responses above symbolize the situation of “too much content covered in too little a time”. Given the inadequate time for coverage of the requisite material, facilitators just rush through it without considering if teachers have grasped the content or not. This is not healthy and it compromises the quality of the CPD programme as well as its translation into practice at classroom level. However, the major challenge to the design of CPD programmes that spread over a longer period of time, especially in Malawi, lies in the financial as well as material resources to sustain such programmes. As earlier presented, financial constraints was given as the main reason why CPDs are not conducted as frequently as necessary. It appears the same reason could explain why CPDs are not allocated adequate time for thorough coverage of material as observed by PEA 1 in the following remark

*PEA 1: content for the orientation to the new curriculum workshop, did not warrant 5 days only. It needed two weeks or more for thorough coverage but where would the financial resources to suffice all those days come from? This resulted in overloading the five days and the facilitators just rushed through the material so as to touch on each and every aspect that the teachers needed exposure to.*

5.3.7 Funding for CPDs

Funding is an essential element in the delivery of effective CPDs. Financial resources are needed for meal allowances for the participants, their transport and also for provision of snacks and refreshments during breaks. Accommodation for participants in residential CPDs as well as materials to use during the training also hinge on financial resources. In addition, financial resources are also needed to pay
CPD facilitators if need be. Sections 5.3.7.1 and 5.3.7.2 below present data on funding for on-school site based and off-school site based CPDs respectively.

5.3.7.1 Funding for on-school site based CPDs

For on-school site based CPDs organized by teachers or PEAs, the focus group discussions and interviews uncovered that such CPDs are not funded in any way. As a result, the training sessions are conducted for just a few hours to avoid expenses for meals or snacks. It was reported that teachers are not provided with lunch in on-school site based CPDs. Further, it was learnt that the CPDs only take place when the school has material resources to use during the training. In the words of some teachers, it was ascertained that

FGD 4: on-school site based CPDs that the head teachers organize do not have much monetary implications at all. This is because teachers are not provided with meals nor are they refunded any transport money.

FGD 7: on-school site based CPDs that the head teachers organize are not funded as such they are conducted for just a few hours as participants are not given any meals or drinks. Such workshops take advantage of available materials in the schools.

Head teachers also acknowledged that schools do not have means for sourcing finances for CPDs and as such, any on-school site based CPD they conduct is run for just a few hours as lunch is not provided. HT 22 stated that

Schools are not funded for INSETs. As such we cannot provide meals or drinks for our teachers during training. This forces us to conduct the training for just a few hours.

Further information revealed that on-school site based CPDs organized by NGOs, usually at cluster level, are fully funded by the NGOs themselves. Similarly on-school site based CPDs organized by the Government and conducted at cluster level are also funded by the Government. The researcher witnessed teachers being given drinks and snacks as well as meal allowances at all the three CPD observations she made which were held at cluster level, facilitated by the PEAs but initiated by the government. NGO 1 also acknowledged funding the cluster level school based workshops they initiate as substantiated by the following quotation
We would have loved to do more but we experience limitations in funding. Currently we pay K500 per day (US$ 3) as lunch allowance. We also provide material resources to use during the workshop.

5.3.7.2 Funding for off-school site based CPDs

For the zonal based INSETs initiated by the PEAS, the study learnt that financial constraint is the main reason why INSETs are not conducted regularly. It was disclosed that Teacher Development Centres are not funded. Each zone has to find its own ways of getting financial resources for its activities. Hence, zones indulge in different Income Generating Activities (IGAs) so as to solicit money for activities such as conducting INSETs; buying stationery; paying watchmen, settling bills, renovating the TDCs; and other related functions. When probed on the actual IGA activities that zones conduct, all the 12 PEAs interviewed indicated that they have a revolving fund where teachers borrow and pay back with interest. The other IGA activities vary from zone to zone. For instance, some PEAs gave the following responses

PEA 2: we generate our own income through big walk. Sometimes we solicit contributions from the villages as well as head teachers to pay the watchman.

PEA 4: sometimes when I am lucky, the Non-Governmental Organizations that are working in my zone fund some TDC activities such as INSETs that I initiate

PEA 5: Sometimes we receive donations from volunteers. For instance this zone had a volunteer lady who donated MK20, 000 to the TDC. We appointed a committee to manage the fund so that it revolves.

PEA 11: In this zone we run a small scale business of selling soft drinks. The profit generated is used to support some of the zone activities.

However, in this study, the researcher noted that no zone in Zomba Rural Education District had adequate financial resources for regular PEA initiated INSETs. The IGAs that they do cannot generate much income to render a Teacher Development Centre financially stable. Better ways of resourcing CPDs need to be explored. CPDs conducted by NGOs are fully funded by the organizations themselves.
Government initiates and conducts CPDs meant to orient teachers following curriculum reviews. Such CPDs are fully funded by the government. PEAs are usually used as facilitators of such CPDs. It was established through the focus group discussions with teachers that teachers are usually given K500.00 (about US$3) for their lunch during CPD training. Teachers lamented that this amount is too little to pay for a decent meal let alone motivate them to participate fully in the training. In this regard some of the teachers had this to say

\textit{FGD 9: teachers are demoralized because of the little allowance they get at CPD training.}

\textit{FGD 13: INSETs are poorly funded as a result the allowances that teachers receive are too little to motivate them to actively engage or participate in the training.}

\textit{FGD 28: What we get as allowances at the CPD training is a mockery to the teaching profession.}

Head teachers concurred with the teachers on the amount and inadequacy of the meal allowances that teachers, including head teachers, receive at CPD training. Quoted are some head teachers who gave the following responses

\textit{HT 8: One of the major weaknesses in CPD training meant for teachers is the allowance that is given to the teachers. Imagine getting a K500 as lunch allowance, what can you buy with that amount?}

\textit{HT 10: The allowance we get at CPD workshops cannot motivate teachers to implement what they learn from CPD training. It is too little.}

\textit{HT 21: Teachers come out of CPD training very frustrated because of the little allowances they receive.}

Supporting the teachers and head teachers on allowances, NGO 1 gave the following response

\textit{We experience limitations in funding such that we currently pay K500 per day as lunch allowance and teachers say it is not adequate. Sometimes you spend hours discussing with participants on the issue instead of going straight into business. We make them understand by focusing our reasoning on the professional benefits of CPDs; not on the monetary gains.}
The teachers’ views on the allowance issue were confirmed in the quantitative data where only 6% of 708 indicated that the allowance was enough. Ninety-four percent (94%) indicated that the allowance was not enough. Further, it was learnt that in some cases, this meagre allowance comes late, sometimes, long after the workshop is finished, and in some rare cases it does not come at all. For instance, FGD 17 pointed out that

*Allowances for the orientation to new curriculum CPDs were not given on time. In some cases they were received on the last day of the workshop or weeks after the workshop was conducted.*

This was confirmed by HT 23 who indicated that

*The allowances that are given during CPD training are very frustrating and that the little allowance does not even come on time sometimes.*

PEA 11 also confirmed the irregularities in the payment of allowances when he said that

*It was very embarrassing for the PEA to go and buy mid-morning and mid-afternoon refreshments on credit simply because the ministry officials had not yet provided the money to run the workshops. The money could come during the last days of the workshops, sometimes long after the workshops were conducted. This inconvenienced the participants as well as the facilitators.*

The situation of poor allowances is even worse with PEA initiated INSETs at zone level where teachers are not given even a lunch allowance. They are just provided with a snack and a drink. This, as already pointed out, was attributed to TDCs not being funded, hence, they cannot afford to provide an allowance to teachers attending INSETs. HT 26 bemoaned this trend when he said that

*Teachers travel long distances to the TDC for the training. They arrive there very exhausted and yet what they get at the end is just a bottle of Fanta and a bun for the whole day. It is very frustrating.*

Issues of allowances as highlighted above de-motivate teachers and affect their participation in the CPD training as well as their implementation at classroom level
of what was learnt at the CPD training. Modalities need to be put in place to ensure that such issues are dealt with if CPD training is to make a difference in teachers’ lives. In fact when teachers were asked to give their suggestions on how to effectively implement CPD training, one of the suggestions given was to revisit the allowance that is given to teachers during the CPD training. Interestingly, this was mentioned in all the focus group discussions that were conducted. For instance, teachers at FGD 15 advised that

Allowances at a CPD training act as a motivator for the teachers to fully commit themselves for the training. Little and irregular allowances frustrate the teachers and reduce their morale for the training.

The teachers went further to suggest that while CPD programme organizers look into how to motivate teachers at CPD venues, government should also think of how to motivate the teachers to implement what they learn from CPD training at classroom level. Mention was specifically made of teachers’ salaries; and teacher promotions and qualifications.

On teacher salaries, it has to be noted that teachers are employed as permanent civil servants and therefore their salaries are based on incremental scales with basic salaries for different categories of employees. An employee reaches the highest point in a given grade through annual increments or can move into a higher scale through promotions. According to a World Bank Report (2007), for example, the starting salary of a primary school teacher was MK78,548.00 (US$ 524) per annum and the last salary in the scale was MK86,124.00 (US$ 574). After promotion into the next grade the starting salary was MK123,528.00 (US$ 824). The highest salary for a primary school teacher was MK387,960.00 (US$ 2,587) per annum.

As can be noted, the salaries are not very attractive and hence de-motivating. According to the teachers, a de-motivated individual cannot be committed to the implementation of what was learnt at CPD programmes. Teachers at FGD 30 confided that
One of the challenges that affect implementation of what teachers learn at CPD training at classroom level is because teachers are not motivated salary-wise.

Similarly, teachers at FGD 34 commented that

The salaries we receive do not take us to the end of the month. Worse still, there is no any other means for us teachers to get alternative income to supplement our meagre salaries. How do you expect us in that situation to be motivated to implement what was learnt at CPD programmes. Mind you, implementation of what we learn at CPD programmes needs commitment. Without motivation, the commitment cannot be there.

It appears teachers are always in debt because of their meagre salaries; therefore, they are not at peace with themselves. They are always thinking of how their families will survive to the end of the month. This seems to greatly affect not only their implementation of what was learnt at CPD training but also their concentration during the CPD training.

On promotions and qualifications, it appears it takes a very long period of service before a primary school teacher can be considered for promotion. Eligibility is after three years of service (NSTED, 2007) but practically, teachers normally serve for 10 years or more at the same grade. One teacher at FGD 25 indicated that he had worked for over 10 years but he is still at the same grade. According to the teachers at FGD 12, the process of short listing and interviewing the teachers for consideration for promotion is marked by so many flaws such that the length of service, the conduct of the teacher and how the teacher performs at school are not necessarily among the criteria. The teachers went further to say that the only consideration seems to be how well the interviewee responds to the questions during the interview. FGD 17 also affirmed what the teachers at FGD 12 observed. They were quoted saying

The system for promoting teachers from one grade to another is very flawed. It ends up promoting undeserving teachers.

Teachers get de-motivated when they see fellow teachers who are not committed to work and are always drunk, getting promoted while deserving teachers are not.
Since promotion goes with an increase in salary, this situation de-motivates the teachers and affects their morale. Teachers at FGD 11 confessed that it is difficult for disgruntled teachers to seriously direct their efforts towards the implementation of what was learnt at CPD training. The District Education Manager as well as the Coordinating Primary School Advisor alluded to problems in the promotion process for teachers. The District Education Manager indicated that

The process of promoting teachers rests in the hands of the Teaching Service Commission. Unfortunately the process excludes conduct of the teachers in their schools as a result we see undeserving teachers being promoted while some of the hard working ones fail the interviews. This results in frustrations and de-motivations.

All in all, a provision for financial resources is necessary for the smooth running of CPDs. The trend of not funding TDCs needs to be revisited so that teachers are not de-motivated during CPD training. Furthermore, the government needs to look into the issues of salaries and teacher promotions as they seem to affect teacher morale and so impact negatively on both the level of concentration at CPD training; and on the translation of what they learn at CPD training into classroom practice.

5.3.8 Material resources in CPDs

Material resources in CPDs are the items CPD facilitators and teachers use during the CPD training. Such materials include but are not limited to handouts, flip charts, pentel markers, exercise books and pens. It was noted in the focus group discussions that resources may be available at the CPD venue but more often teachers are not given the resources to take to their schools. The following were some of the responses by the teachers to a question on provision of resources

FGD 1: Resources may be available at INSET venues but are very limited in schools and this hinders implementation of what was learnt at CPD training.
FGD 13: Resources may be available at the INSET venues but their inadequacy or unavailability at school level renders CPD training useless.

FGD 17: Resources are not available in schools to facilitate implementation of what was learnt at INSET. They are available during the CPD training.

Head teachers also acknowledged the availability of resources at CPD venues. For instance, HT 3 indicated that

At INSET venues, usually materials are available but this is a problem in schools.

The quantitative data made similar revelations. When teachers were asked whether they were given resources or materials to take to their schools to help them in the implementation of what was learned at the training, only 39% of the teachers responded in the affirmative. The majority (61%) said they are not given materials to take to their schools (See Table 5.3.8.1)

Table 5.3.8.1: Responses of teachers on whether they were given material resources to take to their Schools to help them in the implementation of what was learnt at CPD training

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of teachers</th>
<th>Percentage of teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Given materials</td>
<td>273</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not given materials</td>
<td>434</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Andreason et al. (2007) mention mimicking as one of the stages of teacher change after a teacher undergoes a CPD training. This mimicking stage is facilitated by falling back on handouts and materials given to the teachers by the facilitators during the CPD training. Hence, if handouts are not supplied, it becomes difficult to mimick.

However, anomalies in availability of materials were also reported at INSET venues. For instance, FGD 4 revealed that some of the orientations to the new curriculum that teachers went through used irrelevant materials during the first days of the...
training. Reference was made to the use of standard 3 textbooks for a standard 4 curriculum orientation. When PEAs were contacted on the use of irrelevant materials, they explained that this was because the relevant materials had not yet arrived at CPD venues by the time the training was starting. PEA 9 reported that

*While waiting for the standard 4 textbooks, which did not arrive on time for the training, we were instructed to use the standard 3 textbooks. Nevertheless, the relevant materials came in the course of the training. This inconvenienced us to some extent.*

It was then discovered that logistical problems contributed to this anomaly. The lack of inadequate resources as well as the use of irrelevant materials at CPD training venues impacts negatively on the outcomes of a CPD.

From the data above, it appears that giving teachers materials to take home and use in their classroom settings, is not a common practice. Printed materials enhance the acquisition of knowledge. One can always fall back on them to remind oneself of some ideas learnt but since forgotten. Hence, CPD organizers as well as Government need to think seriously about the provision of resources both at CPD training and also at school or classroom level.

### 5.3.9 Consultation for Inputs in CPD Designs

Quantitative data on whether teachers are consulted for their inputs in the design of CPD programmes show that 85% of the teachers are not consulted. Only 15% indicated that they are consulted (see Table 5.3.9.1).

**Table 5.3.9.1: Responses of teachers on whether they were consulted to give their input in the design of off-school site based CPDs**

(N = 681)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Number of teachers</th>
<th>Percentage of teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Consulted</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not consulted</td>
<td>581</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5.3.9.1 gives a picture that teachers are not usually consulted for inputs in CPD programmes. The quantitative data on consultations of CPD organizers on teacher inputs for CPD designs tally very well with the qualitative data. When asked if teachers are consulted for their inputs in CPD designs, almost all the 34 focus group discussions held with the teachers indicated that they are not consulted in the design of the programmes, especially for the off-school site based CPDs. At FGD 3 teachers commented that “We are not consulted in the design of the CPD programmes”. Other focus group discussions with teachers yielded the following responses on the discussion on consultations

*FGD 2: teachers are not consulted in FGD designs. They are just told what to do.*

*FGD 30: CPD programme organizers do not consult teachers. There is need for consultations if CPDs are to be effective. Inputs from teachers especially those from rural schools where there are many challenges, would assist in development of effective CPD programmes.*

However, when asked if the input provided is taken into consideration in the design of the CPD programmes, 84% of the teachers that said they are consulted, affirmed that their inputs are taken on board in CPD programme designs (see Table 5.3.9.2)

**Table 5.3.9.2: Responses of teachers on whether their inputs were taken into consideration in CPD programme designs (N = 103)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Number of teachers</th>
<th>Percentage of teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Taken into consideration</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not taken into consideration</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It appears from the data in Table 5.3.9.2 that CPD programmes would incorporate teachers’ ideas if they were given a chance to air their ideas. Teachers become satisfied when they see that their input is considered in the design of the CPD training and they commit themselves to the implementation of the programme. One teacher at FGD 8 commented that

*I was consulted on which aspect I find difficult to teach in class and would like a CPD on. I suggested teaching of Chichewa using the*
new PCAR approach. I was so glad when I was invited for a workshop and found out that the focus was on how to teach Chichewa using the new approach. I committed myself fully to this workshop.

Unfortunately the practice of consulting teachers is not widespread, as noted earlier. Nevertheless, there is usually a time during the CPD training when the facilitators or trainers provide opportunities for teachers to give feedback on how the training was conducted. For instance, it was learnt that with organizations like Save the Children, their evaluation forms during training contain a component of what teachers would like to see in the next CPD training. It was the same with PEA facilitated CPDs. PEA 2 expressed that

*Usually participants fill questionnaires at the end of the workshop as a form of evaluating the training as well as its design. Their input through the evaluation forms, informs the designs of future CPDs.*

However, PEA 10 warned that not everything the teachers want can be addressed because of resource constraints. The researcher, through the CPD observations she made, noted that teachers were asked to fill evaluation forms.

Quantitative data collected on this aspect shows that 61% agreed that opportunities for feedback are provided while 39% did not agree that facilitators or trainers provide opportunities for feedback during the training (refer to Table 5.3.9.3).

**Table 5.3.9.3: Responses of teachers on whether the facilitators provided opportunities for teachers to give feedback on how the training was conducted**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Number of teachers</th>
<th>Percentage of teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Facilitators provided feedback</td>
<td>423</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilitators did not provide feedback</td>
<td>273</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The quantitative data in Table 5.3.9.3 seem to concur with the qualitative data that facilitators provide opportunities to participants to give feedback on how the training has been conducted. Cross tabbing the consultations made, against the experience
of teachers, it was revealed that the more the number of years the teacher has been in the teaching profession, the higher the chances the teacher will be consulted for input into the design of CPD programmes (see Table 5.3.9.4).

### Table 5.3.9.4: Consultations for inputs on CPD (by experience)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years of being a teacher</th>
<th>Number of teachers consulted</th>
<th>Percentage of teachers consulted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>less than 5 years</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>between 5 and 10 years</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>between 11 and 15 years</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>between 16 and 20 years</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>over 20 years</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Specifically the data in Table 5.3.9.4 indicate that more consultations are made with teachers of 16 or more years of experience compared to consultations made with teachers who have been in the system for less than 16 years. Similar results were underscored for the age of the teachers. Table 5.3.9.5 highlights the data on age.

### Table 5.3.9.5: Consultations for inputs on CPD (by age)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Number of teachers consulted</th>
<th>Percentage of teachers consulted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>19 years or less</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>between 20 and 29</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>between 30 and 39</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>between 40 and 49</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 years and over</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the data in Table 5.3.9.5, teachers who were between 30 and 49 years of age stood a better chance of being consulted than teachers who were younger than 30 years or those who were over 50 years of age. The explanations could possibly lie in the maturity and accumulation of experience of teachers aged between 30 to 49 years. Those below 30 years of age lacked both aspects while those above 50 years of age may be considered a bit stale to offer good input about CPD designs. Gender-wise, male teachers seemed to be consulted more often than female teachers. Table 5.3.9.6 highlights the data on gender.
Table 5.3.9.6: Consultations for inputs on CPD (by gender)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Number of teachers consulted</th>
<th>Percentage of teachers consulted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Nineteen percent of the male teachers agreed that they were consulted compared to 12% of the female teachers; giving an indication that male teachers stand a better chance of being consulted in CPD designs than their female counterparts. Could it be a question of culture? Unfortunately this research did not establish the reason for this trend but culturally in Malawi, men have more powers in decision making than have women.

Input from teachers on programmes that concern them as teachers is very critical to the success as well as to the sustainability of such programmes. Thus, CPD programme organizers need to bear this in mind and consult teachers in the design of the programmes.

5.3.10 Monitoring and support mechanisms for CPD implementation

Monitoring and support mechanisms are very critical in ensuring that teachers implement what they learnt from the CPD training. Structurally, Primary Education Advisors (PEAs), by their job description, are mandated to monitor the implementation of CPD training. According to the Coordinating Primary Education Advisor (CPEA), the PEAs are required to submit monthly reports of their work including monitoring visits to the CPEA who then shares the reports with the District Education Manager (DEM). The CPEA oversees the activities of the PEAs and is answerable to the DEM. Basically the PEAs are responsible for monitoring the implementation of CPDs that are initiated by the Government, in addition to monitoring those that the PEAs themselves initiate in their zones. The Implementation of CPD activities initiated by the Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) or any other stakeholders or institutions are supposed to be monitored by the NGOs or the concerned stakeholders or institutions themselves. However, for
sustainability purposes, PEAs are also involved in the monitoring of the implementation of such programmes.

Head teachers are supposed to monitor the implementation of on-school site based CPD training at school level. In addition to monitoring on-school site based CPDs, head teachers are supposed to assist by ensuring that the teachers implement what they learnt from off-school site based CPD training. They are expected to do classroom observations as well as create a conducive and enabling school environment. The deputy head teacher and heads of sections are expected to assist the head teacher. Support in the implementation of CPD training is expected to be sought from the PEAs, the CPD programme initiators, the school administration as well as colleagues. In the process of monitoring and supervision, PEAs or any other CPD facilitators are expected to give the teachers feedback on how well they are implementing what they got from the CPD training. Where the teachers need further support, a way forward is agreed upon. The school administration is expected to support the teachers by observing their lessons in addition to providing them with resources (where possible) that they may need in the implementation process. Colleagues are expected to cooperate with teachers who attend CPD training. The teacher concerned is expected to share information with colleagues and together devise ways, where possible, to implement what was learnt from the CPD training.

From the qualitative data, there are indications that the monitoring and support mechanisms of both on-school site and off-school site based CPD programmes in Zomba Rural Education District are not given the attention they deserve. The PEAs were mentioned as following up on implementation of what was learnt at the CPD training, especially on the implementation of the new curriculum. However, teachers felt that the number of visits to the schools is not enough to provide the needed support that can guarantee effective implementation of what was learnt at the CPD training. Below are some of the responses given by teachers in some focus group discussions when they were asked about monitoring and support mechanisms

*FGD 4: PEA monitors the implementation of the CPDs on orientation to the new curriculum. Where we are not getting it right, he supports us by...*
demonstrating how it is supposed to be done. The PEA is assisted by the head teachers and the heads of sections. Only that we are not satisfied with the number of visits the PEA makes. It is not adequate for tangible results.

FGD 14: PEA comes as his normal routine of going round the schools on supervision visits. The PEA takes advantage of those visits to monitor implementation of CPD programmes and give support where it is needed. For instance, on assessment records, he assisted us on how to effectively use the records.

FGD 19: No follow-up from NGOs is done to monitor or support implementation of what was learnt at the CPD training. For those that are implementing, it is because they are committed and dedicated to the teaching profession.

FGD 20: PEA comes as per their normal routine of going round the schools for supervision. In the process the PEA also monitors implementation of what teachers learn at CPD training.

FGD 22: PEA monitors and supports implementation. So does Save the Children. The other NGOs do not monitor.

FGD 24: Not much follow-up and support, especially from the NGOs

Head teachers also gave similar sentiments. For instance some head teachers gave the following responses

HT 16: Not much follow-up and support. PEA sometimes comes to monitor implementation of the new curriculum and give assistance or support on areas that teachers are not clear about eg assessment records.

HT 28: Monitoring and support from NGOs are not common. PEA monitors implementation and provides support to teachers during supervision visits.

From the responses of the teachers, it appears that PEAs take advantage of supervision visits to the schools to also monitor the implementation of CPD programmes. As a matter of policy, PEAs have to make at least three supervision visits to each school in a year (NSTED, 2007). One wonders if three visits to a school can substantially support a teacher in the implementation of what was learnt at CPD training. The limited monitoring and support were also mentioned by the PEAs themselves when they reiterated that
PEA 3: We make action plans to guide us in our activities but these plans are not followed sometimes due to impromptu engagements that fall our ways. This also affects our monitoring and support visits.

PEA 4: To say the truth, monitoring is very minimal. For instance, in my zone I have so many teachers and the schools are very distant from each other. This makes it very difficult for me to reach out to each and every teacher and give the necessary support as required.

PEA 5: We make action plans but they are not properly followed because of financial constraints sometimes. This affects the number of visits we make to the schools to provide our teachers with the necessary support they need in the implementation of what they learn from the CPD training.

PEA 11: We monitor though not on a regular basis due to too much engagements and disruptions. Many NGOs do not monitor. It is only Save the Children that I am aware of that goes round the schools on monitoring and support visits.

These sentiments were also echoed by the CPEA who claimed that PEAs have action plans but they do not follow them as most of them are busy with workshops initiated by NGOs. The DEM also acknowledged the monitoring and support visits that PEAs make to the schools, however, she was concerned that the visits are inadequate to provide effective support to the teachers. She commented that

> Sometimes number of PEA visits to schools is a factor of dedication and commitment on the part of the PEA. At the same time we need to acknowledge that PEAs are overloaded and this affects their day to day operations including their school visits. I think a PEA should not have more than 10 schools under his/her jurisdiction.

When NGOs were asked about the monitoring mechanisms for their CPD programmes, they gave the same answer that not much is done in terms of monitoring and offering support to teachers to implement what they learn from the CPD training. NGO 2 said

> We leave that to PEAs, because we feel that is a means of ensuring sustainability of our programmes after we no longer work in the area.

