

**SECONDARY SCHOOL HEADS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF  
RESULTS-BASED MANAGEMENT: HIGHGLEN DISTRICT, HARARE**

BY

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### SECONDARY SCHOOL HEADS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF RESULTS-BASED MANAGEMENT: HIGHGLEN DISTRICT, HARARE.

I declare that the above thesis is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

I further declare that I submitted the thesis to originality checking software and that it falls within the accepted requirements for originality.

I further declare that I have not previously submitted this work, or part of it, for examination at UNISA for another qualification or at any other higher education institution.



29<sup>th</sup> January 2023

Signature:

Date

## **DEDICATION**

This piece of work is dedicated to the following people who made a significant impact on my life. My mother Evelyn Sarafina Dhakwa treasured education so dearly and continued to impress upon me that a qualification is a golden key to opportunities. Tanatswa Bessie Dhakwa my daughter could not attend school due to a severe disability. However, even without the chance to access formal learning you displayed a high level of knowledge that inspired me to endeavour to fill in the gap. To Dominica, this work epitomises your invaluable support and contributions to the critical interrogation of contemporary management issues that characterised our routine debates as family.

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## **ABSTRACT**

This study aimed to explore the perceptions of secondary school heads about the effectiveness of result based management (RBM) in schools. For over a decade since its inception as a public sector management approach, the RBM system continues to encounter uptake-related problems in schools. There is not much-documented evidence about RBM effectiveness from the perspective of secondary school heads as institutional gate keepers and curators of the system at grass roots level. That constituted the problem to be addressed by this study. Research questions that guided the study sought to establish the school heads' level of RBM awareness, its perceived applicability, perceived conditions for results-based effectiveness and strategies to improve its uptake and effectiveness. A qualitative research approach was adopted to investigate the perceptions of secondary school heads in the Highglen district, Harare. An intensive case study design involving 12 secondary school heads selected from 12 public secondary schools in Highglen was considered appropriate for this study. Qualitative research tools namely personal interviews and open-ended questionnaires were used to collect data. Analysis of the responses was done using the six-step model proposed by Creswell. Interpretation of data was done from the interpretivist world view. Empirical evidence from this study revealed that a majority of secondary school heads had a vague understanding of the meaning of the RBM system. It emerged that school heads were subjected to very limited exposure and training on RBM, hence, their limited appreciation thereof. School heads also perceived the RBM system as an extra burden because there were no benefits associated with it. At the school level, RBM was impeded by limited financial resources, lack of expertise and poor motivation. Result based evaluations and feedback lacked in schools. The appraisal form was perceived as too long and too wordy. Based on the literature review and findings, the study recommends the collaborative design of an improved result based management system. The study also recommends the use of both monetary and non-monetary incentives to improve the uptake of RBM.

## **KEY TERMS**

Secondary schools; Results based management; Integrated results-based management; School heads; Harare metropolitan province; Public schools; Results; Key Results Areas; Evaluation; Monitoring.

## **ABSTRAK**

Die doel van die studie was om die persepsies van sekondere skoolhoofde oor die effektiwiteit van result based management (RBM) in skole te eksploreer. Vir meer as 'n dekade vanaf die begin van die opname van die result based management (resultaat gebaseerde bestuursbenadering) ondervind skole steeds probleme met die implimentering daarvan. Daar is nie veel gedokumenteerde bewyse oor die resultaat gebaseerde bestuur se effektiwiteit uit die perspektief van sekondere skoolhoofde (it is also acceptable to use skool prinsipale) as die hekwagters en kurators op voetsoolvlak. Die faktore genoem is wat gelei tot die probleem wat deur die studie aangespreek word. Die navorsingsvrae wat hierdie studie lei beoog om die skoolhoofde se vlak van bewustheid oor resultaat gedrewe bestuur RBM te eksploreer asook die aangenome aanpasbaarheid oor verskeie toestande, die effektiwiteit en die strategiee om effektiwiteit te bevorder. 'n Kwalitatiewe navorsings benadering was gebruik om die persepsies van sekondere skoolhoofde in Highglen distrik in Harare te ondersoek. Intensiewe gevalle studie waarby skoolhoofde van 12 publieke skole in Highglen was gesien as toepaslik vir die studie. Die kwalitatiewe navorsingsmiddele wat gebruik was om die data in te samel in die studie was persoonlike onderhoude en oop vraag vraelyste. Die data was analiseer deur middel van die ses stap model soos voorgele deur Cresswell (2014:197). Die data was interpreteer deur die gebruik van die interpresitiese wereldbeskouing. Empiriese bewyse van die studie het onthul dat die meerderheid skool hoofde het 'n beperkte begrip van die resultaat gebaseerde bestuur sisteem. Dit het voorgekom asof die skoolhoofde nie voldoende opgelei of blootgestel is aan die bestuur stelsel nie, dus hul gebrek aan waardering daarvan. Skoolhoofde ervaar ook die resultaat baseerde stelsel as addisionele werk veral omdat daar geen voordeel of beloning daaraan gekoppel is nie. Op skool vlak word die stelsel beïnvloed deur beperkte finansiële bronne, min of geen kundigheid en lae vlakke van motivering. Daar was 'n tekort aan resultaat gebaseerde evaluasies en terugvoer in skole. Die waarderingsvorm was gesien as te lank en woordryk. Die studie maak die aanbeveling van 'n samwerkende ontwerp van 'n bevorderde resultaat gebaseerde bestuur stelsel gebaseer op die literatuurstudie en empiriese bevindinge. Die studie beveel ook aan dat beide geldelike en nie geldelike aansporings middels gebruik moet word om die opname van resultaat gebaseerde bestuur te bevorder.

## **SLEUTEL TERME**

Sekondêre skole; Resultate gebaseerde bestuur; Geïntegreerde resultaatgebaseerde bestuur; Skoolhoofde; Harare metropolitaanse provinsie; Openbare skole; Resultate; Sleutel Resultate Areas; Evaluering; Monitering.



## UMXHOLO

Injongo yolu phando yayikukuphonononga iimbono zeenqununu zezikolo eziziisekondari malunga nokusebenza ngempumelelo kolawulo olusekelwe kwiziphumo (RBM) ezikolweni. Kwiminyaka engaphezu kweshumi ukusukela oko yasungulwayo njengendlela yokulawula icandelo likarhulumente, inkqubo ye-RBM isaqhubeka nokuhlangabezana neengxaki ezinxulumene nokuthathwa kwazo ezikolweni. Akukho bungqina bungako bubhaliweyo obumalunga neziphumo zolawulo olunempumelelo ngokwembono yeenqununu zezikolo eziziisekondari njengabagcini bamasango neziko lemfundo nabagcini benkqubo kwinqanaba elisezantsi. Oko kube yingxaki ekufuneka isonjululwe kolu phononongo. Imibuzo yophando ekhokele uphando ifuna ukuseka inqanaba leenqununu lolwazi olusekelwe kwiziphumo solawulo, ukubonwa kwayo, iimeko ezibonwayo zeziphumo ezisekelwe kwiziphumo kunye nezicwangciso zokuphucula ukuthathwa kwayo kunye nokusebenza kwayo. Indlela yophando esemgangathweni yamkelwa ukuphanda iimbono zeenqununu zezikolo eziziisekondari kwisithili saseHighglen, eHarare. Uyilo lwesifundo esinzulu esibandakanya iinqununu ezivela kwizikolo eziziisekondari zikarhulumente ezili-12 eHighglen lwabonwa lufanelekile kolu phando. Izixhobo zophando ezisemgangathweni ezizezi, udliwano-ndlebe lomntu siqu kunye noluhlu lwemibuzo oluvulekileyo lwasetyenziswa ukuqokelela idatha. Uhlalutyo lweempendulo lwenziwa kusetyenziswa imodeli yamanyathelo amathandathu ecetywayo nguCreswell (2014: 197). Ukutolikwa kwedatha kwenziwa kwimboniselo yehlabathi yokutolika. Ubungqina obubambekayo kolu phando bubonise ukuba uninzi lweenqununu zezikolo eziziisekondari bezinokuqonda okungacacanga kwentsingiselo yenkqubo yolawulo esekelwe kwiziphumo. Kwaye kwavela ukuba iinqununu zifumene ulwazi oluncinane kakhulu noqeqesho kulawulo olusekelwe kwiziphumo yiloo nto zibangela ukuthakazelelwa kwazo oko. Iinqununu nazo zabona inkqubo yolawulo esekelwe kwiziphumo njengomthwalo ongaphezulu kuba bekungekho nzuzo enxulumene nayo. Kwinqanaba lesikolo, ulawulo olusekelwe kwiziphumo lwaluthintelwa yimithombo yemali enyiniweyo, ukunqongophala kobuchule kunye nenkuthazo ephantsi. Iimvavanyo ezisekelwe kwiziphumo kunye nengxelo yokunika ingxelo ibinqongophele ezikolweni. Ifom yovavanyo yabonwa njengende kakhulu kwaye inamagama kakhulu. Ngokusekwe kuphononongo loncwadi kunye neziphumo zobungqina, uphononongo lucebisa uyilo

Iwentsebenziswano lwenkqubo yolawulo esekelwe kwiziphumo eziphuculweyo. Uphononongo lukwacebisa ukusetyenziswa kwenkuthazo yemali nengeyiyo eyemali ukuphucula ukuthathwa kolawulo olusekelwe kwiziphumo

## **IMIGAQO ENGUNDOQO**

Izikolo zamabanga aphakathi; Ulawulo olusekelwe kwiziphumo; Ulawulo oludityanisiweyo olusekwe kwiziphumo; Iintloko zezikolo; Iphondo le-Harare; Izikolo zikarhulumente; Iziphumo; IiNdawo zeZiphumo eziPhambili; Uvavanyo; Ukubeka iliso.

## **ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

ASDC	Association of School Development Committees
COVID-19	Corona Virus Diseases 2019
DIPA	Departmental Integrated Performance Agreement
ERC	Ethics Review Committee
GoZ	Government of Zimbabwe
GOPP	Goal Oriented Project Planning
HoD	Head of Department
IRBM	Integrated Result Based Management
IRBP	Integrated Result Based Planning
KRA	Key Result Area
MBO	Management by Objectives
MIPA	Ministerial Integrated Performance Agreement
MoPSE	Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education
NASH	National Association of Secondary School Heads
NPM	New Public Management
OECD	Organisation for Economic Commission for Development
PED	Provincial Education Director
PESTEL	Political Economic Social Technological Environmental Legal
PPBS	Planning Programming and Budgeting Services
PS	Permanent Secretary
PSC	Public Service Commission

PSRC	Public Service Review Commission
RBB	Result Based Budgeting
RBM	Result Based Management
RBPPS	Result Based Personnel Planning Services
RBME	Result Based Monitoring and Evaluation
S1	Secondary School Group A /(1)
SIDA	Swedish International Development Agency
SPMWP	School Performance and Monitoring Work Plans
UN	United Nations
UNDG	United Nations Development Group
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drug and Crime
UNESCO	United Nations education Scientific Cultural Organization
UNISA	University of South Africa
ZESRBM	Zimbabwe Education Sector Result Based Management
ZIMASSET	Zimbabwe Agenda for Sustainable Social Transformation
ZIMPREST	Zimbabwe Program for Economic and Social Transformation

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# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **CONTEXT OF THE STUDY**

### **1.1 Introduction**

This study explores the perceptions of secondary school heads regarding the effectiveness of the Results-Based Management (RBM) system in the Highglen School District, Harare. Chapter one provides the context of the study. Background information followed by an outline of the problem statement, the purpose of the study, research objectives and questions, theoretical and conceptual frameworks together with the significance of the study. Ethical issues guiding the study were also discussed in this chapter. Keywords that were used in this study were defined. The delimitations of the study and the organisation of the study were given. Finally, the chapter closed with a summary of the main points.

### **1.2 Background information**

The need for a result-oriented management approach in Zimbabwean education institutions can never be overemphasised. Education has always been considered a critical lever in the Zimbabwean developmental trajectory. Such thinking is influenced by the notion that quality education is synonymous with outstanding results and represents the quality of human capital needed for national development. The preceding statement provides insights into the rationale for the introduction of the results-based management (RBM) system as the certified management approach in the Zimbabwean public education sector institutions. The Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (MoPSE) embraced the RBM system in 2010, five years after its launch in other ministries by the Office of the President and Cabinet's General Letter no. 6 of 2005, (Madhekeni, 2012:125; Zinyama et al., 2015:11). Before the unveiling of the new result-oriented performance management system, the Zimbabwean education sector used the education appraisal forms coded ED57 and ED94 to supervise personnel. The ED57 appraisal tool was done termly by supervisors and it focused on how educational personnel would have executed their duties during the term, while the ED94 assessed teacher professional attributes such as the capacity to plan, make the decision, organise, take initiative, punctuality, and

leadership potential for salary, professional advancement and re-grading purposes (Saurombe, 2014:171). An inherent weakness in the preceding management tools was their reactive nature in a sector expected to spearhead the development of a young nation endeavouring to overturn colonial imbalances. Thus, the education sector in Zimbabwe as agent for national transformation required an agile management system responsive to change in order to remain relevant to the national aspirations.

The use of ED57 and ED94 in public schools also focused on checking whether teaching and non-teaching staff followed the correct procedures in the planning and execution of their duties as stated in their job descriptions. Focus on activities and procedures in public sector created an array of challenges for the civil servants who become overwhelmed with forms to be filled and instructions to follow. Further to that, some of the rules, instructions and policies that governed processes in public entities were amended frequently to extent that they complicated the work of public sector employees (Kevran, 1989:19). Besides concentrating on processes, supervisors also checked on the inputs required to complete planned tasks and their quantities. There was no clarity to both the supervisors and supervisees how their work would fit into the ultimate goal and mission of the school, ministry, and national agenda. The elements of results and accountability as performance drivers at the individual and school levels were not clearly defined in the traditional inspection model. Thus, the teaching and non-teaching staff in public schools were more concerned with demonstrating compliance to the supervisors and had little sense of results ownership.

Further criticism of the traditional management system in the education sector has been pitched on its tendency to promote secretive evaluations and a one-way flow of information from the leadership to subordinates. The above-stated shortcomings of the management outfits used in the public education institutions defied the Zimbabwean government's thrust to transform the education sector and align its performance with the needs of a growing nation. Hence, a new and effective model of managing public schools was required to support the post-independence Zimbabwean education reform process.

The introduction of RBM as a managerial reform in the public education sector came amid other reforms meant to address the unintended results of self-rule. As a young democracy, the Zimbabweans believed that institutions of government and their processes are destined to be accountable to the citizens of the country for their performance. Consequently, the management of public schools across the country has been put under scrutiny and subjected to immense pressure for demonstration of good performance. Firstly, because of the perceived role of education as a critical element in development (Bratton, 1980:441). Secondly, due to the cumulative adverse reports on the public sector institutions, highlighting fraud, laziness, and corruption. Such reports negatively influenced the citizens' perceptions about the public education sector in Zimbabwe and suggest the need for an RBM system to turn it around (Mavhiki et al., 2013:135; UNESCO, 2017:11).

Additionally, the growth in public concerns over the nonperformance of the schools and other failing public amenities had the potential to degenerate into a political matter as stakeholders equated such nonperformance with the failure of the responsible authority to supervise. Thus, the RBM system in the education sector was meant to quell performance-related criticism against the government. To achieve the preceding purpose, public sector schools were asked to display their clients' charters, institutional visions, and missions as a way to demonstrate their answerability for service to key stakeholders (Chigudu, 2014:47). That process marked the beginning of a departure from an activity and process oriented management approach to a results focused management system. Clients' charters and institutional mission statements provided the public with insights of the nature of services and results to expect from schools which is the essence of the RBM system. The RBM process also focused on instilling a sense of ownership, accountability, teamwork and the virtues of efficient use of the limited resources for the achievement of institutional and sectorial results. In the education sector, the RBM system provided an opportunity for school teams to define their anticipated results and collectively coin strategies toward achieving the same. Such a model of managing public sector educational institutions was viewed as a panacea to the struggling quality service delivery in schools.



The quality of service delivery in the Zimbabwean public schools had declined significantly by the end of the first decade of independence to warrant the intervention of the RBM magnitude. The policy of education for all, which sought to address the colonial imbalances led to a quantitative expansion of the education sector in Zimbabwe. Through the Education for All (EFA) policy, the number of secondary schools in Zimbabwe increased rapidly during the first ten years of independence from 177 at the end of 1979 to 1507 schools and the student population in the secondary school sector also grew from 66 215 in 1979 to 695 882 learners in 1989 (Kanyongo, 2005:66). To support the rapid growth in student population, the Zimbabwean government increased teacher training facilities by opening up new low cost teacher training programs such as the Zimbabwe Integrated Teacher Education Course (ZINTEC) for primary school teachers (Kanyongo, 2005:66). The same primary trained school teachers were given opportunities to teach in the secondary sector together with other untrained teachers who were hired to alleviate the challenge of staff shortage (Nyagura, 1993:28). Student performance as highlighted by the Ordinary Level School Certificate national pass rate indicated a decline from 66.6% in 1980 to 12.4% of the candidates passing five subjects or more in 1988 (Nyagura, 1993:29). Whilst the preceding challenges were haunting the public education sector, there were also loud calls for services that are responsive to client needs and efficient use of the meagre resources in the public reserves across different entities in the public sector (Madhekeni, 2012:125). Citizens' demand for client-oriented services prompted the Government of Zimbabwe (GoZ) to institute a Public Service Review Commission (PSRC) of 1987-9 to look into the matter (Zigora & Chagwamba, 2000:3; Zinyama et al., 2015:10).

From the review committee of 1989, it emerged that Zimbabwe lacked a results-oriented performance management culture in the public service. The report also highlighted corruption and increasing resource constraints (Kevran, 1989:9, Zigora & Chagwamba, 2000:3). In response, the GoZ through the Public Service Commission (PSC) introduced a raft of measures that laid the basis for the RBM system. The measures sought to modernise the manner of public sector operations (Pazvakavambwa, 2015:3). However, the first phase of PSRP failed to address the highlighted performance challenges in the public service.

In the education sector, evidence of continual deterioration in the quality of service manifested after the localisation of the public examination system following the constitution of the Zimbabwe School Examination Council (ZIMSEC) to manage public examinations in 1996 (Kanyongo, 2005:67). Numerous cases of corruption, leakages of examination papers and mixing up of examination results were raised against ZIMSEC. In some cases, school heads were also implicated in examination mismanagement involving losing question papers in transit, opening examination scripts for their relatives, and facilitating the personification of the candidates. Such cases eroded the public confidence in the education system prompting the need for a more effective management system that could turn the performance of the sector. The above stated challenges were further exacerbated by the fact that the appraisal system used in the public sector was reportedly ineffective and characterised by erratic and inaccurate assessments. Managers perceived annual performance reviews and assessments as excess administrative duties rather opportunities to generate information for improvements (Kevran, 1989:85). Hence, the need for a performance management system that supported information gathering for decision making purposes.

To address the Zimbabwean persistent performance challenges, further consultations were instituted under the second phase of the PSRC in 1998. The consultations were within the framework of the Zimbabwe Program for Economic and Social Transformation (ZIMPREST). The ZIMPREST's vision was to redefine the role of the public service and promote efficiency and effectiveness of service in public sector institutions. Using lessons from the first phase of reforms, the PSC introduced a performance management system in 1998 (Zinyama et al., 2015:11). However, the 1998 performance management system failed to change the work culture in government institutions as it focused more on activity completion rather than the achievement of desired results (Mavhiki et al., 2013:135). As a result, the Public Service Reform Program (PSRP) of 2002 recommended the introduction of RBM. The central notion of RBM was the "result", which meant a describable or measurable change that is derived from a cause-and-effect chain (Chikasha & Gwata, 2014:281). In the school system, such change was expected to happen at an individual level, group level, school level, district level, and upwards through the

structure to the ministry and national level. At the different levels, the RBM system emphasised a shift from a focus on resources and procedures to focusing on the actual output, outcome, impact, and need for sustainability (Zinyama et al., 2015:2). Thus, with the introduction of the RBM system as a modern public management approach for public service managers, the PSRP hoped to improve on the previous performance management reform of 1998 by empowering managers through giving them space to define their anticipated results, measure performance regularly, and objectively, learn from the performance review information and make appropriate adjustments to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the program (Meier, 2003:6).

### **1.3 The problem statement**

The RBM system was introduced to the MoPSE in 2010 as part of a raft of measures meant to address public concerns about the quality of service delivery in public institutions (Madhekeni, 2012:124; Pazvakavambwa & Steyn, 2014:245; Chilunjika, 2016:1). However, the operationalisation of the RBM system in the Zimbabwean public education sector appears to have been riddled with many challenges of acceptability, understandability, and lack of a result-oriented culture in schools to serve as pre-conditions for its effective implementation (Gwata, 2013:241; Gutuza, 2016:90). As a result, to date, not much change has been recorded in the manner educational institutions are managed and in the quality of service rendered to show the shift from the old regime, casting doubt on the effectiveness of the RBM system (Madhekeni, 2012:127). Given that RBM implementation has become a policy for all public educational institutions in Zimbabwe to follow, school heads are faced with the challenge of fitting the generic RBM system into their local institutional setting. From the preceding discussion, there seem to be no empirical research findings on the perceptions of school heads about the applicability and effectiveness of RBM in schools.

### **1.4 Purpose of the study**

The purpose of this study was, therefore, to explore the perceptions of secondary school heads about the effectiveness of the RBM system in the Highglen School

District in Harare. Linked to the preceding purpose of the study were the following objectives.

## **1.5 Broad research objectives**

To describe secondary school heads participating in this study's perceptions about the effectiveness of RBM in schools in the Highglen School District in Harare.

### **1.5.1 Specific research objectives**

The research aims to:

- a. Describe the secondary school heads' perceived understanding of the RBM system.
- b. Examine secondary school heads' perceptions about the applicability of the RBM elements to public sector school administration in the Highglen School District in Harare.
- c. Describe secondary school heads' perceptions about the maintenance of results-based management in public schools.
- d. Describe the perceptions of secondary school heads about the challenges of using the RBM model to improve school performance in the Highglen School District in Harare.
- e. Propose and recommend improvements to the RBM model in Zimbabwe and implementation strategies that enhance its effectiveness in public schools in the Highglen School District in Harare.

## **1.6 Research questions**

The research questions of this study are categorised into the broad research question and specific research questions.

### **1.6.1 The broad research question**

How do secondary school heads describe their perceptions about the effectiveness of results-based management in the Highglen School District in Harare?

### **1.6.1.1 Specific research questions**

- a. How do secondary school heads describe their understanding of the RBM system in the public education sector?
- b. How do secondary school heads describe their perception of the applicability of RBM elements to school administration in the Highglen School District in Harare?
- c. How do secondary school heads perceive the maintenance of a results-based management system in public secondary schools?
- d. How do secondary school heads describe their perceptions of the challenges of using the RBM model to improve school performance in the Highglen School District in Harare?
- e. How can the RBM system be improved to ensure sustainability and effectiveness in the public secondary schools of the Highglen School District in Harare?

### **1.7 Theoretical framework**

In this study, the RBM system was considered to be a strategic management approach that is used by public schools to plan their work with a special focus on results and work collectively towards goal achievement. Secondary school heads' perceptions of the effectiveness of RBM were therefore examined from Locke & Latham's (1990) goal-setting theory perspective which provided the theoretical basis for this study. Grant & Osanloo (2014:12) define the theoretical framework as a blueprint that guides the study and provides a structure through which the research philosophy, type of knowledge, and methods of inquiry can be defined. This is to say, the theoretical frame work in research helps to define the thinking that influences the process of inquiry and provides the scheme that helps the researcher choose the appropriate tools to gather data. In that way, the theoretical framework helps the researcher to link the research topic to the research questions and objectives, methods of gathering data and interpretation of the research findings.

The theoretical framework could be a specific theory or ideas drawn from the same theory relating to aspects of society's actions that are used to study a particular phenomenon (Imenda, 2014:189; Adom et al., 2018:438). Framing this study within the goal-setting theory guided the researcher's view in the formulation of the research problem and selection of appropriate literature to review (Grant & Osanloo, 2014:14). Thus, a theoretical framework located this study in the field of work place motivation and subject the whole process of research to the epistemological and philosophical assumptions of that field, (Grant & Osanloo, 2014:13; Kivunja, 2018:47). Within that particular field of study, the theory also provided the researcher with a lens to focus on the meaning embedded in the research findings in relation to others studies. Consequently, the theoretical framework enabled the researcher to improve the depth and rigour of his study by referencing the analysis of the study findings to proven and tested work by renowned scholars in the field (Kivunja, 2018:47). In the process, knowledge gaps to be filled by the current study were identified. For Kivunja, (2018:48), the use of theory in qualitative research increases the credibility of data, transferability, confirmability, and dependability of the study findings. The preceding four aspects of trustworthiness were discussed further in section 1.10.5 below. The origins, explanation, and link of the goal-setting theory to the RBM system in the public schools in Zimbabwe are presented in the next paragraph.

### **1.7.1 The Goal-setting theory**

The theory underpinning this study is goal setting. It was developed by Locke and Latham over a period of 28 years and was publicised in 1990. Goal-setting is grounded on what the Greek philosopher, Aristotle called it "*The Final Causality*" implying action caused by purpose, (Locke, 1996:118; Obasan & Sotunde, 2011:116). It asserts that specific hard goals induce improved performance (Latham, 2004:126; Latham et al., 2016:3). This means that clearly defined statements of intent that are challenging provide motivation for individuals to work harder in order to achieve them. Goals refer to future valued results or outcomes. They represent the reason for engaging in a particular action (Locke & Latham, 2002:706; Obasan & Sotunde, 2011:116). Hence, activities in and out of the work place are intentional and they are driven by the need to accomplish particular results. Lunenburg (2011:3)

describes the goal-setting theory as guided by the assumption that values and goals determine behaviour. Setting goals or results, therefore, implies a value-driven dissatisfaction with the present status quo and the desire to attain a different level of performance (Locke & Latham, 2006:265). In this study, the Goal-Setting Theory was used in collaboration with elements of other motivation theories to interpret the pattern of events in public schools in Harare and shed light on how school heads and the schools which they lead function within the RBM environment.

### **1.8 Significance of the study**

The call for improved service delivery in public schools in Zimbabwe is not new. Since the attainment of independence in 1980, numerous reforms were instituted to improve the performance, which is output/outcome, and impact of the Zimbabwean public education sector. Referring to the impression given by the problem statement, against a background of numerous efforts towards improving the performance of the public education system in Zimbabwe, this study focuses particularly on understanding the perceptions of secondary school heads about RBM's effectiveness as custodians of policy at an institutional level. School heads in the MoPSE are first-line managers who preside over the RBM process as appraisers and reviewers of all teaching and non-teaching staff in their respective schools. Consequently, the perceptions of school heads as institutional managers influence the way teachers and non-teaching staff under their supervision view the implementation of the RBM system in public schools in Zimbabwe. Recent studies on the RBM system in the MoPSE in Zimbabwe have tended to generalise its application to the entire public service without zooming specifically on the school heads. This study, therefore, focuses on the perceptions of school heads as an area of study which has not been adequately covered.

