English Teachers Preparedness in the Implementation of Performance Lag Address Programme (PLAP) at Secondary School Level in Zimbabwe

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Abstract: The purpose of a school is to produce students who are achievers. However, low pass rate, especially in English Language, is affecting Zimbabwe's education system and the Ministry of Education is trying to implement new strategies that are earmarked at improving it. One of the strategies is the Performance Lag Address Programme (PLAP) that was introduced in Zimbabwe in 2012. The study sought to assess secondary school English teachers' preparedness in the implementation of PLAP in Gweru urban, Zimbabwe using a descriptive survey design. The researcher drafted questionnaires for teachers, distributed them to a convenient sample of 34 English teachers in Gweru urban secondary schools and finally collected them. Data was analyzed by SPSS, specifically in the form of frequencies and descriptive statistics for research questions number 1 to 6. Inferential statistics, that is, the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient r was uses to test the null hypotheses. Findings showed that most of the English teachers in Gweru are mature, well experienced, well balanced in terms of gender distribution and are highly qualified. However, they could not fully execute PLAP because very few of them were prepared and trained as well as skilled to implement it in the classroom. Nothing much has been put in place for the programme implementation in terms of resources; teachers' workloads are too high, there are no relevant textbooks and the schools rarely meet PLAP financial needs. The respondents' attitude toward PLAP was generally negative although they agreed that low performing students benefit from the programme. The respondents never liked the way PLAP is implemented in their Zimbabwe in general and in their school in particular, thus it is rarely implemented in Gweru, mean 2.56. This is so because the bases for programme have not been properly laid. Teachers are not motivated to carry out PLAP for they do not get monetary incentives, neither are they exempted from other duties. They also doubted if programme implementation improves them professionally. The study concluded that the way PLAP is implemented in Zimbabwe needs an overhaul so that its goals can be realized.

Keywords: Zimbabwe, PLAP, Preparedness, Implementation, Performance

1. Introduction

Teacher duty execution is determined by teacher preparedness. Prepared teachers are keen to do their duties and are likely to achieve their goals and attain job satisfaction. When considering the implementation of Performance Lag Address Programme (PLAP) in English Language at Secondary School Level, teacher preparedness becomes key. PLAP has been described by Masomera and Ganga (2015) as a teaching strategy aimed at addressing gaps and challenges of learners in mastering concepts being taught by initially going back to their last point of success. PLAP is characterized by rigorous assessment and evaluation of students' performance, in terms of strengths, weaknesses and interests. The methodology in Zimbabwe is associated with a multi-level teaching approach (Muzawazi & Nkoma,

2011) whereby those learners with performance lag in Mathematics and English have to be planned for weekly (MoPSE, 2012).

1.1 PLAP Procedure

PLAP involves revisiting the syllabus and targeting concepts that have proven persistently difficult for pupils to catch up on (Mapiko & Chinyoka, 2014). The evaluation programme entails assessing the teaching process, teacher and pupil records, resource provisions, supervision, monitoring and evaluation programmes. A WRAT (Wide Range Achievement Test) marks the beginning of PLAP; it is given to the whole class and pupils are stratified into levels according to the test scores. Nkoma (2013) explained that this is the level at which pupils stopped grasping learning concepts and accelerate their understanding. The teacher then teaches them according to these categories meeting each pupil's academic needs, for example, a form 4 teacher schemes, plans and teaches form 1, 2, 3 and 4 within that same form 4 class.

The goal is to raise those at lower levels than the designated form to their expected level. If this fails to happen by the end of the year, academic records are passed to the next teacher for further assessment and assistance. As Ndlovu (2016) argued, PLAP programme identifies the level or level at which a pupil stopped grasping learning concepts then accelerates him/her to be at par with other pupils at his/her level.