NGO 3 also said that monitoring is left to the existing educational structures such as the PEAs. The PCAR Coordinator at Malawi Institute of Education alluded to the
same weakness in monitoring. He described the monitoring system of the implementation of PCAR following the orientation as

*Very poor! No proper mechanism for monitoring. If there were good monitoring mechanisms following PCAR orientation, we would have identified the so many problems teachers are facing in implementation of PCAR a long time ago and we would have addressed them there and then. Unfortunately reports from PEAs, after their monitoring, go to the Ministry of Education regrettably there isn’t a good system to ensure flow of information from the ministry to the institute.*

What the PCAR coordinator said was also alluded to by teachers at FGD 8 who stated that

*There are some anomalies in books for PCAR and these were identified long after implementation had already started.*

Additionally, teachers at FGD 31 mentioned that

*Teaching and learning of Chichewa using the PCAR approach is very challenging. The curriculum designers did not think it would be this difficult but now they have realized and acknowledged the problem such that they have started CPDs specifically for the teaching and learning of Chichewa and English.*

The quantitative data on the same question on monitoring gave similar results (See Table 5.3.10.1)

**Table 5.3.10.1: Responses of teachers on whether organizers or facilitators made follow-up visits to the schools to see how teachers were implementing what they learned from the training (N = 704)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Number of teachers</th>
<th>Percentage of teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Organizers made follow-up visits</td>
<td>415</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizers did not make follow-up visits</td>
<td>289</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As Table 5.3.10.1 indicates, 59% of the teachers responded in the affirmative when asked whether organizers or facilitators made follow up visits to the schools to see how teachers were implementing what they learnt from the CPD training. Forty-one
percent indicated that facilitators do not visit them in their schools to monitor and support implementation. This tells a story of some CPD training sessions going unmonitored. With such a trend, implementation by teachers in their classroom settings cannot be guaranteed. Several teachers lamented that some of the monitoring and supervisory visits that the PEAs make frustrate the teachers as they are deemed fault finding. It was revealed that such PEAs insult the teachers when something is wrong instead of assisting and supporting them to get things right. Teachers at FGD 24 narrated that

*Some of these monitoring and support visits are not worthwhile because instead of the CPD facilitators assisting and supporting us on what we are not doing right, they become so bitter and insult us as if we are children. This is common, especially when the PEAs come as a team during inspection.*

HT 20 suggested that PEAs should not be fault-finding, rather, they should be advisors as their name implies.

On support, the data point to evidence that, in addition to the PEAs supporting the teachers during the supervision visits, head teachers also assist in supporting the teachers as they implement what they got from the CPD training. The quantitative data on whether teachers receive support from the school administration in implementing what they learn from CPD training are displayed in Table 5.3.10.2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of teachers</th>
<th>Percentage of teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School administration assisted</td>
<td>530</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School administration did not assist</td>
<td>163</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As Table 5.3.10.2 illustrates, 76% of the teachers acknowledged receiving support from the school administration to implement what they learnt from the CPD training. Only 24% of the teachers were negative in their response.
The interviews that were conducted with the head teachers confirmed that head teachers provide support to the teachers where possible. Some of the head teachers had this to say on support

HT 1: *I ensure that teaching and learning materials such as charts and pental markers where possible, are available for teachers to use in their classrooms to promote interactive or participatory learning.*

HT 13: *I provide a forum where teachers that attended CPD training should share with colleagues who did not attend the CPD. I also provide them with materials if available. I even go further as to borrow teaching and learning materials such as textbooks from neighboring schools whenever there is need to do that.*

HT 14: *I try to support them in whatever way possible but the support is limited because there is too much work for me as a head teacher because I also have my own classes to teach on top of administrative duties. This makes it impossible to conduct lesson observations for the teachers.*

HT 18: *I encourage teachers who have attended CPD training to write action plans outlining how they are going to implement what they learn from the CPD training. I then support them in implementation of those plans though the support is limited due to lack of teaching and learning materials in the schools.*

Teachers acknowledged the support they receive from the head teachers in terms of provision of materials. However, they were quick to point out that the head teacher, the deputy head teacher, as well as heads of sections, are limited in their support, especially in classroom observation because they are also overburdened with their own classes to teach. Teachers at FGD 13 explained that

*We would have loved our head teachers and deputy head teachers including heads of sections to do more in terms of classroom observation but we do understand them, they are overwhelmed with work as they have classes to teach in addition to their administration work.*

However, support from fellow teachers or colleagues was said to be problematic and it was mentioned as one of the challenges that teachers face in schools as they try to implement what they learnt from CPD training. It was revealed that when a teacher attends a CPD training session and wants to share what was learnt at the
training so that everybody at the school benefits, the other teachers are not willing to participate in the sharing of the information. They raise issues of allowance, though diplomatically, other teachers would indicate that they are not sure of cascaded information. For instance, at FGD 9, a teacher reported that

*Teachers not only at this school but also in other schools are not cooperative to learn from fellow teachers from their schools who attended CPD training. They always talk of allowances thinking that their colleagues were given allowances at the off-school site CPD training. I think there is an element of jealousy.*

Head teachers also concurred with the teachers that some teachers give problems when colleagues want to share with them the information they got from the training. HT 14 lamented that teachers always raise issues like “You were given an allowance while there, now you want to train us for free”. He confessed that this kind of resistance puts one off and so prevents the dissemination of the knowledge and skills. It is doubtful that teachers can support each other with this kind of attitude. It appears the teachers value the monetary benefits more than they value the professional benefits.

### 5.3.11 Level of implementation of what was learnt at CPD training

The study also enquired from the teachers how they found the implementation of what they learnt from the CPD programmes in their classroom settings. They were given four options to rate their level of implementation, in terms of whether they found it very difficult, difficult, easy or very easy to implement. Summary of the quantitative data show that 38% of the 674 teachers that responded to this question indicated that it was difficult while 38% said it was easy. A further 6% and 7% said it was very difficult and very easy respectively (see Table 5.3.11.1)
Table 5.3.11.1: Responses of teachers on level of implementation of what was learnt at CPD training at classroom level (N = 674)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of difficulty</th>
<th>Number of teachers</th>
<th>Percentage of teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Difficult</td>
<td>252</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very difficult</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easy</td>
<td>330</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>very easy</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From Table 5.3.11.1, forty-four percent found it difficult to implement what was learnt at CPD training while 56% found it easy. However, the expression that they found it easy to implement does not necessarily imply that they implemented what they learn from the CPD training. The qualitative data gave indications that it was not easy to implement the new skills as teachers are faced with so many challenges as they try to put into practice what they got from the CPD training. Below are some of the sentiments that teachers expressed on the level of the implementation of what they learn from CPD training:

**FGD 10:** All factors being equal, implementation of what was learnt at CPD training should not have been a problem. But because of the so many challenges we face as we try to implement what we got from the training, such as large classes and lack of materials, we are put off.

**FGD 14:** So many issues need to be addressed in our education system if effective implementation of what was learnt at CPD training is to be realized.

Head teachers also echoed similar sentiments that implementation at classroom level ought not to be difficult but the teaching and learning environment is what frustrates the teachers in the implementation process.

**HT 18** had this to say:

_Owing to the many challenges teachers face in schools such as understaffing where the available few teachers float among a number of classes, issues that were learnt at CPD training become difficult to implement._

**PEA 7** concurred with HT 18 that understaffing leads to the few available teachers teaching more than one class. In such situations, the teacher does not have ample time for thorough preparation and implementation of what was learnt at CPD training.
training. From the views expressed by the teachers, including the head teachers and PEAs, it appears that, even if the teachers acquire the skills during the CPD training, implementation at classroom level is hampered by the circumstances they find themselves in.

Disaggregating the data by age gave the results displayed in Table 5.3.11.2

Table 5.3.11.2: Level of implementation by age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age (in years)</th>
<th>Very difficult</th>
<th>Difficult</th>
<th>Easy</th>
<th>Very easy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 years or less</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>between 20 and 29</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>between 30 and 39</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>between 40 and 49</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 years and over</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Both teachers aged 19 years or less, found the implementation of what was learnt at CPD training difficult. This could be because the mental capacity of such teachers is not developed enough to cope with the pressures that come with the teaching profession. Hence, it may be important that such teachers be intensively monitored and supported to boost their confidence in the implementation of what they learn from CPD training. Nonetheless, over 50% of the teachers in all the other age brackets, found implementation of what they learn from CPD training sessions not difficult. However, implementation, depends on other factors such as availability of teaching and learning resources, infrastructure and adequate teachers among other factors.

Further analysis of the data by teacher training programme that the teacher went through during pre-service training, gave the results displayed in Table 5.3.11.3.
Table 5.3.11.3: Level of implementation by teacher training programme

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of training programme</th>
<th>Level of difficulty</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Very difficult</td>
<td>N0.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N0.</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>two years training programme</td>
<td>Very difficult</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MASTEP</td>
<td>Difficult</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MITTEP</td>
<td>Easy</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1PTE</td>
<td>Very easy</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>one year programme</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Though not much difference can be noted across the various teacher training programmes, still there is an indication that teachers who went through the two year teacher training programme have the toughest time implementing what they learn from CPD programmes. From the data in Table 5.3.11.3, forty-seven percent of the teachers who underwent the two year teacher training programme indicated the level of implementation as difficult. Looking at the background of the teachers who went through this programme, one notes that their programme was the first programme introduced after Malawi got its independence in the 1960s. Hence, one possible explanation would be that these teachers have stayed too long in the system and are set in their old ways of thinking and teaching which they value and trust. For instance, one month to month teacher at FGD 12 commented that

*The old approach of teaching learners how to read and write was better because we could teach our learners systematically and in stages starting with the alphabet, then vowels and syllables. Thereafter we could go to words and sentences. This whole word approach advocated by PCAR seems not to work.*

This to some extent calls for CPD planners to consider designing the CPD programmes in such a way that they take into consideration the different teacher training programmes that the teachers underwent during their pre service training.

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4 Month to month teachers are teachers who retired sometime back but are now teaching on contract basis because of shortage of teachers in the system
This is because the background of the teachers varies depending on the pre-service training programme they attended and this affects their understanding of issues. PEA 12 gave similar sentiments when he expressed the view that

*Teachers underwent different pre-service training programmes; therefore their understanding of issues is different because of the different backgrounds. Designing CPD programmes that put this into consideration may be a welcome idea as their needs would be addressed separately.*

The study further established the level of implementation of what was learnt at CPD programmes according to the academic qualifications of the teachers. Disaggregating the data by the qualifications of the teachers in the District showed that teachers with Primary School Leaving Certificate of Education find it very difficult to implement what they learnt at CPD training than teachers with Malawi School Certificate of Education or Junior Certificate of Education (refer to Table 5.3.11.4)

**Table 5.3.11.4: Level of implementation by academic qualification**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualification</th>
<th><strong>Level of difficulty</strong></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Very difficult</strong></td>
<td><strong>Difficult</strong></td>
<td><strong>Easy</strong></td>
<td><strong>Very easy</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>N0.</strong></td>
<td><strong>%</strong></td>
<td><strong>N0.</strong></td>
<td><strong>%</strong></td>
<td><strong>N0.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MSCE</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>231</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JCE</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSLCE</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As can be observed from Table 5.3.11.4 twenty percent of the teachers with Primary School Leaving Certificate of Education indicated that they find it very difficult when compared with 6% and 7% of the teachers with Malawi School Certificate of Education and Junior Certificate of Education respectively. Previously, the Teaching Service Commission (a body responsible for teacher promotions) used to train and employ teachers who possessed the Junior Certificate of Education (JCE) and Malawi School Certificate of Education (MSCE). With the
introduction of the current teacher training programme (IPTE), only MSCE holders are recruited for the teaching profession. Though the Ministry of Education encourages those teachers who do not have MSCE to upgrade, the study has noted that there are still some teachers who have not yet done so. Some seem not to be interested while others fail when they sit for the examinations despite Teacher Union of Malawi’s efforts to prepare the teachers for the MSCE examinations.

Further, the data on this item were disaggregated by gender. The aim was to judge which gender had more problems in the implementation of what was learnt at CPD training. Table 5.3.11.5 illustrates the data

**Table 5.3.11.5: Level of implementation by gender**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Very difficult</th>
<th>Difficult</th>
<th>Easy</th>
<th>Very easy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N0.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N0.</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From Table 5.3.11.5 a conclusion can be drawn that, generally, more female teachers (48%) find it more difficult to implement what they learn from CPD programmes than the male teachers (42%) though the gap is not very wide.

Lastly, the researcher also disaggregated the data for this item by experience of the teachers in order to determine whether experience plays a part in ease of implementation of what is learnt at CPD training. Table 5.3.11.6 displays the data.
Table 5.3.11.6: Level of implementation by experience of teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experience (in years)</th>
<th>Level of difficulty</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Very difficult</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N0.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>less than 5</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>between 5 and 10</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>between 11 and 15</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>between 16 and 20</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>over 20</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data in Table 5.3.11.6 show no clear pattern to enable one make inferences as to whether the experience of a teacher has any bearing on the level of implementation what was learnt at CPD training. Though the “between 5 and 10 years” category had more people (54%) indicating that it was difficult to implement, there were fewer people (41%) saying the same in the ‘less than 5 years’ category. This makes it difficult to conclude that experience plays a role in ease of implementation of what was learnt at CPD programmes.

From the data so far presented, there are challenges that are faced in implementation of CPD programmes for teachers. Some of the challenges are faced at the CPD training while others are faced at the schools and classroom settings as teachers try to implement what they learn from the CPD training. Those that are faced at the CPD training were discussed in earlier sections. They included issues of inadequate time allocations to CPD training; inadequate expertise of facilitators; the use of the cascade mode of training; poor logistical arrangements; inadequate / irregular allowances, inadequate / irrelevant training materials; and long distances to training venues. Challenges faced by the teachers as they try to implement what they learn from the CPD training are presented in the next section.
5.4 CHALLENGES FACED BY TEACHERS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF WHAT THEY LEARN FROM CPD PROGRAMMES

It is to the expectation of the CPD programme organizers as well as to the teachers that after undergoing CPD training, teachers should put into practice what they learn from the CPD training in their own classroom settings. The motivation for this study was based on the fact that, despite teachers attending CPD training, their classroom practice has not improved much. For this reason, the study also looked into challenges that teachers face as they try to put into practice what they learnt from the CPD training. These challenges are presented as given by the teachers, head teachers and CPD programme providers during the focus group discussions and interviews. Document reviews from PCAR and Education Management and Information Systems (EMIS) reports as well as other policy documents proved very useful in supplementing the data. The major challenges were highlighted as lack of resources; large classes; inadequate teachers; learner absenteeism; and inadequate infrastructure. These challenges are presented below.

5.4.1 Lack of resources at school level

This was expressed as one of the critical challenges that teachers in Zomba Rural Education District in Malawi face in their profession. The CPEA and the DEM emphasized that one of the main factors hindering translation of what teachers learnt at CPD programmes into classroom practice is the lack of resources at school level. Teachers expressed similar sentiments. For instance, FGD 30 complained that

*Government is not serious in providing resources in schools. It is always talking of TALULAR but TALULAR is not always feasible. You can’t improvise textbooks.*

Some of the resources that were repeatedly mentioned as inadequate in the schools included textbooks and writing materials.
5.4.1.1 Textbooks

In a normal situation, we expect the textbook-to-learner ratio to be 1:1; though some policy documents in Malawi such as the policy investment framework recommend 1 textbook per 2 learners (PIF, 2001). Unfortunately what this study and some other studies have observed is that, in Malawi, the textbook-to-learner ratio can go as far as 1 textbook to 10 learners (CERT, 2009). At FGD 11 teachers reported that

*You find a class where 1 textbook is being shared among 5 or more learners during group work.*

Another study in Malawi (Selemani-Meke, 2010) revealed that in some schools, teachers use borrowed teacher’s guides or they do not use guides at all because the school doesn’t have any. This leads to a situation where some teachers do not plan their lessons.

The Ministry of Education’s policy on textbooks is that they should have a life span of 10 years (PCAR, 2006). However, teachers bemoaned this policy saying it is not realistic considering the realities on the ground. Further probing into the situation on the ground yielded the response of poor storage facilities in schools coupled with the inferior binding of the textbooks. Teachers at FGD 16 commented that

*We hear that the lifespan for the textbooks we receive is 10 years. We have had them for less than three years but they are already in tatters.*

HT 6 aired similar sentiments and described the policy as

*Not practical as the textbooks do not last long due to poor workmanship.*

The researcher noted that books in some schools were just piled at the corner in the head teacher’s office due to the absence of store rooms for the books. Textbooks facilitate the teaching and learning process. The paucity of books in schools means that learners have no means of reference during the teaching and learning process.
This hinders the effective implementation of what was learnt at CPD training. For instance, the effective use of the participatory method of teaching and learning which is the most frequently advocated method of teaching and learning in CPD training, requires an adequate supply of books. Teachers complained that, much as they try to use group work and other participatory methods, their efforts are derailed by unavailability of enough reference books for the groups. Teachers at FGD 8 complained that

*Group work and pair work cannot be effectively conducted without textbooks.*

### 5.4.1.2 Writing materials

Writing materials include exercise books, pens, chalk, scheme pads, charts, markers and glue among others. It is the responsibility of the Government to provide these writing materials to schools but it appears the government has stopped providing these resources for over 2 years now. PEA 2 confirmed this and hinted that

*Resources are a problem at schools since the government has slacked in providing resources to schools.*

PEA 10 concurred with PEA 2 and added that he was thankful to Save the Children for providing writing materials to some schools in his zone (though not enough).

Almost all the 34 primary schools that were visited alluded to the fact that they had not received writing materials for over two years. This has brought a myriad of problems to schools. For instance needy learners can no longer write in class since they have no exercise books and pens. Further, participatory teaching and learning is affected due to the lack of charts and markers. Below are some of the responses from the teachers during the focus group discussions and interviews on resource availability

*FGD 6: we lack resources in implementation of what was learnt at CPD training. Imagine for over 2 years now the government has not provided teaching and learning resources in schools.*
FGD 12: The government is not providing us with teaching and learning resources. We cannot use participatory learning without adequate resources. So we just use lecturing.

FGD 13: The government should provide resources in schools to enhance implementation of what we learn in CPD training.

FGD 18: Due to lack of writing materials, some learners do not write class activities. This greatly affects performance of such learners.

FGD 23: Had it not been for Save the Children, this school would have been in serious problems as regards availability of writing materials. At least orphans and other vulnerable children are assisted with the little we get from Save the Children.

The CPEA concurred with the teachers that resources are a problem in schools. He went further to reveal that this forces teachers to use lecturing instead of participatory methods of teaching. As a result, there is no active learning and this results in poor learning outcomes. It was also noted that some teaching and learning materials are bought by the schools themselves through the Direct Support to Schools (DSS) fund. This is a fund that was introduced by the government years ago and is decentralized at the District Education Office to assist schools in buying teaching and learning resources. Each school has its own allocation which depends on enrolment. Unfortunately the fund is not enough to buy the basic necessities for the schools. Apparently the fund seems not to be regularly administered to schools (Selemani-Meke, 2010). The study learnt that teachers end up buying their own scheme pads for lesson planning and scheming using their meagre salaries. This was confirmed by HT 26 who mentioned that

In desperate situations, teachers end up buying resources including text books using their little salaries.

The shortage of writing materials in schools was mentioned as one of the causes of learner absenteeism as well as limited learner participation in class activities.

5.4.2 Large classes

At every focus group discussion the researcher held with the teachers including the interviews that were conducted with stakeholders, large classes was given as one
of the challenges teachers face in implementation of what was learnt at CPD training. This was felt to be the main hindrance to the implementation of what teachers learn at CPD programmes. This problem was said to be critical in the infant and junior sections of primary school education as enrolment is high in those sections. Policy documents recommend a teacher-to-learner ratio of 1:60 (NESP, 2007; PIF, 2001). The reason for this is that with such a ratio, the classes would be manageable. Anything above 60, respondents felt, makes the classrooms very congested and therefore difficult for the teachers to move through and offer individual assistance to the learners. The following were some of the responses by the teachers on the challenge of large classes

FGD 13: We have over 200 learners in some of the classes here. All those learners are manned by one teacher. This gives problems when it comes to group work.

FGD 22: One class here has over 300 learners and all those learners are under the supervision of one teacher. You can’t talk of implementing participatory methods in such a situation.

FGD 27: Our classes are just too large to allow for effective implementation of what we learn from CPD training.

FGD 33: We have over 300 learners in Standard 3. Tell us how you can conduct participatory methods with such a number of learners.

Head teachers agreed with the teachers that large classes pose one of the major challenges to the implementation of what teachers learn at CPD training, especially when using participatory learning methodologies such as group work. HT 12 explained that

Large classes are compounding the problems teachers face in implementation of what they learn at CPD training. We have over 300 learners in some of the classes here and all those under the responsibility of one teacher. It is extremely difficult to effectively use participatory methodologies in such classes.

EMIS (2009) indicates that the average teacher-to-learner ratio in Malawi is 1: 92 while in Zomba Rural Education District, the ratio stands at 1 teacher to 98 learners. This figure, for sure, masks the actual size of the classes on the ground where one finds over 300 learners in a class being manned by a single teacher as expressed in
the above quotations. From these sentiments, it appears large classes is greatly affecting implementation of what teachers learn at CPD training. Hence, FGD 7 suggested that the 1: 60 ratio as per the policy documents should be strictly adhered to. Unless adequate teachers are engaged, large classes will continue to affect implementation of what teachers learn at CPD training. However, the question remains where to get the teachers to fulfil that recommendation, let alone the financial resources to remunerate them.

5.4.3 Inadequate teachers in schools

Related to large classes is the problem of inadequate teachers in schools. Under normal circumstances, each of the classes or standards in a primary school is supposed to have its own class teacher. Further, a teacher is supposed to have a maximum of 60 learners in a class (NESP, 2007; PIF, 2001). Contrary to the recommendation, the attendance registers in schools revealed that in most schools, especially in rural settings, one teacher teaches more than one class and in some cases over 200 learners in one class as earlier noted. The quantitative data indicated that 28% of the teachers teach multiple classes. This over-burdens the teachers and hinders effective implementation of CPD programmes as the teacher gets exhausted in the process of teaching the multiple classes or manning large classes. Teachers complained of scheming and lesson planning as well as keeping of assessment records as some of the areas that are greatly affected and not properly implemented due to inadequate teachers in schools. They indicated that the load is just too much for an individual teacher to effectively plan and update the schemes and lesson plans; let alone keep individual assessment records for all the learners under the teacher’s responsibility. Some of the teachers had the following to say on the shortage of teachers

FGD 14: due to inadequate teachers in schools, the available few teachers are overloaded as they have to float across two or more classes. This is hectic and indeed impacts negatively on implementation of what was learnt at CPD training
FGD 17: under-staffing in our schools is resulting into one teacher manning too many classes. This renders it difficult to implement plans including keeping up-to-date records for all the classes as well as administering effective individual continuous assessment.

FGD 19: teachers are not enough to match the enrolment of learners at this school. As such, we float across classes just to ensure that all the learners learn something by the end of the day. This makes us tired as a result we find it difficult to implement what we learn from CPD training.

HT 31 concurred with the teachers that due to under-staffing, it is a problem for the teachers to thoroughly prepare for all the classes they teach. PEAs gave similar observations. PEA 7 pointed out that

Even if the teachers acquire the skills at the CPD training, implementation is difficult as the teachers have to float across the classes hence no time to seriously concentrate on the issues.

The CPEA concurred with the teachers that under-staffing is undermining teachers’ efforts in the implementation of what they learn from CPD training. He commented that

We really sympathize with the available few teachers in the schools. In some schools especially in very rural settings, you find only two or three teachers manning a full primary school. It is difficult in such situations to effectively ensure quality of education let alone the teachers effectively implement what they learn from CPD training

The District Education Manager also confirmed the shortage of teachers in schools as one of the contributing factors to the lack of implementation of what teachers learn at CPD training. She narrated that

The number of teachers that we have at district level, do not match the enrolment of learners in the schools as a result the policy recommendation of 1 teacher to 60 learners is not adhered to. This gives problems when it comes to effective implementation of what teachers learn at CPD training such as participatory methodologies and upkeep of teaching and learning records.

Hence, teachers, head teachers including the PEAS and the District Education Manager have urged the government to recruit more teachers to ensure that the 1:60 ratio is adhered to. However, recruitment has to go with retention of the
teachers in the system. The study learnt that teacher-attrition is one of the reasons why there are so few teachers in the system. EMIS (2009) attributes teacher-attrition in schools in Malawi to prolonged illness, dismissals, resignation, retirement, leaving without giving any reasons, transfers to other teaching posts and transfers to non-teaching posts.

The number of teachers being moved from one school to another was the highest contributor to teachers leaving schools. Teachers move especially from primary schools to secondary schools in search of improved living conditions and better salaries. This is done after teachers upgrade and acquire advanced qualifications that allow them to teach in secondary schools. However this creates a gap in the primary education sub-sector. One major setback is that secondary schools especially Community Day Secondary Schools (CDSS), are grossly under-staffed and the Ministry has resorted to using primary school teachers to alleviate the teacher shortage. This has resulted in secondary schools being flooded with under qualified teachers, at the same time creating another shortage of teachers in primary schools. For whatever reasons, the deployment of teachers from primary schools to secondary schools seems to be one of the factors contributing to high teacher to learner ratios in primary schools. The high teacher-to-learner ratio is rendering implementation of what teachers learn at CPD training ineffective. As earlier noted, the few available teachers are over-burdened with work; thereby failing to effectively plan as well as use participatory methods of learning. Teachers at FGD 25 commented that

> Once a teacher is transferred to another school, nobody comes within the shortest possible time to replace that teacher. It can take ages before the school receives a replacement.

It appears teacher attrition is contributing significantly to the shortage of teachers in primary schools. Due to this shortage, the available few teachers are over-burdened with high workloads. This leads to poor lesson preparation and delivery. Even effective implementation of what teachers learn at CPD programmes cannot be guaranteed when teachers are over-burdened.
5.4.4 Learner absenteeism

Absenteeism affects continuity of what was learnt the previous day. Further, it puts the teacher in an awkward position when the group of learners he/she teaches keeps changing from day to day. For instance, teachers gave an example of giving learners an assignment to bring locally available teaching and learning resources for the next day’s lesson but then just a few learners turned up for that lesson. This meant that very few resources were available for use in that particular lesson. This does affect effective implementation of what teachers learn at CPD training. With the low teacher morale issues discussed earlier on in mind, it is very difficult for a teacher to eagerly implement what was learnt at CPD training when they teach different sets of learners due to absenteeism. It is even worse with long term absenteeism. Initiation ceremonies that keep learners out of school for a number of weeks was mentioned as one of the common causes of long term absenteeism for learners in Zomba Rural Education District. For instance, it was learnt at FGD 27 that at their school, learners had lost close to four weeks after opening the school term because of initiation ceremonies. Teachers at FGD 9 complained that

Absence and late coming of learners are adversely affecting and disturbing implementation of what we learn at CPD training. Continuity is not there and this frustrates the teachers’ efforts.