Research has shown that the RBM system led to significant improvements in the performance of public service institutions in both developing and developed countries across the globe (Gwata, 2013:40). However, in Zimbabwe, the public education sector just like other government departments has not registered significant changes in performance since the inception of RBM casting doubt on its applicability and effectiveness (Madhekeni, 2012:127). The preceding background,

thus, suggests the need to isolate key grass-root players in public sector schools' RBM implementation and study them to understand their views regarding its effective use. Correspondingly, Gwata (2013:203) has explained the ineffectiveness of RBM systems in Zimbabwe in terms of the failure of research to address the critical elements in the creation of result-focused work culture in institutions such as individual and group perceptions, attitudes, and understanding of results-based management. The present study thus explores and captures the perceptions of secondary school heads as curators and end-users of RBM in the public education sector to make sense of the silent/unwritten aspects of the systems that define its effectiveness. Research findings on the perceptions of secondary school heads will contribute to the body of knowledge on RBM implementation in the service sector, particularly in the school system. The findings will also provide insights to the education sector policymakers on how RBM is received at an institutional and individual level, which will contribute significantly to the decision about the adjustments and/or review of the policy.

This study was also considered significant because public schools provide a service to the bulk of Zimbabwean learners. Improvements in the performance of public schools are a concern to a majority of Zimbabweans. The notion of accountability and customer-oriented services espoused by the RBM system generates significant interest among various education sector stakeholders. More significantly, improvements in the performance of the school system due to RBM will translate into the improved quality of results and ultimately the quality of labour to steer the development of the country. Thus, understanding the perceptions of school heads about RBM was considered key to unlocking educational managers' and policy makers' deeper appreciation of critical areas in the effective implementation of the performance management system.

### **1.9 Ensuring that ethical issues are met**

Exploring the perceptions of secondary school heads about the RBM system entailed interaction between the researcher and participants at different levels to generate qualitative data. To safeguard the participants against possible risks associated with involvement in the study, the researcher undertook to comply with



research ethical considerations as described below. Davis and Lachlan (2017:108) define ethics in research as specific principles, rules, guidelines, and norms that are considered to be proper, fair, and appropriate by the research community to govern the behaviour of the researchers during the process of investigation. Research ethics implore researchers as professionals to be sensitive to the rights of their participants and act in a manner that safeguards the dignity of participants as human beings (Cohen et al., 2018:112). In educational research, ethical issues may arise from the problem that is being investigated and the methods used to collect relevant data (Cohen et al., 2007:51). The present study involved the use of interviews and questionnaires to generate data on how secondary school heads in Highglen School District described their perceptions of RBM effectiveness. Due to the nature of the study and the type of data required, the researcher had to take all measures to protect the participants from emotional distress and job insecurity arising from the possible disclosure of confidential information. Serious considerations were made to ensure adherence to the principles of informed consent and confidentiality and anonymity of the participants. To enhance the trustworthiness of the generated data, the researcher took measures to ensure the safety of the participants through proper conduct and cultivation of an appropriate relationship with them in line with the UNISA ethics policy (Cohen et al., 2007:52; Akaranga & Makau, 2016:2). The following procedures and ethical considerations were observed in this study to ensure the appropriate quality of responses at the same time building trustworthiness, legitimacy, and representativeness of the study (Davis & Lachlan, 2017:108):

- a. Application for access to the MoPSE secondary schools in the Highglen School District and securing acceptability of the school heads;
- b. Ensuring participants' informed consent;
- c. Ensuring privacy and confidentiality of data;
- d. Ensuring accurate reporting and
- e. Allowing participants access to the study results, (Lune & Berg, 2017:43).

### **1.9.1 Ensuring access to participants and acceptability**

A critical stage in observing the ethical procedures in this research involved seeking and gaining access to the research participants. This qualitative study sought to capture the behaviour and perceptions of secondary school heads about the effectiveness of the RBM system in their work environment. Therefore, the type of data from the study required site visits by the researcher for physical interaction with the participants. According to Saunders et al., (2016:222), the type of access to participants that involve face-to-face interaction to conduct experiments, interviews, focus groups, and observations or to deliver questionnaires is referred to as traditional access. To get traditional access into the Highglen School District, the researcher applied for clearance to conduct the study through the Permanent Secretary for MoPSE and then through the Provincial Education Director (PED) for Harare and the District Schools Inspector (DSI) for the Highglen School District. To ensure acceptability, the researcher introduced himself to the secondary school heads in the Highglen School District using a general clearance letter from the district gatekeeper. This was followed up with site visits to familiarise and spell out the objectives of the study to the participants. According to Cohen et al., (2018:123), the preceding steps covered part of the access and acceptability protocol. Further steps to ensure compliance with research ethics were taken as part of the informed consent described below.

### **1.9.2 Informed consent and credibility of data**

In the present study, the researcher focused on three elements of informed consent. These are voluntarism, full information, and comprehension. The three elements of informed consent are based on the principle of respect for the rights of participants which asserts that research participants are autonomous, self-governing, and capable of making decisions for themselves if they are given sufficient information about the study (Davis & Lachlan, 2017:110; Cohen et al., 2018:121). To ensure compliance with the principle of voluntarism, the researcher, distributed the informed consent forms to all participants that highlighted the study topic and also provided an in-depth articulation of the purpose, objectives, research procedures, and scope of the study. The informed consent form also underscored the expected role of all

participants in the study and possible associated risks. A clause was also added to the consent form stating that participants were free to withdraw from the study if they felt uncomfortable with it. Such a background helped the secondary school heads in the Highglen School District to make informed decisions about participation in the study voluntarily (Creswell, 2014:136; Cohen et al., 2007:52). Observing the principle of voluntarism in informed consent enhanced the credibility of the study by eliminating the feeling of coercion, thereby limiting the possibility of informants giving false and inaccurate information.

### **1.9.3 Ensuring the privacy of participants and confidentiality of the data**

To complement informed consent in ensuring the credibility of the study, the researcher applied the principle of privacy and confidentiality to safeguard participants' responses. According to Cohen et al., (2018:129), one way to ensure the privacy of the research participants and their protection from possible harm is through anonymity. In this study, the following measures were taken by the researcher to ensure that all the information provided by the secondary school heads in the Highglen School District during the study could not be traced or linked to the identities of the participants. Firstly, all questionnaires distributed to the participants were numbered and did not capture personal information. Secondly, during the data collection process, the researcher sought permission from the participants to audio record the interviews. Before recording the interview sessions, the researcher gave participants assurance that the data collected was for study purposes and will be kept in confidence. Further steps to ensure the confidentiality of data involved transcription of all raw data and assigning special codes to it which were then presented in the data analysis section. In that way, the researcher eliminated the possibility of readers linking the responses to any specific participant. Measures to ensure privacy and confidentiality, thus minimized anxiety and stress related to possible victimisation in the workplace for disclosure of confidential information among the secondary school heads.

### **1.9.4 Fair reporting and access to the result**

To further ascertain the credibility of the information captured, the researcher used triangulation of interview, questionnaire, and focus group data together with data

collected from the reports on RBM done by the school heads. Screening of data was also done through iterative questioning. The researcher gave the participants assurance of making available the study findings to them upon completion of the inquiry. Participants were also assured that the data generated from them was exclusively used for study purposes. During the data analysis process, the researcher presented the reduced transcribed data to the participants to confirm that their views were correctly captured before the final consolidation of the results (Pilot & Beck, 2003:573; Shenton, 2004:46). The same ethical procedures were discussed under the credibility of the study were applied to different levels to enhance the trustworthiness of the study in terms of transferability, dependability, and conformability.

### **1.9.5 Ensuring trustworthiness**

The trustworthiness of a study refers to the degree of confidence in data, interpretation, and methods used to ensure the quality of a study (Pilot & Beck, 2003:36). In qualitative studies, trustworthiness is equated to the validity and reliability of the study. Leedy & Onmrod (2010:28) associate validity with the extent to which the instrument measures what it intends to measure. Reliability differs from validity in that it measures the consistency of instruments over time and the same sample (Pilot & Beck, 2003:35; Cohen et al., 2007:147). The two quantitative expressions defined above, were examined in this qualitative research under the following terms which constitute the criteria used by the researcher to ensure the trustworthiness of the study. In the process, ethical issues relating to and applicable to each of the terms are discussed.

- a. Credibility
- b. Transferability
- c. Dependability
- d. Confirmability.

#### **1.9.5.1 Credibility**

Credibility measures the degree of congruence between research findings and reality (Shenton, 2004:63). Also, Pilot and Beck (2003:430) and Lodico et al., (2010:273)

define credibility in terms of the accuracy of the data or truth in the representations of participant views from the researcher. In qualitative research, credibility is the equivalent of internal validity in quantitative studies. In the present study, credibility was built starting from the planning stage of the research, through to the execution and reporting of data. The researcher started with an application for permission from the MoPSE Zimbabwe to carry out the study, articulating the envisaged contribution of the study (Cohen et al., 2007:53). This complied with procedural ethical considerations relating to access and acceptability. Next, the researcher visited the areas under study to familiarise and gain the confidence of informants (Pilot & Beck, 2003:430). During the visits preceding the data generation process, the researcher prepared the participants for informed consent as detailed below.

#### **1.9.5.2 Transferability**

Shenton (2004:69) defines transferability as the degree to which study findings and conclusions apply to other situations. Lincoln and Guba (1985:79) equate transferability with the external validity of the study. Transferability was assessed by the readers by applying and relating the study topic to their setting (Lodico, et al., 2010:275). In this study, the researcher gave a brief background of the application of RBM in public sector institutions to help the readers contextualize the problem being studied. In the background information, the researcher provided finer details of the number of schools, their setting, participants involved in the study, and methods used to collect data to enable the readers to do a comparison of the results to different settings (Lodico et al., 2010:275).

#### **1.9.5.3 Dependability**

Dependability refers to the consistency or stability of data over time and conditions (Pilot & Beck, 2003:444). Trustworthiness based on dependability entails the extent to which similar results can be obtained if the same study is repeated with the same variables and in the same context (Shenton, 2004:71). The use of individual interviews, focus group interviews, and questionnaires as overlapping methods to complement one another increased the dependability of the study results (Shenton, 2004:73). The researcher included a detailed research design in the study to enable the readers to follow the steps taken during the inquiry. An external reviewer was

also engaged to conduct an inquiry audit to enhance the dependability of the research findings (Pilot & Beck, 2003:435; Lodico et al., 2010:275).

#### **1.9.5.4 Confirmability**

Confirmability is the objectivity or neutrality of data (Polit & Beck, 2003:435). It measures the researcher's ability to demonstrate an unbiased representation of the participants' responses or viewpoints (Shenton, 2004:72). As part of the research ethic, the researcher preempted his beliefs to enable the readers to appreciate the limitation of the study. To ensure unbiased reporting, the researcher used member checks and direct quotes from the participants that depict each emerging theme in the final report (Pilot & Beck, 2003:36).

#### **1.10 Delimitation of the study**

The present study was carried out in the MoPSE in Zimbabwe. The study was confined to public secondary schools in the Highglen School District of Harare Metropolitan province. The study focused only on the views and perceptions of school heads in the selected secondary schools in the Highglen School District, all other staff members and students were not considered for the study. Qualitative research data was drawn from public secondary heads in Highglen School District using the questionnaire and interviews as the only data collection tools. This was to maintain confidentiality and anonymity through unlabeled questionnaires and individual perceptions from the interviews. Primary schools in the same district were not considered for the study as the researcher felt the way primary schools and secondary schools conduct RBM might slightly differ. Combining the two sectors in the same study could compromise the standardisation of results.

#### **1.11 Definition of key terms**

This study is about the perceptions of secondary school heads on the effectiveness of results-based management. Key terms that are extrapolated and defined for this study include the terms/ words, secondary school, school heads, results-based management RBM system, Highglen School District, and Harare.

## **1. Secondary schools**

Masuku & Muchemwa (2015:12) describe secondary school education in Zimbabwe as comprising six years, four years Ordinary level, and two years Advanced level. The MoPSE defines secondary education in the Zimbabwean context as post-primary education lasting six years from form one to form six (GoZ, 2013:2). Secondary schools occupy the space between primary school education and tertiary education and are synonymous with high schools.

## **2. School heads**

School heads are instructional leaders with managerial functions. Ndoziya (2014:13) describes school heads as the most senior teachers in schools, charged with the responsibility to manage schools and be accountable for everything. This study defines school heads in terms of their management functions as instructional leaders, planners, communicators, organizers, and coordinators of the schools' curriculum and professional support to members.

## **3. Results-based management (RBM) system**

Global Affairs Canada (2016:8) described RBM as an essential tool for senior management to exercise sound stewardship on performance and accountability in compliance with global standards. Prom-Jackson (2017:7) defines RBM as a management strategy that focuses on the achievement of organisational results through integrating philosophy and result-oriented principles in all aspects of management. This study defines RBM as an approach to management that focuses on the ultimate results and use the projected results to determine the best methods and procedures to achieve them.

## **4. Integrated results-based management system**

Integrated results-based management system entails bringing together the key performance components namely development planning, budgeting, personnel management, monitoring and evaluation and management information systems in a coordinated way (GoZ, 2021:53). The components complement one another to ensure effectiveness of performance decisions.

## **5. Harare metropolitan province**

Harare metropolitan province is the capital and the largest city of Zimbabwe (Mushore et al., 2019:262). Administratively, Harare metropolitan province comprises four districts Harare Urban, Harare Rural, Chitungwiza, and Epworth, (Kamusoko et al., 2013:323). Harare metropolitan province has also been described in terms of its composition as the host to seven educational districts namely, Highglen, Northern Central, Mbare-Hatfield, Glenview-Mufakose, Warren Park-Mabelreign, Epi-Mafara, and Chitungwiza districts with each being manned by a district schools inspector and a schools inspector supporting him/her. This present study defines Harare Metropolitan Province in terms of its coverage of the seven educational districts in line with MoPSE as given above.

## **6. Public schools**

In the Zimbabwean context public schools are schools that are run by the state or by local authorities. The GoZ (2006:619) classifies schools in Zimbabwe under two broad categories. The Government Schools which are described as public schools and Non-Government schools, also referred to as private schools.

## **7. Results**

Results are describable changes that are caused by an intervention or a set of activities. According to the UNDG (2011:10) results can be described in terms of output, outcome and impact. As a form of change, result can be desirable or undesirable.

## **8. Key Result Areas**

Key Result Areas are the major output areas of a job. They are derived from the job holder's job description. According to GoZ (1998:12), key result areas are key components of the job that directly contribute towards achievement of the institutional objectives.



## **9. Evaluation**

Evaluation entails the review and analysis of completed and ongoing activities to establish the degree of success. As a management function, evaluation is done to ensure accountability, efficiency and effectiveness (GoZ, 2021:XV111).

## **10. Monitoring**

Monitoring is a process that involve the collection of information from an activity or project in an orderly way and periodically for decision making purposes about the future improvements. GoZ (2021: XVII) describe the purpose of monitoring as generating knowledge from experience.

### **1.12 Organisation of the thesis**

Chapter one of this thesis provides an outline of the study. The background information on the performance of public sector institutions and efforts that were made to reform the operations of government departments which include MoPSE are presented in the first chapter. That was followed by the statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research objectives, and significance of the study. Finally, key terms were defined and delimitations of the study were presented.

Chapter two presents the theoretical framework of the study. The results-based management theory was examined. The definition, origins, aims, and objectives of the RBM system were presented. The chapter also discussed the phases of RBM and its challenges.

Chapter three reviews related literature on the RBM system as a public sector management approach. The chapter highlights the literature perceptions about the effectiveness of the RBM system in public sector institutions. A review of literature on selected cases of successful RBM implementation from developing and developed economies across the globe is also presented here. Finally, the chapter closes with a summary of the main points.

Chapter four presents the research methodology and design. It explained the steps that were followed in the conduct of this empirical study. A description of the study population and the tools used to generate data are presented in chapter four. Finally, a data analysis plan and a summary of the chapter were presented.

Chapter five focuses on the presentation of data, its analysis, interpretation, and discussion. A table with emerging themes was presented, followed by detailed discussions of each theme.

Chapter six presents the summary of the study and the conclusions drawn from the study. The chapter also made recommendations for future studies based on the findings and stated the limitations of the study.

### **1.13 Summary of chapter one**

Chapter one introduced the research topic and gave a general background leading to the introduction of the RBM system in the public education sector in 2010. The deplorable state of the education system in the pre-RBM era which was attributed to the massive expansion of the public education sector was presented in the background information. Section 1.2 also described the general carefree attitude, inefficiency, laziness, and lack of focus associated with the civil service which characterised the Zimbabwean public sector institutions including public schools in the pre RBM era. That was followed by the description of steps taken by the GoZ to replace the old performance appraisal system with the RBM system in the MoPSE in 2010. The chapter also highlighted the research problem that revolved around limited research on the perception of secondary school heads as institutional gatekeepers in the public school system. The purpose of the study, research objectives and research question were presented in chapter one. A brief description of the theoretical framework and conceptual framework was given followed by the significance of the study. Findings from the study were considered to be of paramount significance in informing educational managers, policymakers, and other education sector stakeholders on the reception, implementation, and the usefulness of RBM as a public sector school management approach. Ethical issues were described and key terms used in the study were explained. The organisation of the thesis was presented and finally, the chapter closed with a summary.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND CONCEPTUAL MODEL OF THE RESULTS-BASED MANAGEMENT SYSTEM**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

Results-based management (RBM) plays an important role, not only in the private sector, but also in public sector institutions such as formal schools. Chapter two focuses on the theoretical framework underpinning the RBM system in the education sector. The RBM system is defined and its origins and development are discussed in this chapter. That is followed by a discussion on the aims, objectives and characteristics of the RBM theory. The chapter presents the different phases of the RBM process are presented and the activities that constitute the respective RBM phases are unpacked. To help the readers to appreciate the sequencing and integration of RBM activities, a graphical conceptual model of the RBM system is presented in this chapter. Conditions for effective RBM implementation are highlighted. The implications of the goal-setting theory to the operationalisation of the RBM system in schools are examined in this chapter and finally, the motivation to sustain the RBM system in public entities such as schools is explained.

#### **2.2 The results-based management system**

This section discusses the results-based management theory with a focus on its definition, origins, aims and objectives, characteristics, phases, and categories. The RBM system implemented in Zimbabwean schools entrusts school heads with a leadership responsibility of managing the performance of both teaching and non-teaching staff in order to achieve set goals. The GoZ (1998:4) describes performance management (PM) as involving achieving results through the people. That is to say, PM strives to ensure improved results from the employees and institutions through cultivating an understanding of the individual and organisational goals that form the basis of their operations. The above description of PM suits the essence of RBM system which is anchored on the principle of setting goals and then coach to improve performance on a regular basis. The performance management system in Zimbabwean public schools is characterised by the process of planning for

work and setting of performance targets, monitoring of staff performance and gathering of performance data, staff development activities which are informed by performance data and rewarding of outstanding performance. All the above stated characteristics of the performance management system constitute the different components the results-based management and are described in detail in subsequent sections of this chapter.

### **2.2.1 Definition of results-based management**

There is no single definition for the RBM system as different institutions, organisations, and countries define it and apply it differently depending on their unique contexts (Hatton & Schroeder, 2007:428, UNESCO, 2008:6, Vahamaki & Verger, 2019:9). The development sector perspective defines the RBM system as:

*A management strategy by which all actors contributing directly or indirectly to achieving a set of results, ensure that their processes, products, and services contribute towards the achievement of desired results (outputs, outcomes, and higher-level goals or impact. The actors in turn use evidence from the actual results to inform decision making on design, resourcing, and delivery of programs and activities as well as for accountability and reporting (UNDG, 2011:2).*

The definition views RBM as an approach to managing that highlights the importance of results. It also facilitates information-based decisions about resources and processes required to produce change. As the name suggests, RBM entails a deliberate shift in management focus from inputs and activities to the actual results (Hunt, 2009:3; UN-Habitat, 2017:2). Similarly, the organisational behaviour perspective asserts that RBM is a way of thinking about one's work that looks beyond the inputs, activities, and processes to focus on the actual benefit of the intervention, which is the ultimate result (The Global Affairs Canada, 2016:9; The UN-Habitat, 2017:2).

A third way of looking at the RBM system is from the public service management perspective. From that perspective, the RBM system is described as a modern public management approach that advocates for public service managers to define their

anticipated results and set the direction for the flow of organisational activities based on the results (Meier, 2003:6). For public service managers, the RBM result statements provide the basis for objective performance measurement and tracking of progress regularly. In the process, lessons drawn from past performance help both managers and subordinates to plan for future improvements (Meier, 2003:6). Whilst the preceding description of a result-driven management system is generic to the global public sector management approaches, it is important to note that literature has not located the RBM system within the precise context of public secondary school management in Zimbabwe. As a result, one assumption made by this study was that public secondary schools in Zimbabwe fall in the broader category of public service institutions. Hence, secondary school heads in Highglen School District as public service institutional managers relate more with the public service management perspective of describing the RBM system.

The UN-Habitat (2017:3) described the sequencing of RBM thinking as defining the destination first and choosing the route to arrive at the destination. This implies that results determines the reach of the envisioned change and also the methods of achieving the change. In the context of public school management, the RBM system implores school heads to think strategically about the changes they wish to make in schools and then consider what it takes for them to achieve results (Hunt, 2009:3; UN-Habitat, 2017:2). Results are descriptive changes that are derived from a cause and effect relationship (UNESCO, 2008:8; UNDG, 2011:10). Such changes are expressed as output, outcome, and impact in RBM language (UNDG, 2011:10). Regardless that the RBM diction is seemingly production oriented, it also applies to service institutions like schools where change takes the form of the anticipated improvements in the quality of student performance, improved school infrastructural development, enrolment expansion, reduced cases of indiscipline, improved teacher and student retention and improvement in other aspects of school life. In the above-stated categories of school functions, the RBM theory implores school leaders to be curious about how change manifests for them to choose the appropriate methodology and deploy suitable resources in their response to facilitate the achievement of the set results (Jensen, 2017:9; Javed et al., 2019:24). Thus, the

envisaged change within the school as an organisation determines the activities to be pursued within set budget parameters and over a stipulated time frame.

The RBM system for school heads entails mainstreaming a result philosophy and related principles into the already existing school management system and practices. Robbins et al., (2018:9) describe management in terms of its certified roles of planning, organising, coordinating, leading, and controlling which are executed to enhance efficiency and effectiveness within the institutions. Based on the preceding description of management, school heads may therefore view the RBM system in schools as a tool for them to plan, organise, control, and lead work activities to achieve a predetermined level of change. In the RBM process, school heads also leverage the use of performance information to make decisions about where to deploy human, financial, and material resources to enhance performance. Information-based decisions about the future of organisations are generally associated with the private sector (Meier, 2003:6; UNDG, 2011:2; UN-Habitat, 2017:8). Hence, its adoption in the public sector management, particularly in schools implies the end users' perceptions about its applicability.

### **2.2.2 Origins and development of the RBM system**

The roots of the RBM system are traceable to Drucker's 1954 concept of management by objective (MBO) (Meier, 2003:3; UNESCO, 2008:5; Madhekeni, 2012:123; Bhattarai, 2020:157). According to Bhattarai (2020:157), the MBO philosophy viewed the successful result orientation as a mindset and a managerial perspective rather than a set of guiding instructions. The MBO approach to managing was associated with the private sector and it entailed focusing the people's minds on critical factors regarding performance in terms of results (McKernan et al., 2016:4; Bhattarai 2020:157). By so doing, MBO ushered in the notion of results primacy over processes and activities which also characterised the RBM system as a contemporary management approach. Other attributes of MBO that identify with the RBM system include its focus on setting and aligning individual specific objectives to organisational objectives, participative decision-making, regular feedback, and the use of time frames (UNESCO, 2008:5). Within the context of MBO, management collected and used data to inform decisions about the direction

and appropriateness of activities pursued to improve organisational performance (Meier, 2003:4; Ntanos & Boulouta, 2012:68).

The central tenets of MBO presented above, highlighted a new public sector management tool called the Logical Framework Approach (LPA) which emerged and became a forerunner to the development of the RBM system (Meier, 2003:4; UNESCO, 2008:5; McKernan et al., 2016:4). The use of LPA for planning purposes in the public sector facilitated the link between activities and results (Pazvakavambwa, 2015:25). It was the LPA which later rebranded to become the Goal-Oriented Project Planning (GOPP); Objective Oriented Project Planning (OOPP) and the Project Cycle Management (PCM) (Bhattarai, 2020:158). Whilst the above-stated management approaches from the MBO to the PCM exhibited some basic features that were further refined to characterise the modern RBM system, the features were not integrated to function as a system. The integration characteristic that defines the RBM system as a contemporary management strategy started to feature in the 1990s (UN-Habitat, 2017:12, Bhattarai, 2020:159). This was during the era of the global public sector reform movement under the rubric New Public Management, (NPM) (UN-Habitat, 2017:12).

The NPM as an immediate antecedent of the RBM system was a response to political, social, and economic pressure on governments across the globe to be more accountable and responsive to citizen demands (Tolofari, 2005:76; UNESCO, 2008:4; UN-Habitat, 2017:12). In its response, the NPM introduced market strategies which emphasised efficiency, management, accountability, and performance-oriented organisational culture (Bhattarai, 2020:158). The preceding development, thus, marked the beginning of an ideological shift from the traditional public sector administrator model that emphasised executive focus on resources, activities, and output to one that emphasised results (Try & Radnor, 2007:656). From the NPM dispensation, the RBM system took its final shape and format in the 1990s and was quickly implemented in many different countries and organisations (UNESCO, 2008:4). Whilst the NPM systems emphasised efficiency, the RBM paid special attention to effectiveness, which implied achieving desired results (UN-Habitat, 2017:12). Based on the preceding sequence in its development, the RBM system

has been described as an evolution in management that has its roots deeply embedded in management sciences and linked to previous efforts (Meier, 2003:4).

### **2.2.3 The objectives of results-based management in the global context**

According to Hatton & Schroeder (2007:428), it is difficult for two people to describe the RBM system in the same way. The preceding notion suggests context-specific rather than straight-jacket aims and objectives of the RBM system at regional, country, and organisational levels. Staff and management in different institutions perceive the RBM system, apply it and value it differently. Consequently, the effectiveness of managing with a results focus varies with individuals, groups, and companies. A review of the literature on the global aims and objectives of the RBM system, therefore, helps to reveal the gap between the perceived goals of RBM and what it is meant to do.