When considering effectiveness of education programmes like PLAP, teacher preparedness therefore plays a significant role. What the National Science Board (1999), is still true today that public opinion overwhelmingly favors "ensuring a well-qualified teacher in every classroom" as the top education priority….The refrain, "You can't teach what you don't know," surely applies. This means that teachers who are well equipped with the necessary skills in their areas of operation are needed for they know what to do and how to do it. Studies in America by Darling-Hammond, Holtzman, Gatlin and Heilig, (n.d.) as well as by Gary, Charles, Kevin, Kevin, David, Kelly and Zulli (2011) confirm the above assertion. Their findings revealed that teachers' effectiveness appear strongly related to the preparation they have received for teaching.

1.2 The Zimbabwean Situation

Education is one of the major indicators of a country's development worldwide. Zimbabwe is on the world map due to her literacy rate which is the highest in Africa. After attaining her political independency in 1980, one of the crucial focuses on development was in the education sector. The country's post-independent Education for all Policy, is one of the greatest achievements of Zimbabwe's government as pointed out by Ndlovu (2013). Her Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture has always strived to improve the education quality which lags third behind Kenya and Gambia (Onila 2012). This has been tried through education acts and inquiries, for instance, the Education Act of 1987 and the1999 Nziramasanga Commission of Inquiry into Education and Training. Some of the findings have been implemented; yet, a lot is still desired as far as the quality of education is concerned.

Zimbabwe's education system comprises 2 pre-school years, that is, Early Childhood Development (ECD) A and ECD B then 7 years of primary education (USAP 2012). The secondary education is a level that is completed in six years: four years for Ordinary Level ("O" Level) and 2 years for Advanced

Level ("A" Level). Passing "O" Level is key to "A" Level entrance and a number of candidates cannot make it. Those who pass "O" Level, but cannot proceed to "A" Level, either look for employment or join the tertiary institutions like nursing and teacher training colleges (USAP 2012).

It should be noted that pass rate at both "O" and "A" Levels is generally low in the country but worse in English Language. NewsDay (2014) showed that 'O' English Language pass rate was at 30.46% in 2014 while it was 27% in 2015 (TECHZIM, 2016). Kanyongo (2005) blamed the reforms that took place in the country which did not focus on education outcome assessment. PLAP has been introduced by the responsible Ministry to only two subjects at "O" Level with the lowest pass rate, that is, English and Maths.

Although the causes of underachievement in schools are complex and difficult to determine as echoed by Nkoma (2014), the low pass rates of 2007 to 2008 academic years in schools in Zimbabwe was ascribed to teacher turn over. The period was characterized by massive movement of teachers from the country looking for better pastures for survival due to the economic crush in the country. Those who remained in the country were so disheartened that their services were poor; this therefore affected the learning and teaching processes (MoPSE), 2012). From that time, a number of schools were recording 0% pass rate up to 2012 (MoPSE Grade 7 Analysis 2011, 2012). The Ministry of Education Sport, Arts and Culture reacted by launching the Performance Lag Address Programme (PLAP) (Kakwere, 2013) in October 2012, first in Manicaland Province and then to spread to other regions of the country. The responsible minister highly supports the programme (Ndlovu, 2016).

It can be argued that pupils' learning difficulties emanate from an amalgamation of social, emotional, physiological and intellectual factors. However, research has it that all the other factors are considered to be recessive and dominated by lack of untaught lower level concepts, hence creating the achievement gaps in conjunction with the present level of operation (Mukoko & Mdlongwa, 2014). Research show that students' weaknesses crop up from concepts missed at lower levels and they continuously affect their performance (cited in Ndlovu 2016). PLAP is built on these assumptions for it is believed that such learning gaps could be remediated by implementing PLAP.

Chikwature and Oyedele (2016) in their study on factors affecting pass rate at Ordinary Level in Zimbabwe, recommended graduate teacher in-service courses on handling mixed classes through the Performance Lag Address Programme (PLAP). (PLAP) should be intensified and conditions of service and remuneration for teachers be improved for the nation to have a sustainable human capital development from the education sector. This study therefore focused on how prepared the English Language secondary school teachers are in PLAP implementation in Gweru, Zimbabwe.

