

Teachers at Crossroads: Teacher Professional Development through the Performance Appraisal System at Primary School Level in the Bulawayo Metropolitan Province: An Assessment

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ABSTRACT Worldwide education systems have adopted performance appraisal systems as a crucial mechanism to induce desirable behaviors among teachers and as initiatives for accountability, quality assurance and professional development. A mixed methods design, located in the post-positivist paradigm was utilized to solicit information from a sample of 60 teachers, 18 school heads, three education officers and six Public Service Inspectorate Officers. The collection of data was completed through, interviews, questionnaires and focus group discussions. Data was analyzed by means of tables and themes, and these revealed that teachers were resistant to performance appraisal, as they viewed it as an imported system, which lacks universally set standards of assessment. The study found no evidence to support the existence of professional growth that was envisaged by the implementation of performance appraisal. The study therefore recommends teacher evaluation practices, that are rooted in professional development frameworks, be used to enhance quality education in primary schools.