The RBM system was introduced in different countries of the world to ensure transparency and accountability in public sector institutions (Meier, 2003:2; Muranda et al., 2015:97; Chilunjika, 2016: 1; UNODC, 2018:2). This was after the upsurge of internal and external pressure on different governments to reform. In the preceding context, RBM aimed to address public concerns about the quality of services rendered by public sector organisations. Improvements in public sector service delivery stabilised governments by quelling criticisms leveled against political and corporate leadership for inefficiency and ineffectiveness (Mutambatuwisi et al., 2016:88). Coupled with that, the RBM system was also motivated by the desire to align with the global trends (Chilunjika, 2016:1). However, whereas there seems to be a general convergence on the circumstances that prompted the adoption of the RBM system across different countries, the individual country, and institutional specific RBM aims and objectives varied widely resulting in different levels of RBM uptake and success levels.

### **2.2.4 Characteristics of results-based management**

The RBM theory assumes a general inclination towards results at all levels within the institution. In public schools, RBM theory incorporates the element of core results to all management functions leading to results-based planning, budgeting, monitoring



and evaluation, management information systems, and the e-government (Asian Development Bank (ADB), 2009:4; Wael, 2015:26; Mundondo et al., 2019:144). All the preceding five components of RBM are harmonised and complement one another to achieve the intended results. As a modern management approach, RBM differs from earlier models of public sector management in that, it integrates the key performance elements vertically and horizontally to create greater cohesion. It also measures progress, advocate for goal clarity, and encourage continual improvement through learning (Kaboyakgosi & Mookodi, 2014:41). Vertically, the RBM theory is characterised by result-focused planning that takes place at a higher level and cascades down to the lowest unit (Wael, 2015:26). Along the horizontal continuum, the RBM system brings together the human resources component through RBPPS and the budgeted financial resources to operationalise the laid down plans. The other two RBM components, namely RBM&E and MIS provide timely progress data that help in the decision-making process about how to proceed, where to adjust both human and financial resources, and finally what may be required to achieve the set goals. This implies that, RBM&E and MIS collect and collate data that complement the RBPPS and RBB processes to ensure the success of the plans in achieving results. Hence, they are discussed below as attributes of the integrated results-based management (IRBM) theory.

#### **2.2.4.1 The components of the IRBM system**

The first step and a critical attribute in the implementation of the IRBM system is the strategic results-based planning process which is done by the top leadership in ministries and government departments in consultation with lower-level managers (Thomas, 2005:2). Further to that, Thomas (2005:4) asserts that the Integrated Performance Management Framework (IPMF), guide the result based planning process which culminates in the performance agreements. At national level, the performance agreements between top leadership in government and representatives of the different ministries and government departments spell out the expected results for the respective government departments using specified amounts of resources over stipulated time frames (Thomas, 2005:4). An integrated approach is taken during the planning process to align program goals at the highest level with lower level sectional objectives.

In the public education sector, the integrated results-based plans are expressed in terms of overarching results that are shared from the ministry head office which is top of the hierarchy to the school at the bottom. Along the hierarchy, individuals at different levels in the system adopt the same results and take responsibility to contribute towards their achievement (ADB, 2009:2). From the bottom-upwards, institutions that embrace the common planned goals serve as building blocks in the achievement of the overarching ministerial goals. In that way, the IRBM planning process exhibits top-down and bottom-up characteristics in the treatment of results. The integrated results-based planning process also put into considerations monitoring and evaluation plans together with the reporting formats which are aligned to the projected budgets and enabling policies (Thomas, 2005:4). Consequently, the IRBM planning process ensures adequate coverage of the concerns of the clients and also build consensus and accountability at different levels with organisations. Rasappan (2010:14) referred to the structured and systematic planning process described above as Integrated Development Planning (IDP).

Once the plans are laid down, the next step in IRBM is for leadership to operationalise the plans. To do that, the IRBM system makes provision for a result-based budget (RBB) which allocates resources to the different activities meant to support the achievement of the core results. In the context of the public education system, a school budget refers to a plan for resource allocation towards key time-framed school activities on a priority basis (Zinyama et al., 2016:35). Disbursement of budgeted resources towards the result-focused activities in public institutions is guided by a relevant policy framework to ensure efficient and effective use of resources. Hence, RBB serves as a strategic management tool to improve school resource management and accountability (Thomas, 2005:4; Zinyama et al., 2016: 35).

Meier (2003:10) describes RBB as linking performance levels to the budgeting processes and allocating resources to the competing demands based on their cost-effectiveness. Similarly, Rasappan (2010:8) argues that RBB focuses on how financial and human resources are deployed toward the systematic achievement of results. Thus, the IRBM theory is characterised by linkages between input level needs, activities, and results against available resources and how the resources can

best be used to achieve the best possible results (Zinyama et al., 2016:35). The role of leadership in maintaining the linkages between the laid down plans and set budgets is, firstly through ensuring that the correct planning and budgeting framework are used and are supported by relevant policies. Secondly, leadership has to ensure consistent and effective mechanisms to monitor progress and inform timely decisions about necessary changes. Thirdly, leadership would require budgeting expertise to align available resources to the set goals. Thus, the RBB process in public institutions requires the support of leadership to meaningfully link with and complement the development planning process.

The third and equally important stage in the IRBM process is the inclusion of the human resources element to drive the RBM agenda (Thomas, 2005:4). Without the personnel factor, the IDP and the RBB would have very little significance. Consequently, the IRBM system makes a provision for the RBPPS. In the public education sector, RBPPS integrates the education sector's human resources plans and the financial resources plan that are required to achieve results (Chilunjika, 2016:4). A key characteristic of the RBM theory is a clear definition of roles in a decentralised framework for accountability purposes (Thomas, 2005:5; Bastoe, 2006:97). The Global Affairs Canada (2016:21) defines accountability as the commitment to demonstrate responsibility for the use of resources and the expected results from the funded activities. In line with the above notion, the RBM theory applied to the public education sector challenges the leadership to define results and reach a consensus about human resources and their associated responsibilities toward goal achievement at different levels within the system (Wael, 2015:30).

A key component of the RBPPS is the appraisal system that focuses on the personal performance of members (Pazvakavambwa, 2015:45). The performance appraisal system in the public education sector calls for school heads and their subordinates to agree on work plans and also define the time frame in which to achieve the set objectives (Chilunjika, 2016:4). At the school level, the performance appraisal process systematically links teachers' performance to the main schools' performance plans. That is to say, each member of the school's contribution to the ultimate school results is highlighted. In that way, the members are made accountable on an individual basis for their performance which contributes to school, district, province,

and national results (Rasappan, 2010:14; Pazvakavambwa, 2015:45). During the performance appraisal process, the RBM system also identifies performance gaps in the RBPPS component and make the appropriate recommendation that helps institutions to achieve their goals.

The fourth step in the IRBM involves mechanisms to monitor and evaluate the progress made by human resources in the achievement of the planned results. Measurement of performance helps management to tell whether progress is being made towards goal achievement. The RBM&E therefore, reveals the gap between current performance and anticipated results. In public institutions, the RBM&E process helps to ensure the accountability of public officials. That is done by linking public officials' workplace outputs and outcomes with planned goals and then making them account for the gap. In principle, RBM & E ask public officials if they did what they were expected to do (Kaboyakgosi & Mookodi, 2014:5). Public education sector RBM&E tracks and assesses the alignment of the school activities to the intended overarching results.

Monitoring entails tracking performance while evaluation brings in the element of judgment, that is, whether the acceptable level of performance was reached or not. The RBM&E generates important information about school performance that is used in the decision-making process (Thomas, 2005:6; ADB, 2012:4; UNDG, 2011:2; The UN-Habitat, 2017:64). This means that in the two processes of monitoring and evaluation are complementary. Through the act of monitoring, information regarding performance flaws, strengths and challenges is gathered and used to prescribe corrective actions to ensure achievement of the accepted level of performance. Performance data from the RBM&E process may also highlight the complexity of tasks assigned to subordinates and the need to break unrealistic goals into manageable portions. Evaluation as a support process provides management with information on whether the set results were achieved or not. Thus, RBM&E generates information that supports the RBPPS component focusing on goal achievement.

Institutional leadership uses performance data to downsize overstated goals where there is evidence of persistent failure to achieve set targets or upscale understated

goals. The preceding aspect of RBM&E helps both leaders and subordinates to maintain steady progress toward institutional goal achievement. In Zimbabwe, management at different levels within the education sector uses monitoring and evaluation to gather the information that links institutional activities to the sectorial set goals (Thomas, 2005:6). At the school level, monitoring and evaluation constitute important aspects of the school heads' supervisory roles. However, the inclusion of the result element in the processes of monitoring and evaluation implies a shift in school heads' perceptions of it as a casual routine to a purposeful process. A knowledge gap thus exists on whether public school leadership managed transition from the traditional inspection to purposeful results-focused RBM&E with the introduction of IRBM in Zimbabwe.

The fifth attribute of the IRBM system involves the coordination of all the performance elements discussed above to enable them to function systematically. For that supportive role, the IRBM system uses RBMIS. The public education sector uses the RBMIS to facilitate the integration and consolidation of all databases from the monitoring and evaluation process relevant to school improvement (Kaboyakgosi & Mookodi, 2014:6). Also, the RBMIS facilitates and organises the flow of information between producers of the information who are teachers in public schools, and end-users who are school heads, district-level administrators, analysts, decision-makers, and other stakeholders. Thus, whilst the process of RBM&E tracks school performance, the RBMIS identifies and collates the essential information for contribution to lessons learned and the school decision support system (DSS). (Rasappan, 2010:14; Pazvakavambwa & Steyn, 2014:248).

The last complementary attribute of the IRBM process is the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) to provide the best quality and accessible information and services to different stakeholders (Kusek & Rist, 2004:148). Within the public education framework, the RBM system is generally described as a participatory, team-based approach to the planning and execution of school-related activities with a special focus on achieving the desired measurable results (UNESCO, 2008:6; Gutuza, 2016:390). Through the use of ICTs, IRBM encourages the departure from the paper-based office to a new interconnected electronic environment where information is found online together with platforms offering

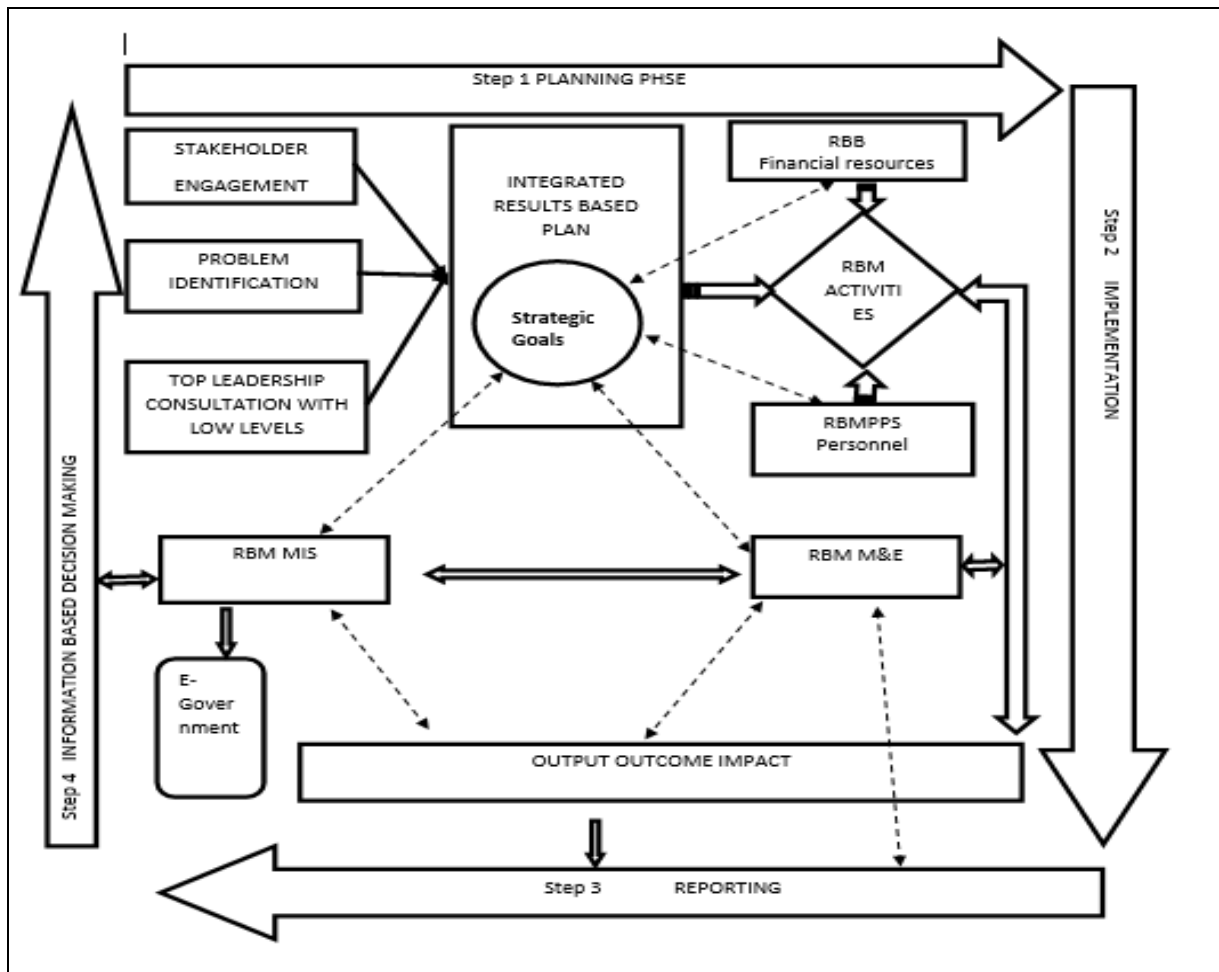
transaction services (Kaboyakgosi & Mookodi, 2014:41). Such an environment enables stakeholders to directly interact with the public sector service providers to make their contributions towards planning, monitoring, and service rating (Kusek & Rist, 2004:148).

The Government of Zimbabwe through the MoPSE has started using ICTs in programs like schools' e-mapping and electronic enrolment of form one students together with supervision of school activities where narrative reports are generated during the process and posted directly to the national platform. In the IRBM process, e-government and RBMIS combine to provide an ICT-based platform that links human resource management to results-based budgeting, implementation monitoring and evaluation for a well-coordinated government system (Kaboyakgosi & Mookodi, 2014:42).

#### **2.2.4.2 The Conceptual model of IRBM**

The IRBM conceptual model presented above highlights the four pillars that support the IRBM process. These are:

1. Result-based management planning;
2. Result-based implementation;
3. Result-based monitoring, evaluation, and reporting;
4. Review and report on results.



**Figure 2.1 The IRBM system conceptual model**

The four elements of RBM form the cornerstones of the model as depicted in Figure.2.1. The personal goals of an employee which are derived from institutional goals and linked to the corporate goals hold the centre of the RBM matrix. The four elements sequentially relate to one another in a result chain where planning is followed by implementation, then monitoring and evaluation leading to performance reporting. The final pillars comprise information-based decision-making. Goal-setting theory places employee goals at the centre of the whole process. Employee goals motivate the planning, implementation, evaluation, and reporting of the results. The present study also examines the different components of RBM as subsystems of the Integrated Result Based Management system IRBM and how they interrelate to influence the required change in the performance of the public sector institutions and the quality of change.

## **2.3 Conditions for effective implementation of RBM in public schools**

According to Heslin et al., (2009:89), performance management involves all initiatives taken by management to guide and motivate high performance. As a performance management system, the RBM would do well in an environment where its functions and organs are understood and supported by leadership. The conditions spelled hereunder support the effective implementation of RBM in the public education sector.

### **2.3.1 The need for a strong and supportive leadership**

A critical managerial function required for an effective RBM system is effective and supportive leadership. Hale (2004:9) describes leadership in a performance-based management system as a beacon for performance. According to Vahamaki et al., (2011:46), analysts of the RBM system contend that strong and supportive leadership has a greater role in enhancing RBM effectiveness than technical skills. From the preceding discussion, it follows that guidance on the successful implementation of RBM in public schools should emphasise the visibility of empowered senior MoPSE on the ground. The said officials would need to demonstrate their sound understanding and full support of the RBM system to build trust and confidence among the lower-level workers. At the institutional level, Try & Radnor (2007:655) recommend the transformation of leadership from ordinary managers to results-based managers as the starting point in building supportive leadership. Such leadership will then be subjected to regular capacity development to keep them abreast with the changes in the RBM field (Mayne, 2007:3). Similarly, Vahamaki et al., (2011:46) recommend the following actions in the process of building strong leadership with the capacity for RBM advocacy in public schools:

- I. Building a knowledge base among top leadership through training, constantly talking about RBM, conducting RBM quizzes during workshops, and initiating platforms for leaders to demonstrate how RBM can be used to improve performance;
- II. Provide support to school heads and district education officials who experiment with new methods of doing things and respect their management autonomy;



- III. Provide platforms for school heads and other education officials to showcase their RBM success stories and display achievement which can be incorporated into the cluster, district, or provincial merit awards;
- IV. Encourage and support RBM-related peer review and championship exercises;
- V. Provision of a budget and material resources for RBM training;
- VI. Promote the acquisition of RBM-related expertise through setting up RBM resource centres at cluster and district levels.

Leadership support builds confidence in the subordinates. Latham, (2004:127) views delegation of duties in result-oriented environments as a gesture of trust by top leadership and validation that subordinates can deliver. Such trust motivates employees who endeavour to keep their self-efficacy high. The use of the preceding strategies by senior leadership in the public sector schools is likely to increase appreciation of the RBM system and hence increase its uptake and effectiveness.

Effective leadership in RBM also manifests through other acts such as the provision of clear goals and guidance on objectives achievement. According to Latham et al., (2008:392) leadership has a role to assign targets and provide the rationale for working on them. Correspondingly, Robbins & Judge (2017:44) contend that through executing the organising function of management, leadership defines and prioritises tasks to be performed. Effective implementation of RBM also requires leadership to provide the resources needed to accomplish the tasks. To be able to execute the above functions, leadership needs to be articulate and enthusiastic. A common problem associated with leadership in most RBM-implementing institutions is the drive to produce reports without having done the work. Vahamaki & Verger, (2019:19) explain the preceding leadership challenge in terms of a drift by management towards responsive leadership more than being responsible leaders. Responsive leadership complies with the RBM processes, even through the use of unorthodox means, while responsible leadership commits to the managerial functions required to meet the demands of RBM. Over and above the element of prescribing the road to result achievement, result-based leadership also plays a critical role in giving informative feedback to supervisees during performance

reviews. This has the overall effect of improving school performance (Pointon & Ryan, 2004:515).

### **2.3.2 The importance of creating a result-focused culture in school**

The effectiveness of the RBM system is mostly a function of leadership's ability to demonstrate a clear appreciation of a result-oriented performance culture and support for new ways of management (Meier, 2003:6). However, Bester (2012:30) claims that establishing a result culture in organisations is the most difficult aspect of RBM as a performance management approach. The RBM system is anchored on the principles of accountability, transparency, and production of tangible results which subjects public sector employees to work-related pressure. The preceding RBM principles thus, create an impression of a burdensome RBM system that attracts criticisms against it.

Creating a result-oriented culture in public schools require placing managers with an urge for performance information at different levels in the system and building momentum for them to make informed decisions based on such information (Mayne, 2007:3). In concurrence, Mutambatuwisi et al., (2016:92) view getting the right people into the right jobs as a critical condition for enhancing a results-oriented culture in schools. This suggests that for RBM to significantly influence performance public institutions, there is need to strategically place people who intentionally demand performance information and use it to make decisions on a regular basis in key positions. At the school level, the preceding description implies an administrative structure in which school heads at the highest level have an informed desire for performance information followed by the deputy heads, sectional heads, and heads of departments. In that setup, the demand for performance information and its use permeates all sections of the institution vertically and horizontally through the structures making the operationalisation of RBM effective (Wael, 2015:27; UN-habitat, 2017:10).

A result-oriented performance culture also requires institutionalised incentives that motivate staff members to participate in the RBM processes (UN-Habitat, 2017:11). This means that setting results alone may not be enough to change the way employees work or view their work if it is not supported by some benefits. Inculcating

a culture of results within an organisation, thus, requires the support of a clearly defined structure of commensurate benefits for achieving particular results. Similar views were expressed earlier by Kusek and Rist (2004:154) who underscored the need to introduce and use incentives to encourage performance and use of information. Mutambatuwisi et al., (2016:92) posit that it has been proven by research that incentives inspire result-oriented culture institutions. Such incentives take various forms. Research has also confirmed that without incentives the possibility of a result-oriented culture in institutions is greatly compromised (Hatton & Schroeder, 2007:430). This is so because without such, other ways of dealing with non-performance are not devastating enough to influence behaviour change. Linked to the above notion, acknowledging and rewarding success where it is due would also need to be balanced off by consistent administration of corrective action in areas characterised by underperformance. However, Kusek & Rist (2004:154) caution institutions against punishing messengers to encourage organisational learning. The UNFPA (2019:19) concurs with the preceding view and proposes five RBM principle support standards for the effective implementation of RBM that include;

- a. Ensuring the existence of systems, procedures, and practices within the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education to support a result culture; such as the promotion of adequate use of RBM systems, granting institutional leadership autonomy to manage adaptively for results, and provision of timely guidance to institutions on RBM office practices;
- b. Promotion and use of result information at all levels of management (using monetary and non-monetary incentives and recognition of RBM champions;
- c. Putting a robust RBM accountability system that supports learning such as platforms to demonstrate that RBM has changed the school status, that some learning has taken place, and generally demonstrating the conduct of a good RBM system;
- d. Provision of a conducive environment for learning, risk-taking, and management tolerance of mistakes in the process of RBM learning; and

- e. Equipping staff with the right skills.

Gwata (2019:3) highlights two major areas that foster a result-oriented culture in institutions which are first, linking resources allocated to expected results and ensuring individual and institutional accountability to all stakeholders. In the preceding context, institutions will be compelled to explain actions and take liability overall consequences of the decision on the resources allocated. Secondly, the system generates results if communication is two-way. Feedback from beneficiaries, followed by action enhances focus on results.

### **2.3.3 Sustainable partnerships and result ownership in schools**

Accountability for results is key to the effective implementation of the RBM system (UNDG, 2011:3). According to Meier (2003:6), important ingredients for accountability in RBM include shared expectations and shared management decisions. Also, the level of control through participation in designing and planning an intervention determines the participants' sense of ownership and their potential to relate and account for results. In the same vein, Hatton and Schroeder (2007:429) contend that stakeholder participation in an RBM process is a key success factor in ensuring their buy-in and identification with the system. Related best practices include the involvement of all stakeholder representatives in designing a strategic result framework with clear objectives aligned to the strategy and linked to the institutional resources supported by a related risk assessment (Mayne 2007:3). In public schools, the inclusion of teachers in such an initiative helps to build a sense of ownership of the system and responsibility for the set results (Locke & Latham, 2002:706; Hatton & Schroeder, 2007:429). The practice also implores schools to set fairly reasonable expected results and clear targets that relate and add value to the teachers' jobs and milestone indicators that fall within reach (Mayne 2007:7). Such a process requires the involvement of both parties, the supervisee who works to achieve the results and the supervisor who monitors and reports on the activities and processes to jointly participate in the result framing exercise.

### **2.3.4 The use of performance-based information to make decisions**

One of the basic functions of the RBM system is to generate information for decision-making processes about the organisation's current performance and future prospects (UNESCO, 2008:6). Such a function makes performance information a vital element of the performance management system (Fryer et al., 2009:490). Effective implementation of the RBM system, therefore, rests on credible performance information that is used to reinforce good behaviour and inform on areas for improvement (Mayne, 2007:7). Such information can be captured on well-designed performance appraisal agreement forms. According to Zinyama et al., (2015:5) the five factors that influence the effective utilisation of performance information are:

1. The timely arrival of information needed for consequential decisions which are somewhere near the beginning of the decision-making process;
2. Presentation of information in a concise, simple non-technical way understandable to decision-makers;
3. Use of trustworthy sources of information;
4. Defining standard norms to guide all RBM processes and
5. Customising the RBM system to the local environment and use of specific appropriate guides.

In public schools, performance information from RBM can be requested at the departmental level within the school where heads of departments (HoDs) can use it to deploy teachers, arrange staff development workshops in cases where the performance levels fall short of the departmental expectations and recommend them for promotion or rewards in cases where performance level is good. If such use of performance information is escalated from school to the district, provincial level, and beyond during an RBM performance cycle, with information being used for the intended purposes, it may help both supervisors and supervisees to give serious consideration to the RBM processes which enhance its effectiveness.

### **2.3.5 Simplification of the data collection instrument**

As a management system, RBM is largely compromised by the failure of implementers to comprehend the measurement aspect. According to Bester (2012:32), owing to the overly complicated measurement system in RBM, a majority of people end up measuring everything including the insignificant aspects. Literature also attests that RBM is further complicated by a lack of clarity of indicators and the multiplicity of reporting structures. In support of the preceding view Muranda et al., (2015:99) describe the complicated multi-stakeholder reporting structure for RBM in Zimbabwe as comprising the line Ministry, PSC, and the Salary Services Bureau. All with different perspectives on the characteristics of results. Literature also identified the use of loosely defined targets and indicators as the most common problem associated with RBM. Bester (2012:32) describes the preceding scenario as caused by the notion that "not everything that is measured is important and not everything important is measured". A panacea to the above-highlighted challenge lies in crafting a simplified model and a short appraisal form for civil servants. Similarly, Andersen et al., (2008:13) proffer a suggestion that involves the use of simplified data-capturing instruments with clear instructions to ensure the effectiveness of the RBM system. The tools should also be easily accessible and linked to well-structured incentives. As a best practice, the RBM guiding manual and data collection tool requires the use of simple language for ease of understanding by all.

### **2.4 Implications of the Goal Setting Theory on RBM in schools**

The RBM system implemented in public sector schools in Zimbabwe is built around the tenets of goal-setting theory. As a performance management system, RBM instills purpose, challenge, meaning, and direction into the work of public sector education employees (Latham, 2004:126). The results focus on the RBM process to motivate public school managers and their subordinates to work towards set goals. Hence, the results serve as an inbuilt causal mechanism for employees to perform effectively and efficiently in the ways explained below.

*a. Setting the direction for school performance.*

RBM planning is an integral component of the leadership's managerial responsibilities in both private and public institutions. In the public education sector, the planning process led by school heads set the direction to be taken by the schools through prioritisation and focusing of resources on common goals (UN-Habitat, 2017:20). Set goals define the schools' performance aspirations and they influence the choice of appropriate methodologies and activities to be pursued to produce desired results. Emphasis on results in the RBM planning process highlights a paradigm shift in the leadership's perceptions about the importance of inputs, processes, and procedures as determinants of what institutions could do, to focus on the actual results. Thus, planned results serve as the final destination and a pull factor that directs that guide all other operations within the schools. The preceding result-focused characteristic of RBM planning has been described as planning in the reverse from the right hand to the left, starting with defining the anticipated output, outcome, and impact (ADB, 2006:6, Wael, 2015:28). When applied to public school administration, the RBM system implores school heads to define the level of the expected change in schools and direct all the critical elements of the jobs towards the set goals (Latham, 2004:126). In that way, RBM helps school management to recognise and concentrate on relevant and important aspects of the job and leave out those aspects with no contribution to the ultimate results.