1.3 Research Problem

Schools are expected to highly perform, however, at times they fail to reach expectations and students fail dismally. An example happened in Zimbabwe; a number of schools were recording 0% pass rate from 2008 up to 2012 (MoPSE Grade 7 Analysis 2011, 2012). When the situation is like that, strategies are suggested and tried, for instance, the Performance Lag in a bid to look for workable solutions. The Address Programme (PLAP) was employed in Zimbabwe in 2012 when research has shown that students' weaknesses have cropped up from concepts missed at lower levels and they continuously affect

their performance (cited in Ndlovu 2016). The programme was expected to work, however, its usefulness is not certain. Yet literature has it that teacher preparedness enhances high pupil academic performance in schools (Brinkman, 2014; Dube, 2015). The study therefore sought to assess teacher preparedness in the implementation of PLAP in Zimbabwe answering the following research questions:

1. How prepared are English teachers to implement PLAP in Gweru's secondary schools?
2. Are secondary school teachers trained to conduct PLAP in English Language teaching?
3. Do teachers have the necessary resources for PLAP implementation?
4. What are the teachers' attitudes towards PLAP?
5. To what extent is PLAP used for English Language remediation in Zimbabwe's secondary schools?
6. How motivated are teachers in PLAP implementation in Gweru, Zimbabwe?

1.4 Null Hypotheses

Two hypotheses have been tested in this study, that is:

1. There is no significant correlation between PLAP preparation and PLAP implementation

2. There is no significant correlation between teachers' specific PLAP skills and PLAP implementation

2. Literature Review

Literature review focused on the two main areas of the study, that is, teacher preparedness and PLAP. On teacher preparedness, Ingersoll, Merrill and May (2014) studied on the effects of teacher education and preparation on beginning teacher attrition in America. They examined a wide range of measures of teachers' subject-matter education and pedagogical preparation. Findings showed that although beginning teachers widely varied in the pre-service education and preparation they received, teachers with more training in teaching methods and pedagogy, especially practice teaching, observation of other classroom teaching and feedback on their own teaching, were far less likely to leave teaching after their first year on the job due to job satisfaction.

On a similar note, Brinkman (2014) argued that student achievement is a critical component of the success of a school mainly because students who are well prepared for rigorous postsecondary education are able to meet the demand for a skilled and educated workforce in challenging careers. He concluded that the impact of a teacher's preparation program on academic achievement of students is potentially valuable information since educational outcomes strongly affect economic growth. Brinkman (2014) researched on the impact of teacher preparation program on academic achievement of eighth grade students in a South Texas school district in the areas of Mathematics, reading, Science, and Social Studies. Results showed that students of alternatively prepared teachers outperformed students of traditionally prepared teachers in most of the areas. This current study addresses a similar issue, on the English teacher preparedness in PLAP implementation.

In Zimbabwe, researches have also been done on teacher preparedness; Dube (2015) explored teacher education initiatives in preparing trainee teachers for handling gifted learners as a way of ensuring education for all in Zimbabwean primary schools. She realized that the primary education system in Zimbabwe tends to ignore the needs of the gifted learners since teachers would not have been equipped

with knowledge and skills to handle gifted learners. The researcher concluded that there were no initiatives by teacher training colleges in preparing trainee teachers in handling gifted learners and recommended the need for a national policy to provide guidelines on gifted education.

When considering research on PLAP in Zimbabwe, the researcher realized that PLAP is a relatively new programme in Zimbabwe, hence related researches in this area are also limited. Those that are available are mainly associated with the primary school since this is the level at which the programme was first introduced.

Kurebwa and Mabhanda (2015) researched on the challenges to the implementation of PLAP in primary schools in Zimbabwe. The study found work over load, lack of resources, poor salaries, diagnosis of learner problems and implementation of continuous assessment as challenges that militated against implementation of PLAP. These factors contributed to lack of motivation and lack of commitment of teachers to effectively implement PLAP at classroom level.

They called for the government and stakeholders in education to seriously look into factors that are de-motivating teachers to implement government education programmes effectively; workshops to be held on continuous assessment and expose teachers to a variety of assessment techniques in order to close learner achievement gaps; finally, government should remunerate teachers adequately so that the teachers would be more professional and more attitudinal in doing their work with minimum resentment.