Further, teachers revealed that the PCAR approach including its books is of higher level and the content in the textbooks is not congruent with the learner abilities. Teachers at FGD 6 warned that

With PCAR curriculum, if a learner misses a class today, it is very difficult for that learner to catch up in subsequent lessons.

Similarly, the content in some subjects such as life skills is felt by teachers to be very difficult and sensitive to discuss with learners, especially in the lower standards regardless of whether the teacher attended a CPD in the area. Teachers at FGD 30 expressed that

Some content in life skills such as sexual and reproductive health is very sensitive to teach and sometimes not culture sensitive. Some of the issues we are forced to teach our learners at not compatible with
their ages and contradicts cultural values. Imagine discussing menstruation issues with learners in standard 2 or standard 3, is it not a disgrace to womanhood?

The head teachers made similar observations and indicated that the content in life skills was seen to contradict culture. HT 27 confided that

_Some content in life skills contradicts the cultural values that both teachers and learners uphold. Such content meets much resistance from both teachers and learners regardless of whether the teacher attended CPD training or not._

Again it was noted that some learners resist change, they do not want to try out new things no matter how much the teacher makes the effort to bring new things to class. Absenteeism coupled with lack of learner interest in trying out new things complicates the process of implementing what teachers learn at CPD training.

### 5.4. 5 Inadequate infrastructure in schools

Unavailability of adequate infrastructure was mentioned to as one of the factors hindering the implementation of what teachers learn at CPD programmes in the Zomba Rural Education District. Infrastructure includes, teachers’ houses, staff rooms, head teacher’s office, store rooms, libraries and toilets. Infrastructure renders the teaching and learning environment conducive to teaching and learning and, by extension, to enhancing the implementation of what teachers learn at CPD training. Their inadequacy in schools severely affects the implementation of what teachers learn at CPD training. The data on inadequate infrastructure and how it affects implementation of what teachers learn at CPD training are detailed below:

#### 5.4. 5.1 Classrooms

During the data collection exercise, the researcher observed that there were not enough classrooms to accommodate all the learners at the school. As such, some classes were seen taking place in open air and under trees. This was affirmed
during the focus group discussions and interviews with stakeholders. For instance, teachers at FGD 11 indicated that the classrooms at the school were not enough to accommodate all the learners at the school. It was the same with FGD 12, FGD 14, FGD 34 and other FGDs. Teachers complained that the insufficient number of classrooms in schools has inconvenienced implementation of what teachers learn from CPD training. Teachers mentioned open air classes and congestion in the few available classrooms as resultant effects of this situation. It was further reported that teachers would send learners home when the weather is very harsh for them to have open air classes. Worse still, in some schools, they have the open air classes but they have no portable boards to use outside the classrooms. The following were some of the responses from teachers on classroom availability

FGD 14 *Due to inadequate classrooms at this school, we are forced to hold open air classes. We face a lot of disturbances with open air classes as learners’ attention is drawn towards passersby instead of focusing on the teaching and learning process. Even group work is difficult to conduct effectively in open air classes*

FGD 34: *unavailability of adequate classrooms at this school has resulted in congestion in the available few classrooms. It becomes difficult to conduct effective group work in congested classrooms. The teacher cannot even move round to supervise individual learners as there is no space to allow movement. The situation is really pathetic.*

PEAs concurred with the teachers on problems of classrooms in schools. PEA 10 advanced that open air classes are common in his zone due to insufficient classrooms. He went further to say this interferes with the teaching and learning process.

Policy documents recommend a 1-to-60 classroom to learner ratio (PCAR framework, 2006) yet in Zomba Rural Education District, an average classroom holds about 132 learners (EMIS, 2009). This makes the classrooms congested and difficult for the teacher to effectively implement what was learnt at CPD training as presented earlier.
5.4.5.2 Teachers' houses

Shortage of teacher houses, especially in the rural areas where teachers cannot find good houses to rent, was mentioned as another reason why teachers feel too de-motivated and frustrated to implement what they learn from CPD programmes. Lack of teacher houses was also mentioned as a reason for the high teacher-to-learner ratios in rural areas because teachers hesitate to move to rural schools where they would not find decent accommodation. The Guidelines for Infrastructure Development recommend four teachers’ houses as a minimum requirement for Junior Schools and eight teachers’ houses as a minimum requirement for Senior Schools (Ministry of Education, 2008). Currently, Zomba Rural Education District has 422 teachers’ houses against the 1684 teachers working in the district (EMIS, 2009). This gives a ratio of 1 teacher’s house to 4 teachers and their families. This indicates how serious the problem of teacher accommodation is in the district.

Teachers explained that the lack of teachers’ houses at the schools forces them to find accommodation in nearby villages. They went further to say that sometimes the house may be very far from the school and in some instances, the communities might be unfriendly to the teachers. Teachers at FGD 17 lamented that

Due to lack of accommodation for teachers at this school, some teachers operate from distant places and sometimes the environment is not good for positive leaving. This de-motivates them and consequently affects implementation of what was learnt at CPD training

PEAs concurred with the teachers and indicated that some teachers operate from long distances as accommodation in the schools and nearby villages is a problem. This contributes to late arrival for lessons in addition to under-preparation and poor delivery due to fatigue. PEA 10 argued that

It is difficult for an exhausted teacher to implement what was learnt at CPD training.
5.4.5.3 **Staff rooms, store rooms and head teacher’s office**

It was noted through documents and focus group discussions that building a staff room, store room or a head teacher’s office in schools is not common in most schools. It is expected that at every school, there should be at least one staff room, store room and head teacher’s office. However, EMIS (2009) has established that in Zomba Rural Education District, there are only 39 staff rooms; 89 store rooms; and 81 head teachers’ offices. These figures are against the 191 schools that are in the district. Teachers complained that they do not have staff rooms or store rooms and this inconveniences them when it comes to planning their lessons as well as storing their TALULAR and other school resources. Under-preparation culminates in poor or under-implementation of what was learnt at CPD training. The following were some of their responses

**FGD 12:** *We do not have a staff room at this school as such lesson preparation at school is a problem. Teachers do not stay at school after knock off time to prepare for the next day’s lessons. We would rather prepare haphazardly at home than sit in open air under a tree and do the preparations.*

**FGD 33:** *We neither have a head teacher’s office nor a store room here. Our TALULAR is destroyed since we do not have a store room to keep it. This is frustrating and de-motivating as making TALULAR is not an easy thing to do.*

Similarly, schools without a head teacher’s office do not offer a conducive and enabling environment for proper school administration. HT 12 expressed his frustrations when he said

> *Look, you are a visitor and am attending to you right here, under a tree, because the school does not have an office. It does not either have a staff room or a storeroom. This greatly affects our work, including implementation of what we learn from CPD training.*

From the data, the implementation of what teachers learn from CPD training is facilitated by the conditions the teachers find themselves in at the schools. At CPDs teachers learn about lesson planning, TALULAR, scheming and record keeping, among other things. From the responses above, it appears the environment in some
schools is letting the teachers down, as far as effective implementation of what they learnt from CPD training is concerned

5.4.5.4 Libraries

Experience has shown that building libraries in Malawian primary schools is not a priority. As such, a library is treated as a luxury, not by design, but because the problems the primary education sub-sector is facing are so many that building and stocking a library, is not prioritized. For instance there are only 10 schools with libraries out of the 191 primary schools in Zomba Rural Education District. Lack of libraries in schools was mentioned to affect implementation of what was learnt at CPD training as teachers felt the knowledge gaps from some CPD training could have been filled by reading books or supplementary materials from the library. Teachers at FGD 22 indicated that

*Lack of a library at a school derails a reading culture not only in the learners but also in the teachers.*

5.4.5.5 Toilets

Toilets ensure good sanitation and hygiene for good health of both the teachers and the learners in schools. This means that the presence of adequate toilets in schools is a must. PIF (2001) advocates one toilet per sex per class for Standards 1 to 5 and one toilet per sex for two classes for Standards 6 to 8. From EMIS (2009) statistics on toilet availability, one notes that 125 boys and 111 girls respectively are using a single toilet in primary schools in Zomba Rural Education District. This provides unfavourable conditions for teaching and learning. Teachers explained that one of the factors contributing to absenteeism and consequent drop out from school, especially for the girl child, is the lack of toilets in the schools. At FGD 14, teachers commented that

*Girls tend to be uncomfortable to use the bushes when they are pressed hence they just opt for absenteeism and if the problem persists, they just drop out.*
As noted earlier, absenteeism hinders effective implementation of what was learnt at CPD training. Hence, measures need to be put in place to ensure that adequate toilets are available in schools. Communities through School Management Committees (SMCs) and Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs), need to be seriously mobilized to sort out the issue of toilets in schools.

From the data presented on challenges that teachers face as they try to implement what they learn from CPD training, a lot needs to be addressed if teachers are to implement what they learn from CPD training at classroom level. All the highlighted challenges need to be looked into. If these are not well looked into and improved from the current state, no matter how frequently teachers attend CPD training, implementation of what they learn from the CPD training at classroom level will always be a problem.

The next section presents data on preferences of teachers on how CPDs should be implemented.

5.5 PREFERENCES OF TEACHERS ON HOW CPD PROGRAMMES SHOULD BE IMPLEMENTED IN ZOMBA RURAL EDUCATION DISTRICT IN MALAWI

This last section of chapter 5 presents and analyzes data on general preferences of teachers in Zomba Rural Education District regarding how CPD programmes should be implemented in the district for teacher change. The teachers’ views were solicited on variables such as venue, mode, duration, time of the year, form of recognition, and nature of the CPD programmes. The views were given by the teachers after their analysis of how CPDs for teachers in Zomba Rural Education District are presently being implemented. These views on preferences were mainly collected through the questionnaire that captured both quantitative and qualitative data on the variables. The focus group discussions held with teachers also supplemented the data on preferences, as teachers were asked to give their suggestions on how CPD programmes should be implemented in Zomba Rural
Education District so that they result in teacher change. The data on the preferences are highlighted below.

5.5.1 Preferred venue for conducting CPD

The study in earlier sections has noted that venues for CPDs vary. If the CPD is residential, that CPD cannot be an on-school site based CPD nor can it be a zonal or cluster-based CPD. Such CPDs take place at neutral venues such as at a formal organized place in town where the teachers will easily find accommodation for the days they will be attending the training. Similarly, if the organization of the CPD demands that it take place at district or national level so as to include teachers from different zones or districts, then, definitely, the venue for such a CPD will not be a school. Sometimes it depends on the preference of the organizers. If they want teachers to commute from their homes, as was the case with the orientations to the new curriculum workshops, then the CPD will be conducted at zone, cluster or even school level.

Further, the focus of the CPD can also determine the venue of the CPD. If the focus requires certain equipment, choosing a venue that has that kind of equipment is unavoidable. For instance, teachers at FGD 21 revealed that the dissemination workshops for their action research projects were done at a hotel in Zomba town because the hotel had the facilities that were required for the dissemination. They claimed that

*Dissemination of our action research projects needed a venue that had electricity so that the organizers could use their computers and projectors during our presentations. The workshop also needed enough room because participants were many, including policymakers from the Ministry of Education. Further the workshop needed catering services for mid-morning, lunch as well as mid-afternoon refreshments. A hotel sufficed.*

In this study, teachers were asked to indicate their preferences for venues for conducting effective CPDs. Options were given; school; teacher development centre; primary teacher training college; and other venue apart from the ones
mentioned. For alternative number four, teachers were asked to indicate the actual venue. Table 5.5.1.1 details the preferences of the teachers.

Table 5.5.1.1: Preferred venue for conducting CPD (N = 734)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Number of teachers</th>
<th>Percentage of teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher development centre</td>
<td>407</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary teacher training colleges</td>
<td>206</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data in table 5.5.1.1 show that the majority of the teachers in the district (56%) prefers the venue of most CPDs to be the Teacher Development Centres (TDCs). The qualitative responses of the teachers who chose this option in the questionnaire showed that most INSETs for teachers are poorly funded and as such, it would be cheaper to conduct the INSET at a TDC. Some teachers were of the opinion that a TDC provides a good environment for sharing experiences with teachers from different schools. Others gave reasons of ease of accessibility to the TDC compared to other distant places. The 28% that favored Teacher Training Colleges (TTCs), justified their choice with reasons of good management, availability of capable and skilled facilitators, ease of accommodation as well as the availability of good facilities. Thirteen percent endorsed a school as a place to conduct effective CPDs. The school was seen as a convenient place in terms of transport. A further 3% of the teachers were not happy with the given choices and so opted for their own alternatives. They were very ambitious and suggested venues such as the Malawi Institute of Education; the University of Malawi (Chancellor College) or even hotels as ideal places for effective CPD training. They gave reasons of availability of good facilitators as well as a conducive and enabling environment for successful delivery of the CPDs.

From these findings, one is convinced of the reasons for the different preferences for choice of venues given by the teachers. They are valid reasons for each option. However, the majority (56%) opted for the Teacher Development Centre; hence, it can be concluded that a TDC is a preferred venue for holding CPD training for teachers in Zomba Rural Education District.
5.5.2 Preferred mode for conducting CPD

The researcher was also interested in getting views from the teachers on their preferred mode for conducting CPDs. By mode, the researcher had in mind the operational system of the CPD, whether participants will be residing away from their homes or they will be operating from their homes. Again, there is the question of whether the CPD will have an element of distance learning where participants will just be exposed to print and electronic media but not meet face-to-face with their facilitators. Hence there were three main options for this question; namely, residential mode; non-residential mode and distance mode. Table 5.5.2.1 displays the findings.

Table 5.5.2.1: Preferred mode for conducting CPD (N = 711)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mode</th>
<th>Number of teachers</th>
<th>Percentage of teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Residential mode</td>
<td>476</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non residential mode</td>
<td>225</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distance mode</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As the data in Table 5.5.2.1 indicate, 67% of the respondents to this question prefer CPDs that follow a residential mode where participants are given accommodation for the days they will be attending the CPD training. Qualitative responses from teachers that opted for a residential mode indicate that the residential mode offers a conducive environment for intensive training and hence, the coverage of more content. It was also pointed out that management of participants is easy and absenteeism is not a problem as all participants are in the vicinity of the CPD venue. Further, teachers supported the residential mode because in their view, the non-residential mode tires teachers as they have to cycle to and from the training venues. This, according to teachers, makes CPD training hectic and hinders achievement. Teachers at FGD 34 stated that

We arrive at the venues for non-residential CPDs while sweating because of the long distances we cover to get to the CPD venue. We
are tired before we start the training and this affects our concentration during the training.

The 32% that opted for the non-residential mode considered issues of poor funding and logistics that go with the non-residential modes of training and thought it would be much worse with the residential modes. They sympathized with the CPD programme organizers and opted for the non-residential mode for the sole reason of cutting down on costs. This was also indicated by some teachers in the focus group discussions e.g. at FGD 23 who lamented that

From experience, funding for CPDs is usually a problem. If non-residential CPDs face challenges in terms of running costs, residential CPDs would face even greater challenges.

The distance mode was not popular amongst the respondents. Only 1% opted for it. This has to do with the low levels of technology in Malawi. In the Zomba Rural Education District, only 5 schools out of the 191 primary schools in the district have electricity (EMIS, 2009). This means that about 97% of the schools cannot use electronic media. Even among the five schools that have electricity, not one has a computer. Even if the computer was to be found, the school, would not be able to afford internet connection. Hence, teachers cannot think of the distance mode as the best option for CPD training in Malawi.

So from the data presented on preferences of teachers on the mode of delivery of CPD training, the majority stance is that residential CPDs are preferable to non-residential or distance CPDs. By preferring residential modes to non-residential modes, the teachers are sending across the message of not using the cascade mode of training in CPD programmes. This is because the cascade mode of training is usually used in non-residential modes of training.

5.5.3 Preferred duration for CPD training

The researcher also established from the teachers their preferred length of time for conducting effective CPDs. Table 5.5.3.1 highlights the findings.
Table 5.5.3.1: Preferred duration for CPDs (N = 709)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Number of teachers</th>
<th>Percentage of teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 days</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 week</td>
<td>293</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 weeks</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 weeks</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 month</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>more than 1 month</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Results from Table 5.5.3.1 show that most teachers (41%) would prefer CPDs to spread over a period of one week. From their experience accumulated over the years they have been attending CPD training, teachers feel one week is long enough for them to assimilate new knowledge and skills. Consequently, such change would result in improved classroom practice and better learning outcomes for the learners. Twenty-five percent preferred duration of two weeks. Two days was said to be too short a duration for effective CPD while 1 month or over was thought to be too long to sustain the teachers’ concentration in the CPD training.

The preference of the teachers in terms of duration for conducting CPDs is not very far from what different writers and researchers have found out and written about the duration of effective CPDs. Brown (2004) contends that professional development that is of longer duration and time span is more likely to contain the kinds of learning opportunities necessary for teachers to integrate new knowledge into practice. However the focus group discussions noted that the five days allocated for the orientation to the new curriculum were not adequate for thorough coverage of the content. This can be an indication that the duration of a CPD should also take into account the volume of the content to be covered. This was also stressed by the head teachers. HT 1 suggested that

\[ \text{Duration for CPDs should depend on subject matter to be covered but should be long enough to ensure attainment of skills.} \]

PEAs also concurred with the views of the teachers and the head teachers and indicated that the content to be covered should dictate the duration of the CPD. Nevertheless, the conclusion that can be made from the preferences of the teachers
in terms of duration for CPD training is that teachers prefer the training to be conducted for a period of one week and should take into account the amount of content that needs to be covered.

5.5.4 Preferred time of the year for conducting CPD

It was also felt that the time of the year when the CPD training takes place can have a bearing on the attendance of teachers to that training and on their commitment and participation in the training. Hence the study solicited views from teachers as regards their preferred time of the academic year when they would want CPDs to be conducted. The results are outlined in Table 5.5.4.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of teachers</th>
<th>Percentage of teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>during longer term holidays</td>
<td>469</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>during short term holidays</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>during school week days</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>during week ends</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Teachers in Zomba Rural Education District unanimously opted for CPD training that takes place during the holidays especially the longer term holiday. Sixty-six percent of the teachers wanted CPDs to be conducted during the longer term holiday while 20% of the teachers had no problems with the CPDs being conducted in the short term holidays. Only 9% and 5% of the teachers wanted the CPDs to be conducted during school week days and during weekends respectively. The qualitative responses of the teachers who opted for the longer or short term holidays indicated that during the end of term holidays, teachers have ample time for the CPD training in addition to preparing schemes of work for the next term. They further added that CPD training sessions conducted during the end of term holidays do not disturb teaching as is the case with CPDs that are conducted when schools are in session.
From the evidence in Table 5.5.4.1, there is an indication that the majority of teachers does not prefer CPDs that are conducted during school days or weekends. Teachers felt weekend CPDs stress them and week day CPDs disturb learning. Teachers at FGD 24 argued that

*CPDs should not be conducted during school days as learners are left unattended to. This results in more work for the teacher as the teacher has to plan for makeup time when he/she is back from the training. Those that are conducted during weekends inconvenience the teachers even more as the teachers do not have time to rest or put their houses in order.*

Unfortunately weekend CPD training sessions are common. The CPD observations that the researcher made in this study were all conducted during the weekends, including Sundays when the majority of the people is expected to go to church.

### 5.5.5 Preferred organization of CPD training

Another aspect that was considered worth soliciting views and inputs from teachers about was to do with the organization of the CPD programmes. Teachers were asked to give their views on whether CPD training should be organized at school level, cluster level, zonal level or at district level. This referred to the target of the CPD training; whether to target teachers at school level, cluster level, zonal level or at district level. The results of their preferences on this aspect are highlighted in Table 5.5.5.1

**Table 5.5.5.1: Preferred organization of CPD training (N = 706)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization of CPD Training</th>
<th>Number of teachers</th>
<th>Percentage of teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>at zonal level</td>
<td>367</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>at cluster level</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>at district level</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>at school level</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Just like the majority of teachers preferred a Teacher Development Centre to be the venue for CPD training, again the majority of teachers (52%) opted for CPDs to be conducted at zonal level. Their choice implies that teachers would prefer that CPD
training to target teachers coming from the same zone. The teachers’ qualitative response to justify this choice was based on the fact that in most CPD training, the PEA is more often the resource person; hence, a TDC is very convenient for the PEA since he/she is based at a TDC. Teachers at FGD 31 indicated that

Almost all the CPD training sessions that most of us have attended were facilitated by the PEA. This is regardless of who organized the CPD. It could be organized by the PEA or NGO or Ministry of Education head quarters but the facilitation process involves the PEA. So conducting training at zone level will be very convenient

Those that opted for district level organization valued the sharing of experiences by teachers from different zones; while those that opted for cluster level CPD training thought the number of participants at cluster level would be manageable. Some PEAs and head teachers also advocated for cluster level CPDs. PEA 1 argued that

With cluster level CPDs, there is a high probability of reaching out to each and every teacher in the cluster.

Nevertheless, zonal level CPDs were the most preferred.

5.5.6 Preferred form of recognition for attending CPD

As a source of motivation or incentive and recognition for attending a CPD training, this study sought to hear from teachers in Zomba Rural Education District, their views on the form of recognition they would like to be offered after the training. They were given three options of no award; certificate of attendance/participation; and promotion. Table 5.5.6.1 depicts the ratings from the teachers.

Table 5.5.6.1: Preferred form of recognition for attending CPD (N = 693)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of teachers</th>
<th>Percentage of teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Certificate of attendance/participation</td>
<td>324</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotion</td>
<td>320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No award</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As can be seen in Table 5.5.6.1 above, 47% of the teachers that responded to this question opted for being given certificates of attendance/participation and 46% of the teachers wanted promotion to be the form of recognition after attending a CPD training. However, 7% thought it was not necessarily important that teachers be recognized in any way after attending a CPD training. They argued that usually such training sessions do not take too much time nor do they impart substantial knowledge and skills to teachers to warrant any form of recognition. Those that opted for a certificate of attendance/participation were of the view that an accumulation of such certificates can add up in building one’s Curriculum Vitae (CV). An impressive CV can be presented during interviews for promotions. This can impress the panel and so the teacher can easily be promoted. Hence, teachers emphasized that the certificates should be certificates of value. At FGD 6 teachers asserted that

As a form of recognition, teachers should be awarded certificates. However the certificates should be of value to promotions not just a paper to be displayed in your sitting room.

Head teachers also concurred with the teachers in recommending certificates of value after attending a CPD training. HT 3 explained that

Teachers could be encouraged to participate in future CPD training when they see something tangible coming out of the training such as certificates leading to their promotions

The qualitative justification for teachers that opted for a promotion following participation in CPD training was that promotion is one way of motivating teachers. Hence, they were of the opinion that if teachers were assured of a promotion after attending CPD training, their morale for the teaching profession would be boosted and so they can easily implement what they learn from CPD training. FGD 21 yielded the following motivation-related sentiment

Attendance to a CPD should be recognized and be part of the criteria for promoting teachers. This would be one efficient way of promoting teachers as the present system of only using interviews promotes lazy and undeserving teachers leaving behind hard working and deserving teachers.
Since promotions go with increases in salaries, possibly recognizing teachers who have attended CPD training during promotions would be one of the best means of motivating a de-motivated teaching force.

5.5.7 Preferred nature of CPD

On preferred nature of CPD training, the researcher had in mind whether attendance to CPD training should be voluntary or compulsory. The present trend of CPD training in Malawi is that teachers are not given a choice of whether to attend or not. As has been highlighted in Table 5.5.7.1 about 57% of the teachers who responded to this question preferred compulsory CPD training while 43% preferred that the CPD training should be voluntary (Refer to Table 5.5.7.1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 5.5.7.1: Preferred nature of CPD (N = 695)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compulsory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voluntary</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The qualitative justification of those who held the opinion that CPD training should be compulsory was that the concern for CPDs is to improve professionalism that promotes a good quality of education. So every teacher must attend CPD training so that quality of education in Malawi is improved. PEA 1 advised that

*If you give teachers choices of whether to attend or not to attend, the majority will not attend because the conditions for attending most CPDs are not all that attractive and impressive.*

Further, the District Education Manager indicated that

*Compulsory CPDs are good as they insure that all the teachers are sailing in the same boat, and hence uniformity across schools is guaranteed.*

Those who opted for CPDs to be voluntary had their own reasons. However, the general feeling was that CPD training especially that which takes place during
the school days, disturbs teachers in one way or the other. Teachers have plans that should not be interrupted; hence, CPD training should be optional. Teachers also felt that with voluntary CPDs, they would be attending not because they have to but because they want to. They thought this feeling would give them an inner motivation to translate what they learnt at the CPD training into classroom practice. Teachers at FGD 30 argued that

Voluntary CPDs can offer teachers a chance to participate in CPDs that they need and have interest in. This would ensure full participation and commitment to such CPDs and implementation of what was learnt at the CPD, will be inevitable.

Nevertheless, from the data, most teachers prefer compulsory CPDs.

5.6 SUMMARY

Chapter 5 has presented both quantitative and qualitative data that were collected for this study. The researcher has in this chapter highlighted and analyzed the findings as they emerged from the data. Basically, the chapter presented and analyzed data that captured: Biographic information of the respondents; issues of implementation of CPD programmes in Zomba Rural Education District; Challenges that are faced by teachers as they implement what they learnt from CPD training; and preferences of teachers on how CPD programmes should be implemented in the Zomba Rural Education District in Malawi. The biographic data examined the profiles of the respondents in terms of number; age; years of teaching experience; type of teacher training programme; academic qualification; and class allocation of the respondents. All these were felt to have an effect in the interpretation of the data collected for the study.