*b. Regulating the behaviour of school heads and teachers through goal clarity*

The second way in which goal setting influences performance in RBM processes is by providing clarity to the expected level of performance at both institutional and organisational levels. Clearly defined result statements in schools' RBM system provide a standard level of teacher performance, which induces personal satisfaction in them (Locke & Latham, 2006:265). The use of anticipated results as performance benchmarks for teachers in schools causes them to effectively monitor their progress toward set goals. When the goals are supported by realistic performance indicators, they inform both supervisors and supervisees of the need to adjust their efforts to align with the challenge. Thus, goals in the RBM process highlight the performance gaps and implore members to mobilise energy towards achieving a satisfactory level

of performance (Lunenborg, 2011:4). However, the regulatory effect of goals in the school performance is in part based on the assumptions that the value of goal achievement is intrinsically embedded in the teachers and school heads and also that the achievement of goals is reinforced through other means.

*c. Motivating teachers to increase their level of effort*

Thirdly, agreed result projections and institutional goals which are meaningful to teachers and school administrators in RBM implore the educators to work beyond the scope of their normal routines, to attain the goals (Latham, 2004:127). Such goals serve as dangled carrots in a stick and carrot model of motivation. When a percentage pass rate is set as a KRA in public schools implementing RBM, school heads and teachers may opt to conduct vacation school lessons, and after-school or weekend classes to surpass the set goal. Such behaviour is described as persistence which is motivated by the goal-setting pull factor. Latham (2004:127) posits that high goals lead to prolonged efforts while tight deadlines induce a rapid and intense work pace. The preceding form of motivation can also be explained in the context of achievement motivation.

*d. Encouragement to innovate*

Finally, the theory postulates that challenging results, invoke the discovery and arousal of latent task-relevant skills and knowledge leading to the formulation and implementation of the best strategies that match the goal complexity (Locke & Latham, 2002:706). In public sector result-based management practices, set results that are challenging foster a desire to operate at a higher performance level in the employees (Sides & Cuevas, 2020:3). In the school system, such behaviour is premised on the notion that when dealing with the usual moderate goals, teachers use existing skills, but when anticipated results and goals are highly pitched and complex, they naturally move out of the comfort zone to pull task-oriented knowledge into awareness (Locke & Latham, 2006:265; Obasan & Sotunde, 2011:116). Thus, RBM provides a challenging environment that influences behavioural change among teachers in schools. However, for the results-based management system to induce the above-stated workplace behaviour in schools, the underpinning theory makes assumptions about the existence of conditions highlighted hereunder.



#### **2.4.1 Goal setting assumptions that enhance effective RBM implementation**

The effectiveness of the RBM system in public schools is premised on a set of four critical assumptions. Firstly, the notion that RBM yields better results in school environments where individual teacher goals and objectives are aligned with school goals (Heslin et al., 2009:104). Through the synchronisation of the individual and school goals and objectives, the RBM system implores education sector employees at different levels to contribute their part to the overall result, thus directing individual effort towards the significant aspects of their jobs.

The second assumption is that fairly difficult, but achievable results elicit the desire among teachers to work hard to achieve those (Locke & Latham, 2006:265). Guided by the above-stated assumption, effective implementation of RBM in public schools requires leadership and subordinates to set and agree on realistic work objectives that are stretchy to induce higher-level performance (Latham, 2004:126; Lunenburg, 2011:1). In the education sector, planned high-level results which are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-framed serve as a reference point to teaching and non-teaching staff in their daily activities than loosely defined vague result statements that allow for a variety of performance levels (Locke & Latham, 2002:706).

The third assumption for effective implementation of the RBM system in the public sector relates to the acceptability of the planned goal and objectives to the end users (Lunenburg, 2011:4). To ensure the acceptability of results, institutions such as schools are encouraged to involve employees in the process of defining anticipated results to ensure buy-in and ownership. Locke and Latham (2002:707) concur with the preceding view in their contention that the instruction " *do this without explaining kills the spirit,*" and hence the need to involve subordinates in the conceptualisation of the goals and results for them to understand and appreciate their importance. Thus, the theory implores institutions to build an understanding of RBM meaning among members through training and advocacy as a prerequisite for its acceptance.

Finally, the RBM system assumes that the meaningful periodic feedback is a key ingredient in the effective management of schools. According to London et al. (2004:326), employees such as teachers in public schools need feedback to

calibrate their performance and adjust. Thus, goals work with feedback to enhance performance. Miner (2005:166) explained goal feedback and performance relationship in the workplace as comprising employees' use of set goals to measure their level of performance and feedback to adjust upwards or maintain the level. In summary, the goals can moderate employees' behaviour if they are used in the evaluation of employee performance (Miner, 2005:166).

## **2.5 Motivation to sustain RBM among school heads in public schools**

Literature surveys on the challenges compromising the effectiveness of RBM in the Zimbabwean public sector indicate that low enthusiasm and limited stakeholder buy-in negatively affected the operationalisation of the system (Madhekeni, 2012:125-6; Mavhiki et al., 2013). In summary, the major impediment to the implementation of RBM in Zimbabwe is a cluster of behavioural elements that affect the employees' predisposition to effectively perform. Such elements can be addressed by manipulating the motivational elements in the public education sector. The next section examines theories of motivation that relate to the behaviour of teachers during the process of executing tasks associated with the RBM system.

### **2.5.1 Motivation theories that relate to RBM implementation**

According to Beardwell et al., (2004:504) motivation is about motives and needs. Luthans (2011:157) examined motivation from the Latin root word "*movere*" meaning to move and described it as a process that starts with a psychological or physiological need that triggers an action to address the deficiency. The preceding description implies that needs exist where there is an imbalance and they create the urge or drive to offset the imbalance with the incentive. The ultimate goal in a motivation process is to satisfy a need. Referring to the workplace, Beardwell et al., (2004:504) described motives as internal drives that energise school personnel and influence their behaviour toward the achievement of results. Motivation thus enables workers to be more productive and effective in executing their roles. However, what motivates employees often changes constantly, hence providing a management challenge of knowing the best motivation package for their employees. In trying to explain the different motivators, scholars came up with several theories of motivation.

### **2.5.1.1 Linking the RBM process to the achievement motivation theory**

Achievement motivation theory focuses on three motives and relates them to the behaviour of individuals in the workplace. According to Miner (2005:48), all motives are learned, and as people grow, they associate positive and negative feelings with certain things around them. This implies that the reason to perform an act or work towards achieving a certain result is influenced by values that are learnt. Thus, performance is value driven and is influenced by the awareness of the potential to succeed. Based on the study of managers, McClelland (1985) proposed the achievement motivation theory which postulates that human behaviour is influenced by three motives, (a) need for achievement, (b) need for affiliation and (c) need for power (Armstrong, 2014:172; Robbins & Judge, 2017:708). Achievement motives are associated with the urge to complete challenging goals, taking calculated risks, and receptiveness to good feedback (Miner, 2005:48). This suggests that setting challenging but achievable results in a performance management system induces the desire among workers to perform at a higher level in order to achieve the goals. In the context of school RBM, SMART result statements with achievable targets provides motivation for educators to work towards achieving them. However, the achievement motivation theory warns against stating overambitious goals as they have the potential to elicit unintended results. Armstrong (2014:172) described motive as the need for competitive success measured against a personal standard of excellence. The affiliation motive induces strong feelings toward teamwork, a sense of belonging, collaboration, and being appreciated (Miner, 2005:48; Armstrong, 2014:172). The need for power prompts the desire to control others and make them behave in ways they would not have done (Robbins & Judge, 2017:250). It also makes individuals enjoy competition, status, and recognition (Miner, 2005:48). Of the three motives, the need to achieve was found to be the strongest (Robbins & Judge, 2017:250). All three categories of needs stated above are premised on different sets of values and goals.

The importance of the achievement theory of motivation to the implementation of RBM in public schools goes beyond the mere categorisation of teachers as supervisees and school heads as supervisors. It also divides the employees' motives into achievement-seeking, affiliation-seeking, and power-seeking. Based on the

preceding groups, school heads are challenged to have an in-depth understanding of the people they are managing. That knowledge is critical in shaping the leadership decisions about how to support the teachers and also utilise the subordinates' motives and capacity to the best advantage of the schools. According to Miner (2005:48), leaders need to understand what motivates their subordinates to have and how they respond to feedback. Such background information helps school heads in public schools to alter their styles of leadership to get the best out of their staff members (Mulikita, 2000) cited in (Shangahaidonhi, 2013:581). Thus, the achievement motivation theory helps school heads nurture appropriate conditions for enhanced performance. Whilst giving clear instructions with specific challenging and time-framed goals may elicit feelings of pleasure in educators with a strong desire to achieve, it may not bring out the best in the power-seeking group (Miner, 2005:48). The achievement-seeking attribute in RBM also suggests the need to group RBM goals in clusters that put into consideration different conditions and resource capacities in schools such as the former multiracial secondary schools code-named S1 schools; urban high-density schools coded S2, and rural day secondary schools coded S3 to avoid creating impressions of in-achievable goals which demotivate teachers. The theories, however provide a context of a standardised work environment in a stable economy which may be different from the MoPSE situation in several ways. For instance, educators in Zimbabwe are amongst the lowly paid employees (Chireshe & Shumba, 2011:113). Owing to the above stated work environment, employees tend to shun away from achievement motives to a survival mode of operation where they question the benefit of completing the given assignment.

### **2.5.1.2 The influence of expectancy theory on RBM implementation**

Expectancy theory states that the strength of an individual to act in a certain way is influenced by the strength of the expected outcome and its attractiveness (Robbins & Judge, 2017:270). Correspondingly, Beardwell et al., (2004:514) argue that behaviour is voluntary and employees in the workplace choose behavioural options that they believe will lead to the most desirable rewards. They further stress that as rational beings' employees often choose options that lead to economic maximisation. According to Armstrong (2014:174), motivation is a product of valence,

instrumentality, and expectations, where the valence refers to the value; instrumentality is the belief that one action will lead to the other, and expectancy is the assumption that the effort will lead to an outcome. In an RBM system in public schools, staff members often ask themselves three critical questions:

1. What is in it for me?
2. How hard will I have to work for what is in it for me?
3. What are my chances of getting a reward if I do what my supervisor wants?  
(Beardwell et al., 2004:514).

Responses and behaviours associated with the preceding questions in a workplace were presented by Robbins & Judge (2017:267) as an effort-performance, performance-reward, and finally reward - personal goal and need linkages. The expectancy theory states that employees will apply more effort to their work if they perceive the existence of a strong link between effort and performance, performance and reward, and reward and personal goals. A review of the literature on the expectancy theory indicates that managers have a limited range of rewards they can offer and they tend to assume that all employees want the same thing (Robbins & Judge, 2017:267) Thus, overlooking the effect of differentiation of rewards. The expectancy theory also suggests that the capacity of employees' benefits (salaries, bonuses, and allowances) to satisfy employee needs is a higher-order component of motivation.

From the preceding discussion, effective implementation of the RBM system in public secondary schools requires a motivated workforce and inquisitive management that seeks to understand the different levels at which their subordinates are operating and choose appropriate reinforcement techniques for positive behaviour. Such understanding of the human resources component in the RBM process complemented by management's understanding of the rules governing RBM helps to enhance effectiveness in the system.

## **2.6 Summary of the theoretical framework**

Chapter two examined the literature on the theoretical framework of RBM. The RBM theory was defined and its origins were traced. Tracking the origins of RBM revealed

that it evolved from the management by objective concept taking different names at different stages. The term results-based management was coined in 1990 and was equated with a management philosophy that sought to address the efficiency and effectiveness matters in public sector institutions. Objectives of RBM were examined in this chapter. The chapter also examined the phases of RBM and its characteristics. Four pillars of RBM namely, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, and reporting were described each with its characteristics and related activities. The IRBM system implemented in Zimbabwe was explained and its conceptual model was presented graphically in this chapter. Conditions that support the effective implementation of RBM theory were outlined and explained. The RBM result process that starts with proper result planning followed by implementation, then evaluation and reporting was highlighted in this chapter. The preceding activities unfold during an RBM cycle through 12 stages that are generally referred to as the RBM procedures. The implications of goal-setting theory on RBM were discussed together with other theories of motivation that explain the behaviour of workers during the RBM process.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter reviews related literature on the use of results-based management (RBM) system in public sector institutions in general and public schools in particular. The chapter proceeds by examining literature perceptions about the impact of the RBM system on the developing and developed economies of the world. A survey of related literature on cases of RBM implementation from North America, Europe, Asia and Africa was presented in this chapter. Positive developments linked to the implementation of RBM in the public sector were highlighted. Literature on the relevance of the RBM system to the school head's administrative roles was examined. Also, the challenges of applying the different RBM activities around the cycle to school management were scrutinised. The chapter also reviewed the literature on the perceived effectiveness of the RBM in public schools. The gap that exists in the literature about RBM implementation was examined and finally, a summary of chapter 3 highlighted the important takeaways.

#### **3.2 Literature perceptions of the impact of RBM in the global context**

There are divergent views regarding the effectiveness of RBM as a public sector management approach across the globe. On one hand, there is a general perception that the RBM system has been implemented with a remarkable degree of success in developed countries. On the other hand, some research seems to suggest that more than two decades after its inception, very few institutions can claim to have been successful in adopting and using RBM effectively to change their status (Mayne, 2007:87; Pazvakavambwa & Steyn, 2014:245). The preceding view validates the argument that different institutions are at different stages of appreciating and implementing the RBM system (OECD, 2018:6). Thus, whilst some institutions are still exploring the meaning of RBM, others have already reached advanced stages in the implementation process. The effectiveness of the RBM system in the public sector, therefore, varies with the different levels at which individuals or institutions are operating along the continuum of RBM understanding and institutionalisation. A

review of related literature on the motivation to implement RBM in different countries and the resultant experiences from the different models was done in the next section to provide insights into perceptions forming behaviours at the different stages.

### **3.2.1 The international cases highlighting RBM implementation models**

This section examines the experiences of five countries from North America, Europe, Asia, and Africa respectively that introduced RBM for different reasons and witnessed varying degrees of success. The selected countries provide insights into the political, social, and economic conditions prevailing in both developed and developing economies and how the conditions influenced the success or failure of the RBM system. A comparison of the highlighted cases and the Zimbabwean model of IRBM enables the readers to relate RBM implementation successes and challenges with global experiences. Literature perceives the political environment, economic conditions, and support from leadership, stakeholder buy-in, and institutional ability to adopt result-oriented work culture in the host country as key to the success of public sector RBM (Meier, 2003:2; Mavhiki et al., 2013:135; Gwata, 2013:46). However, the above conditions differ with countries which creates a knowledge gap on how to bridge the environmental factors to effectively implement the RBM system. Also, a review of the literature on RBM cases helps to put the MoPSE RBM implementation into perspective.

#### **a. The Canadian model of education sector RBM system**

Canada is one of the earliest countries to embrace the RBM system in its education sector. The rationale for Canadian RBM was to address the public concerns on the state regarding non-accountability, inefficiency, and ineffectiveness of government institutions in the face of escalating national debt (CIDA, 1999:3). Similar conditions existed in Zimbabwe and also contributed to the implementation of IRBM system (Mavhiki et al., 2013:135). Thus, the literature survey on the Canadian RBM system provides insights into the applicability of the RBM system to the public education sector. Besides the introduction of RBM across the government department in Canada, literature zooms into the use of the RBM system in the Canadian education sector to highlight the impact on instructional delivery.



Quebec, in Canada, is one case where the RBM system was introduced in the public education sector as a tool for pedagogical supervision. The purpose of the RBM system was to support school heads' systematic use of the management principles of planning, coordination, evaluation, and control in their routine supervisory duties (April & Bouchamma, 2017:85). In that way, the Canadian RBM system envisioned to support school heads' roles through enhanced focus on the planned results and systematically monitor and evaluate the teachers' work. It also helped school heads as institutional managers to make recommendations for adjustments to their subordinates' initial plans to maintain focus on the desired change (Javed et al., 2019:24). However, on the negative side, school heads perceived the RBM system as an extra burden to the already overburdened administrators (April & Bouchamma, 2017:83). Further to that, school heads with a limited appreciation of quantitative data viewed the RBM system as too complex and hence discreetly applied it. School heads in Quebec also felt that RBM creates anxiety and tension between schools in terms of their obligation to perform and succeed given the variations in their abilities to support the needs of RBM (April & Bouchamma, 2017:83). Some schools are better placed and well-resourced such that they can easily support teaching and learning needs required to achieve good results whilst others are badly placed and endowed with very limited resources to support student achievements. Such variations cause disparities in the operationalisation of RBM.

To support the implementation of RBM, the Canadian government used advocacy, the mantra "results for Canadians" to inspire innovative ways of management (Idea International, 2003:24; Lahey, 2010:3). As a result, political will at a high level and a clear RBM implementation roadmap helped to ensure the success of the change initiative. However, despite the long history of RBM implementation, Canada has also registered a fairly sizable number of challenges which include a weak monitoring and evaluation system characterised by insufficient details (Lahey, 2010:3). Besides that, Try & Radnor (2007:657) also describe the Canadian RBM implementation process as having been impeded by the challenges associated with the Canadian bureaucracy.

## **b. Application of the RBM system in Sweden**

The Swedish RBM system highlights the importance of prelaunch consultations and the need to customise RBM to the local conditions. Sweden embraced the RBM system in its public sector and the international development arm of government and significantly improved its operations. The Swedish motivation for adopting RBM was in line with the dominant philosophy of western political democracies of the time that stressed the need to deliver on reforms promised during the pre-election period by any winning government. After every election, political ideas, such as a focus on results, became top of the agenda's institutionalised practices in Sweden. Successive governments strived to live up to their promises by taking the initiative to advance the cause of the results on an incremental basis (Vahamaki, 2015:1). Thus, the Swedish RBM system carried political significance.

Among other functions, the RBM system served the purpose of ensuring accountability of political leadership to the citizens and transparency of public sector operations (Vahamaki, 2015:8). To strengthen the RBM agenda, the Swedish government widely consulted both its internal and external stakeholders to ensure buy-in (OECD, 2017:6). Alongside the preceding initiative, the Swedish implementation agency also emphasised flexibility, context specificity, and adaptive application of the RBM system rather than the straight jacket approach (OECD, 2017:6). This means that the Swedish RBM model catered for variations in the institutional differences in terms of their capacity and also their needs. As a management approach, the Swedish RBM avoided the use of a standardised result framework, preferring to put more emphasis on learning and mutual dialogue at different levels rather than accountability based on quantifiable results (OECD, 2017:6). Sweden also leveraged the use of communication technologies for advocacy and periodic engagement of partners capacitating them and making them accountable for their results (OECD, 2017:6). Such a background nurtured the appreciation of the RBM system and also enhanced its effectiveness. An important lesson for Zimbabwe is that, whilst the overarching rationale for public sector RBM in both Zimbabwe and Sweden was the same. That is to ensure accountability and transparency in government operations. The difference was that, the Swedish RBM model paid particular attention to the need to secure buy-in and also recognised the

differences between institutional capacities to implement RBM. Hence, the success of the Swedish RBM system was hinged on flexibility of the system and emphasis on learning rather than concentrating on quantified evaluations.

### **c. The rationale for RBM and implementation challenges in the Philippines**

The case of the Filipino RBM system demonstrates the use of RBM as a human resource management tool. It relates to the application of results-based PPS to the Zimbabwean public school system RBM. In the Philippines, the RBM system was introduced to assist organisations to ensure that employees work hard to achieve the organisational mission and objectives. According to Dizon et al., (2018:485), the RBM system was meant to set expectations for employees' performance and motivate them to work hard in ways expected by their organisations. The role of the RBM system in the Philippines is to ensure that the civil service took responsibility to deliver on government policies efficiently and effectively (Asian Development Bank, 2012:45). In line with the above view, the Philippine public education sector embraced RBM as a management tool to measure teaching and non-teaching staff performance in schools. However, research findings by Dizon et al., (2018:495), suggest that the Philippine RBM was tainted by:

- i. Absence of follow-up reviews;
- ii. High anxiety associated with the burden of paperwork;
- iii. Infrequent feedback;
- iv. Raters' inconsistencies and;
- v. The effects of recency bias.

The authors argue that without feedback, RBM loses meaning and if feedback is delayed, then its whole purpose is defeated.

### **d. Implementation of RBM in the public sector in Thailand**

Thailand presents a case of a good initiative by the government to prepare the country for the changeover to RBM system. Furthermore, the case of Thailand RBM demonstrates the importance of packaging change in phases and also the implications of stakeholders buy in. Thailand introduced the RBM system in 2003 against a background of finite resources that needed to be used properly to the best

advantage of the greater majority (Col et al., 2006:6). To ensure efficient use of the limited resources and improve the quality of services, the Thai government introduced the RBM system in a phased approach, starting with the civil service which was transformed into a flexible, adaptive, and client needs responsive workforce (Dorotinsky et al., 2011:3). To prepare for the launch of the RBM system across government departments, Thailand piloted the use of RBM in selected provinces and districts using volunteers who were encouraged to experiment with a variety of reengineering efforts to improve service delivery (Col et al., 2006:6). Feedback from the pilot studies and the Royal Decree on good governance that sanctioned all departments to participate in RBM set the tone for the launch of RBM in Thailand. This shows that, for the Thai government, thorough preparation for the launch of RBM system was of paramount importance as it helped to ensure buy-in. Also Thailand viewed RBM as a change initiative that needed to be broken down into meaningful and palatable chunks to ensure successful and effective implementation. As a result of the preceding initiatives, the Thai RBM system witnessed gradual growth over the following two decades.

#### **e. The example from the Ugandan RBM system**

In Africa, Uganda embraced the system of RBM monitoring and evaluation from the 1990s to transform its public sector operations and focus on effective poverty alleviation (Hauge, 2001:4). To ensure a successful and effective RBM system, the government of Uganda demonstrated a strong commitment to effective public service delivery by placing special emphasis on consultations with both internal and external stakeholders, transparent budget processes, and decentralisation of decision-making (Hauge, 2001:5; Kaboyakgosi & Mookodi, 2014:9). The Ugandan government supported the change initiative through the use of education for public awareness, capacity building, instituting an enabling legal framework, and provision of incentives to the civil servants. In support of the preceding view, Hauge (2001:18) posits that the best way to ascertain that managers are motivated to achieve results is to align incentives with the results. This implies that, effective RBM implementation requires leadership to buy into the change initiative in order for them to support it. Such buy-in can be enhanced by the use of a well-structured incentive system. According to Kusek and Rist (2004:32), the process of building an RBM monitoring

and evaluation system is a political activity that is complemented by some technical dimensions. In that vein, the success of the system is largely a function of the political will of the government leadership. From the cases examined above, the literature highlights variations in the manner of RBM adoption in different countries. The following section examines the implementation of RBM in the Zimbabwean public sector to link the Zimbabwean RBM system to the international context.

### **3.3 The Implementation format of the IRBM in Zimbabwe**

The Zimbabwean model of the RBM system is characterised by five key performance elements, namely planning, budgeting, personnel planning, monitoring and evaluation together with decision making based on performance information. Introduction of the Integrated Results-Based Management (IRBM) system in the public sector was in part to address performance challenges arising from the disharmony in the planning, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation. As a panacea to the preceding challenge, the Zimbabwean RBM system combined the key performance elements outlined above in an integrated way in order for them to function as one result focused system. The term used to describe the Zimbabwean model is IRBM and its components are the Integrated Development Plan (IDP); Results-Based Budget (RBB); Results-Based Personnel Planning System (RBPPS); Results-Based Monitoring and Evaluation (RBM&E) and Results-Based Management Information System (RBMIS) which is also referred to as the E-Government (Madhekeni, 2012:125; Mutambatuwisi et al., 2016:88). The IRBM introduced in Zimbabwe borrowed heavily from the Malaysian RBM (Mundondo et al., 2019:145). As a system, IRBM combines several processes in government to achieve pre-determined results (Kaboyakgosi & Mookodi, 2014:41).

Several stakeholders are interested and involved in the discharge of IRBM in the Zimbabwean public sector. The Ministry of Economic Planning and Investment Promotion in Zimbabwe has the responsibility to spearhead strategic planning leading to the formulation of the IDP. Budgeting of financial resources to support the realisation of the IDP is done by the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development. The Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, through its proxy, the Public Service Commission (PSC) takes care of the human resource component. The MoPSE as

the custodian public education in Zimbabwe thus, supervises personnel employed by the PSC and resourced by the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (MoFED) (Madhekeni, 2012:127). In addition to the involvement of the above-stated government ministries and agent, implementation of IRBM in Zimbabwe is also an initiative of the Office of the President and Cabinet (OPC) which has the overall responsibility over it. The above characteristic of the Zimbabwean RBM theory presents challenges with regards to smooth coordination of activities and standardisation of results which are viewed through different lenses. The multi sectorial reporting structure in the Zimbabwean RBM system, thus, creates challenges in the harmonisation of the different components.

### **3.3.1 The Zimbabwean phases of implementing RBM system**

The RBM system in the school system strives to generate performance information for accountability to external stakeholders and internally for learning and decision making (Binnendijk, 2000:10). Schools' external stakeholders refer to all interested parties such as ministry officials, funding agents, parents and development partners who have vested interests in the school performance information. Internal stakeholders in the Zimbabwe school system are school heads and teachers who use RBM as a tool collect data for decision making. To achieve the above stated goal, the RBM process follows a clearly defined path comprising three main phases, namely, the strategic planning phase; the performance measurement phase; and finally the integrated evaluation and learning phase. Disaggregated, the three phases comprise twelve distinct processes related to planning, implementation, and decision making on the basis of performance information, which are highlighted below (UNESCO, 2008: 8; Javed et al., 2019:24).

#### **3.3.1.1 The planning phase**

The planning phase involves a thorough examination of the problem at hand by top leadership, followed by the delineation of the desired change and planning of related ways and means to achieve the desired change (UN-Habitat, 2017:21). Further planning in the school RBM system involves budgeting and setting performance indicators. Whilst planning forms a basic component of the school head's job, RBM

planning in the public school system challenges school leadership to strive to address the following questions;

1. What is the undesirable situation in the school?
2. What does the school want to achieve/ change?
3. How would the school achieve the change?
4. What resources are required for the school to execute the planned activities and what are the associated risks?
5. How would the school know that change has been achieved?

Thus, the sequencing of the steps followed in the planning process is guided by the order of responses to the preceding questions as highlighted below.