Another study was carried out by Nkoma (2014) who looked into teachers' perceptions and pedagogical approaches to PLAP in Zimbabwe. Findings showed that teachers' views on PLAP varied depending on the class they were teaching. Some felt challenged but having positive views; they found PLAP appropriate for special classes of slow learners. On the other hand, other teachers had negative views about the whole PLAP procedure.

Mukoko and Mdlongwa (2014) studied on the effectiveness of PLAP in Mathematics in Zimbabwe. Results indicated that the programme was generally effective in enhancing pupils' understanding of the basic mathematical concepts; the programme was mainly effective when dealing with the most challenged pupils. The study concluded that PLAP exercise, if managed properly, can effectively help in improving pupils' academic performance in Mathematics. The study recommended teachers to have a positive look at PLAP so that they effectively implement it while parents are expected to complement in, for instance, when dealing with those pupils who are truant. The school administration needs also to be actively involved, for example, on programme time allocation and on exempting the involved teachers from other duties.

Another study on PLAP was conducted by Masomera and Ganga (2015) in Gutu, Zimbabwe on the problems posed by the lack of effective assessment on the implementation of PLAP. Finding revealed that effective assessment was a challenge in the effective implementation of PLAP. The WRAT was criticized of not giving teachers adequate insight on the real problems facing learners. Teachers highlighted that they were not fully equipped and they lacked required technical know-how of using various assessment methods beside tests. The study recommended the education system to prioritize assessment as a major component of the teaching and learning process by providing skills and material support to teachers.

The studies reviewed above are related to the current study and have exposed the gap in literature that need to be filled, that is, a study that specifically looks at teacher preparedness in PLAP implementation. The above literature review also gave the researcher more insight on the study and also gave bases for the study's questionnaire construction.

2.1 Theoretical Framework

Apart from the study getting input from the literature review, two theories have been used, one to address teacher preparedness and the other to foster on PLAP. The Preparedness Theory was first introduced by Seligman (1971) and it explains why certain associations are learnt more readily than others. The theory states that organisms which learned to fear environmental threats faster had a survival and reproductive advantage. Ohman and Mineka (2001) argued that the innate predisposition to fear these threats became an adaptive human trait. Although originally the theory focused on animals, its concepts can be applied to education focusing on teachers where teacher preparedness becomes a cornerstone to teaching. When considering this study, it means that those teachers who are sensitive to the needs of the PLAP environment and do something about it (for instance, getting skills) become adaptive to the programme.

To address the PLAP concept, the researcher used the Fischer and Bullock (2006) Modified Cognitive Theory which addresses the relativity and universality of developmental sequences. They argued that one of the best-established facts in cognitive development is that performance does not strictly adhere to stages. To them, developmental stages vary widely with manipulations of virtually every environmental factor.

This developmental unevenness, also called horizontal decalage by Piaget, seems to be the rule for development in general. This means that since there is developmental unevenness, it becomes inevitable that developmental sequences also vary among children and across contexts. Fischer and Bullock (2006) hypothesis states that, developmental sequences are relative, affected by the nature of the child, the immediate situation and the culture. The Modified Cognitive Theory ideas tally very well with PLAP. PLAP can therefore suit as a programme that is meant to correct such cognitive developmental unevenness mentioned above.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This research used a descriptive survey design. The design provided statistical descriptions, relationships and explanations about numerical data that was collected through questionnaires from secondary English teachers. This research design was chosen because a large geographical area was to be covered while a number of responses were needed in order to capture the responses of a maximum possible number of respondents.

3.2 Population and Sampling Techniques

The study used Gweru urban schools in Zimbabwe as its population. All the secondary school English teachers and their heads of departments in this geographical area were the population of the study. The

sample of the study comprised 34 conveniently selected secondary English teachers from Gweru urban, Zimbabwe. A sample was conveniently selected due to the accessibility of their schools and their willingness to participate.