The data collected on the implementation of CPD programmes in Zomba Rural Education District scrutinized variables of implementation of the CPD programmes in the district in terms of number of CPDs respondents attended; organizers of the CPDs; focus of the CPDs; time allocation to the CPDs; methods used by facilitators; monitoring mechanisms that are put in place; and challenges faced by facilitators as
well as challenges faced by teachers in implementation of the CPD programmes. Generally, the findings on these important issues of CPD implementation have skewed more to the negative side of CPD implementation than to the positive side. This has confirmed the basic assumption of the study that there are problems in the implementation of Continuing Professional Development activities for teachers in Zomba Rural Education District in Malawi; as such, the programmes have failed to result in improved classroom practice by the teachers.

The chapter went further to present and analyze data on preferences of teachers on how CPD programmes should be implemented in Zomba Rural Education District. Issues of preferred venue, mode, duration, time of the year, form of recognition, and nature of the CPD programmes were highlighted. Their views have provided a spring board to the researcher on what should be involved in the design of effective CPD programmes that can result in teacher change and consequent improvements in classroom practice and learner performance.

The next chapter, that is chapter 6, is the discussion chapter of this study. It will critically examine the data presented in this chapter in line with the objectives and research questions of the study while making reference to what other writers and studies have unveiled elsewhere.
CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

In chapter 5, the researcher presented data on findings of the study regarding the assessment of the Implementation of Continuing Professional Development Programmes for primary school teachers in Zomba Rural Education District in Malawi. The data pertained to aspects of CPD implementation as observed by various respondents that formed the sample of the study. Preferences of teachers in the district on how CPDs should be implemented to result in teacher change were also highlighted. This chapter discusses the data with the aim to identify key learning points in the findings of the study to draw conclusions, as far as the implementation of CPD programmes in the district is concerned. The discussion is based on two broad themes derived from the objectives, research questions and assumptions of the study while at the same time taking into consideration the theories and models that guided the study. Hence, the chapter examines and discusses aspects of CPD implementation and challenges faced in the implementation of the CPD programmes in the district. Following, is a discussion on each of these three thematic areas.

6.2 THE IMPLEMENTATION OF CPD PROGRAMMES IN ZOMBA RURAL EDUCATION DISTRICT

As earlier noted, this study was concerned with on-school site and off-school site based CPD modes. Under this theme, the researcher discusses the organization of both the on-school site and off-school site based CPD programmes in relation to the venues for the CPDs, the modes of CPD delivery, the frequency of the CPDs, the organizers of the CPDs and the focus of the CPD Programmes. Further, the section discusses in general, the methods used in delivering the CPDs; the duration for the CPDs; the professional experiences of the facilitators; and the consultation processes involved in the CPD implementation process. Lastly, the section
discusses the monitoring and support mechanisms for the CPD programmes. Below is a discussion of the findings on each of these sub-topics as they relate to the implementation of CPD programmes in Zomba Rural Rural Education District.

6.2.1 Organization of on-school site based CPD training

On-school site based CPDs take place at the school. In some cases, this study noted that they took place at cluster level where teachers from 3 or 4 schools came together for CPD activities at a given school. On-school site based CPDs seem to have proliferated in recent years in continents like Asia, Africa, and Latin America (MacNeil, 2004). MacNeil, (2004) attributes the proliferation to the ineffectiveness of off-school site based CPDs that overemphasize the transmissive mode of CPD delivery through use of cascade mode of training. Hence, on-school site based CPDs are thought as ideal for improving teacher classroom practice and learner performance (Gold, 1998). Guskey (2000) concurs with Gold (1998) and advocates on-school site based CPD transformative models such as action research. Wenger (1998) acknowledges transitional models such as communities of practice and teacher networking as some of the on-school site CPD models that enhance and ensure effective teacher professional growth. Similarly, Kennedy (2005) alleges that transformative CPD implementation models demonstrate the most effective efforts for change to take place close to the action. Hence, on-school site based models ensure that educational problems and issues are identified and addressed at classroom level and hence, solved more quickly.

In Guatemala, where most teacher training investments have been in in-service training, positive gains in improved classroom pedagogy were reported following on-going training and on-site follow-up supervision and feedback (Craig et al. 1998) captured in MacNeil (2004). The teachers in Guatemala also participated in Teacher Circles where groups of teachers from different schools met regularly to train each other and share their experiences.

In this study, the on-school site based CPD training sessions were noted to be mostly initiated by Primary Education Advisors and head teachers. Non-
Governmental organizations were also found to organize on-school site based CPDs, especially those CPDs targeting three or four schools at cluster level. When that happened, it was noted that the cascade mode of delivery was used where the teachers were being trained by resource persons who were trained by the Trainer of Trainers. The resource persons basically comprised PEAs, head teachers and mentor teachers.

The study further learnt that the main focus of the on-school site based CPD training was basically on further orientation to the new curriculum to supplement the knowledge gained during off-school site based orientation at Teacher Development Centres. In this way, the on-school site based CPDs used transitional models at school level such as communities of practice to support a transmissive agenda of the government in orienting teachers to the new curriculum. This concurs well with Kennedy’s (2005) argument that, within transitional models, a CPD has the capacity to support a transmissive agenda. However, it was the expectation of the researcher that head teachers and teachers would be in the forefront in organizing on-school site based CPDs, as these usually happen at school level. On the contrary, the quantitative findings on this variable showed that the PEA is the main organizer and the head teachers come second followed by NGOs and lastly, the teachers.

These findings appear to confirm that there is a lack of seriousness and commitment in the implementation of on-school site based CPDs by head teachers and teachers in schools. The lack of seriousness was also reflected in the frequency with which the on-school site based CPD training sessions are conducted. The study noted that on-school site based CPDs do not take place on a regular basis. It was learnt that lack of material and financial resources constrained the schools in carrying out on-school based CPD programmes. However, other cost-effective means of carrying out on-school site based CPDs can always be explored. Teachers can be asked to bring packed meals for their lunch on days that the school would hold a CPD. They can, as well, be encouraged to use TALULAR to supplement the material resources. This confirms Gold’s (1998) assertion that organization of on-school site based CPDs depends on the commitment and value that the school administration and the teachers place on them.
Furthermore, the study noted that there is no policy document that specifies the number of on-school site based CPDs that teachers need to attend at a given period of time. Hence, implementation is fragmented. Theoretically, it was observed that schools plan for on-school site based CPDs but in reality, they are not usually implemented. Hence, there is the need for Primary Education Advisors during their supervision visits to schools, to seriously monitor the implementation of school action plans and encourage and support head teachers and teachers to initiate and conduct on-school site based CPDs. PEAs need to emphasize that teachers from one school or a few schools can come together and jointly develop their professional growth through several activities such as peer review, coaching, mentoring, study groups, communities of practice and teacher networking. Through such activities, teachers can shape their professional experiences and improve their classroom practice (Back, De Geest, Hirst, & Rosamund, 2009). Gray et al. (2005) report that although these opportunities take relatively little time out of the teachers’ working lives, the teachers find them stimulating and refreshing, and that they assist their overall professional development. A similar argument was made by Wenger (1998) that engagement in social practice is the fundamental process by which we learn and gain a sense of identity - in this case, professional identity.

However, not many of these professional learning opportunities were noted in this study. The three aspects of professional learning as advocated by Bell & Gilbert (1996), comprising personal, social and occupational aspects are being neglected to a greater extent in the way the on-school site based CPDs are implemented in Zomba Rural Education District. According to Bell & Gilbert (1996) the social aspects support personal learning; hence, learning in isolation is seen as ‘problematic’. Communities of practice, teacher networking, peer coaching among other transitional models of learning, are advocated as one way forward to enhance professional learning and development (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Schools are potential communities of practice both for teachers and learners, where opportunities for collaboration with colleagues abound and where interpreting information and making meaning can result in the mediation of new knowledge within the community (Falk & Dierking, 2000). Modalities need to be put in place where head teachers and teachers would be encouraged to initiate and conduct on-
school site based CPDs on a regular basis. This is also acknowledged by Young & King (2002) who advance that instructional quality can be enhanced when head teachers create structures within the schools to promote teacher learning.

From this discussion, the implementation of on-school site based CPD programmes seem to be a factor of how the administration of the school values them. Gold (1998) alludes to this when she urges school leaders to take full responsibility for continuous professional development in schools. Gold (1996) further notes that continuous professional development works best when it is understood theoretically as well as planned for but points out the challenge that comes with nurturing a culture that ensures that the school is a vibrant and learning school. Hence, there is a need for commitment and dedication on the part of head teachers and teachers, as well as PEAs and NGOs to gear up and scale up their efforts in conducting on-school site based CPD training.

6.2.2 Organization of off-school site based CPD training

Off-school site based CPDs are CPD training sessions that take place outside the school sites. As highlighted in chapter 1, they usually come in the form of workshops or seminars at venues designated by the CPD programme facilitators and implementers. The workshops or seminars entail drawing participants out of their schools to a venue where they are exposed by experts to a core of information and skills. In the case of Malawi, such workshops are conducted at zonal level in Teacher Development Centres (TDCs). Apart from zonal level workshops, the researcher noted that some training took place at district level and drew participants, especially PEAs and head teachers, from across the district to be trained or oriented on issues of concern to the whole district. Such workshops or training took place at neutral venues such as the Malawi Institute of Education or in conference rooms at lodging places.

The analysis of the data on venues for off-school site based CPDs shows that the TDC is the main centre where teachers converge for professional development activities.
However, teachers prefer a residential mode where participants are given accommodation for the days they will be attending the CPD training. They argued that the residential mode provides an environment that is conducive to intensive training and hence, thorough coverage of more content. Similar findings were noted in a study conducted in Malawi by Mwanza (2008) on In-service training needs and preferences of secondary school Physical Science teachers who found that the majority (67%) of the total respondents, preferred residential mode over non-residential modes.

The distance mode was not popular among the respondents in the study. This has to do with the low levels of technology in Malawi. For instance the study established that in Zomba Rural Education District, only 5 of the 191 primary schools in the district have electricity (EMIS 2009). However, not even one of the five schools that have electricity, has a computer at the school. Even if a computer was to be found at the school, the school would not be able to afford the internet connection. Hence, teachers cannot think of the distance mode as the best option for CPD training in Malawi. This is contrary to Korean science teachers who favoured online in-service training to traditional face-to-face programmes (Noh, Kang & Scharmann, 2004).

The findings on the venue for CPDs give the impression that teachers, feel that residential CPDs are more powerful and more likely to realize the objectives than non-residential CPDs. However, where residential CPDs are unavoidable, CPD programme organizers should use TDCs as venues for the off-school site based programmes. When that happens, it is important that CPD organizers incorporate the reasons for the choice of other venues in the designs of the zonal based CPDs. Such factors as mentioned by teachers who opted for the other venues include good management, availability of capable and skilled facilitators and an environment conducive to the successful delivery of the CPDs.

However, CPD organizers need to be thoughtful about the venue they want to use for CPD training. Venues that are close to entertainment centres should be avoided as they limit concentration of participants during the training. Similarly, the welfare of participants in both residential and non-residential workshops should be taken care of to avoid demoralizing the participants. If teachers’ welfare is not well
considered in the design of a CPD programme, teachers, come to the training with a negative attitude. With a negative attitude, everything that takes place during the training is likely to be looked at negatively and this impedes the effectiveness of the CPD programme.

On modes of delivery for off-school site based CPD training, the study noted that the transmissive model that relies heavily on the cascade mode of training was extensively used in these off-school site based CPD training, especially in the orientations to the new curriculum. As noted earlier, in the cascade mode of training, top-level personnel are trained intensively and then they in turn train the next level personnel, and so on till all available personnel have been trained by the level above them (Dove 1983; Johnson, 2000; Hayes, 2000). The reason for the use of the cascade mode of training for the orientation to the new curriculum was to train larger numbers of teachers in a relatively short time because of resource constraints.

Unfortunately the study learnt that this compromised the quality of the CPD training and affected the implementation of the CPD programmes at school level. Teachers complained of knowledge gaps as the messages became diluted and distorted at each level of the cascade model. Further, teachers complained of the lack of confidence in some facilitators due to the use of the cascade model. Dove (1983) points out similar problems with the use of the cascade model when she highlights

*New ideas and skills will be communicated only in so far as the trainers are fully at ease with them. Meanwhile, conventional ideas and habits will be discarded only slowly (p.224)*

Khulisa (2001) cited in Engelbrecht, Ankiewicz, & de Swardt (2007) makes a similar observation and warns that the cascading of information results in the ‘watering down’ and / or misinterpretation of crucial information. Engelbrecht et al. (2007) note trainers during workshops and especially those involved in the cascade model of training who lack confidence, knowledge and understanding to manage the training process. Some countries such as South Africa encountered similar problems when they used the cascade model to orient teachers on Outcome Based Education (OBE). Ono & Ferreira (2010), report that a study on the implementation of
Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS) in South Africa that used the cascade model of training, failed to yield effective learning on the part of the trainees. They further reported that, after the training workshops, the teachers went back to their schools with some knowledge gaps. From the findings of this study coupled with revelations from the literature, the use of the cascade model of training appears to be one of the major challenges to the successful implementation of CPD programmes due to its diluting effects.

On the frequency of off-school site based CPD training, the study revealed that the training sessions are not conducted frequently enough to meet the policy requiring each teacher to attend at least three In-service training per year (NSTED, 2007). Eraut (1995) asserts that in-service education is also an indicator of the health of an education system. If in-service education programmes are not frequently conducted, it shows that the education system has problems which need to be looked into. Hence, the situation in Zomba Rural Education District needs to be addressed and the policy of at least three In-service Education training per year per teacher is reinforced. Insufficient INSETs partially affect implementation of what teachers learn at CPD training since they are not regularly refreshed on areas that affect their professionalism.

On organizers of off-school site based CPDs, findings of the study pointed to PEAs as being the main organizers, followed by the NGOs. Organizing CPD activities for teachers is one of the terms of references of PEAs. They are required to initiate as well as be involved in CPD activities taking place in their zones. However, the study noted that the number of CPDs that PEAs initiate, is minimal compared to the number of CPDs they get involved in because the government or NGOs have asked for their service in the organization of those CPDs. This is because TDCs are not funded; therefore, it is difficult to conduct frequent training as CPDs have monetary implications. TDCs carry out Income Generating Activities (IGAs) to generate money for their zonal activities. However, the researcher noted that the amount of money generated through the small scale businesses cannot suffice the operations of a TDC such as conducting INSETs, buying stationery, paying watchmen, settling bills and renovating the TDCs among other functions. In fact, the researcher noted
that no zone in the district had sufficient funds to run termly CPDs for all the teachers in the zone.

The lack of funds for PEA initiated INSETs at zone level is indeed cause for concern. This study has established that PEAs visit the schools to supervise teachers. In the course of doing this, they are aware of the problems and challenges teachers face in the teaching and learning process. They need to bring the teachers together and train them on how to handle those challenges but that process cannot be done without money. The PEA would need money to buy materials to use during the facilitation process, buy meals for the participants and refund transport expenses, among other workshop costs. Hence, the government and donor organizations need to re-think seriously the issue of not funding TDCs. This view is also shared by Rogan & Grayson (2003) who note that money is needed to support all school programmes including In-service Education. This study has noted that the few CPDs that the PEAs manage to conduct are marked with a number of logistical flaws due to financial constraints. Such CPDs, as observed by the teachers, leave them frustrated to implement what the training was about in their classroom settings.

However, care needs to be taken to ensure transparency and accountability in use of the funds as some PEAs might take advantage of the fund to enrich themselves or they may divert it for other pertinent uses in the zone. Mohammed (2006) talks of budgets for CPD activities in Nigeria that are usually inadequate but often misused while Merson (1989) doubts if CPD funds in the UK were necessarily used for In-service training purposes. This is an indication that CPD funds are vulnerable and may not necessarily be used for the intended purposes. Hence, proper auditing procedures need to be in place for the effective use of a fund meant for In-service education.

Concerning the focus of off-school site based CPDs, it was noted that much focus was on orientation to the new curriculum (PCAR). This was followed by methods of teaching; teaching and learning resources; and subject content in that order. The study learnt that the orientation to the new curriculum was the most common CPD that almost all teachers had attended except IPTE teachers who were oriented on it
while in College. However when teachers were asked about the priority focus areas, if given a choice, the study noted that CPDs that focus on assessment topped the list. This was regardless of the experience of the teacher; the pre service training programme the teacher went through; or age of the teacher. This is contrary to the stage theories of teacher professional development as highlighted by Huberman (1995) that teachers’ in-service training needs vary with their years of teaching experience.

The finding on the priority areas of focus of CPDs is an indication that teachers have their own priority needs for CPDs, depending on the problems they face in the schools. CPD programme initiators and facilitators need to take into account teachers’ needs when designing their CPDs. For instance, the data gathered for this study on the focus of CPDs do not lean towards assessment as one of the focus areas of the CPDs that teachers attended. Yet teachers see assessment as one of the critical areas that need to be addressed in both on-school site and off-school site based CPDs. This calls for the need for consultation in CPD programme design. This finding supports Speck’s theory of adult learning that professional development needs to give participants some control over the what, who, how, why, when, and where of their learning (Speck, 1996). Otherwise without consultations, CPD programme organizers end up designing CPD programmes that are brief, fragmented and incoherent as well as de contextualised and isolated from real classroom situations (Fullan & Hargreaves, 1996).

### 6.2.3 Methods used in the delivery of both on-school site and off-school site based CPD programmes

A variety of methods are used in both on-school site and off-school site based CPD programmes in Zomba Rural Education District. The study noted group work, brainstorming, question and answer, demonstration, case studies, singing, role playing, lecturing, explanations, discussions, future’s wheel, pair work, observations, games and dances among others. Group work was the most commonly used method followed by the question and answer method and the demonstration method. Methods used in CPD training, matter as far as the effective delivery of CPD
programmes is concerned. Asikhia (2010) alludes to this and partly attributes academic achievement to the methods used by the teachers, in this case, the facilitators.

The methods that are used in CPD training in Zomba Rural Education District are interactive methods. More participatory methods than teacher centred methods were noted as used in the facilitation process. If used properly, interactive methods actively involve the participants and consequently result in better acquisition of skills and knowledge. Assuming that conditions are favorable for CPD implementation at classroom level, this can guarantee the implementation of what was learnt at the CPD training. Armour & Makopoulu (2006) and Birman et al. (2000) noted that when teachers are involved in active learning during their professional development, they are more likely to increase knowledge and change classroom practices. Coolahan (2002) noted similar views in his study where collaborative and interactional techniques were found to be much more popular than lectures.

However, CPD facilitators need to ensure that they incorporate the different methods in every single CPD that they conduct. The CPD observations the researcher made, lacked much variety in terms of the methods used. Mostly it was group work, question and answer, demonstration and lecturing. Reichert (1992) articulates that In-service education must be specific in nature, continually offering new information and variety in its presentation.

Further the study revealed that in some instances there were too many participants attending a CPD at one given session. In such cases groups were either too large for effective interaction or too many for effective management by the facilitators. When participants are too many in a given session, it is difficult for the facilitators to take into account the different learning styles, the levels of ability and prior knowledge of the teachers attending the training. Speck (1996) suggests the need to structure professional development activities in such a way as to provide support from peers and reduce the fear of judgment during learning. In this way, letting teachers participate in small group activities provides them with an opportunity to share, reflect and generalize their learning experiences. Making use of what the teachers already know and progressing from there, as well as tapping into the teachers’ daily
classroom experiences, can render CPD programmes effective. Hence, Speck’s (1996) theory of adult learning should be considered in the design of CPD programmes for teachers because teachers are adult learners.

In addition, teachers reported that some methods used at CPD training were not practical in the classroom situation; as a result, teachers in those situations do not use them in their classrooms. An example was given of group work which is difficult to conduct with very large classes. This confirms Guskey’s (1986) theory of teacher change, that practices that teachers find useful in helping students attain desired learning outcomes are retained and repeated. Those that do not work or yield no tangible evidence of success are generally abandoned. Hence, Speck (1996) advocates direct and concrete experiences in which the teachers can apply the learning in real work.

6.2.4 Duration for on-school site and off-school site based CPD programmes

The amount of time allocated for any CPD programme implementation is critical to the achievement of success of such programmes. Studies worldwide have established that the longer the duration of training, the greater the probability of such a training resulting in teacher change and consequent improvements in learner outcomes and vice-versa (Brown, 2004; Supovitz and Turner, 2000; Sinelnikov, 2009). This is also supported by Cohen & Hill (2001); Fullan (1993); Guskey (1994); and Supovitz & Turner (2000) who all argue that intellectual and pedagogical change require professional development activities to be of sufficient duration, including both span of time over which the activity is spread and the number of hours spent in the activity. The study noted the inadequate time allocation for CPD activities in the district. Teachers partly attributed the lack of implementation of what they learn from CPD training to inadequate time allocations to the CPD training. Inadequate time allocations to CPD training resulted in facilitators rushing through the content as they did not have time for thorough coverage. The resultant effect was that the teachers did not thoroughly grasp the content to effectively implement it in their classroom settings.
Teachers in this study preferred CPDs to spread over a period of one week. From their experience of attending CPDs, they felt that such a period is long enough for them to assimilate new knowledge and skills. Mwanza (2008) also noted that secondary school teachers preferred slightly longer CPD courses to short courses. Further, the teachers preferred CPD activities to take place during the long term holidays. This concurs well with the need for CPDs to be spread over a reasonable number of days. Similar results on preferring CPDs to take place during the holidays were noted in a study conducted by Rhea (2002) in Eastern North Carolina, USA, where only 22% and 12% of the teachers indicated that they would attend a CPD taking place during the school week or a Saturday respectively.

The preferences of the teachers in this study on duration and time for conducting CPDs supports what different writers and researchers have found and written about the duration of effective CPDs. Brown (2004) contends that professional development that is of longer duration and time-span is more likely to contain the kinds of learning opportunities necessary for teachers to integrate new knowledge into practice. This preference of one week falls within Desimone’s (2009) argument that CPD activities that are spread over a semester (or intense summer institutes with follow-up during the semester) and include 20 hours or more of contact time are more effective. Such a time is considered long enough to ensure that teachers assimilate the new knowledge and skills imparted, into their current repertoires. Hence, CPD organizers need to plan for a reasonable number of days for CPDs. This would avoid the tendency of facilitators to rush through the material as was observed in this study. Adequate time should be planned for to ensure thorough coverage of the intended material. Adequate coverage of material reduces knowledge gaps and facilitates translation of what was learnt at CPD training into classroom practice.

It has to be borne in mind that the process of teacher change is a gradual one (Guskey, 1986), hence, teachers, in addition to being given adequate time during the CPD training, also need to be given a lot of support over a longer period of time during the implementation of what they learnt from CPD programmes. However, the major challenge to the design of CPD programmes that are spread over a long
period, especially in many developing countries like Malawi, lies in the financial as well as material resources to sustain such programmes.

Revelations of inadequate time allocations to both on-school site and off-school site based CPD training in Zomba Rural Education District are a cause for concern. Financial constraints are given as a reason for not allocating adequate time for the CPD activities. Government and stakeholders in education need to be committed and set their priorities right when it comes to issues of national importance such as In-service education for teachers. Teachers, as implementers of whatever the CPDs are meant for, need adequate time during the training so that they are clear about what they are going to implement, in their classrooms. Otherwise CPD training that covers too much content within a very short period of time do not fully equip the teachers for improved classroom practice. It is difficult for teachers to implement what they do not comprehend or master during the training. Sinelnikov (2009) argues that sporadic ‘one-off’ professional development activities are unlikely to have lasting impact upon teachers’ practice.

6.2.5 Professional experiences of CPD facilitators for both on-school site and off-school site based CPD programmes

Successful delivery of a CPD programme very much depends on the professional experiences or expertise of facilitators. Their preparedness before CPD facilitation, their thoroughness and confidence during presentations and how they engage the teachers in the training process, count a great deal in making a CPD achieve its goals and have a lasting impression on the teachers. This is also supported by Rogan & Grayson (2003) who posit that the implementation of any programme can also be affected by the level of the facilitator’s confidence.

Qualifications also matter as these have a bearing on the knowledge of subject matter, as observed from the Action Research Project that was initiated by the University of Malawi and used Research Fellows and Lecturers as facilitators (CERT, 2009). Sall et al. (2009) point out that under-qualified professional
personnel can compromise quality of skills imparted to the learners. In the same vein, Fraser, Killan & Nieman (2005) assert that it is likely that low levels of knowledge will contribute to poor performance. Thus, CPD programme initiators need to be thoughtful in their selection of CPD facilitators. The study noted that usually zone initiated CPDs in Zomba Rural Education District are facilitated by PEAs but sometimes PEAs engage services of outstanding teachers to assist in training other teachers in the zone. NGOs identify their own facilitators, though more often than not they seek the services of PEAs, head teachers and mentor teachers. The study further learnt that familiarity of the facilitator with the material and nature of topic dictates the choice of facilitators.

The study established that PEAs are qualified primary school teachers who ascend to the position through promotions. Coupled with their experience in the teaching profession, PEAs are better placed to be facilitators in In-service training meant for primary school teachers. However, these qualities alone cannot be enough to guarantee an effective CPD. Other factors that go with CPD implementation need to be carefully considered. For instance, in the cascade mode of training, PEAs are like bridges, carrying information from this side to the other end. This means that if they are not thoroughly trained as resource persons, it would be reflected in the way they pass on knowledge and skills to the teachers. That is where teachers in this study are moaning about the knowledge gaps displayed by the PEAs, especially in the orientation to the new curriculum. It was learnt that PEAs were not thoroughly oriented due to the inadequate time allocated for their training as Trainers of Trainers or resource persons.

Similarly, head teachers are teachers by profession and they ascend to the position of headship through promotion after serving as teachers for a considerable period of time (not less than three years). Mentor teachers are those teachers that are identified to be resource persons to fellow teachers following their outstanding performances in the schools in which they are teaching. When head teachers and mentor teachers are used as facilitators, as is the case with Save the Children CPDs, care needs to be exercised so as to be very objective in the choice of such facilitators. This would pre-empt speculation by teachers that some facilitators are engaged because they are related in one way or the other to the organizers, as their
expertise is questionable. When participants to a CPD start questioning the authority of the facilitators, it raises doubts as to how committed to the achievement of the objectives of the CPD such participants would be. Further it is also questionable if such facilitators have the command of the subject matter and skills they are required to impart to the teachers.