### ***I. What is the undesirable situation in the school?***

Planning in public secondary schools starts with management's effort to understand the environmental factors surrounding the school's undesirable situation. The situational analysis will immediately be followed by plans to address each one of the identified problems in order to achieve the predetermined level of results (Binnendijk, 2000:9). In a public secondary school characterised by poor student performance in public examinations, RBM seeks to understand all the problem areas through engaging with the concerned parties and then plans to address each of the problems to achieve the desired level of performance. The above-stated principle of result-based planning helps stakeholders to remain focused on the critical factors in their planning. According to The Hanover Research (2014:6), effective planning is underpinned by the team participation in problem diagnosis and prioritisation of the needs in view of available resources. Similarly, the RBM planning process starts with identification of the undesirable situation which is immediately followed by the setting of goals and objectives that strive to offset it (Wael, 2015:21). Planning for such goals also requires leadership to clearly articulate the institutional vision and align the envisaged change and goals for it. Thus, the RBM planning process incorporates the theory of change.

### ***II. What does the school want to achieve?***

After diagnosis of the performance problem, the next step in RBM planning is setting the desired level of performance that is aligned to the institutional vision, mission and

goals. That process calls for engagement between the school leadership and all other involved parties to ensure ownership and buy in of the results. The anticipated change may be expressed quantitatively or qualitatively. At this stage in the planning process, school heads and teachers formulate and agree on clearly defined result statements that describe the anticipated change. Sound planning of the desired change highlights Key Result Areas (KRA) that seek to address the undesirable situation identified in stage one. The KRAs will be accompanied by performance targets and performance indicators.

Clearly defined targets and indicators enhance the effectiveness of the RBM system in the education sector through the facilitation of accurate measurement and tracking of progress (Jensen, 2017:44). Well framed result statements in the schools performance management system express a concrete, visible and measurable change in status quo, which enables leadership to track progress (UNESCO, 2008:9; UNODC, 2018:22). In order to achieve the above status of result statements, the RBM process implores school leadership to subject the result statements to test batteries that ascertain the following qualities.



**Table 3. 1 The SMART qualities of stating results objectives**

Quality	Characteristic
1. <b>Specific</b>	The precise and well-explained result precluding unambiguity. A clearly stated and well-described unit of change in the school.
2. <b>Measurable</b>	A school result that is amenable to verification by another person qualitatively or quantitatively.
3. <b>Achievable</b>	Realistic school results that can be achieved with available resources in the obtaining political, social and cultural environment
4. <b>Relevant</b>	The result contributes to the achievement of the school mission. They address the needs of the learners
5. <b>Timeliness</b>	Achievable within a specific time frame. The result ought to satisfy temporal logic in the school system.

The preceding five characteristics of school RBM result statements, namely specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and timeliness (SMART) constitute criteria for evaluating result statements in the public school system (Prom-Jackson, 2017:60; UNDOC, 2018:31). The SMART criteria are also equated with the responses to the five “Ws” of public sector work, what, why, where, when and how (Wu, 2020:170).

### ***III. How may the school achieve change?***

The question of how change will be achieved relates to the issue of strategy that suits the magnitude of the desired change (Jensen, 2017:8). This stage of planning challenges leadership to consider adoption of the most effective and efficient methods of implementing RBM activities. In the public school system, the RBM system requires that supervisors and supervisees discuss and agree on the strategies to achieve set objectives together with plans to monitor the implementation process. The monitoring plan focuses on ways to collect information on progress made towards achievement of results. With new information gathered and lessons learned from the performance review sessions, the RBM

implementation process takes an iterative form due to the deployment of new strategies in line with the performance-based information and recommendations (UN Habitat, 2017:8). In the Zimbabwean public sector appraisal form, Section 4C addresses the adjusted work plans which in turn suggest considerations for redirecting the implementation strategy.

***IV. What resources are required for the school to execute the planned activities and what are the associated risks?***

The fourth level of the RBM strategic planning process involves the provision of a result-based budget. Budgeting encompasses planning for the deployment of human and financial resources towards the achievement of the planned goals (Zinyama et al., 2016:35). In the RBM system, the process of result-based budgeting seeks to draw linkages between input level needs, activities, and result against available resources and how the resources can best be used to achieve the best possible results (Zinyama et al., 2016:35). By so doing, RBB serves as a strategic management tool that is meant to improve resource management and public school accountability (Thomas, 2005:4). One major role of school heads in public schools is to make school budgets that support the school development plans. It is also the responsibility of the school heads to ensure that all departments are adequately staffed to effectively execute planned activities. Thus, RBM reinforce the traditional responsibilities of school heads through the addition of the result component.

***V. How would the school know that change has been achieved?***

The fifth RBM planning question in public schools focuses on the identification of performance indicators to signal progress towards achievement of the set goals (Cox, 2009:11; UN-Habitat, 2017:7). According to Binnendijk (2000:16), result framing is part of planning for performance measurement. Without measurement, it will be difficult to tell the amount of progress made. Performance measurement in the school therefore, requires planning for performance indicators that allow for authentic verification of change produced by the teachers' contribution relative to what was planned (UNDG, 2011:18). During the performance journey, indicators serve as milestones and they are expressed neutrally without showing direction up or down. However, RBM implementers often misconstrue indicators for results and targets.

Abu-El-Magd (2016:69) distinguishes between the three by describing the results as precise statements of what should be achieved, while indicators specify directly what has to be measured and targets as described a specific value or level of an indicator to be achieved by a specified date which will be in the future. Accordingly, the three performance measurement elements highlighted above provide a mechanism for RBM implementing schools to check their progress towards achieving the desired change. The results are the final destination, while indicators are milestone and targets being specific levels between the milestones. Based on the sequencing of the preceding planning processes, RBM is a cumulative process of setting anticipated results and ensuring that sufficient resources in the form of time, finances, material resources, and manpower are committed to achieving the results (UNESCO, 2008:6). Once clear performance plans are laid down, the next level is the measurement of progress.

### **3.3.1.2 The performance measurement phase**

Results are changes in a state or condition that arise from intervening in a cause and effect relationship (UNDG, 2011:7). Measurement of performance that contribute to the desired change in school results involve the collection and analysis of teacher performance data for comparison with the set targets to establish how well the objectives are being met (Wael, 2015:27). According to Binnendijk (2000:6), objectives and goals in a school represent the teachers' intentions or "*to do*" while results in the form of outputs, outcome, and impact constitute expectations. Effective measurement of performance in schools, therefore, starts with the process of setting and agreeing on clear, measurable objectives, together with defining clear means (input and activities) of achieving the results (Binnendijk, 2000:6). Such processes take place at the beginning of the performance management cycle when school managers discuss key result areas with their subordinates. Based on the preceding exposé, the RBM performance measurement phase, therefore, includes the initial five strategic planning stages examined above supported by monitoring and evaluation.

### **3.3.1.3 Integrated evaluation and learning phase**

The third phase in an RBM process combines three processes, namely evaluation of performance, discussion of the performance findings, and integration of lessons learned from the planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation processes into the decision support system (UN Habitat, 2017:8). A teacher's self-evaluation reports and observations made by school heads during the periodic assessments and performance review sessions are discussed at the end of the performance cycle leading to the final weighted performance rating. According to Javed et al., (2019:25), discussions around the evaluation of performance should be transparent and iterative. Timely performance review sessions inform prompt adjustments of the work plans, objectives, strategies, and indicators at the same time facilitating the process of learning (Global Affairs Canada, 2016:9). Hence, the RBM system is described as proactive and agile (Swiss & Strauss, 2005:32).

## **3.4 The Results-Based Management Cycle in the Zimbabwean Schools**

Results-based management in public educational institutions takes place at three different levels, each comprising a different set of tools, but all three are linked by a strong focus on results. Result-based planning is the first category of result-focused activities in the RBM system. It is followed by result-based monitoring which runs concurrently with the implementation process and finally, result-based evaluation. The three categories of results-based management activities are discussed in detail below.

### **3.4.1 Result based planning in Zimbabwean schools**

Planning refers to the process of thinking about the activities or course of action required to achieve a defined result (Armstrong, 2014:89; Robbins & Judge, 2017:44). Based on the preceding definition of planning, result based planning may therefore be viewed as the process of defining a goal and then establishing strategies to coordinate activities towards goal achievement (Robbins & Judge, 2017:44). In Zimbabwe, provision education is guided by the National Development Strategy (NDS1)'s Human Capital Development theme. The goal of the theme is to revamp the entire education system in Zimbabwe and align it with the national vision

2030. The planning process takes place at ministerial level under the guidance of the technical team and culminate in the production of the Education Sector Strategic Plan (ESSP). The ESSP serves as the guiding document in the planning process at different levels within MoPSE.

Informed by the goals stated in the NDS1, the ESSP set strategic priorities that are aligned the country's vision of a middle income economy by 2030. Achievement of the strategic priorities in public education is done through the implementation of an IRBM system that harmonises the planning, budgeting and decision making from the top of the hierarchy to the bottom. Thus, IRBM in the MoPSE provides a platform for a planning process that is based on ESSP and is cascaded from the ministry to provinces down to districts, and to school level (GoZ, 2021:72). At the different levels, the objectives set are drawn from the respective ESSP program goals. Along the horizontal axis, the IRBM provide education sector planning with linkages at different administrative levels. For example, the human resources, policy and administration and accounts level department combine to ensure goal achievement.

Within the above hierarchy in the public education sector, result based planning involves clear and correct definition of the problem. It breaks down the problem into smaller manageable chunks to suit the sector, department, school and individual member's scope of work (SIDA, 2014:11). The planning process proposes the desired level of change in line with ESSP goals. At each level, such planning leads to the formulation of specific; measurable; achievable; relevant; and time framed key result areas and related objectives together with outputs and outcomes. However, the success of the planning process depends on meaningful discussions and consensus between supervisors and supervisees on the predetermined level of change that addresses the identified problem and the strategies to achieve it.

### **3.4.2 Result-based monitoring in schools**

The result-based monitoring process is an integral supporting tool that helps to track education sector performance and inform the need for systems adjustment (Thomas, 2005:6). Monitoring of performance in the education sector in Zimbabwe is done under the National Monitoring and Evaluation (NME) policy for the Zimbabwean public sector (GoZ, 2021:72). The purpose of monitoring is to ensure alignment of

the institutional objectives to national goals. That is to say monitoring in school gathers information that helps to align school plans with district strategic plans which are part of the provincial plans and feeding into the ESSP and NDS1. According to Pazvakavambwa (2015:47), monitoring at school level involves routine collection and analysis of information to establish school performance progress against set targets. Management at different levels within the school system use monitoring to keep their set goals in a linkage with the program performance goals for accountability purposes (Thomas, 2005:6). According to Hauge (2001:2), monitoring and evaluation are meant to support the creation of results.

Pazvakavambwa and Steyn (2014:247) describe the overarching purpose of monitoring in the school system as ensuring compliance with the policy on the use of resources. In that vein, monitoring seeks to establish the school goals, check on the progress toward achievement of the said goals, and state the level of progress as evidence to prove goal achievement (Zvoushe & Zhou, 2013:72). Systematic monitoring in public schools takes the form of supervision that is done by school heads and heads of subject departments on teachers' work. When arranged and done properly, monitoring provides teachers with feedback on their performance levels, which facilitates behaviour modification in their workplace for them to realign personal performance with institutional goals (Latham, 2004:127). In some cases, the process of monitoring in a school may prompt a decision by supervisors to break their supervisee complex goals into manageable tasks and initiate re-tooling of their members to enhance their capacities.

### **3.4.3 Results-based management evaluation in schools**

The third category of RBM activities relates to the evaluation of performance. In the school system, evaluation involves establishing the difference between the pre-intervention status quo and the actual result as a way of demonstrating change (Jensen, 2017:10). Further, RBM evaluation in the school system has the regulatory purpose on the appropriateness of the objectives, the level of their fulfilment, effectiveness as well as the efficiency of the methodologies, the impact of the results, and its sustainability (UN-Habitat, 2017:8). Monitoring of progress towards goal achievement in the school system gathers data that culminates in the

generation of evaluation reports. The departmental evaluation reports done by the head of departments feed into the school evaluation report which forms part of the district evaluation report and up the hierarchy to the national results. Such reports, inform both supervisees and supervisors of the extent to which desired objectives are being met (UN Habitat, 2017:8). In Zimbabwean public secondary schools, the RBM cycle is divided into four quarters, each closing with a performance review session. In between the quarterly review sessions, supervisors and supervisees track performance, making a comparison of what was agreed upon against what is on the ground. Such interactive processes during formative evaluation help both supervisors and supervisees to re-plan and effect the necessary adjustments to remain focused on the set goals. The above narrative also suggests that result-based evaluation opens the window to RMB lessons learned.

### **3.5 The public sector changes linked to RBM in Zimbabwe**

All public schools under the MoPSE in Zimbabwe belong to the category of public sector institutions. This implies that the different public sector reforms such as RBM that are introduced in Zimbabwe affect the education sector in much the same way as other public entities. In the context of the preceding notion, it, therefore, follows that the benefits of RBM reported across different government entities are also present in the education sector. Madhekeni, (2012:125) and OECD, (2018:21) view the introduction of the RBM system in different public sector institutions across the world as having contributed to a trail of intended and unintended changes to the way institutions operate. A remarkable positive development linked to the RBM system in public sector schools has been advocacy to create a general awareness of the new management approach. In that area, the Zimbabwean government initiated training to capacitate manpower at the same time drawing supporting policy frameworks and circulars to guide institutions on RBM implementation (Madhekeni, 2012:125). The Kevran Commission of 1987 and the Public Sector Review Commission (PSRC) of 2002 resulted in a series of changes that transformed public sector management (Chigudu, 2014:47; Zinyama et al., 2015:10). In many Institutions that include schools, the changes included the use of new work-related terminology linked to the RBM system. Terms such as key result areas, the SMART criteria for the objective formulation, performance output, and outcomes emerged and gained popularity

(UNESCO, 2008:10; Chigudu, 2014:47). The effect of using such terms in the public schools was to draw the attention of employees and institutions to the major aspects of the public service expected deliverable. In the process, it also marked a cultural shift from the old workplace discourse and behaviour in a new way of doing things.

The notion of defining and reporting results for accountability purposes in the public sector schools was another positive development associated with the onset of the RBM system (OECD, 2018:12). Coupled with the above-stated changes, the MoPSE in Zimbabwe compelled all public schools to craft institutional visions, mission statements and client charters guide them in their daily operations (ADB, 2002:1; Madhekeni, 2012:124; OECD, 2018:11). Such developments helped institutions to appreciate their reasons for existence and the need for them to focus on the important aspects of their mission (Zigora & Chagwamba, 2000:4). Also, through displaying their institutional visions, mission statements and client charters, public schools in Zimbabwe conveyed the message of their responsibility to the stakeholders for accountability purposes (Zigora & Chagwamba, 2000:4; Jensen, 2017:124). Hence, the literature confirms the relevance of the RBM system to Zimbabwe's public school system.

The RBM system has also made significant inroads into the public sector planning section with its drive towards strategic result planning (OECD, 2018:11). In the MoPSE, strategic result planning is done at the national level, culminating in the sectorial key result areas aligned to sectorial performance goals, outputs, and outcomes. The initial phase of the Zimbabwean RBM system placed education provision under the Zimbabwe Agenda for Sustainable Socio-Economic Transformation, (ZimAsset)'s social services and poverty alleviation cluster (GoZ, 2013:10). Within the social services cluster, MoPSE drew its performance roadmap the ESSP and the performance contracts. The Ministry Integrated Performance Agreement (MIPA) and Departmental Integrated Performance Agreements (DIPA) as performance contracts pursued the national goals stated in the ZimAsset. At the institutional level, the schools drew development plans and teachers formulated Key Result Areas (KRA) are guided by the DIPA (GoZ, 2013:13; UNESCO, 2017:7). Thus, RBM ushered in a new era of guided planning that cascaded from the top to the bottom of the hierarchy.



However, political changes that witnessed the birth of the Second Republic in Zimbabwe at the end of 2017 resulted in the natural death of ZimAsset and its replacement by the Transition Stabilisation Policy (TSP) of 2019. The TSP later gave way to the New Development Strategy (NDS1). Under the NDS1, education planning shifted focus to fulfilling the aspirations of National Vision 2030. The competence based curriculum that was launched by the MoPSE in all public school in Zimbabwe in 2017, served as a foundation for the Education 5.0 policies in Higher Education. The Education 5.0 Policy emphasised the following five critical areas through which the education sector could support and contribute towards national development and the achievement of an upper middle class economy by 2030. The five areas are teaching, research, community service, innovation and industrialisation. All aimed at problem solving and value creation (GoZ, 2020:19). To achieve the preceding goal, the GoZ leveraged the use of the RBM system to guide the planning process and monitoring of activities as the country moved towards the national vision of a middle-income economy's performance (GoZ, 2020:229).

In the area of the personnel planning system, RBM initiated the processes of performance appraisal, human resources development and human resources management (Muguti et al., 2022:59). The personnel appraisal system in the MoPSE assesses progress against set targets. This has become an annual program in schools where school heads and teachers meet to discuss progress. Human capital development equips workers with the requisite skills while human resources management deals with policies (Muguti et al., 2022:62). This means that the personnel planning system is a buildup processes where one activity leads to the other. The appraisal process identifies manpower strengths and weaknesses leading to recommendations for human capital development. When brought together all the aspects of managing the skills development and allocation of responsibilities according to capacity constitutes a human resources management in schools.

The decentralisation process is another development linked to the RBM system in Zimbabwe. Decentralisation was meant to enhance the effectiveness of assessment and result reporting for accountability purposes (Madhekeni, 2012:125). Tied to authority, is the responsibility to account for results. Thus, through decentralisation, the MoPSE strengthened the notion of results at the school, district, and provincial

levels. Each of the above-stated levels represents a building block in the education sector RBM system. To the school heads, decentralisation also entailed pressure for monitoring and assessing teaching processes to achieve results that cascade from the district and provincial levels (Madhekeni, 2012:125). The preceding exposé suggests that the RBM system also led to the creation of a reporting structure with an urge for results at different levels in the public education sector. Aligned with the above-stated development, the RBM concepts also instilled a sense of competition that escalates from classroom competition to merit awards at the school, district, province, and national levels.

The RBM system created footprints in the area of information management. According to GoZ (2020:57), the MoPSE runs the Education Management Information System (EMIS) which collects information from all schools on an annual basis. The EMIS provides information that supports policy formulation at the national level. Besides the EMIS, the MoPSE also introduced the Electronic Ministry Application (EMAP) in 2016 to help with the enrolment of form ones (GoZ, 2020:57). The ZIMSEC portal, where candidates access their examination results is another development linked to the RBM's MIS component. It is however important to note that the functionality of the MIS structures in the MoPSE has been heavily compromised by connectivity challenges and the EMIS provides historical data in an environment that requires constant change.

The onset of RBM also ushered in a new era characterised by the development of new institutional values that stressed productivity, accountability, efficiency, and effectiveness (Mutambatuwisi et al., 2016:88). The ethics associated with the RBM philosophy inspired a new way of doing business which resonated with the new result-focused culture (UNESCO, 2008:6; Chikasha & Gwata, 2014:282). The preceding influence of the RBM system on the public sector workplace behaviour demonstrates that RBM has the potential to effectively change institutions if diligently applied. However, in Zimbabwean schools, research has also highlighted that there are varied perceptions about the applicability, usefulness and relevance of the RBM system in public sector institutions.

### **3.6 The application of RBM concepts to public school management**

There is often debate on the appropriateness of using the RBM system as a management approach in the public sector. According to Maiwasha and Gweshe (2021:45) the RBM system has not recorded significant improvements in most countries and particularly in Zimbabwe due to application challenges. Some of the identified challenges include absence of legal instruments to enforce the use of RBM system and also mechanism to ensure RBM buy-in at the top leadership level. As a result, the RBM is generally perceived as an ineffective and inappropriate intervention for solving the Zimbabwean public sector performance challenges. Based on the preceding exposé, the next section reviews literature related to the application of RBM concepts to the different responsibilities of public sector school heads in Zimbabwe.

#### **3.6.1 The nexus between RBM and the roles of the school head in Zimbabwe**

The application of the RBM system to the management of public sector institutions in general and schools, in particular, has encountered a variety of challenges across the globe. Jaricha and Dzimiri (2019:358) advance that the success of the RBM system rests on the alignment of its components with the results. From the above notion, it, therefore, follows that effective school RBM entails fitting the component of results to the administrative roles of school leadership. According to the GoZ (2021:38), the duties and responsibilities of the school heads in MoPSE include but are not limited to the following:

- a. Take charge of the overall management and operation of the school following the education act and guiding school policies and regulations;
- b. Develop and propagate the vision, mission, and goals of the school in line with the education act;
- c. Develop the school calendar in consultation with teaching staff;
- d. Preparation and proposal of annual school budgets;
- e. Manage and efficiently utilise the available human and material resources in the school;
- f. Maintain personal contact with staff members to foster public relations and promote high staff morale;

- g. Determine standards and take appropriate steps to measure, support, coach, and maintain reasonable performance and professional growth of subordinates.
- h. Conduct frequent monitoring and supervision of staff to ensure continuous improvement in teaching and learning;
- i. Develop and implement procedures for tracking student progress and intervening early when concerns are identified;
- j. Maintain accurate school records inclusive of teaching, among others personnel enrolment, and finances.

When re-grouped, the preceding duties and responsibilities of school heads reflect elements of planning, leading, controlling, and organising school-related activities. In RBM terminology, the school head's roles can be classified under the planning, personnel management, financial management, and monitoring and evaluation subheadings. Successful implementation of the RBM system in the public education sector is, therefore, defined by the effective application of the concept of results to the planning of school activities, preparation, and managing of the school budget together with supervision and reporting of teacher performance. Further to that, the Zimbabwean RBM model links the different components of school management to enable them to function in an integrated way (GoZ, 2021:53). Thus, the RBM system applies to public school governance if done properly. However, the linkages between school results-based plans; budgets; personnel; monitoring and evaluation, and reporting of results on the planned activities often present challenges that make RBM appear inapplicable to the education sector. The next section examines the literature on the results-based management cycle as a management framework for public education institutions in Zimbabwe.

#### **3.6.1.1 The implications of the RBM cycle to public school in Zimbabwe**

Education provision at the secondary level is structured to allow facilitators to lay down plans of what they wish to deliver and the delivery format. The post-delivery stage is characterized by the evaluation of the work covered. Planning, implementation and evaluation also take place at school management levels. Application of the RBM system in schools, therefore, falls into the traditional activities

management activities in public educational institutions take place at three different levels each comprising a different set of management tools used by the school heads but all three are linked by a strong focus on results. Result-based planning is the first category of result-focused activities in the RBM cycle. It is followed by result-based monitoring which runs concurrently with the implementation process and finally, result-based evaluation. The three categories of results-based management activities are discussed in the context of school heads' administrative roles detailed below.

### **3.6.1.1 a. The importance of results-based planning in Zimbabwean schools**

Planning refers to the process of thinking about activities or course of action required to achieve a defined result (Armstrong & Taylor, 2014:89; Robbins & Judge, 2017:44). Results-based planning involve a clear and correct definition of the problem. It breaks down the problem into smaller manageable chunks to suit the sector, department, school, and individual member's scope of work (SIDA, 2014:11). According to Robbins and Judge (2017:44), planning entails the process of defining a goal and then establishing strategies to coordinate activities towards goal achievement. In line with the above view, PSC (2022:3), in the vacancy announcement for school heads in Zimbabwe, describes the formulation of the vision, mission, and goals of the school as one of the key duties of the school heads. The vision, mission, and goals guide the process of planning (GoZ, 2021:38). Calendar of events in the schools is then aligned with the set goals. The provision of public education in Zimbabwe is guided by the National Development Strategy (NDS1)'s Human Capital Development theme. The goal of the theme is to revamp the entire education system in Zimbabwe and align it with the national vision of an upper middle class economy by 2030. Schools, therefore, formulate their plans with guidance from the broad goals stated in the ESSP which is informed by the NDS1.

As a strategic planning document, the ESSP set priorities that are aligned with the country's vision of a middle-income economy by 2030. The role of IRBM in the achievement of the strategic priorities in public education in the MoPSE is to support with harmonisation of the planning, budgeting and decision-making from the top of the hierarchy to the bottom. At each level, such planning leads to the formulation of

specific; measurable; achievable; relevant; and time-framed key result areas and related objectives together with outputs and outcomes. Based on the description of the IRBM planning process above, it, therefore, follows that RBM applies to school planning and it promotes alignment of the plans to the national agenda. However, the success of the planning process depends on meaningful discussions and consensus between supervisors and supervisees on the predetermined level of change that addresses the identified problem and the strategies to achieve it.

#### **3.6.1.1 b. The use of result-based monitoring in schools**

The result-based monitoring process is an integral supporting tool that helps to track education sector performance and inform the need for systems adjustment (Thomas, 2005:6). Monitoring of performance in the education sector in Zimbabwe is done under the National Monitoring and Evaluation (NME) policy for the Zimbabwean public sector (GoZ, 2021:72). The purpose of monitoring is to ensure alignment of the institutional objectives to national goals. That is to say, monitoring in school gathers information that helps to align school plans with district strategic plans which are part of the provincial plans and feed into the ESSP and NDS1. According to Pazvakavambwa (2015:47), monitoring at the school level involves routine collection and analysis of information to establish school performance progress against set targets. Common terms used in the MoPSE to describe the monitoring process are supervision and inspection (PSC, 2022:3). School heads are mandated to engage in periodic supervision of teaching and learning processes in schools to ensure goal achievement. Thomas (2005:6), describes the essence of monitoring in terms of keeping the set goals aligned to the program performance goals for accountability purposes.

For Hauge (2001:2), monitoring and evaluation processes support the creation of results. Also, Pazvakavambwa and Steyn (2014:247) describe the overarching purpose of monitoring in the school system as ensuring compliance with the policy in the use of resources. Thus, monitoring in schools seeks to establish the school goals, check on the progress toward achievement of the identified goals, and state the level of progress as evidence to prove goal achievement (Zvoushe & Zhou, 2013:72). In the context of RBM, systematic monitoring in public schools in the form

of supervision assumes a result focus. School heads and heads of subject departments supervise teachers' work guided by the need to achieve a given level of results. From the preceding discussion, it follows that supervision of teaching and learning done by school heads is essentially an act of performance monitoring. The RBM system only contributes the resulting focus to the school head's role. When arranged and done properly, monitoring provides teachers with feedback on their performance levels which facilitates behaviour modification in their workplace for them to realign personal performance with institutional goals (Latham, 2004:127; GoZ, 2021:53). In some cases, the process of monitoring in a school may prompt a decision by supervisors to break their supervisee complex goals into manageable tasks and initiate re-tooling of their members to enhance their capacities.

