



Research Article

# The cost-benefits of empowering teachers on Public Service Acts of Misconduct Regulations of 2000 as Amended in 2001 to curb indiscipline in Zimbabwe

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## ABSTRACT

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It is so colourful to empower secondary teachers with public service acts of misconduct as a mitigating measure to curb indiscipline. Indiscipline is an academic scar that undermines the education system in Zimbabwe. Indiscipline is a product of bad leadership practices. The objective of this study was to determine the cost-benefits of empowering or capacitating secondary school teachers on Public Service acts of misconduct regulations to address the frequent occurrence of teacher indiscipline. Purposive sampling was used to select the participants and data was analysed using thematic content analysis. A case study was used as a research design in this study. The participants were made up of junior teachers, senior teachers, school deputy heads, school heads, human resources officers, school inspectors, and district school inspectors. Data was collected using two different methods which were in-depth face-to-face interviews and document analysis. The study found that there is a need for empowering teachers on the Public Service acts of misconduct regulations, is need for School Heads to conduct consistent school-based consultative workshops with teachers, a need for the continuous reskilling of teachers through staff development programs and teachers' ignorance of the PSC Regulations 2000 as amended Acts of Misconduct. The study recommended that there is a need to establish a harmonized Teaching Professions Council.

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## Introduction

The Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (MoPSE) is witnessing an unprecedented rise in the number of cases of abscondment and other miscellaneous acts of misconduct as of June 2007. This problem of indiscipline among teachers inclusive of secondary school teachers warrants the Legal and Disciplinary Services Division (LDSD) of MoPSE to shift its focus and target cases of abscondment in its attempt to assist provinces recruit qualified and unqualified teachers. Van Nuland and Khandelwal (2023) argue that various countries have developed professional codes of conduct in the education sector to ensure that teachers observe core ethical values refraining from inflicting corporal punishment on learners denying access and quality education to learners. The Public Service (Statutory Instrument 1 of 2000 as Amended in 2001, First Schedule (Section 2) Acts of Misconduct read as paragraph 1 to 24 code of conduct in Zimbabwe. This code is developed by The Public Service Commission an autonomous body under the Office of the President and Cabinet of the government of Zimbabwe. The Public Service Code of Conduct regulations require teachers to be responsible for learners under their care. The amount of indiscipline and misconduct cases among teachers was potentially a problem such that district schools'

inspectors and school heads were experiencing difficulties in managing secondary schools in the districts. The community in which they live, the profession, the employer, and the state. The Public Service Act (Chapter 20) indicates that enforcement of the code is entrusted to the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education with the support of the Public Service Commission. MoPSE has been taking various initiatives to enforce the code and ensure that teachers comply with it. In support of the above Public Service stance, MoPSE has taken initiatives that include the provision of seminars and workshops, guidance and counselling, reprimands and dismissal of perpetrators alleged for committing acts of indiscipline in the service, (MoPSE Secretary's Annual Report, 2019).

## Cost Benefits of Empowering Teachers on the Effects of Indiscipline

In this study, the researcher believed that one important way of dealing with the effects of indiscipline among teachers is by conducting capacity-building development training programs in a proactive manner rather than in a reactive way. The United Nations Development Programme (2023) defines capacity building as the ability to perform functions, solve problems, and achieve objectives namely at the individual, institutional, and

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societal levels. Okumbe (2021) complements the above definition by asserting that capacity building is the process by which individuals and organizations obtain, improve, and retain skills, knowledge, tools, equipment, and other resources needed to do their jobs competently. Capacity building and capacity development are often used interchangeably to conceptualize the above aspects.

From these two definitions, it is prudent to emphasize that making teachers know what is expected of them beforehand rather than after misbehaviours happen, is a crucial step in capacity building and in dealing with the effects of indiscipline. In the researcher's view, the school head must lead the fundamental process of enhancing the cost-benefits of capacity-building teachers on the effects of indiscipline. School headship not only makes or breaks the success of schools in various countries globally as organizations and the teams within the school as an organization. In light of this argument, Muli (2023) states that a good head means being a mix of many different things and interestingly having many conflicting attributes as well. As a point, the school head should be ambitious with the desire to excel in his/her chosen field of school headship. In the same vein, the best school heads do not work for themselves, but for the good of others in the school as an organization. Patterson (2022) equally complements the above views by pointing out that while school heads may be powerful, they need to put the needs of others before their interests. For the school head, capacity building teachers gives a good opportunity for teacher participation widely in school management. The school head should ensure that there is a functional capacity that acts as a link between the school head and the teachers.