3.3 Research Instruments

The researcher designed a questionnaire on a 5 point rating Likert scale of Strongly Agree, SA=5, Agree, A=4, Uncertain, UC=3, Disagree, DA=4, Strongly Disagree, SD=1 for data gathering. The questionnaire was validated by experts in the Education Department at University of Eastern Africa, Baraton who made sure that the content validity of the questionnaires covered the important aspects of teacher preparedness in PLAP implementation in Zimbabwe.

3.4 Data Gathering Procedure

Using the letter of introduction from Baraton University, the researcher asked for permission from each chosen school to carry out the research. When permission was granted, the researcher saw the English Head of Department who introduced her to the English teachers. The researcher got informed consent from the respondents, distributed the questionnaires, waited for the respondents working on them and then collected the questionnaires. This procedure enabled the researcher to collect all the questionnaires.

3.5 Statistical Treatment of Data

The collected data was analyzed using SPSS, specifically frequencies for demographic data and descriptives for research question number 1 to 5. Inferential statistics, that is, the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient r was uses to test the null hypotheses. A coherent summary and analysis of findings was eventually done.

4. Findings and Discussion

4.1 Demographic Data for the Respondents

The Table 1 shows the age of the respondents. The ages vary from below 30 to above 51of age. The majority of the respondents fell between 36 and 50 years (64.7%) as shown on the table below. This means that the majority of the teachers were mature people (but not old) who could execute their duties well. They could embrace change, for instance, the introduction of PLAP as a way of remedial teaching.

Table 1: Age

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	30 and below	4	11.8	12.1	12.1
	31-35	4	11.8	12.1	24.2
	36-40	6	17.6	18.2	42.4
	41-45	7	20.6	21.2	63.6
	46-50	9	26.5	27.3	90.9
	51+	3	8.8	9.1	100.0
	Total	33	97.1	100.0	
Missing	System	1	2.9		
Total		34	100.0		

Table 2 shows respondents' distribution according to gender. The respondents were generally balanced according to gender; two respondents never filled in this part of the questionnaire, but for the 32 who filled in the gender section, 50% were females and 44.1% were males as Table 2 below indicates. Such a composition of teachers where each gender is adequately represented is conducive for teaching innovations.

Table 2: Gender

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Female	17	50.0	53.1	53.1
	Male	15	44.1	46.9	100.0
	Total	32	94.1	100.0	
Missing	System	2	5.9		
Total		34	100.0		

The Table 3 shows that the bulk of the respondents were married: 79%. Married teachers are usually responsible people who can also use their past experience when new innovations like PLAP are being introduced. Their responses were therefore valid to the study.

Table 3: Marital Status

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Married	27	79.4	81.8	81.8
	Single	6	17.6	18.2	100.0
	Total	33	97.1	100.0	
Missing	System	1	2.9		
Total		34	100.0		

Table 4 shows that the respondents were highly educated; 82% of them being degreed teacher. In general, new innovations can be relatively easy to highly educated people. Their responses to the questionnaire of the study were therefore valued.

Table 4: Qualifications

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Certificate in Education/Diploma in Education	5	14.7	15.2	15.2
	First Degree	22	64.7	66.7	81.8
	Masters Degree	6	17.6	18.2	100.0
	Total	33	97.1	100.0	
Missing	System	1	2.9		
Total		34	100.0		

Table 5 shows the posts held by the respondents at the time of the research. Most of the respondents, 76.5% were classroom practitioners who really knew what the students wanted. Their responses to the questionnaires of the study were therefore from an informed view point.

Table 5: Current Post Held

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Head of english department	1	2.9	3.7	3.7
	english teacher	26	76.5	96.3	100.0
	Total	27	79.4	100.0	
Missing	System	7	20.6		
Total		34	100.0		

The respondents were generally seasoned workers, the majority of them falling between 6 and more than 21 years of service as the table below shows. This adds to the validity of their contribution to the study.