#### **3.6.1.1 c. The implications of results-based evaluation on teacher performance**

The third category of RBM activities relates to the evaluation of performance. In the school system, evaluation involves establishing the difference between the pre-intervention status quo and the actual result as a way of demonstrating change (Jensen, 2017:10). School heads in the MoPSE should determine standards for performance and take steps to measure and maintain reasonable performance among teachers (GoZ, 2021:38). Moreover, the evaluation process in the school system has the regulatory effect on both the supervisor and supervisee. As managers, school heads use performance evaluation to ascertain the appropriateness of the objectives, the level of their fulfillment, the effectiveness as well as efficiency of the methodologies, the impact of the results, and their sustainability (UN-Habitat, 2017:8). Monitoring of progress towards goal achievement in the school system gathers data that culminates in the generation of evaluation reports. The departmental evaluation reports done by the head of departments feed into the school evaluation report which forms part of the district evaluation report and up the hierarchy to the national results. Such reports, inform both supervisees and supervisors of the extent to which desired objectives are being met (UN-Habitat, 2017:8). In Zimbabwean public secondary schools, the RBM cycle is divided into four quarters each closing with a performance review session. In between the quarterly review sessions, supervisors and supervisees track performance making a comparison of what was agreed upon against what is on the

ground. Such interactive processes during formative evaluation help both supervisors and supervisees to re-plan and effect necessary adjustments to remain focused on the set goals. The above narrative also suggests that result-based evaluation opens the window to RBM lessons learned.

### **3.7 Challenges of fitting the RBM activities to school administration**

Application of the RBM system to school management fails mostly because school heads and teachers fail to follow proper RBM guidelines regarding planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation (Mundondo et al., 2019:149). The next section examines challenges encountered by school personnel during the RBM processes.

#### **3.7.1 The RBM planning-related challenges in public schools**

A notable challenge in the application of the RBM system to school management arises from the hierarchical nature of MoPSE structures that support a centralised planning system (Mavhiki et al., 2013:136). The integrated performance management framework advocated by the RBM system encompasses linking the results plans to the budgets and also the personnel involved (Thomas, 2005:1). It also includes laying down plans for the process of monitoring and evaluation of the planned activities. An inherent challenge associated with the preceding model of planning is non-adherence to the planning guideline at the lower level. As a result, the integrated characteristic of RBM is only practiced at the senior management levels. Similarly, the GoZ (2020:58) describes an absence of linkages between the ESSP and other lower-level planning documents such as POP, DOP, and SDP as a serious impediment to the operationalisation of RBM in the MoPSE. Lower-level employees end up planning without the guidance of the source documents.

Public education institutions are implored to involve teachers, parents, learners, and other stakeholders in the planning of school activities using the school development committees and prefect boards to enhance the relevance of school plans and a sense of ownership to all (Oladele, 2010:173, Machingambi et al., 2013:265, Muranda et al., 2015:103). However, the top-down approach to planning associated with bureaucracy nurtures negativity as non-participating teachers and other



stakeholders tend to dissociate themselves from the system. Research has also highlighted that public sector bureaucratic planning has posed major challenges to the operationalisation of RBM in Thailand, Malaysia, and Zimbabwe (Mavhiki et al., 2013:136). In all the cited cases, lower-level employees disowned the RBM system and perceived it negatively as alien. Similarly, Col et al., (2006:13) view the RBM system as a new innovative approach to performance that faced the challenge of failing to fit into existing institutional practices due to a lack of buy-in. Thus, the RBM goodness of purpose challenge in most public schools is aggravated by culture-driven resistance that influences members to view any new idea from above as alien (Mavhiki et al., 2013:130).

### **3.7.2 The RBM Implementation challenges for school heads and teachers**

Implementation refers to the management of inputs required to facilitate the activities that lead to the achievement of planned results (Jensen, 2017:75). Human resources, budgetary, and policy-related constraints inhibit the RBM process in the public school. Thus, the RBM implementation challenges in schools relate to operational hurdles that school heads and teachers encounter during the discharge of their daily duties within the context of RBM. The next section examines literature related to challenges linked to RBM implementation in schools.

#### **3.7.2.1 The budgetary and staffing challenges in schools RBM processes**

The operationalisation of RBM is greatly limited by incapacities within institutions to finance the high costs associated with implementing the system (Chilunjika, 2016:4). In concurrence with the above notion, the OECD (2018:18), views the implementation of the RBM system as requiring a significant amount of resources. However, ironically most institutions have insufficient human and financial resources to commit to RBM implementation. Insufficient professional skills and knowledge of the RBM system have manifested in some institutions failing to interpret and apply the relevant RBM concepts leading to the ultimate failure of the whole system (Mavhiki et al., 2013:136). Whilst skills shortage poses the greatest challenge to the effective implementation of RBM, literature further confirms that financial incapacity within an organisation has serious implications for the success of the RBM system (Madhekeni, 2012:125; Mavhiki, et al., 2013:138). Production of RBM reports has

serious cost implications on schools which militates against the success of the system as school heads and staff avoid the costly exercise (OECD, 2018:18). The poor performance of the Zimbabwean economy implies declining revenue for the government and resultantly fewer resources to support the RBM initiative (UNESCO, 2017:6). Public secondary schools have to operate without adequate human resources due to a shortage of funds to employ more teachers. The same schools also operate with very large classes and high book-to-pupil ratios due to limited school budgets which compromises the success of the RBM system.

### **3.7.2.2 The challenge of building a result-focused culture in schools**

Successful implementation of the RBM system in the education sector requires schools to develop and sustain a culture that focuses on results (Asian Development Bank, 2006:17). Mayne (2007:90), describes such an initiative as fostering the right climate for performance management. However, given that fostering the right climate is first and foremost a mindset issue for educators, most schools fail to transition from input-related management to result-based management due to a lack of cultural change management skills (Mayne, 2007:91; Mavhiki, et al., 2013:136; Chikasha & Gwata, 2014:284). Similarly, The Asian Development Bank (2006:17), views the complexity of change itself as instrumental in the resistance of management and staff implementing RBM towards the change initiative. The fear of the unsettling nature of change lead members to implement RBM in the public sector partially focusing on easy targets. The absence of a result culture also limits the effectiveness of RBM by removing the drive to experiment with new methods of doing things to achieve better results from teachers and educational administrators in the school system. Evidence on RBM evaluation further attests that most public sector institutions that include schools implementing RBM are risk-averse and prefer to do things traditionally rather than trying new methods and learning from them which is the essence of RBM (OECD, 2018:19). Thus, the absence of an enabling RBM climate in which result cultures prevail in schools renders the whole system ineffective.

### **3.7.2.3 The policy framework, implications on RBM implementation in schools**

In the public sector, many institutions fail to effectively apply the RBM system because of policy inconsistencies. Dorsey and Mueller-Hanson (2017:10), view the poor implementation of performance management in public institutions as influenced by a multiplicity of rules and procedures which at times undermine effective conversation. Emphasis on rules, policies, and procedures like when to fill in the forms and how to fill them up at the expense of productive feedbacks and relations building diverts the efforts of members implementing RBM towards compliance rather than the production of results (Dorsey & Mueller-Hanson, 2017:10; Owolabi & Adeosun, 2021:32). Similarly, OECD (2018:18) and Vahamaki and Verger (2019:21), assert that conflicting policies seriously impede the operationalisation of the RBM system. In Zimbabwe, the Secretary for MoPSE through Policy Circular 6 of 2014 outlawed incentives in public schools which dealt a serious pushback to the education sector RBM system as members asked themselves "what is in it for me?" (Mutambatuwisi et al., 2016:92). This indicates that the RBM system implemented in Zimbabwe assumes that employees are intrinsically motivated by goal achievement. Whilst the removal of incentives in schools by Policy Circular 6 of 2014 had implications on safeguarding parents as stakeholders from extortion by schools, the absence of an alternative policy statement encouraging incentive-free performance left the RBM hanging without statutory backing. That suggests a void in the literature regarding the way to sustain the implementation of RBM in schools.

### **3.7.3 The RBM monitoring-related challenges in public schools**

School heads in the MoPSE have the responsibility of supervising the work of teaching and non-teaching staff in their respective schools. In the context of school management, the terms inspection, supervision, and monitoring are often used to mean the process by which supervisors collect supervisees' performance data. Monitoring in an RBM system entails the systematic collection of performance data to compare the planned performance and the actual performance (UNESCO, 2008:15; Jensen, 2017:105). Appropriateness of the RBM system to the school heads supervisory roles is defined as a good fit between planned work with baseline information and the anticipated results. In between the two ends sit performance

indicators which serve as performance progress milestones (GoZ, 2020:58). However, effective monitoring of RBM-related activities in public schools is affected by the selection of inappropriate indicators, use of poor-quality result information and inappropriate use of the same in the decision-making process (Mayne, 2007:99; UN-Habitat, 2017:16). The two categories of monitoring-related problems are discussed in detail below.

### **3.7.3.1 The use indicators to track performance in schools**

The RBM monitoring process in public educational institutions is mostly affected by the poor definition of results. Ambiguous result statements formulated and agreed upon by school heads and teachers as Key Result Areas (KRA), goals, and objectives during planning make the process measurement in schools difficult. Generally, indefinite result statements lead to inappropriate and irrelevant performance indicators (Mayne, 2007:99; UN-Habitat, 2017:16). Effective and reliable indicators in schools' RBM give meaning to teachers' efforts toward reaching their planned targets. However, an associated challenge is that in many schools, staff members struggle to formulate such indicators. That challenge often results in supervisors and supervisees formulating and agreeing on complicated and vaguely stated indicators and targets that sometimes exceed the school's capacity to achieve (The Asian Development Bank, 2006:17). Hatton and Schroeder (2007:430) concur with the preceding notion and further posit that time limitation and resource constraints force educators to base their performance on simple and easy-to-reach indicators that fall short of telling the real result-based performance story. On the other end of the continuum, overstated indicators drive the education sector personnel to falsify performance information to appear to have reached an acceptable level of performance. The preceding practice greatly waters down the essence of performance information (Hatton & Schroeder, 2007:429).

### **3.7.3.2 The credibility of RBM performance data collected in schools**

An overarching purpose of the RBM system is to measure performance in order to effectively manage results (Madhekeni, 2012:127). In that vein, Madhekeni posits that credible, timely, and relevant information is critical for enhancing well-informed decisions at the policy level. For Col et al., (2006:6), performance measurement in

public sector institutions is largely motivated by the fundamental desire to improve performance through a systematic approach. However, an inherent weakness in public schools has been identified as poor quality and often overstated achievement information that provides false impressions of the learners and school performance to the stakeholders (Pazvakavambwa, 2015:61). Literature attests that a common problem associated with performance data is that many public schools pay modest attention to quality assurance issues leading to the gathering of moderate to low quality data which is not fit for purpose (Mayne, 2007:103; OECD, 2018:20). Effective monitoring entails the collection of data with a special focus on the intended purpose (Poate, 1997:35). Thus, the quality of data is defined by variables such as accuracy, relevance, and timeliness which come at a cost (Mayne, 2007: 101).

In the public education sector, the timeliness of feedback is a challenge yet it has profound effects on the relevance of data. Delayed feedback has no value in addition to the teachers' performance. Closely related to the preceding challenge is the view articulated by Vahamaki et al., (2011:23) and Pazvakavambwa (2015:72) on the gathering of performance information for upward reporting. The preceding sources concur that data collection in schools presents resentment challenges to the RBM monitoring process as supervisees perceive monitoring negatively. To Col et al., (2006:10) employees also overstate their accomplishments for upward reporting which distorts the essence of RBM. Pazvakavambwa (2015:72) concurs and further argues that distorted behaviour in RBM-implementing schools is more apparent where performance is expressed quantitatively. In such circumstances, both supervisors and supervisees manipulate their results to portray their work positively. Similarly, Owolabi and Adeosun (2021:58) advance that ratings done for administrative purposes tends to be lenient. Pazvakavambwa (2015:72) further posits that difficult tasks which are not well supported financially often lead to the presentation of falsified performance data.

### **3.7.4 Challenges of evaluating teachers' performance in public schools**

According to Dorsey and Mueller-Hanson (2017:10), performance improvement at an organisational level is very complex to measure. The process of establishing progress made in terms of achieving set objectives is evaluation. Evaluation in the

education sector seeks to establish the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, and timeliness of various school-related activities in the achievement of the stated results (Jensen, 2018:126; Jaricha & Dzimiri, 2019:364). This study examined literature pertaining the evaluation of teacher contribution and the quantification of the teachers 'contribution in order to ward a performance rating.

#### **3.7.4.1 The attribution and contribution challenges in teacher performance**

In an RBM process, the output is the most immediate result of the intervention and is easier to define while outcomes and impact may be influenced by other external factors (Cox, 2009:2, UN-Habitat, 2017:16). In service institutions like schools that are supported by many stakeholders, it is difficult to attribute the outcome like student pass rate to the activities of a single factor since many other factors would have contributed to the same (Mavhiki et al., 2013:137; Pazvakavambwa & Steyn, 2014:255). Thus, accountability for results in such an environment poses serious challenges as it is done collectively (OECD, 2018:20). Vertical accountability runs from schools up to the MoPSE head office while horizontal accountability runs across the other supporting ministries (Madhekeni, 2012) cited in (Gutuza, 2016:391). Such collective accountability is difficult to enforce as it requires good communication, a sound support system, and well-articulated common agenda (OECD, 2018:98). Thus, a lack of accountability and ownership of results poses serious challenges to the success of the RBM system.

#### **3.7.4.2 Quantification of results**

An inherent problem in the RBM system relates to the measurement of performance. In the public education sector, assessment of teacher performance tends to emphasise the quantitative aspects of the job. The qualitative aspects of teaching and learning are generally underplayed (Vahamaki et al., 2011:23). The OECD (2018:21) describes such behaviour as measure fixation which has the effect of influencing schools to measure their success based on a single or a selected few quantifiable aspects of their performance at the expense of unquantifiable aspects. Measure fixation also emphasises more on short-term achievements, like student grades in a school, at the expense of legitimate long-term objectives, implying that the system suffers partial measurement challenges (OECD, 2018:21).

Closely related to the problem of measure fixation, is sub-optimisation, which entails evaluating the success of the RBM system based on its effectiveness in single aspects like infrastructural development, sports, or pass rate at the expense of many other aspects that make the school system (OECD, 2018:22). Literature attests that sub-optimisation creates an imbalance between the two main purposes of RBM, which are accountability and reporting versus learning and decision making by skewing the efforts towards one of them at the expense of the other. Norad (2018a) cited in OECD (2018:22) posits that performance data collected for reporting purposes is often valueless to the management and staff in schools as it does not contribute to the decision-making process. Teachers and school heads casually gather RBM data and report on performance for fulfilling job requirements because they perceive it as irrelevant and of no value to their work (Mavhiki et al., 2013:136).

### **3.8 The effectiveness of the RBM system in Zimbabwean schools**

Perceptions about the effectiveness of the RBM system in the Zimbabwean public sector vary from organisation to organisation. Muranda et al., (2015:97) describe the teaching staff's perceptions of RBM in the MoPSE public schools as generally negative towards the system. Coupled with that negativity, is also the low uptake of the RBM system by teachers who feel that the planning and policy formulation processes did not involve them. Lack of buy-in and commitment by the implementing partners especially at a high level in the public education system has been pointed out as one factor contributing to the RBM system's ineffectiveness (Jaricha & Dzimiri, 2019:365). Research on the implementation of the RBM system in Zimbabwe also revealed that its effectiveness in changing the public sector performance, in general, remained unclear as its applicability and benefits were shrouded in controversy (Madhekeni, 2012:122). Also, Pazvakavambwa (2014:70) view the RBM system as having encountered some implementation obstacle. School heads and teachers' perceptions about the RBM system in the public education sector are formed as a result of the challenges encountered during the RBM process.

#### **3.8.1 Limitations to results-based management effectiveness in schools**

This section discusses the challenges associated with the implementation of the RBM system in the Zimbabwean public schools.

***a. The limited understanding of the result-based management system among school heads***

According to Owolabi and Adeosun (2021:27), the attitude of employees toward a performance management system is largely influenced by their (employees) perceptions of its purpose. Concerning the above notion, literature on the RBM implementation in Zimbabwe infers the existence of a variety of feelings regarding the effectiveness, efficiency, applicability, and sustainability of the RBM system in public institutions that include schools (Muranda et al., 2015:103; Mundondo et al., 2019:144). The variations in views about the RBM system highlighted above imply differences in the level of stakeholders' understanding of the meaning and purpose of RBM to them. Because of a limited understanding of the RBM system, a section of the teaching staff in Zimbabwe perceived the RBM system as a scheme by management to keep them busy and has no value addition to the teacher's job (Muranda et al., 2015:103). The preceding view suggests a lack of RBM acceptance by the teachers which also affects the implementation fidelity of the RBM process. Correspondingly, Dorsey and Mueller (2017:2) view mistrust between supervisors and supervisees as one critical factor that compromises the effectiveness of a performance management system. Often, mistrust arises from a lack of full knowledge about the process.

Pazvakavambwa (2015:70), views comprehending the meaning of the RBM system, its requirements, and the related benefits to the school system as a critical antecedent to the RBM launch and implementation. Such a process is meant to ensure acceptance of the model. However, in the MoPSE, Zimbabwe that process did not happen especially at the grassroots level. Hence, teachers and school heads have problems understanding the objectives of RBM in schools (Muranda et al., 2015:103). Acceptance and successful implementation of the RBM system in schools where both leadership and subordinates lacked the basic knowledge and skills required to execute RBM-related tasks remains an implausible dream (Machingambi et al., 2013:268; Muranda et al., 2015:100). Madhekeni, (2012:127) and Gutuza, (2016:395) also concur that Zimbabwean public schools are characterised by a low uptake of the RBM system as a result of low level of understanding of how the RBM system works at both management and grassroots



level. Such an impressionistic view of the RBM system in the education sector influences teachers to view the paperwork associated with the RBM system as an extra burden to their workload (Gutuza, 2016:395). As a result of the highlighted perceptions about RBM in Zimbabwe, especially among teaching staff, its effectiveness in the public school system seems to be suffering a premature death (Madhekeni, 2012:127).

Further to the issue of acceptance of the RBM system, the UN-Habitat (2017:16) cites inadequacy of skills and knowledge among staff as one big challenge compromising the effective implementation of the RBM system. Due to inadequate skills and knowledge of the RBM system, poor definition of basic terminology and aspects such as results, output, outcome, and measurement of the same characterise most public sector institutions that include schools (Mayne, 2007:99, UN-Habitat, 2017:16). According to Owolabi and Adeosun, (2021:28) organisational goals can only be achieved if employees align their goals to those of the organisation. For that to happen in Zimbabwean schools, school heads as leaders are expected to know RBM and have skills to help their teachers to link their objectives to the MoPSE goals and adhere to the RBM implementation process. However, the literature suggests a void in the school leadership's capacity to support junior staff with RBM-related problems. Muranda et al., (2015:103) cite the inadequacy of skills among some school heads in Zimbabwe leading them to only contribute information regarding dates on which to fill in the RBM forms. Similarly, for Jaricha and Dzimiri (2019:366) the RBM system failed to make meaningful headway in the MoPSE schools due to the failure of leadership to impart knowledge and skill about its proper implementation. Conspicuous gaps in the requisite skills for RBM implementation in public schools were reported in the areas of interpreting the Departmental Integrated Performance Agreement (DIPA) which is a reference document and mathematical computations of the rating score (Jaricha & Dzimiri, 2019:366).

Given the importance of getting things right first, a vague idea of the basic aspects of RBM in most public schools in Zimbabwe translates into a lack of certainty among school heads and teachers regarding what needs to be done and how it should be done. It also leads to the struggle with the operationalisation of the RBM system

which compromises its effectiveness (Gutuza, 2016:395). The above-stated skills and knowledge gap was exacerbated by the limited RBM training that was given to a majority of the teachers in Zimbabwe (Dandira, et al., 2020:399). According to Madhekeni (2012:125), the RBM training sessions did not cover the entire country. The training only covered six out of ten administrative provinces in Zimbabwe and focused mostly on top leadership in the civil service (Madhekeni, 2012:125). Oladele (2010:179) describes training as a critical entry point in the institutionalisation of RBM as it builds knowledge and create room for synergies. Oddly, the Zimbabwean public sector only trained a small section of the RBM implementers resulting in the bulk of the civil services especially teachers getting into RBM without clarity of what they were expected to do (Jaricha & Dzimiri, 2019:359) . Thus, with little training to no training among a great number of public school personnel, the effectiveness of such a technically heavy management approach could not be ascertained.

***b. The implications of school heads' perceptions about the results-based management system as a foreign project on its uptake***

Low acceptance of the RBM system in the MoPSE Zimbabwe has also been attributed to its origins. A review of related literature on the challenges associated with the implementation of RBM in Zimbabwe highlighted that the system was imported from Malaysia (Pazvakavambwa, 2015:212). Hence, it was viewed as an alien program (Mavhiki et al., 2013:137; Muranda et al., 2015:100). The perceived foreign status of the RBM system coupled with the non-involvement of the education sector grassroots personnel at the RBM design stage influenced negativity among teachers in different schools who construed it as "someone else's business" (Madhekeni, 2012:125). As a result, the RBM system was never fully comprehended by the users and it remained a farfetched model. With no acceptance and buy-in of the teaching staff, the RBM system is viewed as a requirement from the employer that ought to be fulfilled annually (Mutambatuwisi et al., 2016:91; Mundondo et al., 2019:149). Front-line members of staff dissociate themselves from it, showing no interest in understanding the concept or its benefits.

Literature attests that the importation of the RBM system from the advanced economies to the developing economies has had futile results arising from

differences in the political, economic, and other internal factors in developing countries (Jaricha & Dzimiri, 2019:366). In the case of Zimbabwe, the RBM architects failed to differentiate between the conditions prevailing in the RBM consultant's country and Zimbabwe to customise the RBM system to the new host (Pazvakavambwa 2015:163). Similarly, Mavhiki et al., (2013:137) and Jaricha & Dzimiri, (2019:259) concur that the importation of the RBM system from Malaysia to Zimbabwe failed to transfer its success and effectiveness to Zimbabwe. That anomaly led to the compromised state of the RBM system's fitness for purpose due to improper packaging and presentation. From the above discussion, it, therefore, emerges that successful implementation of RBM requires flexibility of the system and adoption of an iterative approach in its application to respond to varying situations (Meier, 2003:9). Pazvakavambwa (2015:212) and the OECD (2017:6) view new thinking around the RBM system as placing emphasis on the need for flexibility and customised approaches to management rather than a rigid top-down approach.

***c. The complexity of the results-based management model to educators is a limiting factor to its effectiveness***

The RBM system has also been described as a problem in itself and a requirement that consumes a lot of time, energy, and resources which in the process of its execution causes a lot of disruptions to the actual job (Hatton & Schroeder, 2007:427; Muranda et al., 2015:103). The preceding description of RBM gives an image of a complicated management system that is of little benefit and is unfriendly to the users. Literature on the challenges encountered in the implementation of the RBM system in Zimbabwe substantiates the above-stated view. Research by Mavhiki et al., (2013:138) reveals that the appraisal process is cumbersome and complex which compromises its uptake and effectiveness. Commenting on the implementation of RBM across the globe (Meier, 2003:9) posits that organisations tend to focus on complex results with differentiated outputs and outcomes instead of keeping their results and indicators to a vital few, which is also true of the Zimbabwean public school RBM.

The complexity of RBM in Zimbabwean schools is further aggravated by the fact that RBM was introduced as an add-on to a pre-existing management approach.

According to Dandira et al., (2020:399), the transition from the old performance appraisal system to the RBM was not reinforced by any clarifications beyond the mere signing of circulars by employees. As a result, the RBM system implementation is tainted by numerous challenges. Vahamaki et al., (2011:22) describe the effects of introducing RBM to an environment where another management approach was operational without first relaxing procedures and ground rules for the former as a recipe for failure. Such an application is tantamount to passing the administrative challenge associated with the old system to the new one.

The RBM system in Zimbabwe is also characterised by an excessively high number of performance indicators that defeats the essence of a “living management tool”. Poorly defined performance indicators which are too heavy for the school system also create vagueness in the RBM process that teachers continue to ask “what are we supposed to achieve?” (Col et al., 2006:13). Connected to the notion above, is the problem of clarity of purpose in the RBM system. The essence of RBM as a performance management system, is adversely affected when the RBM system is used to serve too many purposes (Dorsey & Mueller-Hanson, 2017:9). According to Samkange and Dondofema (2016:790), the RBM system in the MoPSE serve several purposes that include assessing school improvement, improving the pass rate, facilitating teacher promotion, remuneration of teachers and general school-related planning. Such an array of objectives and purposes for RBM may require different approaches, assessment models, and systems to address them. Hence, this creates RBM-related complications for both supervisors and supervisees. The complications arise from attempting to reduce the various goals needing different responses to fit into one approach (Dorsey & Mueller-Hanson, 2017:9). Also, the responses and measurement criteria for the different goals may be conflicting. Besides the above-stated challenges, too many RBM purposes also result in none being fulfilled.

Literature highlights that as a result of a poorly defined scope of RBM goals and indicators in a public institution, supervisors, and supervisees get constrained by time and resources from pursuing meaningful KRAs and indicators and hence, opt for simplified ones that do not measure performance (Hatton & Schroeder, 2007:430). To avoid the labor of dealing with complex RBM systems, school

teachers tend to recycle the previous year's work plans, KRAs, and indicators without changing anything except the date which sends the wrong message about the whole RBM system.

Another impediment to the successful implementation of RBM in Zimbabwe lay in the complex nature of the RBM documents used. According to Pazvakavambwa (2015:70), the personnel appraisal form that collects the RBM data is also inaccessible to teachers which results in teachers having to photocopy the documents. Similar observations were made by Samkange and Dondofema (2016:790) who stress that the appraisal form is cumbersome as it involved a lot of unnecessary paperwork.

***d. The challenge associated with measuring performance in public schools.***

Performance measurement tracks how effective employees are doing their jobs (Owolabi & Adeosun, 2021:28). The process of measuring performance in public institutions involves addressing the following critical questions;

- I. what is to be measured;
- II. how is it going to be measured;
- III. how is the data going to be interpreted;
- IV. How would the outcome be effectively communicated (Fryer et al., 2009:481).

The above-stated questions require the full participation of all implementing partners to deliberate on and make necessary adjustments during the planning stage, with due consideration being paid to feasibility and situational constraints. The planning stage highlights what is to be measured. The RBM system in Zimbabwe requires that teachers and school heads plan for the improvement of the quality of education provided and access for all, to educational facilities in schools (ESSP, 2020:78). Measurement of performance, therefore, implies evaluating the changes that happen in terms of planned quality improvements and access of learners to education facilities. Achievement of a given range of indicators implies success or failure to perform to the expected level. The planning process also highlights the tools and methods of performance measurement.