In support of the above assertion, Okumbe (2023) emphasizes that it is of paramount importance that teachers be thoroughly inducted by the head on their roles and boundaries within which they should operate. Okumbe (2023) further posits that consistent capacity-building seminars for teachers should be an in-built program in the school so that the teachers' professional ethics and code of conduct are objectively observed. Acts of indiscipline such as assault, sexual abuse, administering corporal punishment, and denying learners the opportunity to learn committing a serious offense according to the United Nations Organisation (1989) declaration on human rights to access inclusive and equitable quality education.

Frequently, teachers find themselves in an awkward situation when they are recruited or appointed without any initial capacity-building training on the code of conduct, leadership roles, and administrative skills in school governance. The problem is compounded further if no proper induction or guidance is given to the teachers after the appointment into service. Due to dynamic changes in society, technology, and so on, capacity-building development training is now emphasized. Kyungu (2020) claims that for a teacher to understand the effects of indiscipline, school heads should facilitate capacity-building training through the provision of the code of conduct regulations booklets and delegation of responsibilities. Kyungu goes on to emphasize that once a teacher is appointed by the Public Service, the teachers have to undergo an initial capacity-building training program to acquaint themselves with their expected roles and limitations.

In support of the above views, Muli (2023) postulates that such capacity-building induction provides teachers with the knowledge and skills to interpret the code of conduct regulations. In addition, capacity-building training programmes should be conducted as the need arises for the benefit of the teachers. Thus, the school has an equivalence of the on-the-job capacity-building training for the teachers. This maximizes the

cost benefits of understanding the effects of indiscipline among secondary school teachers. Kyungu (2020) further states that through capacity-building training sessions, the following personal qualities should unfold, respect, good observable professional ethics and code of conduct regulations, a positive attitude towards duty, inspiration to lead, visionary, responsibility, honesty, loyalty, punctuality, courtesy and acceptability. These personal attributes are not necessarily inborn or inherent in the teachers. Most of them are acquired through administrative capacity-building training programmes. In essence, most of these attributes are acquired through capacity-building training sessions which are formally organized by the school head for the overall benefit of his or her teachers in the school.

The empowerment of teachers requires recognition, authority, responsibility, and commitment necessary to sustain improvement (Chapman, 2024). Given that, three basic philosophical foundations that support teacher capacity building as an effective management process include, change that should be teacher-centered and that decisions should be made as close to the teacher as possible. Change in the view of the research requires ownership that comes from the opportunity to the participant. In this case, definite change and the flexibility to adapt to individual circumstances, to acknowledge power, and effective decisions among teachers require good and timely information.

Given the above argument, Blumerg (2024) posits that where efficiency depends on the continued coordination and interaction of persons, a decision produced by the three groups, administrators, teachers, and learners is always superior to one produced by most capable individuals. In this scenario, school heads should be flexible and resourceful in meeting teachers' concerns, by providing a supportive teaching and learning environment that facilitates and promotes leadership roles. The teachers should actively engage in the education process and avert the effects of indiscipline.

According to Muli (2023), school heads should take into consideration teachers' opinions in establishing policies that directly affect programmes, activities, privileges, and other areas of teacher concern. In the context of the researcher, teachers feel accepted and loved if they are given a chance to participate in decision-making in the school concerning their welfare. In support of the above views, Sergiovanni (2022) claims that school heads who involve teachers in decision-making on matters concerning their welfare face fewer acts of indiscipline problems as compared to those who do not. In pursuit of the above assertion, Baker (2021) also reveals that the teachers' involvement in decision-making helps to develop their leadership skills and ability to plan. As such, the teachers can come up with ideas that promote the smooth running of the school. Sergiovanni (2022) further posits that involving teachers in decision-making through capacity-building training programmes creates a sense of ownership in the teachers. The teachers feel that the school is part of them and therefore do everything possible to boost and maintain the reputation of the school by adhering to the code of conduct as professionals. The morale of the teachers in all activities is boosted when they are involved in decision-making in the school. Sergiovanni (2022) goes on to suggest that involving teachers in such matters makes them feel responsible and accountable for their code of conduct. However, this review of related literature makes no effort to assess whether teachers globally are conversant with the effects of indiscipline that arise from breaching the code of conduct that governs them at work.