Table 6: Length of Service

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	0-5	3	8.8	9.7	9.7
	6-10	6	17.6	19.4	29.0
	11-15	5	14.7	16.1	45.2
	16-20	9	26.5	29.0	74.2
	21+	8	23.5	25.8	100.0
	Total	31	91.2	100.0	
Missing	System	3	8.8		
Total		34	100.0		

Research question 1: How prepared are English teachers to implement PLAP in Gweru's secondary schools?

Table 7 shows teacher preparation for PLAP. Respondents showed that very few of them were trained to implement PLAP in the classroom, mean 2.03 and they are lowly prepared to implement PLAP in the English classroom, mean 2.74. High standard deviations of 1.267 and 1.333, respectively, show heterogeneous responses of the teachers. Respondents also strongly disagreed with the fact that all English teachers in their schools were trained to implement PLAP, mean 1.82 as shown on Table 7. The

respondents wonder if there is any time allocated for PLAP and whether the PLAP programme was communicated to the students, mean 1.55 and 2.12, respectively. However, the respondents concurred that their school heads were aware of PLAP activities, mean 1.45. These findings are similar to those by Dube (2015) who found inadequacies of teacher preparation programmes in Zimbabwe.

However, these findings contrast those by Ingersoll, Merrill and May (2014) in America who found teachers prepared for their duties at hand; in Zimbabwe, teachers are not prepared. The findings also contrast those by Brinkman (2014) who realized that students of alternatively prepared teachers outperformed students of traditionally prepared teachers in most of the areas.

This lack of a PLAP awareness and training on the part of the teacher is most likely to make the programme a flop. One can argue that PLAP has been implemented prematurely in Zimbabwe.

Table 7: General Preparation for PLAP

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
1. I was trained to implement PLAP in the classroom	34	1	5	2.03	1.267
2. I am prepared to implement PLAP in the English classroom	34	1	5	2.74	1.333
3. All the English teachers at my school have been trained to implement PLAP	34	1	4	1.82	1.114
4. Time has been allocated for PLAP	33	1	5	1.55	1.003
5. PLAP programme was communicated to students	33	1	5	2.12	1.244
6. My school head is aware of PLAP activities	34	2	5	4.15	.958
Valid N (listwise)	32				

Research question 2: Are secondary school teachers trained to conduct PLAP in English Language teaching?

Table 8 shows respondents' specific skills. Following the inadequacies of PLAP preparation on the part of the English teachers, the respondents showed that they were not skilled to implement PLAP in the English classroom. Very few of them were able to plan and scheme for PLAP and still few were oriented

to make the preliminary PLAP placement assessment, mean 2.67 and 2.18, respectively. Neither could the respondents say with confidents that they could follow PLAP procedure in the classroom nor could they know how to evaluate PLAP exercises, mean 2.41 and 2.39, respectively as shown by the table below.

These findings correspond those by Masomera and Ganga (2015) in Gutu, Zimbabwe whose study revealed that effective assessment was a challenge in the effective implementation of PLAP while that the placement test (WRAT) was criticized of not giving teachers adequate insight on the real problems facing learners. The same study showed that the teachers were not fully equipped and they lacked required technical know-how of using various assessment methods beside tests.

Table 8: Specific PLAP Skills

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
7. I am able to plan and scheme for PLAP	33	1	5	2.67	1.384
8. I was oriented to handle PLAP students	34	1	5	2.12	1.225
9. I was oriented to make WRAT/assessments tests	34	1	5	2.03	1.167
10. I am able to apply the WRAT/assessment techniques to my students	34	1	5	2.18	1.290
11. I can follow PLAP procedure in the classroom	34	1	5	2.41	1.305
12. I have PLAP evaluation know-how	33	1	5	2.39	1.116
Valid N (listwise)	32				

Research question number 3: Do teachers have the necessary resources for PLAP implementation?

Table 9 shows that nothing much has been put in place for PLAP implementation in terms of resources. Teachers' workloads are too high to allow them to plan and execute PLAP programme, mean 1.82 and 2.0, respectively. High standard deviations of 1.114 and 1.231, respectively show variations in responses. Neither PLAP text books nor the PLAP associated tests are supplied to the English teachers, mean 1.91 and 1.61, respectively. The schools rarely meet PLAP financial needs, mean 2.1. These findings tally those by Kurebwa and Mabhanda (2015) who found work overload and lack of resources as challenges to the implementation of PLAP in primary schools in Zimbabwe.