Based on the arguments advanced in this discussion, the choice of facilitators for any CPD training meant for teachers needs to consider the expertise of the people the organizers of the CPDs intend to use as facilitators. If personal relations influence choice of facilitators, the resultant effect is frustration on the part of the participants the CPD was intended for. This renders the CPD ineffective, as its objectives are not achieved to the fullest. Incompetent facilitators cannot equip teachers fully to effectively implement what they learn from the CPD training. Further, the facilitators should be thoroughly trained if the cascade mode is used, so as to reduce the “dilution effect” that comes along with cascading of information as observed by Dove (1986); Engelbrecht et al. (2007); and Ono & Ferreira (2010) among other researchers and writers.

6.2.6 Consultations in delivery of both on-school site and off-school site based CPD programmes

On consultations, the quantitative findings revealed that 85% of the teachers were not consulted for their input in CPD programmes. Teachers in focus group discussions also indicated lack of consultations in the design of CPD programmes, especially for the off-school site based CPDs. Part of Speck’s (1996) theory of how adults learn states that adults want to be the origin of their own learning and that adult learners come to learning with a wide range of previous experiences, knowledge, self-direction, interests, and competencies. Hence, CPD facilitators need to seek input from participants not only during the proceedings of the workshop but also in the design and content of the CPDs. This ensures that teachers accept the programme and willingly put to use what they learnt from the programme. Reichert (1992) asserts that teachers want and need to be involved in the planning and implementation of In-service education activities. This is because
when implementers are involved in the planning process of a programme, they understand it better and are more willing to implement it effectively (Parsons, 1995). Such a programme is likely to achieve its objectives.

The above means that CPD programme implementers need to tailor their course content in such a way that it takes into account input from teachers themselves; and that it meets the expectations of the teachers. Otherwise, course content if not well designed, can be a challenge to the successful implementation of a CPD programme. Further, a CPD training that does not seek input from teachers builds on what Wight & Buston (2003) call a 'deficit model' which emphasizes inadequacies rather than identifying and developing teachers' existing strengths. This is detrimental to the successful implementation of a CPD programme as teachers will not own such CPD programmes.

Noteworthy, is also the fact that, of the 15% who indicated that they are consulted, 84% of those teachers affirmed that their input was taken on board during CPD training. The study noted that such teachers derived satisfaction with such CPD programmes because they incorporated their input. This motivated them to dedicate themselves to the achievement of the goals of the programmes by making an effort to implement what was gained at the CPD training. This is an indication that if the practice of consultation is widespread, there is an assurance of improved delivery since most of the input will be put into consideration.

6.2.7 Monitoring and support mechanisms for on-school site and off-school site based CPD programmes

The success of any programme also hinges on the monitoring and support mechanisms put in place to ensure implementation of the activities of the programme. Similarly, CPD programmes for teachers need to have a monitoring and support component in their design to ensure that teachers are putting into practice what they learnt from the CPD programmes. Otherwise, teachers feel neglected and do not have the motivation to implement what they get from the CPD programmes if they do not see facilitators of CPD programmes following up on what
is learnt at CPD training. Rogan & Grayson’s (2003) theory on curriculum implementation emphasizes the need for external support in the implementation of a programme. They further contend that, if teachers lack support, they find it difficult to implement the programme.

At school level, the study noted that head teachers and heads of section play a significant role in monitoring, supervising and supporting the implementation of what teachers learn at CPD training. They conduct lesson observations and provide teaching and learning resources where possible. They also check to see that records such as schemes of work and lesson plans are written and updated. However, the study noted that the monitoring and support provided by the head teachers and the section heads is limited as they too have their own classes to teach. As a result, most head teachers prioritize their teaching to the neglect of evaluating the performance of the teachers. This tendency of head teachers in Zomba Rural Education District contradicts the perception by Shinkfied (1994) that one of a head teacher’s most important responsibility is the evaluation of teacher-performance. The evaluation of teacher performance cannot be effectively done by the head teachers without conducting classroom observations. Hence, the overload of the head teachers in the district is compromising the quality of education, not to talk of the implementation of CPD programmes. This is because head teachers as instructional leaders need to support teachers in the teaching and learning process. They can only effectively do that when they conduct clinical classroom observation.

The qualitative data established that monitoring of CPD programmes in Zomba Rural Education District is not given the attention it deserves by the CPD programme organizers and facilitators. It is the PEAs that were mentioned as doing follow-ups on the implementation of what was learnt at the CPD training. Very few NGOs like Save the Children monitor the implementation process. Most NGOs just depend on PEAs to do the monitoring for them in the name of ensuring sustainability of the project activities after the project has been phased out. Much as the researcher agrees that sustainability mechanisms need to be put in place, it is not proper to just let go of training without the responsible officers following the trainees to see if they are implementing what they learnt from the CPD training. Fullan (1991) writes that curriculum designers, in this case, CPD programme
designers need to provide the necessary support for their programmes to be implemented. This implies that without monitoring and support, the implementation of what teachers learn at CPD programmes is compromised. This is why the teachers mentioned the lack of monitoring and support as one of the major challenges they face in the implementation of what they learn from CPD programmes.

Monitoring the implementation of a CPD programme ensures that the challenges that the teachers face as they try to implement what they learnt at the CPD training, are shared with the organizers. When this happens, proper ways to handle the challenges are discussed and possibly tried out together. This can be done in the form of Action Research between the teacher and the programme organizer; thereby supplementing the transmissive model used during the CPD training with a transformative model at school level (Kennedy, 2005). This can render the CPD training very effective because the activities done through Action Research are practical and occur continuously and therefore guarantee teachers the opportunity for professional development and growth (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2002).

Further, if CPD programme organizers are very particular about monitoring and support mechanisms, problems that teachers face or discover as they implement what they learnt from the CPD training are rectified in good time. Special reference is made here to the orientation to the new curriculum (PCAR). If there had been proper mechanisms for monitoring teachers in the implementation of the new curriculum, it would not have taken so long to address some of the challenges the teachers are facing in implementing the curriculum. Such curriculum challenges include teaching and learning of Chichewa using the PCAR approach; assessment records and anomalies in books among other challenges. When CPD programme organizers seem not to have the time to monitor implementation of what they impart to the teachers during the CPD training, teachers feel the organizers do not care. CPD organizers need to realise that the transfer of learning for adults is not automatic and must be facilitated (Speck 1996). Coaching and other kinds of follow-up support are needed to help adult learners transfer learning into daily practice so that it is sustained (Speck 1996). Teacher networking and other school level structures such as communities of practice, study groups and peer coaching need
to be encouraged so that teachers support one another in implementation of what is learnt at CPD training.

Further, Loucks-Horsley, Stiles, & Hewson (1998) urge professional development programme designers to see professional development as a process, not an event. Hence, there is a need for the provision of support for a longer period of time to teachers who have attended CPD training. This is because learning to be proficient at something new or finding meaning in a new way of doing things is difficult and sometimes painful. Guskey’s (1986) theory also supports the need for supporting teachers during the change process when they are trying out new things learnt at CPD training in their classroom settings. He urges CPD programme organizers and facilitators to recognize that change is a gradual and difficult process for teachers as it sometimes brings in anxiety. As such, it requires extra work, energy and time from both the teachers and the CPD programme facilitators. Close collaboration between program developers/researchers and teachers can greatly facilitate this process and help reduce the anxiety in the teachers.

From the discussion above, it is important for CPD programmes organizers to put in place monitoring and support mechanisms for the implementation of what teachers learn at CPD programmes. Over-dependence on PEAs alone for monitoring CPD activities is not helping teachers much. Officials from the Ministry of Education; Department of Teacher Education; as well as from the Malawi Institute of Education should set modalities on monitoring the implementation of CPD programmes that teachers have attended. NGOs and all stakeholders in In-service training of teachers should also do the same on CPD programmes that they conduct for teachers. Adey (2004) points out that new classroom practices only become embedded after around 30 hours of trying them out. Teachers alone cannot feel confident enough to try out new things in their classrooms without sustained monitoring and support from CPD programme providers and facilitators.

Teachers partly attributed their lack of implementation of what they learn from CPD programmes to the lack of monitoring and support mechanisms. Guskey (2002) also alludes to this when he enunciates that CPD programme organizers need to provide continued follow-up, support and pressure for teachers to put into practice what they
learn from CPD programmes. He explains that the support allows those engaged in the difficult process of implementation to tolerate the anxiety of occasional failures where as pressure is often necessary to initiate change among those whose self-impetus for change is not great.

6.3 CHALLENGES FACED IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF CPD PROGRAMMES IN ZOMBA RURAL EDUCATION DISTRICT

This study also explored the challenges that are faced in the implementation of CPD programmes in Zomba Rural Education District. As already noted from the findings of this study, the main expectation of teachers in attending CPD training is to improve their professionalism so that they become better teachers who can effectively teach in their classrooms and achieve good learning outcomes. The finding on the expectation of teachers concurs with Guskey’s (2002) assertion that most teachers engage in CPD activities because they want to become better teachers. For many teachers, becoming a better teacher means enhancing student learning outcomes because teachers judge their effectiveness in terms of learner achievement (Guskey, 2002). Further, Fullan (1999); and Fullan & Hargreaves (1996) also report similar findings that what attracts teachers to professional development is their belief that it will expand their knowledge and skills, contribute to their growth, and enhance their effectiveness with students. Hence, any development programmes that fail to address these needs are unlikely to succeed (Fullan & Miles, 1992).

The study has established that this expectation is not fully met by any of the teachers that participated in this study. A number of reasons were highlighted and given as challenges to the effective implementation of the CPD programmes in Zomba Rural Education District. The researcher has categorized the challenges into four groups namely: organization-related challenges; classroom-related challenges; teacher motivation-related challenges; and challenges related to teacher-characteristics. The CPD organization-related challenges have already been highlighted in the above sections. They included inadequate time allocation for the
CPD training, the limited expertise of facilitators, the use of the cascade mode of training, inadequate consultation, weak monitoring and support mechanisms and poor logistical arrangements for the CPD training. These CPD organization-related challenges need to be looked into. They have an influence on how receptive a teacher would be in the acquisition of the knowledge and skills imparted at the CPD programme venues and indeed their subsequent translation into practice at classroom level. This section discusses the other three categories of challenges.

6.3.1 Classroom-related challenges

Under classroom-related challenges, the researcher examines those challenges that are faced in the teaching and learning process as teachers try to implement what they learn from the CPD programmes. Such challenges are to do with large classes, inadequate teachers, inadequate teaching and learning resources and limited infrastructure. It was established that all these challenges impinge on satisfactory translation into practice of what was learnt at CPD training.

6.3.1.1 Large classes

Large classes in this study, was mentioned as one of the main hindrances to the implementation of what teachers learn at CPD programmes. Zomba Rural Education District has an average teacher to learner ratio of 1-to-98 (EMIS, 2009). In some schools, it was noted that the ratio exceeds 1:200. Sall, Ndiaye, Diarra, & Seck (2009), affirm that quality is a function of the number of learners in a class. With large classes it is difficult to realize gains in learning outcomes as the classes become unmanageable. With large classes, it is difficult for the teachers to effectively use participatory methods of teaching that are advocated at most CPD training sessions. For instance, it is difficult for teachers to move round and supervise group work effectively let alone offer individual assistance to the learners when the class is very large. From my own experience as a teacher, it is almost impossible to conduct effective group work with a large class. It is either the groups
are too many to manage or they are too large for the attention of an individual teacher.

Furthermore, assessment which is also an important aspect in the new outcomes-based curriculum is difficult to administer frequently with large classes. This runs counter to the requirement of the new curriculum which demands that learners be assessed on a regular basis and that cumulatively the continuous assessment grades should form part of the final grade at the end of the semester (PCAR, 2006). Assessment skills might be imparted to the teachers at the CPD training, but their actual implementation appears to be hampered by the number of learners under an individual teacher.

The situation of large classes calls for government and stakeholders in education to tirelessly direct their efforts to ensuring that the recommended teacher to learner ratio of 1 to 60 (PIF, 2001) as per the policy requirement is adhered to. With such a ratio, classes will not be congested and so it would be easier for teachers to put into practice what they learn from CPD programmes.

6.3.1.2 Inadequate teachers

Related to the challenge of large classes is that of inadequate teachers in schools. The study established that the teachers in Zomba Rural Education District are too few when weighed against the number of learners in the schools. The end result is that teachers in some schools are teaching multiple and/or large classes. Teachers expressed sentiments that teaching multiple classes over-burdens them greatly. This is compounded by the demands of the new curriculum, where teachers have to manage too many records such as lesson plans, schemes and outcomes of work, registers, stock books, progress books, rubric record tools, scoring rubric among other records (PCAR, 2006). So if one is teaching multiple classes, it means one is supposed to fill in all those records for all those classes. Even when a CPD orients teachers on how to fill all those records, the actual implementation of the process is hampered by the situation the teacher finds himself/herself in at the school.
Something has to be done to ensure that enough teachers are deployed to schools. Recently, the government increased teacher intake in teacher training colleges. Though this is a solution in the long term, still it gives hope of better staffing in the schools in the future. However there is the problem of teacher attrition. The documents analysed revealed that teachers are leaving the profession for more respectable and better paying jobs (Selemani-Meke, Kunje & Chimombo, 2009; EMIS, 2009). Others have died or have left because of prolonged illness, dismissals, retirement and transfers to other teaching and non-teaching posts. Malawi is not the only country affected by the brain drain. Similar findings were also noted in studies conducted by Johanson & Adams (2004) in Germany and Sub Saharan Africa. In South Africa skilled workers were noted to migrate to Britain and America among other developed countries (Mohr, Fourie & Associates, 2008).

Attrition needs to be addressed, especially in terms of the conditions of service for teachers, which are deemed poor. Attrition contributes greatly to the shortage of teachers in primary schools. Due to this shortage, the few available teachers are over-burdened with high workloads. The effective implementation of what teachers learn at CPD programmes cannot be guaranteed when teachers are over-burdened. This leads to poor lesson preparation as well as lesson delivery; translating into poor learning outcomes. A study conducted by Nhundu (1997) in Zimbabwe found that schools with the least staff turnover experienced great success in the implementation of Education with Production than schools with high staff turnover.

Further, deployment and transfers of teachers should be critically looked into. One finds a situation where some schools are over-supplied with teachers while others are undersupplied. For instance urban schools are better staffed than rural schools. Though there may be valid reasons for unequal deployment and transfers of teachers as given in chapter 5, the fact remains that teacher deployment and transfers seem to be contributing to high teacher-to-learner ratios in rural primary schools. This has contributed to difficulties in the implementation of what teachers learn in CPD programmes in rural schools as highlighted in previous sections.
6.3.1.3 *Inadequate teaching and learning resources*

In terms of teaching and learning resources, the study has established that the situation in primary schools in Zomba Rural Education District is worrisome. Instead of a textbook-to-learner ratio of 1-to-2 as recommended in policy documents (PIF, 2001), the study noted that in some schools, the ratio could exceed 1 textbook per 5 learners. The idea of 1 textbook to 2 learners, the researcher presumes, was envisaged to facilitate effective learning and teaching. This is because the learners would have enough time to use the books during group or individual work at school as well as take them home for further reading and references for take-home assignments. This would assist in easy implementation of what the teachers learn at CPD programmes especially the orientation to the new curriculum. A UNICEF Report (2000) advances that one textbook for every pupil is the ideal, and allowing learners to take textbooks home for reading, review and homework, facilitates learning. Hence, textbooks are vital in the implementation of what teachers learn at CPD training including curriculum implementation (Fullan, 1991).

In some schools teachers’ guides for some subjects were found to be non-existent such that teachers labour to borrow from other schools. With that scenario, it would be very difficult for a PEA to blame the teacher if the PEA finds that the teacher has not developed lesson plans, let alone failed to implement what was learnt at CPD programmes. Rogan & Grayson (2003) assert that lack of material support hinders effective implementation of programmes.

Further, the study noted that for over 2 years the government has not given writing materials such as exercise books, pens, chalk, scheme pads, charts, pental markers, glue and others to primary schools. This has disadvantaged the teachers and the learners to a great extent. Teachers end up using their meagre salaries to buy scheme pads for scheming and planning lessons. Those teachers that cannot afford to squeeze their budgets use that as an excuse for not preparing schemes of work. This problem of lack of writing materials was mentioned as one of the causes of learner absenteeism as well as limited learner participation in class activities. Learner absenteeism inconveniences the continuity of implementation of what
teachers learn at CPD training and consequently, this results in poor performance of
the learners. This confirms findings reported by UNICEF (2000) that learners who
miss extended periods of contact time are less able to develop the requisite
knowledge, skills and competencies that the curricula demand.

Some schools were grateful to organizations like Save the Children for supplying
them with writing materials which have gone a long way in assisting learners that
cannot afford to buy the writing materials. This issue of government not providing
schools with teaching and learning materials contradicts views of Rogan & Grayson
(2003) that those charged with the implementation of change need to be supported
both materially and non-materially.

However, the study learnt that the government introduced a fund known as Direct
Support to Schools (DSS) where each school is allocated a certain amount of
money for buying minor teaching and learning resources. Unfortunately the study
established that the fund is not enough to buy all the basic requirements for the
schools and apparently the fund seems not to be regularly administered to schools.
With this kind of situation, the implementation of what teachers learn becomes
problematic at school level. The teachers alleged that the use of participatory
methods, advocated in most CPD training sessions, becomes a non-starter in an
environment that lacks adequate teaching and learning resources. Sall et al. (2009)
support this view and reiterate that pedagogical methods are only feasible and
efficient when adequate teaching and learning resources are available. In the long
run, this inadequacy or unavailability of resources at school level renders CPD
training ineffective.

6.3.1.4 Limited infrastructure

Availability of infrastructure in schools plays a vital role in ensuring that teaching
and learning take place in an appropriate environment. It is an incontrovertible fact
that a conducive and enabling environment facilitates the implementation of what
teachers learn from CPD programmes. If infrastructure such as classrooms, staff
rooms, head teacher’s office, store rooms, libraries, and toilets are not available or are inadequate in schools, implementation of what teachers learn from CPD programmes becomes difficult. Rogan & Grayson (2003) argue that poor resources or their unavailability can limit the performance of even the best teachers in the schools. Similarly Johnson, Monk & Hodges (2000) contend that new practices will only be practised if there is a fit with the working environment. Furthermore, a study in South Africa conducted by Chisholm & Motala (1998) divulged that adequate and decent facilities do create a positive environment, affect the working conditions of staff and influence the learning environment.

Classrooms provide space in which the teaching and learning process takes place. Policy documents recommend a 1-to-60 classroom-to-learner ratio (PCAR framework, 2006) yet in Zomba Rural Education District, an average classroom holds about 132 learners (EMIS, 2009). This kind of situation cannot offer a conducive and enabling teaching and learning environment, let alone the implementation of what was learnt at a CPD programme. Such an environment hampers the effective application of participatory teaching and learning methodologies. Sall et al. (2009) allude to this when they say that teachers find it difficult to use participatory methods of teaching and learning including group work when there are many learners for the available space in the classroom. In some cases, congested classes force the teacher to take learners out for group work, and by so doing, a lot of valuable time is unnecessarily wasted thereby limiting the time for implementing the knowledge and skills gained at CPD training.

In terms of the availability of staff rooms, store rooms and head teachers’ offices in Zomba Rural Education District, the study has noted that there are only 39 staff rooms; 89 store rooms; and 81 head teachers’ offices against the 191 schools that are in the district. This is contrary to the expectation that each school should at least have a staff room, store room and head teacher’s office. These are important assets in the teaching and learning process. Their unavailability in schools hampers an environment conducive to the effective implementation of what teachers learn at CPD programmes during the teaching and learning process. For instance, TALULAR and other teaching and learning resources including textbooks and
teachers’ guides after being used in the classroom are supposed to be packed and carefully stored in store rooms. Lesson preparation cannot be effectively done under a tree; rather a staff room offers good space for that purpose. It is the same with the head teacher’s office. The head teacher needs a comfortable office to operate from if he/she is to administer the school properly and ensure that teachers implement what they learnt from CPD programmes.

The study further learnt that 95% of the schools in Zomba Rural Education District do not have libraries. A library enhances a reading culture for teachers as well as for learners. It supplements what the teachers already know either through CPD training or through other sources of information. In addition libraries also supplement what learners learn in class. Apart from storing recommended text books and some other resources got from CPD programmes, a library can also store supplementary readers for use by those learners who enjoy reading and would like to improve their writing and reading skills. Unfortunately most primary schools in Malawi do not have libraries (EMIS, 2009) and those that are available are not adequately stocked and properly managed.

Only 10 schools out of the 191 primary schools in Zomba Rural Education District have libraries (EMIS, 2009). Seriously, this has an influence on the implementation of what is learnt at CPD training because if libraries were available in schools, the knowledge gaps that teachers complain of during CPD training would be filled through reading the books in the library. Further, the library would assist in enhancing the literacy skills of the learners, which are known to be disturbingly low to the extent of scoring the lowest in the Southern Africa Development Community (SACMEQ, 2005). Rogan & Grayson (2003) acknowledge the role of libraries in the implementation of an innovation, in this case implementation of what teachers learn at CPD training including the implementation of the curriculum. In their argument, they add the library as one of the supporting structures that facilitate the implementation of the curriculum.

Similarly, toilets are important assets in schools as they ensure good sanitation and hygiene for the good health of both the teachers and the learners in schools. Teachers in this study elucidated that one of the factors contributing to absenteeism
and consequent drop-out of school, especially for the girl child, is a lack of toilets in the schools. Similar findings were highlighted by Aikman & Unterhalter (2007) in their study on enrolment of pastoralist girls and boys in Kenya. They found that unfriendly school environments that lack adequate sanitation facilities, have further excluded girls, rather than boys.

Measures need to be put in place to ensure that adequate toilets are available in schools to avert the current trend where 125 boys and 111 girls respectively are using a single toilet in primary schools in Zomba Rural Education District (EMIS, 2009). This provides unfavorable conditions for learning and the implementation of what was learnt in CPD training, as there is congestion at the toilets and this becomes a health-hazard not only to the learners but also to the teachers. Communities through School Management Committees (SMCs) and Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs) as well as NGOs need to be seriously mobilized to sort out the issue of the lack of toilets in schools.

As discussed above, classroom-related challenges are very complex. CPD programme organizers alone cannot manage to address them all. There is need for collaborated effort among all stakeholders working in basic education. Piecemeal assistance to schools in terms of infrastructure development cannot solve the problem. A holistic school reform where the problems are addressed as a package not bit by bit could be ideal.

6.3.2 Teacher motivation-related challenges

Teacher motivation-related challenges are those challenges that affect the morale of teachers and influence their decisions on whether to implement what they learnt from CPD training or not. The discussion focuses on challenges to do with issues of allowances, poor conditions of service and lack of support from colleagues in implementing what was learnt at CPD programmes.
6.3.2.1 Issue of allowances

The study learnt that teachers got K500 (US$3) as their meal allowance per day when they attended CPD training. This was felt to be inadequate according to 94% of the teachers who responded to the question on whether the allowance was adequate or not. Of course, the general view by the wider community is that teachers are not supposed to be paid for attending professional development activities meant to improve their professionalism. Teachers also agree that getting an allowance is not their major reason for attending In-service education (Mwanza, 2008). However, when CPD activities take place off the school site, teachers would expect an allowance to buy a decent meal if it is a non-residential workshop and also to afford decent accommodation if it is a residential CPD. The study further learnt that the administration of the allowance in some cases was not prompt. For PEA initiated CPDs, it was stated that teachers do not get any allowance because zones are not funded. Issues like these, tended to de-motivate and frustrate the teachers at the INSET venues. The end result is, as some teachers pointed out, “limited participation leading to poor acquisition and attainment of knowledge and skills”.

The study learnt that TDCs are encouraged to generate their own income for their activities including CPDs but this research has observed that the amount that is generated is not adequate to meet the financial requirements of the TDCs. Rogan & Grayson (2003) contend that implementation can be difficult without adequate financial support from outside agents such as the government. Hence, modalities to address the issue of “no funding” for TDCs need to be put in place.

6.3.2.2 Poor conditions of service

The other burning issue that was stressed as impinging on the implementation of what was learnt at CPD training was the poor conditions of service for teachers in terms of their salaries, promotion, professional development and accommodation. On salaries, it was noted that being civil servants, teachers’ salaries are based on incremental scales with basic salaries for different categories of employees. An employee reaches the highest point in a given grade through annual increments or
he/she can move into a higher scale through promotion. The study has learnt that a teacher, according to World Bank Report (2007), would get US $524 per annum that is about US $44 per month. Bearing in mind that annual increments do not substantially increase salaries, this impression of low salaries for teachers still stands today.

Unlike salaries in other government sectors, teachers’ salaries are described as low because there are virtually no alternative ways of getting extra money to supplement the salaries. Chances of upgrading to higher salary segments are also limited. In addition, promotions are not common and teachers stay in one salary segment for long periods of time in their careers. To supplement their meagre salaries, teachers resort to getting loans from loan sharks and dubious banks which charge a lot of interest; leaving them with almost nothing to take home. Teachers end up getting permanently into debt. As a result, teachers cannot manage their finances and this leads to disenchantment and low morale in general. Salary is a critical issue as it affects teacher-motivation (Chireshe & Shumba, 2011). Without motivation, teachers cannot commit themselves to the implementation of what they learn from CPD training. The end result is poor implementation of what was learnt at CPD programmes reflected in overall low quality of education offered to learners and poor learning outcomes.

On teacher promotions, the study has noted that it takes a very long period of service before primary school teachers can be considered for promotion. Further, the promotion process is marked by many flaws, so that, the length of service, the conduct of the teacher or how the teacher performs at school, are not necessarily considered in the promotion process. Definitely such a process ends up promoting lazy and un-deserving teachers leaving out the hard working, committed and deserving teachers. This de-motivates the deserving teachers and frustrates their commitment to duty including the implementation of what they learn from CPD training.

Better ways of promoting teachers need be explored. Teachers suggested that after attending CPD training, they should be awarded a certificate of value that can be recognized during interviews for promotions. Since promotions go with an increase in
salary, surely promotions or certificates of value after attending CPD training would be one of the best means of motivating a de-motivated teaching force. By recognizing the certificates and promoting the teachers, the teachers will get motivated about their work and work tirelessly in implementing what they learn from CPD training (Bowen, 2000). Maslow’s hierarchy of needs theory also acknowledges recognition as one of the self esteem needs and hence, it has an effect on the morale of a person (Maslow, 1943).