According to Chigeda (2022), it is also worth noting that it is not clear how teachers are expected to become aware of their government ministry regulations or code of conduct, whether during their preservice training or in-service training programs. In the context of the researcher's assertion, it is clear that one cannot expect people to behave in line with set norms when in fact the very people do not know such norms and when their attitudes towards such norms are unfavorable. Chigeda (2022) further posits that having knowledge and a favorable attitude is a prerequisite to adhering to norms at work.

The director general of school education in New South Wales in a memorandum to heads on professional responsibilities of teachers states that some teachers are unaware of their professional responsibilities (Boston, 2023). As such, Boston goes on to ensure that learners in the New South Wales public education system are provided with every opportunity for quality education in a safe environment. As part of this critical opportunity, all teachers must be aware of and comply with their professional responsibilities. Research literature on many countries of the world indicates that although conduct and discipline regulations are available, some teachers continue to behave contrary to what the regulations stipulate. Whenever this happens, this necessitates the need for cost-benefits of capacity building of teachers on the effects of indiscipline by the school head.

### Objective of Study

To determine the cost-benefits of empowering school teachers on Public Service acts of misconduct regulations to address the frequent occurrence of teacher indiscipline

### Methodology

#### Research Design

In Oghuvbu's (2021) assertion, indiscipline among secondary school teachers is the acts of behaviour that affect the effective execution of teaching, learning, learners' welfare, administration, and management of the school system. In addition, indiscipline is defined from another dimension by Nwakoby (2021) as an act of misconduct that may not only involve a physical act but can also be a non-verbal abusive act. The definition presupposes that indiscipline is an act of wrongdoing by teachers. Achebe (2014) defines indiscipline as a disregard to set standards of behaviours, rules, and regulations of a social system. The social system in Achebe's sense can be taken to mean schools as education organization development entities or enterprises. Furthermore, Achebe's assertion could be said that indiscipline is the negligence of school norms and cultures of a social system. In the same vein, Tuli and Bello (2021) posit that indiscipline is the breaking of the professional code of conduct, rules, and regulations of schools. The individuals who are school teachers and school heads in this context are willing and unwillingly violating laid down rules of the schools. In essence, this retards the smooth running of the schools such that the individual teachers are said to be exhibiting indiscipline acts. In analyzing the term indiscipline, connotes the violations, professional code of conduct, rules, and regulations by the teachers. The violations of the professional code of conduct, rules, and regulations are capable of obstructing the smooth and orderly functioning of the school as a social system (Adeyemo, 2022).

#### Participants and Setting

This study involves educational facilitators found in public secondary schools in Mashonaland West Province. The information was gathered until the researcher noted that the information was saturated. Since the study aimed to investigate the forms of acts of indiscipline and strategies for addressing

them among secondary school teachers, data were collected purposively from forty-nine participants in the same province's seven districts. The participants were made up of junior teachers, senior teachers, school deputy heads, school heads, human resources officers, school inspectors, and district school inspectors. The study collected the personal data of the participants through the use of in-depth face-to-face interviews.