However, whilst, all the information is presented in the strategic planning document, personnel at the school level often encounter challenges in scaling down the indicators to suit the conditions prevailing in the schools. According to the Asian Development Bank (2006:17), many organisations establish elaborate RBM systems without paying sufficient attention to the human resource dimension. Incapacity of the personnel component results in planning for incalculable ambitious and unrealistic expectations of the RBM system against limited financial, human, material, and time resources (Mayne, 2007:93; Mavhiki et al., 2013:138).

Literature also confirms that RBM fails in most institutions because of overstated goals, unwarranted demand for performance information, and inappropriate use of the same (Mayne, 2007:93). In the school system, planning for performance measurement is often marred by duplication of the previous performance cycle work plans without referring to the current problem to be addressed by the RBM system. Such a background creates plans that are divorced from the problems on the ground and are often characterised by overstated goals, unrealistic targets, and unachievable objectives.

Besides performance measurement complications arising from poorly stated indicators, the frequency of monitoring performance also affects the supervisors' judgment of the subordinates' work. According to Dorsey and Mueller-Hanson (2017:24), most organisations rely on annual evaluations. This means that organisations base their view of performance on once off summative assessments made at the end of the performance year. In accord with the preceding notion, the GoZ (2020:58) reported that monitoring and evaluation in MoPSE are characterised by single annual visits to schools by head office and provincial monitoring teams. Such visits constitute part of the performance measurement process. However, it is important to note that in the MoPSE, the inspectorate has often failed to reach target schools due to logistical constraints. As a result, some schools have gone for years without external performance evaluation (Jaricha & Dzimir, 2019:365). Moreover, the GoZ (2020:58) describes the assessment reports compiled by inspectors on the few schools visited as incoherent, and difficult to analyse and consolidate to give a full picture of the education sector performance. To the GoZ (2020:58), the MoPSE inspectors paid insufficient attention to the quality of teaching and as a result, cannot

give meaningful feedback. The ineffectiveness of the RBM system in the school system in Zimbabwe is, therefore, partly due to weak monitoring and evaluation mechanisms.

Machingambi et al., (2013:265) insinuate a general lack of appreciation of performance measurements. They infer a lack of credibility in the measurement process due to personal biases and the prevalence of human elements over professional elements. The performance measurement challenges are further exacerbated by the fact that not all forms of results are amenable to measurement. Hence in public schools, heads and teachers encounter the problem of quantifying output and outcome and state their measurements with precision (Mayne, 2007:99). Similarly, Muranda et al., (2015:103) posit that RBM performance measurement does not add value to a teacher's work as it cannot measure and award a score for contribution to the creation of tacit knowledge.

A survey of literature on performance measurement revealed that RBM is rendered ineffective by poorly coined result statements. Highly optimistic results that are unrealistic harm the RBM initiative (Meier, 2003:7). Such result statements reflect one-sidedness in the process of conceiving result statements or a top-down implementation approach. In line with the above discussion, the UNDP (2000:8), warns against over-emphasis on the quantification of results and indicators as it may negatively influence the behaviour of managers. From the preceding discussion, it follows that to balance off the magnitude of the expected results and the effectiveness of the RBM intervention, organisations are required to involve all stakeholders in the RBM process from beginning to end to ensure ownership and credibility of result information (UNDG, 2011:6).

According to Owolabi and Adeosun (2021:27), fairness in measurement is of paramount importance in the RBM process. However, problematic measurement and evaluation cause dissatisfaction that breeds mistrust among employees. Coupled with that, Samkange and Dondofema (2016:789), view the process of performance rating as complicated and tedious. Teachers are not clear about what is required and school heads who are supposed to capacitate and guide teachers either lack experience and expertise in the management system or are purported to be too busy

to help their subordinates. Consequently, neither the supervisors nor the supervisees commit whole heartedly to the process of performance measurement. With such a disjointed operational structure, RBM in Zimbabwean schools is biased for failure as it suffered a crisis of expectations between teachers and heads on one hand and a lack of expertise on the other. The most likely result of such a situation would be antagonistic views of the system between the two categories of education sector personnel.

***e. The influence of leadership support on the effectiveness of the RBM system in schools***

According to Chilunjika (2016:1), the effectiveness of RBM largely depends on the commitment and support of the top leadership. Correspondingly, Owolabi and Adeosun (2021:33) view the productivity of employees as a function of top management's ability. In the context of RBM, top leadership in the organisations defines the vision, and goals to measure performance and inspire others to focus on results achievement (Samkange & Dondofema, 2016:787; Mundondo et al., 2019: 148). Ironically, support is not always available in public sector institutions. Literature on the RBM implementation strategy highlights a gaps in the Zimbabwean leadership support for the RBM initiative at both institutional and national levels (Madhekeni, 2012:126; Mavhiki et al., 2013:137). As Mundondo et al., (2019:149) assert, the RBM system lacked buy-in from top leadership, and the syndrome cascaded down to the lowest level. Top management in civil service which includes education inspectors was not visible on the ground to supervise RBM activities, motivate subordinates and champion the RBM implementation (Jaricha & Dzimiri, 2019:359; Mundondo et al., 2019:149). At institutional level in MoPSE, school heads showed no enthusiasm to implement RBM or support their supervisees on RBM matters (Muranda et al., 2015:102; Gutuza, 2016:789). As a result of that, the RBM system was perceived as a valueless annual exercise done for conformance with the requirements of the job. Such lack of high-level support, thus, inspired a lack of seriousness and low uptake at lower levels which ultimately suggested a rot of the system from the head.



***f. Absence of benefits linked to performance in public schools as a deterrent factor to results-based management effectiveness.***

Dorsey and Mueller-Hanson (2017:10) view the failure of performance management systems like RBM as influenced by faulty assumptions about human behaviour and motivation. Aligned with the above view, Bester (2012:28) asserts that it is difficult and time-consuming to build a result culture and institutionalise it without the support of necessary incentives. For the RBM system to foster accountability, feedback on performance progress needs to start with a clear plan of expectation followed by monitoring of performance progress and then provision of feedback requires a follow through with consequences which are both positive in the form of incentives and negative in the form of penalties (Dorsey & Mueller-Hanson, 2017:15). Bester (2012:29) views institutions that do not have consequences for non-performance as having little to no incentive for others to perform. Thus, consequences linked to performance are a critical factor for the success of RBM. In Dorsey and Mueller-Hanson (2017:15)'s views, without consequences that are linked to performance feedback, accountability cannot improve in institutions even if all other variables are done well.

In the context of the Zimbabwean school RBM system, Pazvakavambwa (2015:155) acknowledges that school heads and teachers felt that a more enabling environment with a supportive legal framework and commensurate incentives was required to enhance the systems' effectiveness. Further, junior staff members in the public education sector perceived the RBM system as an unsupported high-level initiative. Equally, Samkange and Dondofema (2016:789), view teaching staff's perception of the RBM system as negatively influenced by the absence of financial benefits attached to them. The general sentiment is that RBM does not earn teachers a pay cheque. Aligned to that, Hatton and Schroeder (2007:430), view the prospect of RBM success as very negligible in systems without real incentives for good performance together with defined consequences for non-performance and poor reporting. To Dandira et al., (2020:396) recognition help employees such as teachers to balance positive and negative feedback. Because of that, an incentive provided as recognition of good performance can boost the morale of teachers. However, Mavhiki et al., (2013:138) describe the failing economy of Zimbabwe and the

incapacity to provide the promised incentives to civil servants as the main reason for the ineffectiveness of the RBM system.

***g. The effects of corruption on RBM effectiveness***

The effectiveness of RBM in the public education sector has also been compromised by corrupt activities in the workplace. Lewis (2011:465) defines corruption as the abuse of power for private gains. And, the practice of corruption leaves very little evidence to show its presence. In different institutions, corruption manifests in different forms. Some of the forms are bribery, embezzlement, extortion, abuse of authority, favouritism and abuse of official privileged information. All the above forms of corruptions represent a departure from the expected standard operating procedures. According to Kirya, (2019:4) corruption in its different forms signify an underlying problem that affect good school governance. For Zimbabwe, Transparency International (2009:7), confirms the incidence of corrupt activities that negatively impacted public education management at different levels from the top to the lowest level. Some of the high-level corrupt activities include the use of political influence by top leadership to manipulate the recruitment process, transfers, promotion of teachers, and even decisions about which institutions to award government financial support. At the school level, common practices included the delivery of extra lessons by teachers to formal learners for an extra fee together with unreported cases of absenteeism and teachers' engagement in other activities during working hours to make ends meet (Chene, 2015:4, Kirya, 2019:5). Such acts severely affect learning outcomes.

UNESCO (2017:11) describe corrupt activities at lower levels in the public education sector as undesirable consequences of the decentralisation process that was ushered in by the RBM system. For instance, the decentralisation of decision-making powers to districts and schools also presented opportunities for corruption among lower-level personnel. Aligned to the above view, literature attests to the prevalence of nepotism and patronage, bribery, paid private tuition provided to formal learners, kickbacks during procurement of school items, and sexual exploitation in the public education sector as some of the common challenges affecting the performance of the education sector (Chene, 2015:4). Micro level corruption also manifested through

the sale of examination question papers and bringing in non-candidates to write examinations on behalf of others (Chene, 2015: 4; UNESCO, 2017:12). Thus, whilst the RBM system in the education sector advocated for transparency and accountability, the failure of the Zimbabwean government to decisively deal with corruption at a high level led to a culture of non-accountability and the absence of transparency in schools (Chene, 2015:4). Such a culture negates the ethos of RBM in schools.

The limitations of the RBM system highlighted above have casted doubt on the relevance, applicability, and benefits of the RBM system to many people. For example, Madhekeni, (2012:122) describes the RBM implementation in Zimbabwe as an area of controversy. It is not clear whether the RBM system is influencing any meaningful changes or not in the Zimbabwean institutions. Such a generalisation is linked to the notion that the implementation of RBM in many public sector institutions is riddled with challenges and its benefits not easily noticeable. Similarly, Hatton & Schroeder (2007:426) questioned whether RBM is a friend or foe in their description of the effects of implementing the RBM system in the development sector.

### **3.9 The gaps discovered in related literature**

From the review of related literature on the implementation of RBM in public sector institutions, it emerged that there are areas that require further research to provide insights into how RBM can be improved. The understanding of and the use of the goal-setting theory to examine the implementation of the RBM system in schools revealed a void in the information regarding how employees sustain the RBM in the absence of incentives. Besides the issue of incentives to support RBM, the review of the literature also failed to provide information regarding how low and unsatisfactory performance in an RBM process should be treated.

The review of related literature on RBM also failed to provide information on the methods and ways of measuring qualitative aspects of the teaching services such as attitudes and behaviours of learners that are gained as a result of interaction with the teacher. A gap exists in literature on the measurement of qualitative benefits that accrue to the learners as a result of passing through the hands of teachers.

There is also a gap in literature on how different institutions bridge the socio-economic differences for them to implement RBM with uniform results. Lastly, from the performance evaluation process, RBM leads to the award of performance grades. What is missing is how the performance grades of employees in an RBM process directly translate into the level of MoPSE performance. Also, there is a void in literature on how the employees' performance grades can be used to determine the nature and levels of incentives

Literature on the RBM system is silent about the burden of accountability during the RBM review process. Once stakeholders engage in the process of problem identification and setting the performance levels, the responsibility for accounting for results is relegated to the job holder. There is no literature on how all stakeholders can be made accountable for the final result during performance evaluation. A multi-directional burden of accountability model can help to ensure that all stakeholders who participated in problem identification and goal setting are made accountable for the ultimate results.

### **3.10 Summary**

This chapter reviewed related literature on the effectiveness of the RBM system in the public sector. A survey of literature on result-based management implementation across the globe highlighted that countries are at different levels in their appreciation of the RBM system. The chapter noted that different countries treat the result-based management system differently as highlighted in the case studies presented. The reasons for its implementation differed which also influences the emphasis given to its various elements. In all RBM-implementing countries, the road to success was not easy. Literature also attested that RBM implementation is a learning curve and nearly all countries using it experience a fair share of related problems. Zimbabwe is barely at the stage of trying to understand the system as demonstrated by the impediments to its effective implementation in public schools. The Zimbabwean model of RBM was discussed in this chapter and its phases that constitute the RBM cycle were described. A review of the literature on the relevance of the RBM system to the administrative roles of the school head was done in this chapter and it highlighted that the RBM system applies to public school management. The

challenges that affect the effective implementation of RBM in schools were manageable. For developing nations like Zimbabwe, skills shortages and financial challenges were perceived as the greatest impediment to RBM implementation. It emerged from the literature that negative perceptions about RBM are mostly a result of implementers' limited appreciation of RBM, the failure of institutions to provide the appropriate conditions for effective RBM, and finally skill deficiency among employees.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the research methodology in which the philosophy underpinning the methods of the study, research approach and design are discussed. The study population is defined in this chapter followed by the sampling techniques employed to obtain the representative study sample. Data generation instruments used in the study are also presented. A qualitative data analysis plan is presented in this chapter. The six steps in qualitative data analysis are described in this chapter. The data presentation format is explained. Ethical issues observed in this qualitative research are also examined and lastly, the chapter close with a summary.

#### **4.2 Research paradigm**

A paradigm is a basic set of beliefs and assumptions that guide action in research (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018:195). Such assumptions define a researcher's worldview from the ontological and epistemological perspectives. Ontological assumptions relate to the nature of the phenomenon being investigated and its characteristics (Cohen et al., 2018:5). The two extreme ends of the ontological continuum view reality as lying out in the world which is represented by "positivism" on one end of it is created in one's mind as represented by "constructivism" on the other end. The present study was located in the interpretivist paradigm which holds the ontological assumption that reality is socially constructed through an individual's interaction with the environment. Epistemological assumptions relate to the knowledge basis, how knowledge can be acquired and communicated (Cohen et al., 2018:6). The epistemological perspective of interpretivism is premised on the belief that there is no single observable reality but rather multiple dimensions or layers of interpretations to a single observable phenomenon (Creswell, 2014:8; Johnson & Christensen, 2014:86; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016:9). Thus, the behaviour of people implementing an RBM process in the public secondary school system can be viewed and construed from many different angles. The ontological and epistemological assumptions

informed the research approach and data generation techniques that enabled the researcher to construct the meaning of the phenomenon from the context-specific perspective of the participants. According to Creswell (2014:8), the interpretivist research paradigm is underpinned by the assumption that individuals develop the subjective meaning of the world they live and work in. The assumption pre-supposes that as individuals interface with the environment, they make meaning of every incident through interpretation of the phenomenon concerning the context in which the events are taking place. Thus, the interpretation of circumstances culminates in the construction of knowledge.

Cohen et al., (2018:19) describe the goal of interpretivist researchers as seeking to understand particular human experiences from the perspective of research participants. The interpretivist worldview believes that reality is located within particular social contexts and researchers can understand it by studying the behaviour, attitudes, and perceptions of the participants. Thus, for one to understand a phenomenon in-depth, one needs to understand the background situation superficially and holistically (Cohen et al., 2018: 288). In their view, Trochim and Donnelly (2006:158), advise that the interpretivist researcher simply needs to be immersed in the phenomenon under study for them to understand it in depth. The ontological and epistemological assumptions provided a framework for the exploration of secondary school heads' perceptions on the operationalisation of results-based management in public schools in the Highglen School District in Zimbabwe. The researcher was cognisant of the fact that educators hold different views of the RBM effectiveness depending on the environments in which they operate. Therefore, the adoption of the interpretivist research paradigm and a qualitative research design was considered appropriate for this study as it recognised the need for one to visit research participants and mingle with them to understand the context or setting of the participants on which to base interpretations of the phenomenon under investigation (Creswell, 2014:8).

Rubin and Babbie (2017:62), concur in their assertion that interpretivist studies endeavor to gain an empathic understanding of the participants' inner feelings, attempt to interpret their everyday experiences, gain deeper meanings, and eccentricity reasons for their behaviour. The above-stated assumptions informed the

present researcher's decision to treat the secondary school heads implementing RBM in the Highglen School District as research participants and mingle with them in their schools setting while he posed as a research instrument to appreciate their situation and make sense out of it. Accordingly, in this study, the interpretivist worldview informed the adoption of a qualitative research approach to explore the heads' perceptions about RBM from their everyday work environment without influencing and affecting their behaviour.

### **4.3 Research design**

A research design is a structure comprising the logical steps which were taken to link the research questions to the data generation tools, analysis, and interpretation in a coherent way (Pilot & Beck, 2003:65; Yin, 2011:75). A more comprehensive definition of the research design was given by Cohen et al., (2018:38) as implying

*A plan for and foundation for approaching, operationalising, and investigating the research problem or issue; setting the approach, theory/ies and methodology/ies to be employed; the type of data required and how it will be collected (instrumentation) and from whom (the population and or sample) how the data will be collected; analysed and interpreted and reported*

Johnson and Christensen (2014:593) gave a succinct definition of the research design as an outline or strategy to answer the research questions. As a plan or strategy for inquiry, a research design can fall within any one of the three main approaches to research which are, quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods (Creswell & Creswell, 2018:41).

#### **4.3.1 Qualitative research design**

This study adopted a qualitative research design. Qualitative research is empirical research where data are not in form of numbers (Punch, 2009:3; Trochim et al., 2016:57). In terms of focus, qualitative research seeks to understand a phenomenon by paying attention to the total picture rather than breaking it down into variables (Ary et al., 2010:29). An all-encompassing definition of qualitative research is given by Johnson and Christensen (2014:64), who describe it as a type of educational



research in which the researcher relies on the views of participants, asks broad and general questions, generates data that is largely in the form of words from participants, describes and analyses these words for themes and conducts an inquiry subjectively. Denzin and Lincoln (2018:43) concur with the above view in their description of qualitative studies as situated activities that locate the observer in the world and use interpretive mechanisms and practices that make the world visible.

This study gained an in-depth understanding of the operationalisation of result-based management in public secondary schools and its effectiveness from the perspective of the policy implementers. To achieve the above-stated objective, the researcher reached out to Highglen School District secondary school heads within their natural setting to explore their attitudes, perceptions, and general beliefs regarding the RBM system. A set of qualitative questionnaires was circulated among school heads who consented to participate in the study. The questionnaires prepared participants for face-to-face interviews by defining the areas for discussion. Trochim et al., (2016:57) describe qualitative research as a complex field of methodology that focuses on analysing how people interpret their experiences and their everyday world. For this study, the researcher relied on the participant's views about the study phenomenon which were captured through qualitative research methods that include among others, interviews and open-ended questionnaires. The generic qualitative research methods were used in the exploration and discovery of the meaning of people's lives under real-world conditions (Yin, 2011:8). Thus, in the context of the preceding definitions, qualitative research methods were pursued in this study to enable the researcher to:

- a) delve into the daily routines of the secondary school heads to gain an in-depth understanding of their real-world meaning of the RBM system;
- b) collect data that represent the views and perceptions of the secondary school heads as participants in the study;
- c) pay special attention to and account for the contextual condition under which the RBM system is practiced in schools;
- d) contribute insights to explain social behaviour and thinking of secondary school heads about RBM from existing and new RBM concepts and

- e) acknowledge the potential relevance of multiple sources of evidence on the RBM system in public schools rather than a single source (Yin, 2016:9).

Trochim et al., (2016:57) concluded that the achievement of a deeper understanding of a phenomenon which, for this study, was the RBM system as implemented in public secondary schools, enabled the researcher to develop detailed stories to describe the phenomenon leading to the development of new constructs and theory underpinning the RBM system, appraisal or adjustment of the same.

According to Lodico et al., (2010:34), qualitative researchers develop broad areas of focus based on their experiences, readings, and observations. The decision to research RBM in public secondary schools was influenced by the researcher's twelve years of experience as a secondary school head in the public education sector. As a secondary school head, the researcher worked with different management approaches that include performance appraisal and later on the RBM system. Based on observations of the behaviour of teachers during RBM and his experience in dealing with the preceding management approaches, the researcher developed an interest in undertaking this study to gain further insights into the implementation of RBM in schools. Coupled with these reasons, the researcher also acquired information about RBM from reading about the subject which highlighted several grey areas.

In interrogating the school heads' perceptions about RBM implementation in public schools, the researcher noted that some of the answers to research questions required life experiences that could be captured better through the use of a qualitative approach. Thus, the choice of a qualitative research approach for this study was influenced by the nature of the problem area, the purpose of the study which was to gain further understanding of the subject, and lastly by the type of data to be collected.

#### **4.3.1.1 Generating data from secondary sources**

Within this qualitative study, secondary data from an extensive review of related literature and primary data from field research were used to help the researcher develop a deeper understanding of the operationalisation of RBM in public-sector educational institutions. Using textbooks and scholarly journals as sources of

secondary data, the researcher delved into the subject of RBM to; first, link the present study to prior research on the topic and provide a foundation for contributing to the knowledge gap (Johnson & Christensen, 2014:151; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016:90). In that context, the review of related literature is described by Merriam and Tisdell (2016:90) as comparable to the researcher's involvement in discussion with other scholars on the subject to identify a space to place his contribution. Secondly, a review of related literature was done in this study to stimulate theoretical sensitivity toward concepts repeatedly identified in prior research. Trochim et al., (2016:11) refer to that purpose as setting the current study into the context of conceptual and theoretical framework. Thus, the present researcher conducted a detailed literature search on the subject of the RBM system to build a conceptual framework and explain goal setting as the theoretical underpinning of the study (Johnson & Christensen, 2014:150). In the process, important concepts that have repeatedly recurred in prior research and how they influence RBM implementation were highlighted and used as points of reference to demonstrate what is available and that which is not (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016:90). Finally, as suggested by Johnson and Christensen (2014:151), the researcher conducted a review of related literature to stimulate insights and identify observable behaviours in the study.

Based on the preceding discussion regarding the forms of data, its sources, and its purpose in research, the present study falls into the genre of exploratory case studies. Exploratory research is often conducted because a problem has not been clearly defined and the researcher hoped to listen to the population being studied to understand the phenomenon (Johnson & Christensen, 2014:582). To gain an in-depth appreciation of the implementation of the RBM system in public schools, an exploration of the public secondary school heads' perceptions was conducted using field research for qualitative primary data and desk research for secondary data. To access primary data, the researcher used qualitative approaches such as informal discussions with secondary school heads alongside more formal approaches such as qualitative questionnaires and in-depth interviews which will be discussed in detail under research methods later in this chapter. Thus, the above-stated criteria for exploratory research qualified the present study into the category of qualitative

research. Its design, therefore, followed the canons of qualitative research as explained below.

#### **4.4 Type of research**

Qualitative research can be categorised into six groups which are phenomenology, ethnography, narrative inquiry, case study, grounded theory and historical research (Johnson & Christensen, 2014:109). For the different types of qualitative research, the choice of the research tools is dependent on the research objectives, questions to be answered, the participants and time at the researcher's disposal. This qualitative study adopted the case study design which is explained in detail in the next section.

##### **4.4.1 The case study**

There are many definitions for a case study that is function-specific as a research method, process, design, outcome, strategy, or focus (Lune & Berg 2017:170; Cohen et al., 2018:375). Johnson and Christensen (2014:580) define a case study as a bound system. They further describe case study research as qualitative research that is focused on providing a detailed account of one or more cases. Similarly, Ary et al., (2010:29) define case studies as ethnographic studies that focus on single or multiple units intending to arrive at a detailed description and understanding of the same. This study is aligned with the case study definition which refers to it as an in-depth study of the phenomenon, or "the case" within its real-life setting (Yin, 2014) cited in (Saunders et al., 2016:184). This means that a case study entails zooming into a specific event or group of individuals bound by particular characteristics in order to appreciate its real life meaning.

According to Cohen et al., (2018: 375) case studies are set in particular specific contexts that enable boundaries to be drawn around them. Such case study boundaries could be defined by many temporal features such as characteristics of the group, organisational or institutional arrangements, geographical parameters of the case, and participants' roles or functions among other criteria (Cohen et al., 2007:254). The choice of secondary school heads in the Highglen School District only out of a population of secondary school heads in the seven Education Districts

in Harare fits the description of a case study sample. Furthermore, the role of the participants in the implementation of RBM and the geographical location of the study defined the case. The researcher also assumed that the selection of Highglen secondary school heads as a case was atypical of the other cases of RBM implementers in public institutions and therefore its in-depth examination could provide insights into the situation prevalent in the public sector schools (Kumar, 2011:126).

Yin (2018:45) defines a case study in terms of the scope of the research and its features. Scope relates to the contemporary nature and the boundaries of the case being investigated, while features imply the technical distinctiveness of the study such as the use of multiple sources of evidence for triangulation. The two parameters above, thus make case studies all-encompassing methods of inquiry with their distinct designs, methods of data generation, and analysis which qualify them into different epistemological orientations (Yin, 2018:47). The perceptions of the secondary school heads on the effectiveness of the RBM system are built on a day-to-day basis as participants deal with the phenomenon in question. Such a background qualifies this study into the contemporary group. Evidence about the perceptions of the secondary school heads is qualitative and therefore requires the use of qualitative data generation instruments.

There are three types of case studies namely, intrinsic case study, instrumental case study, and collective case study (Stake, 1995 cited in Jonson & Christensen, 2014:582). The present study is an intrinsic case study in which the researcher used a single case to delve deep into the operationalisation of the RBM system in public schools (Johnson & Christensen, 2014:582). Yin (2016:310) defines an intrinsic case study as one which is chosen for in-depth study because of its uniqueness or inherent interest. He differentiates intrinsic case studies from instrumental and collective case studies on the basis that the former focus on particular cases for deeper understanding while the latter seeks a general understanding of a phenomenon in-order to generalise it beyond the particular case and study multiple cases concurrently in one study (Johnson & Christensen, 2014:583). In this study, the secondary school heads were treated as a unique group that presides over the

implementation of the RBM system in public schools and therefore, were chosen for their unique and critical role in stewarding the RBM system.

According to Johnson and Christensen (2014:582), the primary goal of an intrinsic case study researcher is to understand the case holistically and its internal functions, and then as a secondary goal, the researcher seeks to understand the general process based on the understanding of the single case. In this study, the researcher sought to understand in detail the secondary school heads' perceptions about the RBM system within the Highglen School District boundaries in particular and more generally how other leaders in public sector educational institutions perceived the system and how it works. The study referred to the implementation of the RBM system to the goal-setting theory which gave it a characteristic of an instrumental case study. However, Lune and Berg (2017:176) posit that there is no solid line between intrinsic case studies and instrumental case studies. The two types are separated by a "zone of combined purpose" (Lune & Berg, 2017:176).