Table 9: Resources for PLAP

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
13. My work load allows me to plan for PLAP	34	1	5	1.82	1.114
14. My workload allows me to apply PLAP to my low performing students	34	1	5	2.00	1.231
15. I have books and materials to use for PLAP	34	1	5	1.91	1.111
16. WRAT tests are supplied to us	33	1	4	1.61	.827
17. I make my own WRAT tests	33	1	5	2.06	1.171
18. My school meets my financial needs for PLAP	30	1	5	2.10	1.296
Valid N (listwise)	28				

Research question number 4: What are the teachers' attitudes towards PLAP?

Table 10 shows the English teacher respondents' attitude towards PLAP. The attitude was generally negative; respondents never liked the way PLAP is implemented at their school as well as in Zimbabwe in general, mean 2.65 and 2.3.8, respectively. High standard deviation of 1.276 and 1.128, respectively shows heterogeneous responses. The respondents never liked the way PLAP was implemented in Zimbabwe in general and in their schools in particular, mean 2.64 and 2.38, respectively. However, the respondents agreed that low performing students benefit from PLAP, mean 4.06. PLAP utility was also realized by Mukoko and Mdlongwa (2014) in Zimbabwe who found that lagging behind students benefit from the programme.

These findings are very close to those by Nkoma (2014) in Zimbabwe who realized that teachers' views on PLAP varied: some felt challenged but having positive views for they found PLAP appropriate for special classes of slow learners while other had negative views about the whole PLAP procedure. This means that the way PLAP is implemented in Zimbabwe needs an overhaul so that its goals can be realized.

Table 10: Teacher Attitude to PLAP

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
19. PLAP is an appropriate program for low performing students	34	1	5	3.94	1.205
20. English teachers should employ PLAP for their low performing student	34	1	5	3.94	.983
21. Low performing students benefit from PLAP	33	1	5	4.06	1.059
22. I like the way PLAP is implemented in Zimbabwe	34	1	5	2.65	1.276
23. I like the way PLAP is implemented at my school	34	1	5	2.38	1.129
24. I like implementing PLAP to my students	34	1	5	3.06	1.434
Valid N (listwise)	33				

Research question number 5: To what extent is PLAP used for English Language remediation in Zimbabwe's secondary schools?

Table 11 shows that schools heads rarely encourages PLAP implementation and Heads of English Department rarely monitor its implementation, mean 3,35 and 2.44, respectively. Respondents doubted if the programme was really taking place at their schools for they themselves rarely practiced it, mean 2.56 and 2.29, respectively. High standard deviations of 1.440 and 1.268, respectively, show variations in responses. The responses were also not sure if their co-English teachers were practicing the programme in their classes, mean 2.3.This means that in generally, PLAP is rarely implemented in Gweru and those students who are meant to benefit from it are not benefitting at all. This is so because the bases for PLAP have not been properly laid. For such programmes to be effective, through ground work and piloting need to be done.

Table 11: PLAP Implementation

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
25. PLAP is taking place at my school	34	1	5	2.56	1.440
26. I use PLAP for my low performing students	34	1	5	2.29	1.268
27. My English co-teachers use PLAP in their classes	33	1	5	2.33	1.190
28. My school head encourages PLAP implementation	34	1	5	3.35	1.515
29. My English Head of Department monitors PLAP implementation	34	1	5	2.44	1.397
30. My school administrators supply materials for PLAP implementation	34	1	5	2.41	1.480
Valid N (listwise)	33				

Research question number 6: How motivated are teachers in PLAP implementation in Gweru, Zimbabwe?