### Data Collection

In this study, data was collected using two different methods which were in-depth face-to-face interviews and document analysis. Terre-Blanche, Durrhein and Painter (2023) relate that the key method of gathering data is qualitative research in the interview. The interviewer provides several approaches to gathering data through structured interviews, group interviews, and unstructured interviews. Interviews are interactional and vary from structured to free open-ended flowing informational exchange, face-to-face, focal group interviews, in-depth individual face-to-face interviews, telephone interviews, and online interviews (Creswell, 2022; Denzin and Lincoln, 2020). It was permitted for the expression and exploration of ideas by the participant on forms of indiscipline experienced. The in-depth face-to-face interviews were earmarked for further probing in unclear cases. The interviews were able to pervade and produce contemporary cultural experiences and knowledge of authentic personal, private selves. In-depth face-to-face interviews enabled modifying the line of inquiry; following up interesting responses and investigating underlying motives. The same interview guide was used for each participant category. This was aimed at attaining consistency in the collection of valid data in the study. They gave accounts of their individual managerial experiences built over the eight consecutive years from 2011 to 2018 understudies on the status of indiscipline among secondary school teachers in their respective education districts

### Data Analysis

In this study, data was analyzed through thematic content analysis. With the interview data, the analysis began by transcribing data according to the category of the participants and the research objective. During data analysis, themes emerged after transcribing, member-checking, segmenting, and coding from the thematic research objective. The data collected from document analysis on teacher misconduct charges and subsequent disciplinary authority determination was manually sorted, segmented, and coded. Member-checking was carried out in the process thus referring to the documents on teacher misconduct charges and subsequent disciplinary authority hearing determination for confirmation of the generated data. In analyzing the data qualitatively, the researchers were guided by the following steps suggested by Terre Blanche, Durrhein and Painter (2023). These were transcribing, member-checking, segmenting, coding, and arranging data into themes and sub-themes. For instance, the responses were coded as follows;

- Junior Teachers as JNRTR-1, JNRTR-2, JNRTR-3, JNRTR-4, JNRTR-5, JNRTR-6 AND JNRTR-7 as participants
- Senior Teachers as SNRTR-1, SNRTR-2, SNRTR-3, SNRTR-4, SNRTR-5, SNRTR-6 and SNRTR-7 as participants
- School Deputy Heads as SDH-1, SDH-2, SDH-3, SDH-4, SDH-5, SDH-6 and SDH-7 as participants
- School Heads as SH-1, SH-2 and SH-3, SH-4, SH-5, SH-6 and SH-7 as participants
- Human resources officers as HRO-1, HRO-2, HRO-3, HRO-4, HRO-5, HRO-6 AND HRO-7 as participants



- Schools Inspectors as SI-1, SI-2, SI-3, SI-4, SI-5, SI-6 and SI-7 as participants
- District Schools Inspectors as DSI-1, DSI-2, DSI-3, DSI-4, DSI-5, DSI-6 and DSI-7 as participants. 7 districts in Mashonaland West Province were purposively selected in this study.

### Ethical Considerations

The study followed research ethics and guidelines alluded to in Policy Circular Number 2 Official Secrecy Act which stipulates and even advises an individual such as the researcher to observe confidentiality on classified information. Ethical guidelines are important as they refer to those standards of conduct by researchers and for outlining the behavioural standards of conduct agreed upon by researchers, (Grimm and Wozniak, 2021). Among the standards set and observed before conducting the research, permission was sought from the MoPSE Permanent Secretary for Primary and Secondary Education, the PED-Mashonaland West Province, and District School Inspectors to access the seven districts' education offices in Mashonaland West Province. Consent is also sought from the participants. According to Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2022), informed consent refers to the procedures by which individuals choose whether to participate in an investigation or not and when informed of the facts that are likely to influence their decisions. The participants were assured of anonymity and confidentiality as the researchers were bound not to disclose anything by Policy Circular Number 2 Official Secrecy Act, and no real names of persons, secondary schools, or districts were used in this research. The study will use codes instead of the real names of the participants. For the seven administrative districts purposively selected in Mashonaland West Province, the following listed pseudo-names Pachipamwe, Runyararo, Pachedu, Rufaro, Maworesa, Chido, and Moyowokurera were used. The right to privacy, avoiding harm to participants, objectivity, integrity, and honesty in reporting procedures and results as viewed by Grimm and Wozniak (2021) was observed by the researchers.