On teacher professional development, the study has established that the policy which states that each teacher is allocated at least three days of In-service Education and training every year is just lip service. The policy is not fulfilled as the majority of teachers in Zomba Rural education District has attended less than 3 In-service education training since they joined the service. This is indeed contrary to what the National Strategy for Teacher Education and Development (NSTED, 2007) advocates that teachers need to continue to learn about how to teach effectively and that as curricula change, teachers need to keep pace with the changes and new demands placed upon them. Fraser et al. (2007) acknowledge the need for teachers to attend continuing professional development programmes and places them within the context of lifelong learning for teachers to be productive in the teaching and learning process.

The implications of not fulfilling the policy is that teachers are neither updated on new methods of teaching and content nor are they adequately oriented to changes in the school curriculum. This impacts negatively on the quality of education and learning outcomes because the teaching methods they use do not resonate with the changed curriculum. In a study in South Africa conducted by Panday (2007), it was noted that insufficient orientation and training were some of the factors that compromised the success of the implementation of the new curriculum. Despite the NSTED, there is a lack of a clear policy to guide INSET in Malawi and there seems to be limited commitment on the part of the government as most of the INSETs that teachers attend, save the orientations to new curriculum, are donor /NGO initiated. In fact, when teachers were asked to give suggestions on how CPDs can effectively be delivered, one of the suggestions given was that CPDs should be frequent and regular if their impact is to be felt in schools.
Accommodation for teachers is another neglected area in the Malawian education system. Sometimes donors build school blocks at the schools but make no effort to erect at least a head teacher’s house at the school. This study has learnt that lack of teacher houses is another reason why teachers feel too de-motivated and frustrated to direct their energy towards the implementation of what they learn from CPD programmes. This is usually the case in rural areas where teachers cannot find good houses to rent. The shortage of teacher houses was also attributed to the high teacher to learner ratios in rural areas because teachers hesitate to move to rural schools where they would not find decent accommodation. Hence, the high teacher-to-learner ratios and the shortage of teachers, as already highlighted, lead to high and unmanageable workloads for the teachers. This hampers effective implementation of what teachers learn at CPD training.

Despite the recommendations set in the Guidelines for Infrastructure Development on teacher housing, most schools only provide one house for the head teacher and the rest are forced to live in rented houses. This brings in a multitude of problems. For instance, the study established that teachers living away from schools have to travel long distances spending the little money they get as salaries on bus or bicycle fares. In rural areas, teachers cycle long distances only to arrive late for work. They sometimes face the problem of bicycle break downs. It was learnt that the situation becomes worse during the rainy season as roads and foot paths become impassable and schools remain without teachers. The government and stakeholders in education need to address the problem of teacher accommodation if teachers are to be lured to remain and teach in the rural primary schools and implement what they learn from CPD programmes. Travel difficulties result in the waste of valuable time and a reduction in contact time between the teacher and the learners (Gray, 2005).
6.3.2.3 Lack of support from colleagues in implementation of what was learnt at off-school site based CPD training

There are revelations from this study that teachers do not want colleagues who attended off-school site based CPD training to share information with them. Some teachers give the reason that they do not trust cascaded information and would therefore want to receive first hand information just like their colleagues who attended the off-school site based CPD training. Other teachers raise issues of allowances, alleging that their colleagues were given allowances when they were being trained and so they would not want to be trained without getting an allowance. The end result is that those who attended the training are not supported fully by their colleagues to implement what they got from the CPD training. This is very counter-productive and contrary to Bell and Gilbert's (1996) three aspects of professional learning where it is believed that the will to learn should come from within the person and that social aspects should support that willingness. With the school as a community of practice, teachers are supposed to encourage one another and come together to share solutions to common problems (Wenger, 1998).

In addition, primary school teachers are versatile in that they can be allocated to teach any given grade or standard at any given point in time. This means that if a teacher attended a CPD training because he/she is a standard 1 teacher, that training becomes useless, to some extent, when this teacher is relocated to another standard and another teacher who did not attend that training takes over as standard 1 teacher. This is the more reason why teachers who attended CPD training need to share information with those who did not attend the CPD training. Nevertheless the best option, as the teachers indicated, is that CPDs should target all teachers. However the challenge remains resources to reach out to all teachers at a given point in time. Apparently teachers need to change their mindset and support each other in the implementation of what was learnt at CPD training.

From what has been discussed on teacher motivation-related challenges, teacher-motivation is critical in the implementation of what teachers learn from CPD
programmes. Inadequate allowances, poor welfare at CPD sites, poor conditions of service and lack of support from colleagues de-motivate teachers and the resultant effect is minimal translation into practice of what teachers learn at CPD training. This is because the implementation of any CPD programme for teachers requires commitment and dedication on the part of the teacher. Without commitment a teacher cannot go the extra mile to ensure that what was learnt at a CPD programme is implemented. Guskey (2002) attributes the failure of CPD programmes to not taking into account the factors that motivate teachers.

6.3.3 Challenges related to teacher characteristics

Another challenge that the study established to be hampering effective implementation of what teachers learn at CPD training concerns the characteristics or the qualities of the teachers themselves. These include the age of the teacher, the type of teacher training programme they attended, the academic qualifications of the teacher and the gender of the teacher.

This study has established that the age of the teacher has a bearing on how easy or how difficult the teacher finds the implementation of what was learnt at the CPD training. Teachers below 20 years of age found the implementation of what was learnt at CPD training much more difficult than older teachers. It is possible to attribute this trend to the mental capabilities of such young teachers, that they might not be developed enough to cope with the demands of the teaching profession. Weiner, Reynolds & Miller (1986) call such teachers beginning teachers. Beginning teachers might have the theory but lack the skills for translating theory into practice. Being new in the profession and lacking experience, such teachers might have an anxiety and might approach the profession with fear. This finding confirms previous studies by Nyagura & Reece (1990) in Zimbabwe, which attributed weaker practical instructional skills of teachers to lack of experience. Hence, younger teachers who are usually beginning teachers need more support to be able to implement what they learn from the CPD training (Weiner et al., 2003).
Furthermore, the type of teacher training programme that the teacher attended seemed to correlate with how easy or how difficult the teacher found the implementation of what was learnt at CPD training. Teachers that underwent the two-year programme, found implementation rather difficult when compared to teachers who went through the other training programmes. The two-year teacher training programme was the first teacher training programme in Malawi. It started in the 1960’s when the country got its independence (NSTED, 2007). This gives the impression that such teachers might have stayed too long in the system and as such they are set in their own way of doing things so that they are resistant to change. This supports a view by Armstrong (1994) captured in Mpofu (2010) that all new programmes inevitably clash with certain entrenched attitudes and values which human beings tend to uphold, protect, preserve and promote. It might be critical that CPD programme organizers consider targeting teachers by the type of teacher training programme they attended because such teachers have similar backgrounds.

Similarly, the academic qualifications of teachers in this study were found to play a role in influencing the implementation of what was learnt at CPD training. Teachers with a Primary School Leaving Certificate of Education (which is awarded after 8 years of primary schooling) found the implementation more difficult than teachers with a Malawi School Certificate of Education (awarded after 4 years of secondary education). This could be attributed to their knowledge levels. It is questionable indeed if these teachers with PSLCE have enough content and methodology to use in lesson delivery vis-à-vis their contribution towards good quality education. Further, it is also questionable if such teachers can easily acquire knowledge and skills at CPD training and effectively translate them into practice at classroom level. Rogan and Grayson’s (2003) theory of implementation, advances that, teachers with an inadequate content base, find it difficult to implement a designed programme. The view is also shared by Mpofu (2010) who found that under-qualified teachers face problems in the interpretation of the syllabus as well as in class management. Hence, it is imperative to enforce the policy that teachers should have the Malawi School Certificate of Education as a minimum entry requirement for the teaching profession.
Further, the study noted a disparity in terms of the gender of the teacher and the implementation of what was learnt at CPD programme. The female teachers were noted to have found it more difficult to implement what they learnt from CPD training than the male teachers. However, this study did not establish the causes of such a disparity. Nevertheless, there is evidence that students learn differently and at different paces because of their biological and psychological differences (Jie Fu, 2009). Hence, it would not be completely off-track to inconclusively attribute the gap to learning styles employed at CPD training that probably favour the male teachers rather than female teachers.

From what has been presented in this section, there appears to be an array of challenges that teachers experience both at the INSET venues and at classroom level as they try to implement what they learn from CPD training. All these challenges need to be addressed if teacher change in terms of improved classroom practice and learner performance due to effective CPD implementation is to be experienced in schools.

### 6.4 SUMMARY

Chapter 6 has discussed findings on how Continuing Professional Development programmes for primary school teachers in Zomba Rural Education District are implemented. It discussed findings pertaining to the organization of CPD programmes in the District, the expertise of CPD facilitators in terms of their professional qualifications and experiences and the duration of CPDs. The chapter further discussed findings on monitoring and support mechanisms for CPD implementation and the challenges faced in the implementation of the CPD programmes in the district.

The next chapter is a summary of the study. The researcher will also make conclusions and offer recommendations based on the findings of the study.
CHAPTER 7: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 INTRODUCTION

In Chapter 6, the researcher discussed the findings of this study as per the data that were presented and analyzed in Chapter 5. This Chapter intends to summarize the study and draw conclusions. The chapter has been divided into six sections. The first section highlights the key ideas from each of the five preceding chapters. The second section summarizes the major findings of the study, taking into consideration the research objectives, questions and assumptions of the study. The third section draws a conclusion based on the findings of the study in line with the models and theories that guided the study. The fourth section offers recommendations based on the major findings. The fifth section puts into focus the contribution of this study to new knowledge in the area of Continuing Professional Development for teachers. It further offers an alternative model for the implementation of CPD programmes for teachers in Zomba Rural Education District. The sixth section suggests areas for future research.

The study aimed at assessing the implementation of Continuing Professional Development programmes for primary school teachers in Zomba Rural Education District in Malawi. As noted earlier, this was based on the concern that Continuing Professional Development programmes for teachers in Malawi have not yielded positive results in changing teachers’ classroom practice which leads to improved learner performance. Hence, it was assumed that there are problems in the implementation of Continuing Professional Development activities for teachers in Malawi. So the study assessed why the implementation of CPD programmes has failed to result in teacher change. As noted earlier, the study was guided by the following major question: How are Continuing Professional Development programmes for primary school teachers in Zomba Rural Education District implemented to ensure teacher change? This major question was further divided into sub-questions as follows:
i. How do CPD programme facilitators impart knowledge and skills to the teachers during the CPD programme training?

ii. What are the professional experiences and qualifications of the CPD programme facilitators?

iii. What monitoring and support programmes are put in place to ensure that teachers practice what they learn from CPD programmes?

iv. What challenges are faced in the implementation of CPD programmes in Zomba Rural Education District?

v. What can be learnt from the findings of the study regarding different models for the implementation of CPD programmes in enhancing teacher change?

7.2 SUMMARY OF KEY IDEAS FROM EACH CHAPTER

Chapter 1 highlighted the background to the study and contextualized the problem that led to the study. The chapter began by discussing the socio-economic, socio-political and educational backgrounds of Malawi as a country. Thereafter, it highlighted the background to the problem, statement of the problem, the research purpose and objectives as well as the research questions and assumptions. The chapter further discussed the rationale and significance of the study, delimitations of the study, key terms used in the study and limitations of the study. Finally it outlined the organization of the chapters.

Chapters 2 and 3 discussed the literature related to the assessment of the implementation of CPD programmes for primary school teachers. Chapter 2 focused on the conceptual and theoretical frameworks as well as models for studying CPD for teachers. The review centred mainly on three different theories of CDP which have a bearing on the study; namely, Guskey’s (1986) theory of teacher change which states that significant changes in teacher’s beliefs and attitudes are likely to take place only after student learning outcomes are evident; Wengers’s (1998) theory of practice which focuses on learning as participation with emphasis on collaborative professional development and learning. According to him, professional development and learning can best be achieved through practice; and Speck’s (1996) adult learning theory which argues that adult learners need to see
that professional development learning and their day-to-day activities are related and relevant.

On the models, the literature review focused on the model that guided the study. This model is a composite framework of three models of studying Continuing Professional Development as suggested by Fraser’s *et al.* (2007). This framework includes Bell and Gilbert’s three aspects of professional learning; Kennedy’s framework for analysing CPD; and Reid's quadrants of teacher learning. Chapter 3 focused on challenges in implementation of CPD programmes as unveiled by other studies elsewhere. It also highlighted best practices for the effective implementation of CPD programmes. Further the chapter discussed findings from other studies on the implementation of CPD programmes for teachers and identified the gap in the literature into which the topic under study fitted itself.

Chapter 4 was a discussion of the technological aspects that guided the research process. These included the research paradigm; the research design; population, sample and sampling techniques; data collection instruments; issues of validity / reliability / trustworthiness; data analysis; and ethical considerations. The researcher in this study wanted to get a more holistic picture of how CPD programmes are implemented in Zomba Rural Education District. To this end, the researcher needed to be objective so as to minimize researcher’s biases, but at the same time, to be subjective enough to allow a deeper insight into the issues surrounding implementation of CPD programmes in the district. Thus, a paradigm that adequately supports both positivistic and interpretivistic ideas at the same time, was considered appropriate to guide the study. Hence, the post-positivism paradigm and a mixed method design guided the study because of their flexibility in the use of both qualitative and quantitative approaches to research.

The quantitative data were collected through questionnaires that were administered to the teachers while the qualitative data were collected through focus group discussions, interviews, CPD observations and document analysis. Focus group discussions were conducted with teachers while interviews were held with head teachers, CPD programme facilitators and Ministry of Education officials responsible for CPDs. The quantitative data were coded and entered under SPSS after which
the researcher applied analytical techniques such as frequency counts and percentages to sum up the indicators. Where appropriate, cross tabs were applied. The qualitative data were reduced by clustering common themes and writing stories discerned from the responses to uncover the main issues that arose. The issues arising from the focus group discussions, the interviews, the questionnaires, the observations and the document analysis were analysed and presented.

Chapter 5 focused on data presentation and analysis. The presentation and analysis of the data was done in line with the objectives, research questions and assumptions of the study. The Chapter was divided into four sections. The first section examined the biographic information of the respondents. It included variables such as the number of respondents, the gender of the respondents, the age of the respondents, the years of teaching experience of the respondents and the type of teacher training programme attended by the respondents. The section also examined the academic qualifications of the respondents as well the classes the respondents were teaching. The second section presented and analyzed data on how CPDs are implemented in Zomba Rural Education District. It covered variables of CPD implementation such as the number of CPDs attended, organizers of the CPDs, focus of the CPDs, time allocation to the CPDs, methods used by facilitators and monitoring and support mechanisms. The third section presented and analyzed data on challenges faced in implementation of CPD programmes. The fourth section highlighted data on teacher preferences as regards how CPDs should be implemented in Zomba Rural Education District. Data were captured on teachers’ views about preferred venues, mode, duration, time of the year, form of recognition, and nature of the CPD programmes.

Chapter 6 focused on discussing the data that were presented in Chapter 5. The discussion was based on the six major themes of the study; namely, the organization of CPD programmes in Zomba Rural Education District; the expertise of CPD facilitators; the duration of CPDs training; monitoring and support mechanisms; the challenges faced in implementation of CPD programmes; and the models of CPD implementation that are prevalent in the Zomba Rural Education District.
7.3 SUMMARY OF MAJOR FINDINGS

This section summarizes the major findings as per the main themes of the study in line with the research questions and objectives of the study. The section gives a summary of the findings on the general organization of CPD programmes in the Zomba Rural Education District, including how CPD programme facilitators impart knowledge and skills to teachers during the CPD training. Further, the researcher, in this section, gives a summary of the professional experience and qualifications of CPD programme facilitators as well as the monitoring and support mechanisms put in place to ensure CPD implementation. Lastly, the section highlights challenges faced in the implementation of CPD programmes.

7.3.1 Summary of major findings on general organization of CPD programmes in Zomba Rural Education District

Under this sub-heading, the study was interested in the methods that the CPD programme facilitators use in imparting knowledge and skills to the teachers during the CPD training. This is in addition to the venues for the CPDs; the frequency of the CPDs; the organizers of the CPDs; the focus of the CPDs; the duration of the CPDs; and the consultations made prior to delivery of the CPD programmes.

Under the methods the study revealed that group work is the most popular method that is used, followed by question and answer and then demonstration. Other methods included brainstorming, case studies, individual work, singing, role playing, lecturing, explanations, discussions, future’s wheel, pair work, observations, games and dances. Most of these methods are interactive methods and can encourage participatory learning if used effectively.

Participatory learning facilitates the acquisition of knowledge and skills; thereby enhancing the achievement of CPD programme goals and objectives. However, the effective use of methods also depends on the availability of material resources. It
was reported that materials are usually available at CPD training though in one of the orientations to the new curriculum, materials were a problem. Further, it was also noted that there was not much variety in the use of the methods at each CPD training and that teachers bemoaned the use of methods that are not practical in real classroom situations.

On venues for CPDs, the study observed that the school and the TDC are the main venues for on-school site and off-school site based CPDs respectively. Some on-school site based CPDs were noted to take place at cluster level where teachers from three or four schools met to shape their professional growth. Similarly, some off-school site based CPDs took place at district level. The study noted that non-residential CPDs were more common than residential CPDs. However, the teachers preferred residential CPDs because these are felt to be more powerful and the achievement of objectives is more likely to be realized than with the non-residential CPDs. Nevertheless, teachers pointed out that where it is inevitable to hold non-residential CPDs, as when there are financial constraints, CPD programme organizers should use TDCs as venues for their training for the off-school site based CPDs.

Findings from the study on the frequency of CPDs point to the fact that both on-school site and off-school site based CPDs for primary school teachers in the Zomba Rural Education District are not regularly conducted. As such, they fall short of the policy requirement that every teacher attend at least three off-school site based In-service Education training per year (NSTED, 2007). Financial constraints were given as the main barrier to conducting frequent and regular CPD training. Lack of regular INSETs impacts negatively on teacher classroom practice as teachers are not adequately refreshed or updated on changes in curriculum.

On organizers of CPDs, the study noted that the PEA is the main organizer for both on-school site and off-school site based CPDs. The PEA is seconded by the head teacher in the case of on-school site based CPDs and Non-Governmental organizations for the off-school site based CPDs. This is contrary to the expectation that head teachers and teachers would be in the forefront, initiating and conducting on-school site based CPDs in the form of study groups, peer reviews, communities
of practice and teacher networking. These CPD opportunities were reported to be rare in Zomba rural Education District. On paper, the researcher noted that schools plan for CPD activities but practically, they do not conduct them. It could be an indication that head teachers and teachers do not take the issue of on-school site based CPDs seriously.

On focus of both on-school site and off-school site based CPDs, the study noted that much of the focus was on orientation to new curriculum (PCAR) followed by methods of teaching; teaching and learning resources; and subject content in that order. Almost all teachers had attended the orientation to new curriculum. Those that had not attended were found to be IPTE teachers who were oriented to it while in College doing their pre-service training. Scheming and lesson planning were mentioned during the focus group discussions as one of the major areas that on-school site based CPDs focus on.

The study further noted that teachers had their own priorities of areas on which CPDs should focus and this was found to be contrary to what most CPDs in the district focus on. In view of the revelations on the focus of CPD programmes, the researcher is recommending that a needs-analysis always be conducted prior to designing a CPD programme. This can ensure that the CPD programme reflects the need of teachers for that particular CPD and assist in ownership of the CPD programme thereby guarantee its translation into practice at classroom level. Where a comprehensive needs analysis in terms of focus of CPD programmes is not possible, at least consultations should be held with selected groups of teachers.

The duration of the CPDs was also quite an issue in this study as it has a bearing on how effectively participants to the CPDs can assimilate the knowledge and skills being imparted. Research has shown that the longer the duration for training, the greater the probability of such a training resulting in teacher change and consequent improvements in learner outcomes and vice versa (Supovitz and Turner, 2000; Brown, 2004; and Sinelnikov, 2009). Hence, according to Desimone (2009), CPD activities that spread over a semester and include 20 hours or more of contact time have proved to be more effective in changing teachers and improving their classroom practice. The study has established that just a few hours are
allocated for on-school site based CPDs and a maximum of 3 days are allocated for off-school site based CPDs with the exception of the orientation to the new curriculum (PCAR) which was allocated a maximum of 5 days. However, even this, content was just too much to be covered within 5 days.

Due to inadequate time allocated to CPD training, it was reported that facilitators just rushed through the material without considering whether the participants understood the content or not. Hence, inadequate time contributed to shallow coverage of content leading to knowledge gaps. Similar to Desimone’s (2009) argument that CPDs include not less than 20 hours of contact time, teachers in this study suggested that CPDs should spread over a period of one week. The teachers also preferred the CPD activities to take place during the holidays, especially the long term holidays as that is the time when teachers have adequate time attend the CPD training and also have ample time to prepare their schemes of work. Further, during the holidays classes are not disrupted. The study noted that financial constraints are given as a reason for not allocating adequate time for the CPD activities.

Lastly, on organization, the study noted that consultations were not very prevalent. The quantitative findings revealed that only 15% of the teachers were consulted for their input in CPD programmes. The rest had not been consulted in any way for their input on CPD designs since they joined the teaching profession. Noteworthy is the fact that, 84% of the 15% who indicated that they had been consulted, acknowledged that their input was considered during CPD training. This is positive and indeed commendable for it symbolizes that, once the practice becomes widespread, there is the assurance of improved CPD delivery since most of the input will be from teachers on the ground.
7.3.2 Summary of major findings on professional experience and qualifications of CPD programme facilitators

Professional experiences and qualifications of CPD programme facilitators in this study basically referred to the expertise of the facilitators and their accompanying qualities, including the qualifications that make them deliver an effective CPD. The study noted that PEAs are the main CPD facilitators in Zomba Rural Education District. Additionally, head teachers and mentor teachers also facilitate CPDs. Occasionally, some CPDs such as the one on Action Research were facilitated by University Lecturers and Research Fellows. NGOs sometimes use their own resource persons. Curriculum specialists from the Malawi Institute of Education are also involved in addition to being Trainer of Trainers for the orientations to the new curriculum. Professionally, PEAs and head teachers are qualified primary school teachers who ascend to the position through promotion based on satisfactory achievements and experience as head teachers and teachers respectively. The mentor teachers are ordinary teachers identified because of their outstanding performance and experience.

The study learnt that the expertise of some of the facilitators was questionable. The teachers alleged that such facilitators gave conflicting information and when participants asked questions for clarity, they got angry and referred teachers to manuals that the teachers could not clearly understand on their own. The teachers further claimed that if such facilitators tried to explain, they did not elaborate well in their explanations. The study further learnt that, where the cascade mode of training was used, such facilitators blamed the system saying they were also not thoroughly trained because of inadequate time that was allocated for their training. Further, the teachers questioned the engagement of some of the mentor teachers who lacked the expertise and speculated that they were engaged because they were related to the CPD organizers. An analysis of the quantitative data on the expertise of facilitators indicates that about 30% of the teachers have little confidence in the expertise of the facilitators while over 75% of those involved in the focus group discussions, alluded to knowledge gaps in facilitators. Knowledge gaps in facilitators inadvertently results in poor acquisition of knowledge and skills by the teachers.
This, consequently, limits effective CPD implementation at school or classroom level.

### 7.3.3 Summary of major findings on monitoring and support mechanisms

Monitoring and support mechanisms are very crucial to the success of any CPD programme including those that are meant for primary school teachers. Training teachers and not following them up on how they are implementing what they learnt from the CPD training, gives an impression of negligence and a lack of seriousness on the part of CPD programme implementers about the success of their CPD programmes. The study has established that teachers face many challenges as they try to implement what they learnt from the CPD training. Monitoring and support can ensure that those challenges are shared and discussed. Possibly solutions can be tried out together between the teachers and the facilitators. The findings from the study on monitoring and support mechanisms put in place to ensure that teachers are implementing what they learn from CPD programmes appear to be weak. Not much attention is being rendered to monitoring and support mechanisms by CPD programme organizers and facilitators.

The study noted that it is the PEAs that make follow-ups on implementation of what teachers learn at CPD training though teachers felt the number of visits is not adequate to sustain the teachers’ morale in the implementation process. Most NGOs do not monitor. They depend on PEAs to do the monitoring for them. Sustainability is used as the justification for using PEAs to monitor their activities. PEAs indicated that they have tight schedules. Teachers acknowledged the busy schedules of PEAs and explained that sometimes when the PEAs visit the schools, it is not necessarily to monitor implementation of a CPD organized by a particular NGO.
7.3.4 Summary of major findings on challenges faced in the implementation of CPD programmes in Zomba Rural Education District

This study has highlighted several challenges that have impacted negatively on the successful implementation of CPD programmes for primary school teachers in Zomba Rural Education District. The study identified CPD organization-related challenges; classroom-related challenges; and teacher-motivation related challenges. The CPD organization-related challenges included challenges to do with inadequate time allocation to CPD training; inadequate expertise of facilitators; weak monitoring and support mechanisms; and poor logistical arrangements for the CPD training. The classroom-related challenges included challenges of large classes; inadequate teachers; inadequate teaching and learning resources; and limited infrastructure. Lastly, the teacher motivation-related challenges dwelt on issues of allowances; poor conditions of service; and lack of support from colleagues in implementing what was learnt at CPD programmes.

A summary of most of the CPD organization-related challenges have already been made in the preceding sections. This section therefore gives a summary of the classroom-related and teacher motivation-related challenges. On classroom-related challenges, the study took notice of high teacher-to-learner ratios, to the extent that one teacher could handle over 200 learners in one class. It also noted the insufficient number of teachers in schools, resulting in one teacher floating among two or more classes. Teaching and learning resources such as textbooks, teachers’ guides, exercise books, pens, chalk, scheme pads, charts, markers, glue and other necessary writing materials were reported to be insufficient or not available. Further, infrastructure, comprising classroom blocks, staff rooms, head teacher’s office, store rooms, libraries and toilets were found to be limited and in some cases non-existent in the schools. All these were mentioned as frustrating the teachers’ efforts to put into practice what they learn from the CPD training.