Table 12 shows findings on teacher motivation. Respondents were not motivated to carry out PLAP programmes, for they did not get monetary incentives, mean 1.44. Neither were they exempted from other duties so that they have ample time for PLAP implementation, mean 1.55. Respondents doubted if PLAP implementation improves them professionally, mean 3.00. They doubted if got recognition by the school authorities for implementing the programme, mean 2.35. These finds concurs those by Kurebwa and Mabhanda (2015) who found poor salaries as contributing factors to lack of motivation and lack of commitment of teachers to effectively implement PLAP at classroom level in Zimbabwe.

Table 12: Teacher Motivation

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
31. I do not pay for PLAP workshops	34	1	5	2.56	1.440
32. I get monetary incentive for PLAP implementation	32	1	5	1.44	.948
33. I am exempted from other duties due to PLAP implementation	33	1	5	1.55	1.121
34. PLAP implementation is an achievement in my profession	34	1	5	2.65	1.555
35. I get recognition (eg from administration, parents etc) for PLAP implementation	34	1	5	2.35	1.454
36. I improve professionally by implementing PLAP	34	1	5	3.00	1.497
Valid N (listwise)	31				

Null Hypothesis 1: There is no significant correlation between PLAP preparation and PLAP implementation.

Correlation between PLAP preparation and PLAP implementation was computed as shown by Table 13. The results showed a moderate, direct correlation of .642 which means that when PLAP preparation increases, PLAP implementation improves. The null hypothesis of the study: There is no significant correlation between PLAP preparation and PLAP implementation was therefore rejected. The implication is that whenever new programmes are to be put in place, through preparation, involving all who matters, should be done.

Table 13: Correlation between PLAP

		General Preparation for PLAP	PLAP Implementation
General Preparation for PLAP	Pearson Correlation	1	.642**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	34	34
PLAP Implementation	Pearson Correlation	.642**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	34	34

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Null Hypothesis 2: There is no significant correlation between teachers' specific PLAP skills and implementation.

Another correlation between teachers' specific PLAP skills and PLAP implementation computation was carried out; a positive moderate correlation of .581 was found. This means that teachers specific PLAP skills directly affect PLAP implementation; when the skill improves, implementation is enhanced. This second null hypothesis of the study: There is no significant correlation between teachers' specific PLAP skills and PLAP implementation was therefore rejected. This means that those involved in programme implementation should be skill enough so that the programme implementation becomes possible and effective.

Table 14: Correlation between specific PLAP skills and PLAP Implementation

		Specific PLAP Skills	PLAP Implementation
Specific PLAP Skills	Pearson Correlation	1	.581**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	34	34
PLAP Implementation	Pearson Correlation	.581**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	34	34

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

5. Conclusions

The study concluded that, although English teachers in Gweru are mature, well experienced, well balanced in terms of gender and are highly qualified (which can be a strong base for the implementation of the programme) they could not tackle PLAP effectively. This is mainly due to teacher lack of implementation preparedness; English teachers in Gweru are not trained to implement PLAP in the classroom and most of them lack the necessary information for the implementation. This lack of a PLAP awareness and training on the part of the teacher is most likely to make the programme a flop for these are indicators that the programme has been implemented prematurely. Also, since nothing much has been put in place for programme implementation in terms of resources; respondents never liked the way PLAP is implemented in Zimbabwe and the respondents' attitude toward the programme was generally negative, PLAP implementation can be problematic. This means that the way PLAP is implemented in Zimbabwe needs an overhaul so that its goals are realized.

6. Recommendations

This study recommends that the ministry should see to it that proper planning should be done before such a programme is implemented. Also, a pilot study should always be carried out accordingly before any new programme is implemented so that corrections and revisions are made before the actual implementation nation-wide. This study also recommends that teachers, as classroom practitioners and PLAP implementers, should be heavily involved in PLAP planning so that they make meaningful contributions towards the success of the programme. This involvement can give teachers ownership of the programme, hence positive attitude to it. Above all, resources in their various forms should be made available for programme implementation to be successful.

7. Recommendations for Further Studies

More studies should be carried out in the area of teacher preparedness and programme implementation effectiveness. Also, factors influencing effective programme implementation should be studied.

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