### Results and Discussion

#### ***The Cost-Benefits of Empowering Teachers on the Public Service Acts of Misconduct Regulations 2000 as Amended in 2001***

##### ***The Need for Empowering Teachers on the Public Service Acts of Misconduct Regulations***

Most participants identified the empowering of teachers on Public Service acts of misconduct regulations through in-service training workshops as one of the forms of benefits for the teachers in Mashonaland West Province's seven education districts. Some of the participants' views on this form of teacher empowerment benefits are highlighted below:

SNRTR-4 of Moyowokurera District reported that *"Most of the teachers would benefit from capacity building workshops especially the junior teachers and seminar teachers who are involved in school administration"*. This was corroborated by HRO-6 of Pachedu District who reported that *"Capacitating of teachers through in-service training workshops on Public Service Acts of Misconduct Regulations of 2000 as Amended in 2001 the schools would equip the teachers with knowledge and skills of how the regulations apply to them, thus forewarned is being forearmed"*. SH-1 of Runyararo District corroborated this view by pointing out that *"Most of the teachers would disassociate themselves with any misconduct of any nature. Such in-service training workshops would reduce the number of cases of indiscipline among teachers thereby saving money on travel costs,*

*and time for disciplinary authority hearing programmes and proceedings to say the least"*. DSI-6 of Pachedu District also corroborated this view by saying that *"Teachers would be well informed on how to conduct themselves always in the school. The teachers especially the junior teachers and some senior teachers not involved in school administration leadership. More importantly, the teacher will know the ethics acceptable while on duty acquire knowledge of the Public Service Acts of Misconduct Regulations 2000 amended would help reduce the incidences of insubordination unauthorized absence from work, improper association with female/male learners, drug abuse, drunkenness failure to plan daily lessons, teach or mark learners' written work among others"*.

In the same vein, the study findings concur with study findings from the document analysis on the benefits of empowering secondary school teachers on the Public Service Acts of Misconduct Regulations 2000 as Amended in 2001 in Chido District. In addition, document analysis study findings indicate that teachers and school heads would adhere to the regulations in general, but interestingly this will not completely silence the teachers' demands for better working conditions of service in Mashonaland West Province's seven districts.

In support of the above propositions, Hamisi and Mfaume (2016) reveal that this can lead to the internalization of the norms, and values of the school and education systems thereby curbing violations of the code of conduct statutes. Hamisi and Mfaume further stress that there will be a reduction in the tendency to commit gets of indiscipline among teachers. The teachers would spend more time with learners affording them value for tuition time. This study, therefore finds it to be very crucial for any school head to capacitate the junior teachers and long-serving senior teachers with skills of understanding, knowledge interpreting, and use of the Public Service Acts of Misconduct Regulations 2000 as Amended in 2001.

In light of that, the understanding and knowledge of interpreting the Public Service Acts of Misconduct Regulations 2000 as Amended in 2001 would enhance good school corporate governance in terms of commitment, integrity, empathy, teamwork, transparency, and accountability core values (MoPSE, 2021). The need for consistent conducting of school-based consultative workshops with teachers as benefits of empowering teachers is discussed next.

##### ***The Need for School Heads to Conduct Consistent School-Based Consultative Workshops with Teachers***

On this sub-thematic research question, most participants identified the need for school heads to conduct consistent school-based consultative workshops with teachers as one of the benefits of empowering teachers on Public Service Acts of Misconduct Regulations 2000 as Amended in 2001. Some of the participants' views on this form of teacher empowerment benefit on the Public Service Acts of Misconduct Regulations 2000 as Amended in 2001 are highlighted below:

SNRTR-1 of Pachedu District pointed out that: *"Most teachers need their school heads to conduct consistent school-based consultative workshops with the teachers. Such workshops would offer the teachers free platforms to ask questions and get a clear understanding of misconduct regulations, policy circulars, and statutes of interactions between teachers and learners"*. DSH-5 of Maworesa District also corroborated this view by saying that *"The teachers across the spectrum benefit more as they would be enlightened and teachers some would be encouraged to do the right thing in school. In the same context, rules and regulations for the teachers act as guidelines and equally help assist the teachers in the school. The above contribution suffices to inform*