Teacher motivation-related challenges are capable of lowering the morale of teachers during CPD training as well as during the implementation of what the teachers learnt at the CPD training. On teacher motivation-related challenges, the
study found that the allowances that are paid to teachers during CPD training are not enough to motivate teachers to participate fully in the training. Teachers cannot even buy a decent meal. Hence, the US$3 dollars that the teachers receive was felt inadequate by 94% of the teachers that responded to the question on whether the allowance was adequate or not. In some CPD training such as the PEA-initiated CPDs and on-school site based CPDs, teachers do not get any meal allowance. All this, it was learnt, is because TDCs are not funded. The income generating activities that the zones carry out do not source adequate money to suffice for decent meals for the participants to the CPD training in addition to paying watchmen and settling bills.

Further, the study noted that the conditions of service in which teachers operate, in terms of salaries, promotions, professional development and accommodation, are not very attractive to warrant commitment and dedication of the teacher to the implementation of what was learnt at CPD programmes. The teachers complained that their salaries are so low that they do not take them and their families to the end of the month. As a result, teachers survive on loans and are in permanent debt. Promotions were noted to be rare and the system of promoting the teachers itself was reported to be flawed as seems to reward undeserving teachers. Professional development was also noted not to be taken seriously as the policy on In-service Education and training which states that every teacher is allocated at least three days of In-service Education and training every year is not honored. Accommodation for teachers was also reported to be a problem in schools. To worsen the situation teachers in rural schools cannot find decent accommodation in the villages to rent. This, results in frustrations and lack of commitment to duty, ending in both teacher and learner-absenteeism.

The lack of support from colleagues was also found to be de-motivating teachers in the implementation of what was learnt from CPD programmes. It was learnt that there were cases where colleagues of teachers who attended CPD training were not fully supported by their colleagues to implement what they got from the CPD training. All these challenges lower the morale of the teachers in implementing what they learn from the CPD training.
7.4 CONCLUSION

This study assessed the implementation of Continuing Professional Development Programmes for primary school teachers in Zomba Rural Education District in Malawi. The concern of the study was that despite the Government of Malawi putting in place structures to facilitate the implementation of Continuing Professional Development for primary school teachers, teachers have not improved their classroom practices. The resultant effect has been the poor performance of learners to the extent that they scored the lowest in international examinations for the Southern Africa Development Community (SACMEQ, 2005). For this reason, the researcher was interested in unveiling the implementation issues of the CPD programmes that have rendered the CPD training ineffective. The study was guided by Fraser’s et al. (2007) composite framework of three models for understanding and evaluating CPD implementation. These models include Bell and Gilbert’s three aspects of professional learning, Kennedy’s framework for analysing CPD, and Reid’s quadrants of teacher learning.

Bell and Gilbert’s three aspects of professional learning comprise the personal, social and occupational aspects. According to Bell and Gilbert (1996) the impetus for change originates within the personal aspect of professional learning. Thereafter, development within the personal aspect can be encouraged or restrained by a range of factors. The social aspects support personal learning, hence, learning in isolation is seen as problematic but communities of practice are thought of as ideal (Bell and Gilbert, 1996). The occupational aspect of teacher-learning involves interplay between theory and practice where it is believed that making sense of practical experiences, particularly those with positive outcomes, can lead to conceptual change and acceptance of theory (Bell & Gilbert, 1996; Clarke & Hollingsworth, 2002).

Kennedy’s framework for analyzing CPD includes the use of transmissive, transitional and transformative models. According to Kennedy (2005), in the transmissive model, CPD is conducted by an external expert, focusing mainly on imparting skills to the teachers and using the cascade model of implementation usually. In the transitional model, teachers work together to support each other’s
professional growth through peer coaching and mentoring using experimentation, observation, reflection and exchange of professional ideas and shared problem solving (Showers & Robinson, 1991). The transformative model involves teachers in Action Research and the evaluation of their own performance. It aims at meeting the needs and expectations of the teachers as the activities are practical; occur continuously; and give teachers the opportunity for professional development and growth (Cohen et al., 2002).

Reid's quadrants of teacher learning looks at professional learning opportunities in two dimensions called formal-informal and planned-incidental (McKinney, Fraser Kennedy, Reid, & Wilson, 2005). According to Fraser et al. (2007), formal opportunities are those opportunities that are explicitly established by an agent other than the teacher while the informal opportunities are sought and established by the teacher. Planned opportunities may be formal or informal, but are characteristically pre-arranged, whereas incidental opportunities are spontaneous and unpredictable (Fraser et al., 2007).

Guided by Fraser’s et al. (2007) composite framework of three models for understanding and evaluating CPD implementation, the researcher in this study makes the following conclusions as regards how CPD programmes for teachers in Zomba Rural Education District are being implemented:

7.4.1 That application of Bell and Gilbert’s three aspects of professional learning comprising personal, social and occupational aspects is not holistically considered in the design of the CPD programmes. The personal aspect of professional learning comes from within the teacher. The teacher’s interest and inner motivation to participate as well as the values, beliefs and attitudes of the teacher play a great role in the achievement of the objectives of any CPD programme meant for the teacher. The study noted that 85% of the teachers are not consulted for input in the design of the CPD programmes, especially the off-school site based CPD programmes, meaning that their personal aspects are not being incorporated into the programmes. This has a negative bearing on ownership of the programme and its subsequent translation into practice at the classroom or at school level as the teachers
feel “This is their programme not our programme” as noted by teachers at FGD 23. In addition to consultations, the study also noted that factors related to teacher-motivation such as allowances and welfare of participants at CPD training venues are not attractive enough to induce that inner motivation of the teacher to seriously commit or dedicate himself / herself to successful implementation of the CPD programme.

On the social aspects of professional learning, communities of practice and other means of enhancing professional development such as teacher networking, study groups, peer review and others are advocated (Lave & Wenger, 1991). According to Bell & Gilbert (1996), the social aspects support the personal learning, hence, learning in isolation is seen as 'problematic'. These learning opportunities to support personal learning were not observed, which gives an impression that they are not common in the district. However, communities of practice structures were available, though the activities were externally-initiated rather than internally-initiated by the teachers themselves. Nevertheless at school level the study noted that teachers meet (though not often) and update one another on proper scheming and lesson planning. Schools are potential communities of practice where opportunities for collaboration with colleagues exist; hence, this practice needs to be encouraged. Apart from sharing their experiences on scheming and lesson planning as is usually the case in schools, other areas of need should be addressed as well. Further, in order to nurture the personal aspect of learning after CPD training, monitoring and support mechanisms need to be put in place as these were found to be lacking by this study.

The occupational aspect of professional learning is where the teacher has to see links between what is being learnt at the CPD training and what is involved in classroom practice. If the link is there, it may not be difficult for the teacher to translate the theory into practice. But if the link is not so clear, the teacher finds his / her participation in a CPD as just a waste of his / her valuable time and will not implement what was learnt at the CPD in his/ her classroom setting (Speck, 1996). The study noted that sometimes the expertise of the facilitators for CPD programmes in Zomba Rural Education
District was questionable. Such facilitators lacked adequate content and skills to effectively equip the teachers. Further the duration for conducting CPDs was found to be inadequate for thorough coverage of material and assimilation by the teachers. With that kind of situation, the effective translation of theory by the teacher into practice at classroom level cannot be guaranteed. These, coupled with the unconducive environmentS at schools where resources are inadequate, classes are large, teachers are few, infrastructure is limited and conditions of service for teachers are poor among other problems, render implementation of CPD programmes difficult.

7.4.2 That almost all the three models as identified by Kennedy (2005), i.e. transmissive, transitional and transformative models are being used in Zomba Rural Education District. What is of concern is the extent and the effectiveness with which they are being used. The study noted the use of the transmissive model of implementation where the cascade mode of training was used in the orientation to the new curriculum as well as in some CPDs organized by some Non-Governmental Organizations such as Save the Children. In both cases key resource persons were first oriented to the training design and then entrusted with the task of training larger numbers of middle- level personnel who, in turn, trained the teachers at the grass root level. In the case of the orientation to the new curriculum, Primary Education Advisors were the middle level personnel while in the Save the Children CPDs, head teachers and mentor teachers formed the middle level personnel.

From the concerns aired by teachers and CPD programme organizers, it appears CPD training through use of the cascade mode did not benefit the teachers much. It was learnt that the flow down of the messages from one level of the cascade to the other resulted in knowledge gaps at each level of the cascade. As a result, teachers found implementation very difficult. This confirms findings by Dove (1986) and Khulisa (2001) cited in Engelbrecht et al. (2007) that the cascade model has a dilution effect. Further, the study noted that some trainers during workshops that involved the cascade model of training lacked the confidence, knowledge and understanding of issues
needed to manage the training process (Engelbrecht et al., 2007). Hence, the resultant effect of the use of the cascade model in training teachers was limited implementation at classroom level, of what was learnt at the CPD training. Though the cascade mode is deemed cost effective (Foulds, 2002; Hayes 2000; Ono & Ferreira, 2010), this study has learnt that its use compromises the quality of training subjected to the lower levels of the cascade.

The use of the transitional model in CPD delivery in this study was noted in CPDs that were conducted at cluster level where teachers from three or four schools came together for professional growth. These cluster based workshops were mainly initiated by Non-Governmental Organizations but were facilitated by PEAs, head teachers and mentor teachers. It was learnt that one of the main reasons for conducting the cluster based CPDs was to support teachers in the implementation of the new curriculum. This was after observing that, despite teachers’ attendance at the orientations to the new curriculum, they still faced difficulties in implementing the curriculum. This is in line with Kennedy’s (2005) argument that, within transitional models, a CPD has the capacity to support either a transmissive agenda or a transformative agenda; in this case, a government agenda of orienting teachers on the new curriculum. In the cluster workshops, teachers shared experiences on the problems they were facing in the implementation of the new curriculum. They discussed the experiences and provided each other with alternatives on how to handle the challenges.

From the findings of the study on the cluster-based workshops that incorporated the transitional model, it appears their use can greatly improve teachers’ professionalism in terms of classroom practice. Teachers from the schools exposed to such training reported better classroom practice after attending such workshops. Nevertheless, they had other issues of concern such as the expertise of some mentor teachers and the frequency with which such workshops happen in the clusters, which were not to their satisfaction. As already highlighted, some teachers wondered how such mentor teachers were chosen to be facilitators, an indication that such learning opportunities
are valued by the teachers; but there is need for careful and thoughtful planning.

Lastly, the use of the transformative model was noted in an action research project that was initiated by the Centre for Educational Research and Training in the University of Malawi. The study learnt that the teachers that attended this particular CPD were transformed and their classroom practice improved and they became reflective practitioners (CERT, 2009). This was reflected in the better performance of learners during the project period. The teachers appeared to have derived much satisfaction from it and their classroom practice significantly improved following improvements in learner performance (CERT, 2009). This confirms Guskey’s (2002) theory on teacher change that significant change in teachers’ attitudes and beliefs occurs primarily after they gain evidence of improvements in student-learning. This means that it is not the professional development per se that changes teachers’ attitudes and beliefs but the experience of successful implementation of the programme. Guskey (2000) argues that the idea of action research is that educational problems and issues are best identified and investigated at the classroom and school level, that is, where the action is. Guskey (2000) further asserts that by integrating research into the classroom settings, and engaging those who work at this level in research activities, findings can be applied immediately and problems solved more quickly. This is exactly what happened with this action research project.

From this Action Research project, there are some positive lessons that CPD programme organizers can learn. The major lesson is the need to embed a monitoring and support mechanism in the design of the CPD programmes over a longer period of time. Again facilitators for the Action Research training were experts in Action Research and were Research Fellows and Lecturers from the University of Malawi. Further, the teachers chose their own classroom problems to solve, nobody dictated to them which problem to solve; and as such, they were committed and ensured that the projects they initiated, worked. This was in line with Speck’s (1996) theory of adult learning, that adults want to be the originators of their own learning and will
resist learning activities they believe are an attack on their competence. Thus, professional development, needs to give participants some control over the what, who, how, why, when, and where of their learning (Speck, 1996).

From the discussion above on the transmissive, transitional and transformational models of CPD implementation as used in Zomba Rural Educational District, one notices an increasing capacity for teacher autonomy and independence as one moves from transmissive, through transitional to transformative models. This makes the transformative models more powerful than the other models in changing teachers and improving their professionalism. Burbank & Kauchak (2003) note the same when they write that transformative and transitional models such as action research and communities of practice respectively have much potential in empowering and liberating teachers as well as developing them into reflective practitioners.

Unfortunately the study has noted that the delivery of CPD programmes in the district is skewed more toward the use of the transmissive model of CPD implementation, to the neglect of the transitional and transformative models. This meant an over-reliance on the use of the cascade mode of training of which studies worldwide have heavily criticized due to the dilution effect it has on the information as it passes down each level of the cascade (Gold, 1998; Khulisa, 2001 cited in Engelbrecht Ankiewicz, & de Swardt, 2007; Engelbrecht et al., 2007). The over-reliance on use of the cascade mode of training has left teachers full of knowledge gaps and uncertainty on how to translate the issues to classroom level. Coolahan (2002) claims that one of the desirable characteristics associated with the successful implementation of CPD programmes is that it incorporates both on and off-school site dimensions. Hence, the use of the transmissive model at off-school site based CPDs needs to be supplemented with use of the transitional and transformative models at school level.

7.4.3 That CPD programmes in Zomba Rural Education District lean more toward the planned-formal dimensions of Reid's quadrants of teacher learning where
the programmes are established by an external agent other than the teachers (McKinney et al., 2005). Planned-informal opportunities organized by the teachers themselves were found to be rare. For instance the study noted that the PEA is the main organizer of on-school site based CPDs followed by head teachers and NGOs. As noted in Kennedy’s framework, such dependency on external agents does not empower or transform the teachers much, unless otherwise supplemented by other models (Kennedy, 2005).

From all indications, it is an incontestable fact that the implementation of CPD programmes for primary school teachers in Zomba Rural Education district needs a facelift. The government, Ministry of Education, Non-Governmental Organizations, teachers and all stakeholders concerned with implementation of CPD programmes for teachers, need to liaise and plan a way forward on how to engage in professional development activities for teachers that will make a difference. At school level, the teaching and learning environment needs to be improved as it is compounding the problem of teachers finding it difficult to implement what they learn from CPD training. Large classes, inadequate teachers, lack of teaching and learning resources, limited infrastructure, lack of teacher accommodation, lack of support from colleagues; learner absenteeism and low teacher morale were some of the factors hindering the implementation of CPD programmes at school level. All these issues need to be addressed by both CPD programme organizers and the government if CPD programmes for primary school teachers are to result in improved classroom practice and consequent improvements in learner performance.

7.5 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, the researcher advances the following recommendations to the CPD programme organizers as well as policy-makers and stakeholders in education:
i. Since the methods used by the facilitators in CPD training appear to be interactive methods, the facilitators should continue to use those methods. However, during group work, caution should be exercised to come up with a manageable number of participants per group (at most 5 members per group) to ensure the participation of every member. Again, there should be much variety in terms of the methods used per given CPD training. This is because variety in methods facilitates more active learning as it reduces monotony that leads to boredom on the part of participants. Effort should also be made to use methods that are practical and can effectively be used in classroom situations. Since the effective use of methods also depends on the availability of material resources, facilitators should ensure that adequate and relevant materials for the training are available before the onset of the training. Where possible such materials should trickle down to the schools for use in classroom settings.

ii. TDCs are ideal places for conducting non-residential CPD programmes at zonal level. However, non-residential CPDs are not the best option for teachers because of the reasons highlighted in Chapter 5. Resources need to be sourced to allow for residential CPDs because with residential CPDs, teachers are assured of a conducive environment for intensive training and thorough coverage of more content. This would ensure better translation of what was learnt at the CPD training at classroom level. Where non-residential CPDs are unavoidable, CPD programme organizers should incorporate in their zonal based CPDs attributes that are deemed to make a residential CPD effective. Such factors according to the teachers, include good management, adequate facilities and resources and skilled and expert facilitators who can competently handle CPD training. Further, on-school site based CPDs should be encouraged to supplement the off-school site based CPDs as well as cultivate a culture of continuous professional learning. Teachers should be encouraged to make use of existing structures such as schools and clusters to form communities of practice, study groups and teacher networks as well as do peer reviews to enhance their professional growth and development.
iii. TDCs need to be funded for the PEAs to effectively carry out their responsibilities including conducting regular and frequent CPDs for the teachers in their zones. On-school site based CPDs also require financial resources for buying materials for the training as well as for lunch for the teachers. Further, the financial resources can be used to pay resource persons from other institutions or organizations, if engaged, to facilitate the training. Hence schools need an allocation in terms of financial resources for such purposes. This would ensure that schools regularly conduct on-school site based CPD training. Meanwhile teachers can be encouraged to take packed meals for their lunch on CPD days. TALULAR should also be encouraged where possible to alleviate the problem of lack of material resources.

However, in cases where the TDCs and schools are funded for CPD activities, auditing should be pivotal to ensure that the fund is being used for the intended purpose. This is because funds can easily be mismanaged or diverted for other purposes (Merson, 1989). Meanwhile, the zones need to be vigilant in sourcing money for their operations including meals for teachers when they are invited for CPD training. Definitely teachers cannot concentrate on the training on empty stomachs. Nevertheless, teachers need to be sensitized to the point that they should not expect to be paid for attending CPD activities as the training are for developing their own professionalism. However the meal allowance given to teachers in CPD training needs to be revised so that teachers can afford to buy a decent meal with it. This would raise their morale and enable them concentrate during the training.

iv. Adequate time should be allocated for CPD programmes for teachers. This would ensure thorough coverage of material as well as assimilation of content into the repertoires of teachers (Coburn, 2004; Tyack & Cuban, 1995). The time-spread over which the CPD activity is to take place should always tally with the amount of content the CPD organizers want to impart to the teachers. A reasonable time of not less than five working days as
suggested by the teachers in this study, is worth considering for off-school site based CPD training. Further, the CPD programme organizers should ensure that the CPD programmes take place during the holidays. This would not inconvenience the teachers or the learners as is the case with CPDs that take place when schools are in session.

v. The cascade mode of training, though cost effective, needs to be used with caution. The dilution of information at each level of the cascade leaves teachers unsure of how to implement what was learnt at the CPD training. Where the cascade mode of training is inevitable, especially in orientations to new curriculum, an effort should be made to allocate adequate time for the training at each level of the cascade to allow for assimilation of the new content and skills. Further, when the cascade mode is used, proper monitoring and support mechanisms should be in place to ensure that the problems that come with its use are rectified in good time. The process of choosing facilitators for CPD training where head teachers and mentor teachers are used should be transparent and objective and should be based on the competencies of the teachers. This would ensure that their authority is not questioned by the teachers.

vi. Proper monitoring and support mechanisms need to be put in place to ensure that teachers who have attended CPD training are followed up in their schools to be supported in the implementation of what they learn from CPD training. This is because learning, especially for adults, is a gradual process; hence, teachers need to be supported over a longer period of time for them to effectively implement what they learn from CPD training (Speck, 1996). For Non-Governmental Organizations, apart from merely depending on PEAs to monitor the implementation of the NGO’s CPD activities, it is also advisable that the organizers themselves allocate time to supplement the PEAs visits to schools. This would assist them to get first-hand information on how the teachers are implementing what they learnt from the CPD training and appreciate the challenges that teachers face in the implementation of the programmes. This can help to shape future CPD programmes. This also
applies to CPDs initiated by the Ministry of Education and any other stakeholders in education that do INSETs for teachers. They should seriously monitor implementation. Further, the CPD programme organizers should make a deliberate effort to consult teachers for input in CPD programme designs.

vii. The government should seriously commit itself to recruiting more teachers to alleviate the problem of the shortage of teachers in schools. The current programme of Distance and Open Learning (ODL) as well as the Integrated Program for Teacher Education (IPTE) programmes need to be intensified. Again, proper modalities in terms of deployment of teachers to urban and rural schools need to be found so that the trend of having excess teachers in urban schools while rural schools have teacher shortages is dealt with. Teacher shortages contribute to high and unmanageable teacher workloads that render CPD implementation difficult.

viii. The government and other stakeholders should consider supplying teaching and learning resources in schools in form of textbooks, teachers’ guides, exercise books, pens, chalk, scheme pads, charts, markers, glue and other necessary writing materials. These resources should be supplied on a regular basis and in adequate quantities as per the enrolment in the schools. Their unavailability in schools is derailing teachers’ efforts in implementing what was learnt at CPD training.

ix. A deliberate effort needs to be made by the government, donor communities, Non-Governmental Organizations and all stakeholders involved in basic education so as to ensure that each and every school has the basic infrastructure. This is a costly adventure but worth the effort as schools would be rendered ideal teaching and learning places. With such an environment, teachers would no longer give the excuse of finding it difficult to implement what they learn from CPD training due to the unconducive environment. Infrastructure-provisioning in schools should be approached holistically; not on a piecemeal basis as is currently the case where a donor would build a
school block but make no effort to build teachers’ houses or the head teacher’s office at the school. Piecemeal assistance solves one problem but the impact is not felt because of the other unsolved problems. School Management Committees and Parent-Teacher Associations including local chiefs need to be lobbied so that they do their part in mobilizing communities to carry out development projects at the schools.

x. Teachers need to be motivated to seriously commit themselves to the implementation of what they learn from CPD training. The government should seriously look into issues of low salaries for teachers and think of alternative means of supplementing the salaries. One such way is ensuring regular administration of a hardship allowance for teachers teaching in rural schools. This would ensure that teachers are not always in debt through getting loans from dubious loan sharks. This would liberate them and with a liberated mind, they can easily focus on the implementation of what they learn from CPD training. Also the Teaching Service Commission (a body responsible for teacher promotions) needs to re-visit its promotion procedures as the current system is frustrating and de-motivating teachers. Teacher Performance Appraisals and conduct from school heads and heads of sections should form part of the criteria for promotions. Teachers should be given certificates of value after attending CPD training and these should be considered in the promotions. Furthermore, the government and stakeholders in education should make an effort to construct teacher houses in schools especially rural schools where decent accommodation for teachers to rent is usually not available. The recommendations set in the Guidelines for Infrastructure Development that set four teachers’ houses as a minimum requirement for Junior Schools and eight teachers’ houses as a minimum requirement for Senior Schools (Ministry of Education, 2008) should be strictly adhered to. This would ensure that teachers are not travelling long distances to school thereby getting too exhausted for the effective implementation of what they learn from CPD training.
xi. CPD programme designers or organizers should adequately address the personal, social and occupational aspects of learning in their programmes for the programmes to be successful and achieve their intended purpose. The teacher’s input; follow-up after CPD training; motivation factors; issues of expertise; duration of the CPD programmes; and others as noted above, need to be considered in the design of the CPD programmes. In the same way, CPD programme designers or organizers should consider supplementing the use of the transmissive model of training with the transitional and transformative models. Following up teachers who have undergone training using the transmissive model would ensure that they are assisted and supported for a longer period of time through use of the transformative model at classroom level. Communities of practice, including teacher networking, study groups, action research and other local means of teachers supporting each other need to be encouraged.

