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DECLARATION

I, **Mapipo Hellen**, do hereby make solemn declaration that this dissertation is a representation of my own work and that it has not been submitted previously for a degree at this or any other university. All the other people's work I have consulted have been acknowledged.

Signature:

Date:

DEDICATION

To my beloved Son, my dear mother, all my sisters and brothers. Thank you all for believing in me and your encouraging words. Mum, thank you for your prayers, it's your prayers that keep me going. Lulu, you have been there for me, understanding and patient, expect you to do better than me. I love you all.

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

This dissertation by **Mapipo Hellen** is approved as a partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Education in Special Education of the University of Zambia.

Signed: Date:
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ACRONYMS

CPD	Continuous Professional Development
DRCCs	District Resource Centre Coordinators
INSET	In-Service Training
ITE	Initial Teacher Education
SEN	Special Educational Needs
SMARC	Subject Meeting At the Resource Centre
SESO-SP:	Senior Education Standard Officer for Special education
UK	United Kingdom
UNESCO	United Nations Education Scientific and Cultural Organisation
WHO	World Health Organisation

ABSTRACT

The lifelong learning and career development known as continuous professional development (CPD) of teachers is emerging as a key priority area internationally. Continuous professional development is the process by which teachers reflect upon their competencies, maintain them up to date and develop them further. Therefore this study sought to investigate continuous professional development of regular teachers in special educational needs.

In order to have in depth understanding of the continuous professional development of regular teachers special educational needs, a case study design was used. Data were collected through questionnaires, interview guide and non-participant observation schedule. One hundred and five respondents participated in the study. Purposive and stratified random sampling procedures were used to collect data. Thematic analysis was used to analyse qualitative data and quantitative data were analysed using statistical package for social sciences (SPSS).

The findings show that regular teachers had a negative attitude towards inclusion of special education related topics in professional development meetings and workshops. In addition, District Resource Centre Coordinators and special education teachers did not do much to sensitise regular teachers on issues pertaining to special educational needs during continuous professional meetings and workshops. As a result, regular teachers on the Copperbelt did not understand learners with special educational needs despite attending professional development meetings and workshops.

The study therefore, recommends that: (1) All colleges of education and universities that train teachers should include special education in their curriculum. (2) District Resource Centre Coordinators should ensure that all serving teachers undergo special education orientation during professional development meetings and workshops so that they understand learners with special educational needs.