*you, sir, that the teachers would become knowledgeable in the use and application of the workplace". HRO-7 of Moyowokurera District corroborated this view by pointing out that "School heads would be expected to be conversant with the monitoring of teachers' conduct at their stations of work, instead of the school heads being exposed to wrongdoing unpleasant publications through anonymous letters and social media".*

The above findings of the study concur with the findings from the document analysis on the benefits of empowering secondary school teachers on the Public Service Acts of Misconduct Regulations 2000 as Amended in 2001. Pachipamwe District indicates a reduction in the frequent occurrence of teacher acts of misconduct when school-based consultative workshops with their teachers. The findings of the study on the benefits of empowering teachers on the Public Service Acts of Misconduct Regulations 2000 as Amended in 2001 further concur with Oziambo (2024) who posits that when this happens, teachers earn respect whilst, on the part of the school head, it also minimizes acts of misconduct charges to be preferred, if any on a teacher.

In agreement with the above assertion, Simuyaba and Chibwe (2022) also indicate that teachers when well-motivated would carry on their duties with more commitment. Teachers are more likely to take teaching as a profession. In summary, the findings from most participants in this study indicate that workshops and internship training for those in-service training would go a long way in equipping them with an understanding of the Public Service Acts of misunderstanding of the Public Service Acts of misconduct regulations. In such doing so, the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education as a public corporate body saves revenue. On further probing during the in-depth face-to-face interviews, it was noted that in-service training workshops would benefit the teachers to a great extent because most teachers become acquainted with the interpretation of the Public Service Acts of Misconduct Regulations 2000 as Amended in 2001.

In further support of the above assertions, Ng'oma and Simatwa (2022) emphasize that this strategic method if properly utilized creates mutual trust, support, and recognition to bring about a sense of professionalism among teachers themselves. In conclusion, one would safely point out that workshops help teachers to understand Public Service Acts of Misconduct Regulations 2000 as Amended in 2001 and more so effectively address teacher indiscipline in the school. The need for teacher learning and continuous professional development is focused on next.

#### ***The Need for the Continuous Reskilling of Teachers through Staff Development Programmes***

Most participants identified the need for continuous staff development programmes for the teachers as one of the forms of benefits of empowering or capacitating on the Public Service Acts of Misconduct Regulations 2000 as Amended in 2001 that would help reduce incidences of indiscipline in Mashonaland West Province. Some of the participants' views on this form of benefit are highlighted below:

JNRTR-4 of Pachedu District pointed out that "Most teachers especially the junior teachers need to be periodically in-service trained by the school head on the interpretation and use of the Public Service Acts of Misconduct Regulations of 2000 as Amended in 2001 that govern the teachers' code of conduct whilst doing their work in the schools". This was corroborated by SNRTR-6 of Runyararo District who said that "The school heads would need to ensure that teachers are knowledgeable on what entails discipline amongst the teachers in the schools. Sir, it

is the feeling of most junior and senior teachers that they can actively contribute to understanding which features of staff professional learning, professional growth and continuous professional development with a vision, motivation, enthusiasm, hands on understanding, practice reflection and the teachers as communities would actually make a difference in the reduction of incidences of indiscipline among teachers in the schools". DSH-3 of Chido District similarly corroborated this view by saying that "Most teachers should be in-service trained so that they retrain from violating the standing acts of misconduct regulations as stipulated in the Public Service regulations 2000 as amended from time to time". SI-7 of Rufaro District corroborated this view by disclosing that "The benefits that the teachers need to be continuously staff developed on the interpretation of the service acts of misconduct regulations in order to enhance professional discipline commitment and become role models in their respective schools of work". DSI-5 of Pachipamwe District corroborated this view further by precisely pointing out that "In return this can as well increase the morale of the teachers and the school heads when they are in-service trained in acts that benefits them professionally at the school level. In addition to that Sir, this would promote organizational ownership and collegiality among the teachers in the schools".

The findings of the study, however, agree with the findings of the study from the document analysis on the benefits of empowering teachers. It reveals that enhanced school corporate governance among teachers and school heads in Mashonaland West Province would prevail if teachers were continuously reskilled through staff development on the understanding and in interpretation of the public service acts of misconduct regulations 2000 as amended from time to time. This strategic method would foster a reduction in the frequent occurrence of cases of indiscipline among secondary school teachers in the province.