7.6 THE STUDY’S CONTRIBUTION TO NEW KNOWLEDGE

This study assessed the implementation of CPD programmes for primary school teachers in Zomba Rural Education District. The researcher has identified weaknesses in the way the CPD Programmes are being implemented in the district. The weaknesses in implementation caused teachers not to appreciate the whole process of attending CPD training. The end result was that despite the teachers attending the CPD training, their classroom practice as well as learner performance had not improved much. After a thorough analysis of the findings of this study coupled with a review of literature on CPD implementation, the researcher proposes an alternative model for CPD implementation for teachers in Zomba Rural Education District as displayed in Table 7.6.1
Table 7.6.1: Alternative model of CPD implementation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect of CPD implementation (identified from literature)</th>
<th>Aspects of CPD implementation (as used in Zomba Rural Education District)</th>
<th>Aspects of alternative model of CPD implementation (as suggested by the researcher)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Duration for conducting CPDs</td>
<td>- Just a few hours for on-school site based CPDs conducted during school days.</td>
<td>- A day possibly a weekend for on-school site based CPDs.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- A maximum of 3 days for off-school site based CPDs conducted during school days sometimes during weekends including Sundays.</td>
<td>- A minimum of 5 days for off-school site based CPDs conducted during the school holidays.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPD venues</td>
<td>- Primary schools for on-school site based CPDs including cluster level CPDs.</td>
<td>- Primary schools for on-school site based CPDs including cluster level CPDs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- TDCs for zonal based off-school site CPDs.</td>
<td>- TDCs for zonal based off-school site CPDs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Other education institutions or hotels for district or national level based off-school site CPDs.</td>
<td>- Other education institutions or hotels for district or national level based off-school site CPDs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequency for conducting CPDs</td>
<td>- Rarely conducted for on-school site based CPDs. An average of once a year could be close to what most of the teachers said about attending on-school site based CPDs.</td>
<td>- A minimum of 3 CPDs per term$^5$ could be ideal for on-school site based CPDs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Less than 3 CPDs attended by the majority of the teachers since they joined the profession.</td>
<td>- A minimum of 3 CPDs per year for off-school site based CPDs. This is as per the requirement by policy documents (PIF, 2001).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPD organizers / facilitators</td>
<td>- PEAs, head teachers, NGOs and teachers in that order for on-school site</td>
<td>- Head teachers, teachers, PEAs and NGOs in that order for on-school site</td>
</tr>
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</table>

$^5$ A school term in Malawi has a duration of about 3 months
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect of CPD implementation (identified from literature)</th>
<th>Aspects of CPD implementation (as used in Zomba Rural Education District)</th>
<th>Aspects of alternative model of CPD implementation (as suggested by the researcher)</th>
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<td>based CPDs.</td>
<td>based CPDs.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- PEA, NGOs, head teachers and teachers in that order for off-school site based CPDs.</td>
<td>- PEA, NGOs and teachers in that order for off-school site based CPDs.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- the government including the NGOs should involve experts such as university lecturers, Research Fellows, curriculum specialists or college tutors as facilitators for some government or NGO initiated CPDs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus of CPDs</td>
<td>- Determined by the CPD organizers.</td>
<td>- Determined by the teachers themselves upon a needs analysis or consultation processes conducted by the CPD organizers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methods used by facilitators</td>
<td>- Group work, brainstorming, question and answer, demonstration, case studies (read and present), individual work, singing, role playing, lecturing, explanations, discussions, future’s wheel, pair work, observations, games and dances among other methods.</td>
<td>- Should continue with the same methods of group work, brainstorming, question and answer, demonstration, case studies (read and present), individual work, singing, role playing, lecturing, explanations, discussions, future’s wheel, pair work, observations, games and dances and others. However CPD facilitators should vary them in any one CPD training and make them more practical with actual classroom settings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding for CPDs</td>
<td>- No funding for on-school site based CPDs initiated by PEA, head teachers or teachers.</td>
<td>- There should be an allocation of funds from the district education office to support on-school based CPD activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- No funding from</td>
<td>- Government should fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aspect of CPD implementation (identified from literature)</td>
<td>Aspects of CPD implementation (as used in Zomba Rural Education District)</td>
<td>Aspects of alternative model of CPD implementation (as suggested by the researcher)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Government for PEA initiated CPDs at zone level for off-school site based CPDs.</td>
<td>TDCs so as to supplement the income the zones generate through small scale businesses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- NGOs fully fund their CPDs whether its on-school site or off-school site based CPDs.</td>
<td>- NGOs should continue to fund their CPDs and consider raising the allowances to motivate the teachers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- CPDs initiated by the government e.g. the orientations to new curriculum are funded by the government.</td>
<td>- Government should continue to fund its CPDs and consider raising the allowances to motivate the teachers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitoring and support mechanisms</td>
<td>- Inadequate monitoring of CPD implementation in schools. Lack of support for teachers in the implementation of what was learnt at CPD training. Everything is left to the PEAs who also have busy schedules.</td>
<td>- PEAs should continue to monitor CPD implementation in schools but NGOs and the ministry of education officials including curriculum specialists from MIE should also take time to monitor and support the teachers in schools. This would help identify problems and sort them out much faster than just relying on PEAs. Every CPD programme for teachers should have a monitoring and support component.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultation processes</td>
<td>- Consultation for input in CPD programme design for teachers is rarely done. Only 15% in this study reported being consulted for input.</td>
<td>- Teachers need to be consulted for anything that concerns them. CPD programme organizers need to consult teachers to get their input for the CPD programme designs. This is the surest way of ensuring that the teachers own the programmes and sustain the programme’s activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Models of CPD</td>
<td>- Personal, social and CPD programme organizers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aspect of CPD implementation (identified from literature)</td>
<td>Aspects of CPD implementation (as used in Zomba Rural Education District)</td>
<td>Aspects of alternative model of CPD implementation (as suggested by the researcher)</td>
</tr>
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<td>----------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>implementation</td>
<td>occupational aspects of professional learning not holistically considered.</td>
<td>should look at CPD programme design holistically. Thereby considering the personal, social and occupational aspects of teachers in the CPD programme designs. Further the transmissive model of training that heavily uses the cascade mode in training the teachers should not be used exclusively. It should be supplemented by the transitional and transformational models in the form of communities of practice, teacher networking, study groups, peer reviews and action research.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Frequent use of the transmissive model of training to the neglect of the transitional and transformative models which are more powerful in empowering and liberating teachers.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Emphasis is on the planned-formal learning opportunities and very little on the planned-informal opportunities.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Incidental learning opportunities were not observed.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

While the researcher in this study appreciates the fact that the aspects of CPD implementation as suggested by the research and discussed in Table 6.3.1 can render CPD implementation effective, it has to be borne in mind that there are other factors that this study has unveiled that need to be addressed. Such factors are to do with the teaching and learning environment in schools so that it is conducive to the teaching and learning process. The study noted problems of large classes, inadequate teachers, inadequate teaching and learning resources, limited infrastructure and poor conditions of service for teachers among other problems. These problems need to be addressed. Without this, the translation of what teachers learn at CPD training into classroom practice will continue to be problematic.
7.7 AREAS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

From the findings of this study, some areas have emerged as requiring further study. The researcher, therefore, proposes the following as areas for future study in the area of CPD implementation for teachers:

i. This study targeted primary school teachers in Zomba Rural Education District only. Hence, the results are conclusively generalizable to CPD implementation for teachers in Zomba Rural Education District. There is a need for a national study that will target teachers in all the education districts in the country. Such a study would give a convincing holistic picture of how CPD programmes for primary school teachers are conducted in the country. Such a holistic picture can easily influence policy in the area of CPD implementation.

ii. Based on the findings of this study, the researcher has suggested an alternative model to CPD implementation for rural primary school teachers. An action research study that incorporates all the aspects of the model needs to be tried out with teachers to make judgments about the feasibility of the new model. Initially the study can be on a pilot basis and be scaled up later.

iii. Another study using the same methodology as was used in this study needs to be conducted targeting secondary school teachers in Malawi. Such a study would help complete the picture for CPD implementation for teachers in Malawi.
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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: CONSENT FORM

Dear teacher,

I am Elizabeth Meke, a Research Fellow at the Centre for Education Research and Training (CERT), Chancellor College. I am currently studying for a Doctor of Philosophy Degree (PhD) in Education at the University of Fort Hare in South Africa. My research study for the degree is an inquiry to understand how Continuing Professional Development (CPD) programmes (also known as In-service Training or INSETs) for primary school teachers are being implemented in Zomba Rural Education District in Malawi. The results of the study will be an eye opener to the Ministry of Education in Malawi and its partners as regards how best to implement In-service education programmes for primary school teachers that can result into teacher change and consequent improvements in learner performance. In so doing, the study will help the government and other organizations working in teacher education to improve delivery of In-service education for primary school teachers in Malawi. I request for your participation in this important study by responding to the attached questionnaire.

Right to confidentiality and Privacy

To ensure confidentiality and other ethical issues, your name is not attached to the questionnaire. The information you give will be completely confidential and private. Consent forms with signatures will be placed in a separate, locked file from the questionnaires. No names or reference to specific schools in the district will be used in any reports or discussions about the results. The information you share through this questionnaire will not be used against any person or any specific CPD programmes. Further, the information provided will be used for academic purposes only. In this regard the results of the research may be published, and presented in conferences and meetings.

Possible Benefits and Compensation

The research study does not provide for direct individual benefits. However, satisfaction can be derived from the fact that by participating in the study, the participants have contributed to knowledge in the area that affects them as teachers. Such knowledge base widens understanding of issues that affect education in general and provision of In-service education in particular. This questionnaire will take about half an hour to complete. It is my hope that you will give me your open and honest opinions. If you have any questions or concerns, you can report them to Mrs Elizabeth Meke, Centre for Educational Research and Training, Chancellor College, P.O. Box 280, Zomba. Tel: 0 888 710 405; email: mekeelizabeth@yahoo.com
**Voluntary Participation declaration**

I have read and understood this consent form. I understand the purpose of the study and I do understand that there are no direct benefits to me and that should I feel that I am at risk I am free to withdraw. However my motivation to participate is facilitated by my will and zeal to help improve the quality of education offered to our learners in Malawi.

Please write your signature:

____________________  ____________________
Signature           Date

Thank you for taking the time to respond to this questionnaire.
APPENDIX 2: TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE

Section A: Demographic data (please circle appropriate answer)

1. What is your gender? (a) Male (b) Female

2. Who is the proprietor of your school? (a) Government /L.E.A (b) Religious agency

3. What is your age? ___________ years

4. How many years have you been a teacher? ___________ years

5. Are you a (a) Qualified teacher? (b) Volunteer teacher? (c) Other (specify)

6. If qualified, which teacher training programme did you undergo? (a) two year training programme (b) MASTEP training programme (c) MITTEP training programme (d) IPTE training programme (e) Other (specify)

7. What is your academic qualification? (a) MSCE (b) JCE (c) PSLCE (d) Diploma (e) Degree (f) Other (specify)

8. Which standard(s) do you teach? (Please circle only those standards which you teach)

Standard 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

Section B: Implementation of On-School site based CPD / INSETs / In-service training programmes

(Note: On-School site based CPD / INSETs / In-service training are those formal trainings that are conducted at school and can sometimes include teachers from other schools)
9. How many On-School site based In-service trainings have you attended after your pre-service training?
   (a) Less than 3 In-service trainings
   (b) Between 3 and 5 In-service trainings
   (c) Between 6 and 10 In-service trainings
   (d) Above 10 In-service trainings
   (e) Never attended any on school site based In-service training

10. Who organized the On-School site based In-service trainings that you attended? (Circle all that apply)
    (a) The Primary Education Advisor (PEA)
    (b) The Head teacher
    (c) The teachers
    (d) Non Governmental Organizations (please name them)
    (e) Other (specify)

11. What did the On-School site based In-service trainings that you attended focus on? (Circle all that apply)
    (a) Subject content
    (b) Methods of teaching
    (c) Orientation to new curriculum e.g. PCAR
    (d) Teaching and Learning Resources (TALULLAR)
    (e) Other (specify)

12. Please indicate your average levels of satisfaction to the On-School site based In-service trainings that you attended and give reasons for your rating

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Reason for the rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a Less than 25%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b Between 25%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c Between 51%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d Over 75%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Section C: Implementation of Off-School site based CPD / INSETs / In-service training programmes

(Note: Off-School site based CPD / INSETS / In-service trainings are those trainings that are conducted at Zonal or national levels in form of workshops, seminars etc)

13. How many Off-School site based In-service trainings have you attended after your pre-service training?

296
(a) Less than 3 In-service trainings  
(b) Between 3 and 5 In-service trainings  
(c) Between 6 and 10 In-service trainings  
(d) Above 10 In-service trainings  
(e) Never attended any Off-School site based In-service training  

14. Who organized the Off-School site based In-service trainings that you attended?  
   (a) The Primary Education Advisor (PEA)  
   (b) The Head teacher  
   (c) The teachers  
   (d) Non Governmental Organizations (please name them)  
   (e) Other (specify)  

15. What did the Off-School site based In-service trainings that you attended focus on? (Circle all that apply)  
   (a) Subject content  
   (b) Methods of teaching  
   (c) Orientation to new curriculum e.g. PCAR  
   (d) Other (specify)  

16. Please indicate your average levels of satisfaction to the Off-School site based In-service trainings that you attended and give reasons for your rating  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Reason for the rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a Less than 25%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b Between 25% and 50%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c Between 50% and 75%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d Between 75% and 100%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Section D: General questions on implementation of CPD / INSETs / In-Service Training  

17. What was your main reason or expectation for your participation in the In-service training programmes? (Please choose one)  
   (a) To increase knowledge of subject matter  
   (b) To be updated on current developments  
   (c) To share experiences with colleagues  
   (d) To increase professionalism  
   (e) Other (specify)
18. Please indicate the extent to which the In-service trainings you have attended have been useful to your classroom practice and overall learner performance
   (a) Not helpful
   (b) Slightly helpful
   (c) Helpful
   (d) Very helpful
   Please give reason for your choice
   _____________________________________________________________
   _____________________________________________________________
   _____________________________________________________________

19. (a) Were you consulted to give your inputs in the design of the off-school site based In-service training programmes you attended?
   (i) Yes
   (ii) No
   (b) If yes, (i) What were your inputs?
   _____________________________________________________________
   _____________________________________________________________
   _____________________________________________________________
   _____________________________________________________________
   _____________________________________________________________
   (ii) Were your inputs taken into consideration?
   (a) Yes
   (b) No

20. How well conversant with the material, were the facilitators or trainers of the In-service training programmes you have attended?
   (a) Not conversant
   (b) Slightly conversant
   (c) Conversant
   (d) Very conversant
   Please give reason for your choice
   _____________________________________________________________
   _____________________________________________________________
   _____________________________________________________________

21. On average, how much time was allocated to the In-service training programmes you have attended?
   (a) 1 day
   (b) 2 days
   (c) 3 days
   (d) 4 days
   (e) 5 days
   (f) 6 days
22. The following were the methods used by the facilitators to impart knowledge and skills to teachers during the In-service trainings (Circle all that apply)
   (a) Lecturing
   (b) Demonstrations
   (c) Question and answer
   (d) Group work
   (e) Other (specify)

23. How easy was it for you to implement what you learnt from the In-service training programmes in your classrooms?
   (a) Very difficult
   (b) Difficult
   (c) Easy
   (d) Very easy

   Please give reason for your choice
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________

24. Indicate whether the following statements are true or false as regards the In-service training programmes you attended

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>True</th>
<th>False</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A  All the In-service training programmes I have attended were successful</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B  The facilitators or trainers made follow up visits to the schools to see how teachers were implementing what they learned from the training</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C  The school environment including the administration assisted in making sure that teachers implemented what they learned from the training</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D  The facilitators or trainers started the training on time</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E  Teachers were given resources or materials to take to their schools to help them in the implementation of what was learned at the training</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F  The facilitators or trainers provided opportunities for teachers to give feedback on how the training was conducted</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
G  The allowance provided during the training was adequate

H  On-school site based In-service training is better than Off-school site based In-service training

25. Rank the following challenges that you might have faced in the implementation of what you learnt from the In-service training programmes in your classroom settings. Please use the following scale: 1 = biggest challenge; 2 = 2nd biggest challenge; 3 = 3rd biggest challenge; 4 = 4th biggest challenge; 5 = 5th biggest challenge; and 6 = 6th biggest challenge

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenge</th>
<th>Ranking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Difficult to translate what I got from the training into classroom setting</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The training was poorly conducted that it was difficult to implement in classroom situations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There were no resources to facilitate implementation of what I learnt into my classroom setting</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My class is large class therefore difficult to handle</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The school environment including administration was not supportive enough</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The facilitators did not make follow up visit to help us in the implementation of what we learnt from the training</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If you experienced other challenges, please list them below

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

26. Given a choice between the following In-service training programmes, which one would you attend? **(Please choose one)**
(a) The one focussing on subject content
(b) The one focussing on methods of teaching
(c) The one focussing on Teaching and Learning resources (TALULAR)
(d) The one focussing on classroom management
(e) The one focussing on learner assessment
(f) Other (specify)
27. Please indicate your preferred venue for conducting In-service training
(Please choose one)
(a) School
(b) Teacher Development Centre (TDC)
(c) Primary Teacher Training Colleges (TTC)
(d) Other (specify)

Please give reason for your choice
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

28. Please indicate your preferred mode for conducting In-service training
(Please choose one)
(a) Residential mode (where teachers are given accommodation)
(b) Non residential mode (where teachers operate from their homes)
(c) Distance mode (where teachers do not meet trainers face to face but use print and electronic media)
(d) Other (specify)

Please give reason for your choice
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

29. Please indicate your preferred duration for conducting In-service training?
(a) 2 days
(b) 1 week
(c) 2 weeks
(d) 3 weeks
(e) 1 month
(f) More than one month

Please give reason for your choice
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
30. Please indicate your preferred time of the year for conducting In-service training
   (a) During the short term holidays (ie during term one or term 2 holiday)
   (b) During the longer term holiday (ie during the term 3 holiday)
   (c) During school week days
   (d) During week ends
   (e) Other (specify)
   Please give reason for your choice
   ___________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________

31. Please indicate how the In-service training should be organized in the district
   (a) At school level
   (b) At cluster level
   (c) At zonal level
   (d) At district level
   (f) Other (specify)
   Please give reason for your choice
   ___________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________

32. Please indicate your preferred form of recognition for attending In-service training
   (a) No award
   (b) Certificate of attendance / participation
   (d) Promotion
   Please give reason for your choice
   ___________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________

33. Please indicate your preferred nature of In-service training
   (a) Voluntary
   (b) Compulsory
   Please give reason for your choice
   ___________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________
34. Please indicate the most prohibiting factor for your participation in an In-service training (Please choose one)
(a) No or late information about In-service training
(b) Biased recruitment process
(c) Long distance to training venue
(d) Large workload
(e) Improper arrangements
(f) Unsuitable time of the year
(g) Lack of interest for In-service training

35. Apart from giving teachers, reasonable allowances during In-service trainings, suggest other ways on how best to implement /deliver In-service training programmes that will benefit rural primary school teachers in Malawi

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The questionnaire is complete. Thank you for your time in providing this valuable information.
APPENDIX 3: FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE WITH TEACHERS

1. Tell me more about CPD programmes or INSETs you have attended in terms of
   (a) How many CPD programmes you have attended after your pre-service training
   (b) What the CPD programmes focussed on (eg subject content, teaching strategies, orientation to new curriculum etc)
   (c) The nature or type of CPD programmes attended (eg school based or off-school based)
   (d) Who organized the CPD programmes
   (e) Expertise / professional experiences of the facilitators
   (f) The extent to which teachers were consulted in the design of the CPD programmes

2. How easy was the training to access? Were there any practical difficulties to overcome? (e.g. time, funding, commitments etc.)

3. What was your main reason or expectation for your participation in the CPD programmes? Was your expectation met? Explain

4. How much time was allocated to the CPD programmes you have attended? Was it adequate? Any thoughts about it?

5. What methods were used by the CPD programme facilitators to impart the knowledge and skills to the teachers during the training?

6. Was the training useful in developing classroom practice? How?

7. How easy was it for you to implement what you learnt from the CPD programmes in your classrooms?

8. What challenges did you face in the implementation of what you learnt from the CPD programmes in your classroom settings?

9. What follow up and support services did you receive after the CPD training? How beneficial were they?

10. Any thoughts or suggestions on how best to implement /deliver CPD programmes for rural primary school teachers in Malawi? (probe on venue for In-service training, mode, preferred duration, preferred time of the year, organizational structure, form of recognition, nature of In-service training, prohibiting factors to attending In-service education)
APPENDIX 4: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR HEAD TEACHERS

1. Please explain to me more about CPD programmes you have attended in terms of:
   (a) How many CPD programmes you have attended since your appointment as head teacher
   (b) What the CPD programmes focused on ie content (eg leadership and management skills, teaching strategies, orientation to new curriculum etc)
   (d) Who organized the CPD programmes
   (e) The extent to which head teachers were consulted in the design of the CPD programmes

2. How easy was the training to access? Were there any practical difficulties to overcome? (e.g. time, funding, commitments etc.)

3. What was your main reason or expectation for your participation in the In-service training programmes? Was your expectation met? Please explain

4. How much time was allocated to the CPD programmes you have attended? Was it adequate? Any thoughts about it?

5. What methods were used by the CPD programme facilitators to impart the knowledge and skills to the head teachers during the training?

6. (a) what materials were given to you (i) during the training? (ii) after the training?
   (b) How useful were they?

7. Was the training useful in improving school management and administration? How?

8. Comment on how CPD programmes are implemented in terms of:
   (a) their weaknesses
   (b) inputs from head teachers on CPD programme design
   (c) logistical arrangements
   (d) resources provided
   (e) expertise of trainers

9. How do you as a head teacher nurture a school environment that fosters implementation of what teachers learn from CPD programmes?

10. What challenges and successes do teachers face in the implementation of what they learnt from the CPD programmes?

11. What Monitoring and support mechanisms does the (a) School provide to teachers who have attended CPD programme training? (b) CPD facilitators provide to the teachers who have attended CPD programme training?
(c) How beneficial are the monitoring and support mechanisms?

12. Please provide suggestions on how best to implement/deliver CPD programmes for rural primary school teachers in Malawi? (probe on venue for In-service training, mode, preferred duration, preferred time of the year, organizational structure, form of recognition, nature of In-service training, prohibiting factors to attending In-service education)
APPENDIX 5: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR CPD FACILITATORS
INCLUDING PRIMARY EDUCATION ADVISORS (PEAS)

1. Please explain to me more about CPD programmes you conduct in terms of
   (a) What the CPD programmes focuses on
   (b) The nature / type of CPD programmes
   (c) The organization of the CPD programmes
   (d) How often CPD programmes are conducted
   (e) Funding issues

2. How easy is it for the teachers to access your training? Are there any practical
difficulties the teachers have to overcome? (e.g. time, funding, commitments etc.)

3. What is your main reason or expectation for conducting the In-service training
programmes for the teachers? Is your expectation met? Please explain

4. How much time do you allocate to the CPD programmes you conduct? Is it
adequate? Do you have any thoughts about it?

5. What methods do you use to impart the knowledge and skills to the teachers
during the training?

6. (a) what materials were given to the teachers (i) during the training? (ii) after the training?
(b) How useful were they?

7. Is there any opportunity for participants to give feedback on the training? How
is it done?

8. How do you ensure that:
   (a) The CPD programmes are delivered as planned?
   (b) The teachers are implementing what they learn from the CPD programmes?

9. How does the training improve classroom practice?

10. What challenges do you face in the implementation of your CPD
programmes? How do you handle them?

11. What challenges do teachers face in the implementation of what they learn
from CPD programmes? How do you help them handle the challenges?

12. What monitoring and support mechanisms do you provide to the teachers who
have attended your CPD programmes after the training? How beneficial are
the monitoring and support mechanisms to (a) the teachers and (b) to you as
facilitators?
13. Comment on how CPD programmes are implemented in terms of:
   (a) their weaknesses
   (b) extent to which teachers are consulted in the design of the CPD programmes
   (c) logistical arrangements
   (d) resources provided
   (e) professional experiences of the CPD programme facilitators

14. Please give suggestions on how best to implement/deliver CPD programmes for rural primary school teachers in Malawi? (probe on venue for In-service training, mode, preferred duration, preferred time of the year, organizational structure, form of recognition, nature of In-service training, prohibiting factors to attending In-service education)
APPENDIX 6: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR DISTRICT EDUCATION MANAGER
AND COORDINATING PRIMARY EDUCATION ADVISOR

1. Please explain to me more about CPD programmes that are conducted in Zomba Rural Education district in terms of:
   (a) Who initiates the CPD programmes
   (b) What the CPD programmes focus on
   (b) The nature / type of CPD programmes
   (c) The organization of the CPD programmes
   (d) How often CPD programmes are conducted
   (e) How CPD facilitators are chosen
   (f) Funding issues

2. How do you ensure that:
   (a) The CPD programmes are delivered as planned?
   (b) The teachers are implementing what they learn from the CPD programmes?

3. What is your main reason or expectation for conducting the In-service training programmes for the teachers? Is your expectation met? Please explain

4. How does the CPD programme training improve classroom practice?

5. What challenges do the CPD programme facilitators including PEAs face in the implementation of the CPD programmes? How do you assist them handle the challenges?

6. What challenges do teachers face in the implementation of what they learn from CPD programmes? How do you help them handle the challenges?

7. Please explain to me more about monitoring and support mechanisms that are put in place in the district to ensure that teachers implement what they learn from CPD programmes.

8. Please comment on how CPD programmes are implemented in terms of:
   (a) Their weaknesses
   (b) Extent to which teachers are consulted in the design of the CPD programmes
   (c) Logistical arrangements
   (d) Resources provided
   (e) Professional experiences of the CPD programme facilitators

9. Can you give suggestions on how best to implement /deliver CPD programmes for rural primary school teachers in Malawi? (probe on venue for In-service training, mode, preferred duration, preferred time of the year, organizational structure, form of recognition, nature of In-service training, prohibiting factors to attending In-service education)
APPENDIX 7: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR DIRECTOR OF DEPARTMENT FOR TEACHER EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT

1. Please explain to me more about CPD programmes for primary school teachers in Malawi in terms of:
   (a) Who initiates the CPD programmes
   (b) The organization of the CPD programmes
   (c) Coordination of CPD programmes offered by different organizations
   (d) How CPD facilitators are chosen
   (e) Funding issues

2. What is your main reason or expectation for conducting the In-service training programmes for the teachers? Is your expectation met? Please explain.

3. How do you ensure that teachers are implementing what they learn from the CPD programmes?

4. How do you support teachers in the implementation of what they learn from the CPD programmes?

5. What challenges do teachers face in the implementation of the CPD programmes? How do you assist them handle the challenges?

6. What challenges do you face in monitoring and providing support to
   (a) CPD programme facilitators and
   (b) Teachers

7. Please comment on how CPD programmes are implemented in terms of:
   (a) their weaknesses
   (b) extent to which teachers are consulted in the design of the CPD programmes
   (c) logistical arrangements
   (d) resources provided
   (e) professional experiences of the CPD programme facilitators

8. Please give suggestions on how best to implement/deliver CPD programmes for rural primary school teachers in Malawi? (probe on venue for In-service training, mode, preferred duration, preferred time of the year, organizational structure, form of recognition, nature of In-service training, prohibiting factors to attending In-service education)
APPENDIX 8: CPD OBSERVATION GUIDE

The researcher will observe the following aspects:

- the methods used in the training
- involvement of participants in the training
- competency / expertise of trainers used
- relevance of materials used in the training and handed to the participants for use in their schools
- motivational factors for the participants
- logistical arrangements for the training such as time for starting the training, welfare of the participants
- Evaluation of the training
- Duration for the training
- etc
APPENDIX 9: DOCUMENT ANALYSIS GUIDE

CPD programme reports will be analyzed with reference to the following:

- the methods used in trainings
- materials used in the training and handed to the participants for use in their schools
- motivational factors for the participants
- logistical arrangements for the training such as time for starting the training, welfare of the participants
- Duration for the training
- Challenges met during the training
- Gaps between theory and practice
- Evaluation of the training
- Any other issues resulting from analysis of above aspects.
- Etc
## APPENDIX 10: LIST OF RESPONDENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data collection method</th>
<th>category of respondents</th>
<th>Number of respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Questionnaire</td>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>798</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviews</td>
<td>Head teachers</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PEAs</td>
<td>12</td>
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<td></td>
<td>CPD facilitators from organizations</td>
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<td></td>
<td>DEM</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CPEA</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Director of DTED</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PCAR coordinator at Malawi Institute of Education (MIE)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus group discussions</td>
<td>Teachers of 34 primary schools</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPD observations</td>
<td>PEAS and teachers</td>
<td>3 CPD observations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Dear Madam,

APPROVAL TO CONDUCT AN ACADEMIC RESEARCH IN ZOMBA RURAL EDUCATION DISTRICT

This is to inform you that the Principal Secretary for Ministry of Education Science and Technology has granted permission for Mrs Elizabeth Selemani Meke to conduct her research in Zomba Rural Education District as per her request.

Please do request her if she can share her final report of this research with this Ministry. For more information she may contact the undersigned.

May I wish her all the success and assured of my support in her studies.

John L. Khozi
For: Principal Secretary for Education Science and Technology