In support of the above findings of the study, Caena (2024) explains that teacher in-service training in acts of misconduct regulations enhances the job security of the teachers, as the teachers will be empowered to understand and interpret the code of conduct regulations that govern them in their respective schools. In complementing the above argument, Ndun'gu (2023) emphasizes that the teacher will be highly knowledgeable and understand the consequences of indiscipline. The teachers become aware of their professional code of conduct regulations acquired through the continuous staff development empowerment programmes benefits. In the same vein, the relevance of teacher effectiveness as related to powerful continuous staff development programmes experiences would play a very important role in the professional lifestyle of the teacher. Teacher efficacy according to Zambo and Zambo (2024) is the teachers' self-assessment of one's ability to support student learning peers and superiors in the school. In light of that teacher efficacy therefore provides learning opportunities that can provide mastery experiences through continuous staff development programs and empowerment benefits. In support of that, Caena (2024) points out that this raises the teacher's personal motivation and competence levels in understanding acts of indiscipline that govern teachers' code of conduct.

In light of the study findings recounted above, it was revealed by most participants that to promote discipline in the teachers and the teaching profession, teachers and school heads should be capacitated through continuous staff development programmes. The teachers should be empowered through continuous in-service training workshops, seminars, and fieldwork, to enhance understanding interpretation, and

implementation of discipline among secondary school teachers. Teacher indiscipline is a key problem that affects the teaching and learning delivery processes, the teaching profession, and the wider community (Hamisi and Bilinga, 2023) and therefore school heads should strategically address such problems when the need arises.

Research literature study findings by Birman et al, (2020) also reveal that if there is discipline and sanity at school, the community's attitude towards paying school fees/levies will be positive, improving school development programmes and pass rate. The school enrolment would also improve leading to the employment of more teachers as that would entail an increase in the teacher-learner ratio. As such, a more collaborative effort must be put in place by the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education, Public Service Commission, Responsible Authorities, and School Development Committees to empower teachers on acts of misconduct to ensure that national educational goals are realized in schools in Mashonaland West Province.

#### **Teachers' Ignorance of the PS Regulations 2000 as Amended in 2001 Acts of Misconduct**

Of particular interest in the study, was the teachers' ignorance of the Public Service Commission code of conduct regulations. The lack of ways of appropriately coordinating and promoting professional discipline among secondary school teachers was also disclosed. Most participants were open enough to stress that teachers fail to adhere to some of the regulations due to persistent frustration, stress, and depression largely on account of poor working conditions, unsustainable salaries, and the lack of incentives. The lack of some fringe benefits made the generality of the teachers engage in conducting private tutoring/extra lessons for payment to supplement their poor monthly earnings against the Permanent Secretary for the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education's Circular No. 12 of 2014, Reference No: A/181/1 dated 18 July 2014. The communication minute prohibits schools and teachers from offering the aforesaid activity. The same communication minute stipulates that no incentives should be paid to teachers. It was also the conclusion of the study as revealed by many of the participants that various factors mediate between the attitudes of the teachers towards the Public Service Regulations 2000 as Amended in 2001 acts of misconduct and the teachers' actual behaviours. In this study, the teachers and school heads advocated for several approaches to promote ethical professional behaviour in secondary schools. One of the strategic methods advocated for by the generality of the participants in this study included incorporating a course/module on professionalism in the teachers' education training curriculum in colleges/universities of education in Zimbabwe.

#### **Call for the Establishment of a Harmonizing Teaching Professions Council**

Most of the participants called for the establishment of a harmonizing Teaching Professions Council that would combine the government, MoPSE, Teachers Unions, and the Public Service Commission in this regard would work collaboratively in promoting the interest and welfare of the teachers and the wide community. The objective would be to help and monitor teacher behaviour, not from the employer's perspective but from a professional perspective point of view. This would in a way promote professional behaviour among secondary school teachers. In line with the above-concluding assertions the absence of a professional association for teachers which could deal with teachers' indiscipline from a professional perspective, leaves no options for addressing the misbehaviour by teachers.

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