#### **4.4.1.1 Advantages of using a case study**

Gall et al., (2003:434) posit that a well-designed case study brings a phenomenon to life for readers and helps them understand its meaning. In choosing a case study design for this study, the researcher considered the following advantages. Firstly, the researcher wanted to gain an understanding of the participants' perception regarding how the RBM system in public secondary schools is faring and why it is perceived in a manner portrayed by participants. That was done by selecting the case of school heads and delving into their daily routines to understand their behaviour patterns. Interacting directly with school heads implementing the RBM system whilst they were in the schools they lead allowed the researcher to record real-world accounts of the school heads' behaviour (Kothari, 2004:117). Lune and Berg (2017:173) concur with the preceding view in their submission that case studies open the doors to the process created and use the study population involved in the phenomenon to allow the researcher access to first-hand evidence. Such experience helped the researcher to make sense of the behaviour and attitudes of the participants in the study.

Secondly, case studies provide context-specific accounts which are holistic (Cohen et al., 2018: 375). Through links with the secondary school heads directly, the researcher got the real and rational accounts of personal experiences which exposed internal aspirations, pressure, and motivation that influences them to adopt certain behaviours during the operationalisation of RBM in schools. In that way, the use of a case study deepened the researcher's understanding of the school heads' perceptions about RBM effectiveness (Kothari, 2004:115). Consequently, the use of a case study as a design and method allowed the researcher for this study to live the experiences of the secondary heads in the implementation of RBM. Through interacting with the participants, the researcher managed to get into the shoes of the secondary school heads, gain feelings about the implementation of RBM in school, and think about the RBM from the participant's perspective which enhanced the researcher's appreciation of the case under study (Cohen et al., 2018:376).

Thirdly, the researcher also considered the case study design most suitable for the current research because of the advantages associated with the use of multi-method data generation and analysis (Cohen et al., 2018:375). In this study, the use of open ended qualitative questionnaires complemented data generated through the use of personal interviews and focus groups. Multiple methods of data generation allowed triangulation which enhanced the trustworthiness of the research findings. The other advantage of a case study design is its appropriateness for use in situations where the researcher had little to no control over the behaviour of participants (Cohen et al., 2018:376). In this present study, the researcher could not control the attitudes and perceptions of the participants toward RBM implementation, hence the decision to adopt the case study design. The other advantage of using the case study design was that it enabled close interaction with the participants in the case (Kothari, 2004:115). The close interaction with participants enhanced the researcher's experience of the school-based RBM system and in the process sharpened his analytical skills.

#### **4.4.1.2 Disadvantages of using a case study**

The following disadvantages of using a case study design were observed by the researcher in this study. Firstly, the case study designs produce information that is

not comparable since every case is unique. For this case study that dealt with secondary school heads in the Highglen School District, the information drawn from the study could not be compared to other groups of public sector employees owing to variations in the prevailing operating conditions. However, Lune and Berg (2017:178) dispute the preceding limitation of using case studies in their argument that, if the case studies are properly executed, they should not only fit specific situations but also provide a general understanding of comparable individuals, groups, and organisations. The other limitation of using the case study design observed in this study related to the nature of the cases. According to Lune and Berg (2017:180), cases are socially constructed and therefore once the behaviour of the case crosses the socially recognised boundary line, such behaviour is subject to different interpretations and might be misconstrued. Data generated was confined to the Highglen School District and perceptions revealed were restricted to the case. However, with more information about a case, the complexity of the case under study and the risk of false generalisation increase. To mitigate the above-stated limitations of case studies, the researchers closely followed the principles of intrinsic case study designs in terms of participant selection, data collection, analysis, and presentation. The use of the qualitative questionnaire together with personal interviews strengthened the fidelity of data through triangulation. The study population, in which this case study was located, is discussed below together with its characteristics.

#### **4.5 The study population and sampling procedure**

##### **4.5.1 The study population**

This study was conducted in the MoPSE public secondary schools in Harare Metropolitan Province. Hence, the population chosen for the study comprised secondary school heads in the seven school districts of Harare. Johnson and Christensen (2014:346) describe a study population as the larger group from which the researcher would want to conduct a study. It is also the larger group to which the researcher wishes to apply the results of the study. This means that for this study, the school heads in public secondary schools in the MoPSE constituted the population. To narrow down the size of the population, school heads in Harare



Metropolitan province were defined as the study population. To Ary, et al., (2010:647) and Lodico et al., (2010:25) the study population is made up of all members of a defined class of people. School heads were considered a relevant population for this study as they superintend the implementation of RBM in schools. Harare province was conveniently selected for the study because of its centrality and the existence of large schools which exhibit diversity in the application of policy, hence the high potential for information richness (Pilot & Beck 2003:305). Besides that, the researcher also stayed in Harare and could easily access the school heads chosen for the study.

#### **4.5.2 The sampling process**

Harare Metropolitan province is made up of 7 school districts and has a total of 82 public secondary schools. Out of the 7 school districts in Harare, the Highglen School District only, with a total of 12 public secondary school heads, was purposively chosen as the sample for this study. A sample is a small proportion of the study population that is selected from a larger population (N) for scrutiny (Best & Kahn, 2014:6). From the preceding description, sampling, therefore, entails the selection of cases of interest from the study population for observation (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009:164; Rubin & Babbie, 2017:350; Johnson & Christensen, 2014:343). From the 12 secondary school heads in the Highglen School District, who constituted the study sample, the researcher purposively selected participants with rich and relevant knowledge of the RBM system for data generation. This was in line with the qualitative ways of drawing a sample suggested by (Cohen et al, 2018:43). The snowballing technique was used within the sampled group of 12 secondary school heads to identify participants with the potential for relevant and informative responses. To ensure fair representation of all the secondary school heads' perceptions about RBM, the researcher categorised secondary school heads in the sample according to the status of the institutions that they lead as follows.

- a. mega schools with advanced level classes where performance appraisal is done for fifty teachers and more;
- b. smaller and satellite schools with relatively smaller establishments of less than fifty members of staff;

- c. newly appointed school heads with less than five years of experience.

**Table 4. 1 The distribution of participants by the size of schools they lead**

<b>Participants group</b>	<b>Number in the group</b>	<b>Number of participants</b>	<b>Total</b>
Mega schools' heads appraising more than 50 teachers	4	4	4
Average schools heads appraising less than 50 teachers	5	5	5
Newly appointed Heads with less than 5 years of experience	3	3	3
<b>Grant Total</b>			<b>12</b>

Table 4.1 gives a breakdown of the participants that constituted the study sample for qualitative data generation by the size of the school. Considerations for equity in the distribution of participants were made by deliberately choosing information-rich school heads from all the columns on the table for data generation.

#### **4.6. Data generation methods**

Data generation methods which are also referred to as research methods are techniques used to physically collect data for analysis in a study (Johnson & Christensen, 2014:313). In the present study, the generation of data was done using the following methods: qualitative open-ended questionnaires and qualitative face-to-face interviews. The researcher also met with the research participants informally to discuss the RBM system in a small group. A detailed discussion of the data generation instruments is presented below.

##### **4.6.1 The use of an open-ended questionnaire to generate data**

Open-ended questionnaires also referred to as unrestricted questionnaires, call for free responses from the participants (Best & Khan, 2014:322). Questions that constitute unrestricted questionnaires are mostly open-ended they do not give clues to the participants on how to respond. According to Saunders et al., (2016:17), open-

ended questionnaires are a form of a self-administered interview in which the participants record their responses in their own words. Similar to all other types of questionnaires, open-ended questionnaires can be administered in the absence of the researcher, electronically as a soft copy online or as a mailed hard copy and it can be physically delivered to the respondents (Johnson & Christensen, 2014:313).

In this study, school heads who had internet connections at home or their respective schools received online copies of the open-ended questionnaire as a measure to avoid contact in line with the COVID-19 response protocols. Borg and Gall (2003:222) refer to questionnaires as documents that ask all the respondents in the sample the same questions to generate data on or about observable and indirectly observable aspects of the study. Hence, this study used the open-ended questionnaire (Appendix I) to generate data on the inner feelings, experiences, values, interests, and perceptions of secondary school heads in the Highglen School District about the RBM system. As a research tool, the open-ended questionnaire Appendix I was considered appropriate for this study as it presented the researcher with factual data about the implementation of RBM in public secondary schools. The open-ended questions allowed school heads to express themselves freely without reservations on the subject under investigation. However, for this study, questionnaires, just like interviews, had their advantages and disadvantages.

#### **4.6.1.1 Advantages of using the open-ended questionnaire**

Questionnaires as data-generating instruments can cover a wide geographical area within a relatively short space of time. Hand-delivered and mailed questionnaires administered to secondary school heads in this study had the economic advantages of less financial and time resources compared to face-to-face interviews. This study was also conducted during the COVID-19 and the lockdown period and the use of questionnaires especially the electronic version was a safe way to generate data. The other advantage associated with the use of questionnaires in the present study and the related contexts was the assurance of participants' anonymity; as names were not written on the questionnaire in line with the ethical considerations for research. Non-disclosure of names encouraged the participants to give information to the best of their knowledge without fear of victimisation. Given that RBM touches

on relationships between supervisors and supervisees, the removal of identification details on questionnaires made participants comfortable to comment freely about the RBM process. Furthermore, the cover letter, Appendix D, accompanying the questionnaire explained the intended use of the data and explained confidentiality matters which helped to enhance objectivity and reduce bias in the responses; Hand-delivered questionnaires had the further advantage of allowing participants time to reflect and think through the responses as the questionnaires could be completed at times convenient to participants (Cohen et al., 2018:360).

#### **4.6.1.2 Disadvantages of using the open-ended questionnaire**

The use of open-ended questionnaires in this study had the disadvantage of restricting the participants' responses to precisely the limits of the questions. Questionnaires left no room for probing. Thus, they tended to limit the participants from providing further details. Also, the response rate of the mailed questionnaires was relatively low as some of the participants did not return the questionnaires or do due diligence on them.

#### **4.6.2 Interviews as data generating instruments**

Interviews are purposeful discussions or interpersonal encounters between two or more people in which the interviewer asks questions and participants respond willingly while the researcher captures important details (Johnson & Christensen, 2014:317; Saunders et al., 2016:388). In this study, thirty-minute semi-structured interviews were arranged with secondary school heads in their convenient spaces adhering to the COVID 2019 protocols. The researcher ensured that face masks, face shields, and the recommended physical distance of approximately one and a half to two metres between the interviewer and interviewee were observed during the interview sessions. To maintain the flow of the discussion, the researcher used an interview guide, (Appendix J) comprising open-ended questions that were linked to the related literature. Other questions stemmed from the participants' responses as the researcher continued to probe to get a deeper appreciation of the research problem (Lodico et al., 2010:125).

In cases where the researcher could not reach out to the participant due to COVID-19 movement restrictions, the researcher conducted telephone interviews and WhatsApp video call interviews with secondary school heads whilst in their workplaces or at home. The conduct of telephone interviews was informed by Trochim et al., (2006:109)'s description of interactive sessions between the researcher or interviewer and the interviewee which can be on a face-to-face basis or over the telephone as personal interviews. Correspondingly, for this study, the researcher conducted five personal interviews physically with selected school heads in their respective schools to capture their opinions regarding the implementation of RBM in public schools. Owing to COVID 19 related movement restrictions, three other interviews were conducted over the phone. Personal interviews enabled the researcher to maintain the participants' natural environment and used the changes in their voice tones and other subconscious body languages noticeable to make meaning about the participants' perceptions of the RBM system as applied to public secondary schools. Cohen et al., (2007:349) describe such a characteristic of interviews as allowing the multisensory channel that includes the use of verbal and nonverbal language to be used in research, which makes it a flexible data generation instrument. Participants' qualitative responses were recorded, in audio and written format with individual quotations captured verbatim as the interviewees spoke and then transcribed by the researcher. Personal interview data in this research was used to support questionnaire responses in building themes on the participant perceptions about the RBM system.

#### **4.6.2.1 Advantages of personal interviews to generate data**

Interviews, by nature, explore the viewpoints of the participants together with their understanding and perspective of the subject under discussion (Bairaji & Munot 2019:36). This constitutes a distinctive advantage of personal interviews. In this study, personal interviews conducted also had the following advantages. Firstly, the use of one-on-one interviews to explore the perceptions of secondary school heads about the RBM system in this study was motivated by the research purpose and research questions (Saunders et al., 2016:394). Such exploration of the secondary school heads' non-palpable elements of the work environment could best be done by engaging with the school heads on a one-on-one basis to get into their shoes and

gain a deeper understanding of the RBM system from their perspective. The interview technique had the advantage of allowing the researcher an opportunity to focus on a small group of information-rich, purposively sampled school heads in the Highglen School District and generate data from them whilst they were in their offices. In the process, the researcher managed to draw contextual meaning from the discussion (Fontana & Frey, 2005 in Lincoln & Denzin, 2005:699; Saunders et al., 2016:392). The semi-structured interviews used in this study also allowed the researcher room to apply the prompts and probes concept in which misunderstood questions were rephrased and clarified for ease of comprehension by the interviewee and further probing of the participants' responses to gain a deeper understanding of the heads' experiences with / and perceptions of the RBM system implementation in public schools (Cohen et al., 2018:513).

Conducting semi-structured interviews on the WhatsApp video platform for this study had the further advantage of enabling the rapid gathering of research data over a short period at a fairly reasonable cost (Trochim et al., 2006:109). A majority of secondary school heads who were selected to constitute the study sample agreed to participate in the interview process which made the interview response rate for this study very high. Finally, in leading the discussions as an interviewer, the researcher had the advantage of controlling the data generation process by altering the sequence of interview questions to give priority to high-yielding and critical questions depending on the participant's capacity (Kothari, 2004:99; Ary et al., 2006:310). Such an innate advantage of the interview as a data generation tool enabled the researcher to maximise every interviewee who participated in the data generation exercise.

#### **4.6.2.2 Limitations of the use of personal interviews**

This study used semi-structured interviews which according to Lodico et al., (2010:224) are characterised by pre-planning and the development of interview protocols. In the planning phase of semi-structured interviews, the researcher coined an interview guide (Appendix J) comprising themes for discussions and questions to be asked (Saunders et al., 2016:391). However, despite thorough preparations before the interviews, the researcher noted that establishing a rapport that promoted

unrestricted and honest responses to the interview questions remained a challenge (Kothari, 2004:99). Some of the participants remained skeptical about openly providing responses that appeared to touch on flaws of top officials in the MoPSE during the RBM implementation process. Coupled with that, the absence of interviewees' anonymity during interviews made some of the participants uncomfortable when it came to the disclosure of sensitive data despite the assurance that responses were going to be treated in confidence (Best & Kahn, 2014:55). Whilst the tendency to withhold information sat at one end of the continuum, at the other end was the challenge of interviewees who tended to provide information based on what they thought the interviewer wanted to hear and hence supplied imaginary and exaggerated accounts (Kothari, 2004:100; Best & Kahn, 2014:272). Thus, success in generating quality data from the interview processes in this research, as in many other qualitative studies, largely depended on the interviewer's ability to remain focused on the goal of research and sift data to remove inaccurate and irrelevant components (Best & Kahn, 2014:273).

#### **4.6.3 Piloting the data generation instruments**

A pilot study is a preliminary study or a trial run of the research with a smaller sample to test the appropriateness of the data tools and the practicality of the inquiry procedures (Ary et al., 2010:95; Johnson & Christensen, 2014: 298). In this study, piloting was done to test the relevance and usability of the two data generation instruments used. A small group of secondary school heads comprising five members bearing the same characteristics as those in the Highglen School District participated in the two pilot studies. According to Yin (2018:37), a pilot test has the benefit of helping the researcher to refine the different aspects of the research as informed by the feedback from the pilot study sample. The first level involved the piloting of the questionnaire that was designed based on the major themes emerging from the review of related literature in chapters two and three. At this level, the researcher also used the pilot study feedback to ascertain the clarity and relevance of the different items in the questionnaire. Irrelevant and obsolete items were revised and some were dropped off while the language used in the data generation tool was thoroughly scrutinised to check for ambiguity, spelling errors, grammar,

offensiveness, and the level of item difficulty vis a' vis cognitive capacity of the participants (Cohen et al., 2018:496).

Feedback from the questionnaire pilot test informed the researcher of the need to adjust the length of the data generation instrument to be covered within a maximum period of twenty minutes. Thus, the researcher re-designed the questionnaire to constitute five sections A to E. Each section comprised five questions to be covered in approximately five minutes. Piloting also highlighted the need to rephrased questions 2.1; 3.2; 3.5; 4.1; 4.3 and 4.4 to reflect the qualitative aspect of the study. In all the above questions, the phrase "what is" was replace by "describe" which is more qualitative. For example question 2.1 was rephrased as follows: "Describe your role in results-based management implementation at your school". According to Lodico et al., (2010:27), piloting a survey instrument helps the researcher to determine the trustworthiness and consistency of the tool. Cohen et al.,(2018:497), assert that in quantitative research, the validity of the questionnaire in this pilot study measures the extent to which the questions measured what they were meant to measure. In qualitative research, such aspects are represented by the trustworthiness and consistency of the data. Finally, the researcher pre-tested the demographic data section of the questionnaire to ensure that the tool captured adequate and appropriate information for the contextual presentation of the research findings.

The second level involved piloting the interview guide and questions for the collection of qualitative data through face-to-face interviews. Conducting a pilot test for this study helped the researcher to realise and adjust the time frame allocated towards conducting interviews from twenty to thirty minutes a session and it also brought to light the logistical challenges associated with the WhatsApp video calls for one on one interviews. The researcher was also able to adjust the language used in the questions and the level of difficulty to ensure the understandability of the interview items and the capacity to elicit appropriate responses. Quantitative aspects in the interview questions were dealt with based on feedback from the pilot test. For example question 1 (1) was rephrased qualitatively as follows: Describe your understanding of results-based management system. With data generation tools piloted and customised to the level of the participants, the next stage in this study



was to plan the field visits, the collection, and the analysis and presentation framework for the generated data.

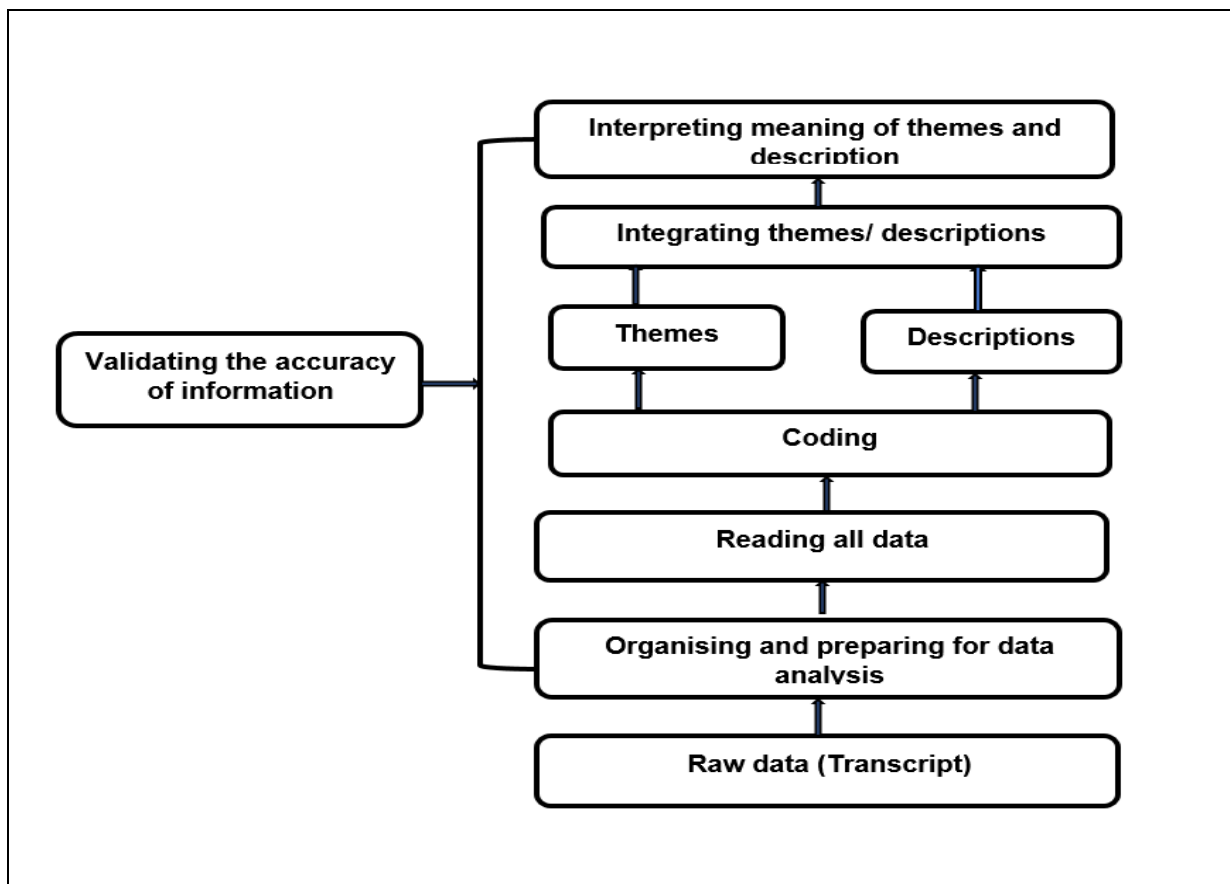
#### **4.6.4 Questionnaire administration**

As indicated in Section 4.6.1 above, the mode of transmission for questionnaires was hand delivery and via email for members who could not be accessed due to COVID-19. The time allocated for questionnaire administration was two weeks. Highglan secondary schools are relatively clustered nearby in three neighborhoods of Highfield, Glen Norah, and Waterfalls which made it easy and time economic for the hand delivery of questionnaires. The questionnaires were accompanied by a cover letter, Appendix H, that introduced the researcher and the study topic covered, the purpose of the study, assurance of confidentiality, expected return date, and appreciation of respondents in advance (Cohen et al., 2018:495). During the questionnaire distribution exercise, the researcher and assistants had the opportunity to explain the purpose of the study to the respondents. The return rate for the questionnaire was 100%. All the selected school heads who participated in this study populated the questionnaires and returned them within the prescribed time.

#### **4.7 Qualitative data analysis**

Data analysis in a qualitative study runs concurrently with data generation in a recursive process of generating and analysing data called interim analysis (Johnson & Christensen, 2014:766). In that process of qualitative data analysis, the researcher applies induction reasoning to combine fragments of generated data to develop themes (Teddle & Tashakkori, 2009:218; Lodico et al., 2010:180). To discover the emerging themes in the present study, the researcher used the six-step model suggested by Creswell, (2014:247) which is presented below in figure 4.1.

#### 4.7.1 Qualitative data analysis plan



**Figure 4. 1 Six-step model for qualitative data analysis**

**(Adapted from Creswell, (2014:197)**

The first stage of qualitative data analysis involved the organisation of the questionnaire and personal interview data. The process involved reducing the audio-recorded data to word format in preparation for analysis (Lodico et al., 2010:181; Creswell, 2014:197). The transcribed data from questionnaires and personal interviews were then organised or grouped according to the categories from where it was collected.

The second stage was a review and exploration of the entire transcribed database to gain a general appreciation and saturation status, of the data together with its overall depth and credibility (Lodico et al., 2010:182). At this level, the researcher read through the collected data many times identifying the salient points.

The third stage in the analysis process involved the codification of data. Portions of data were identified and grouped in segments according to their link and significance

in responding to the research questions and assigned specific identifying codes (Creswell, 2014:198). Johnson and Christensen (2014:770) defined segmentation of data as putting codified data into meaningful analytical units. At this stage, important words, phrases, and sentences were labeled. For this study, inductive codification was done manually and a list of the developed codes (Appendix K) was drawn to guide the grouping of data.

The fourth stage in this qualitative data analysis involved the generation of detailed descriptions of the groups of participants, their settings, experiences, and perceptions as represented in the data (Lodico et al., 2010:185; Creswell, 2014:198). Thus, at this stage, the researchers reconstructed the lived experiences of the participants and situated the study into the appropriate context.

The fifth stage involved further analysis of the codified data and presentation of the analysis findings in a narrative form (Creswell, 2014:199). Several codes were brought together to build themes and test hypotheses. Discussions at this stage were supported by quotations from the participants. The final stage involved the interpretation of the qualitative data. A response was sought for the *questions* “*what lesson has been learned*” and what areas for future research and unanswered questions are presented.

## **4.8 Ethical considerations**

Ethics are defined by Johnson and Christensen (2014:192) as “*principles and guidelines that help us uphold things we value.*” They further refer to research ethics as a set of principles that guide researchers to conduct investigations ethically. A snippet of ethical considerations for this study was presented in chapter one. This section of the study describes in detail the procedures followed by the researcher to safeguard the rights and interests of the participants during the study. A list of appendices used by the researcher to comply with the research ethics at different stages of the study is presented at the end of the report.

### **4.8.1 Obtaining ethical clearance**

The researcher applied and was provided with an ethical clearance certificate to investigate from the University of South Africa, (UNISA), UNISA College of

Education, CEDU, Ethics Review Committee (ERC) (Appendix M). With clearance from UNISA, the researcher applied to the MoPSE Zimbabwe for permission to enter into public secondary schools in the Highglen School District to generate data on the secondary school heads' perceptions about the RBM system in public schools. The MoPSE Zimbabwe here was represented by the Permanent Secretary (PS), who is the national head of administration in the ministry and the addressee to the permission request letter (Appendix B) Provincial Education Director (PED) for Harare metropolitan province, was requested for permission by a copy of the permission request letter (Appendix C). The preceding procedure in research is validated by Cohen et al., (2018:134) who assert that seeking permission from the responsible authority of institutions targeted to carry out research is a requirement that forms the preliminary basis of the informed consent principle.

With written permission from the (PED), (Appendix C) the researcher was able to enter into the Highglen secondary schools through the office of the District Schools Inspector (DSI) to familiarise themselves, present his credentials at the same time establish rapport with the heads before the data generation interviews and deployment of questionnaires (Lodico et al., 2010:113; Cohen et al., 2018:.134). An introductory letter to the DSI Highglen School District (Appendix D) and the Highglen School District secondary schools' school heads (Appendix E) delivered to respective addresses ahead of the researcher's data generation visit to seek the consent of the parties was delivered by hand to all the sampled institutions in the district.

#### **4.8.1.1 Informed consent**

Cohen et al., (2007:55) define informed consent as a research procedure in which individuals choose whether to participate in an investigation after being informed about facts that would likely influence their decision. In the present study, special attention was paid to the four elements of informed consent namely, competence, voluntarism, full information, and comprehension. Through the articulation of the aims and objectives of the study, the research procedures to be followed, and the scope of the study to the participants to ensure that they consent with the full understanding of the implications (Cohen et al., 2007: 52; Creswell, 2014:136;

Johnson & Christensen, 2014:208). Before visiting the schools to conduct interviews, the researcher dispatched introductory letters, (Appendix E), to the leaders of the concerned institutions informing them of the purpose of the visit and seeking their consent to participate. The introductory letters also informed the participants of their right to withdraw from the study without repercussions. Participants were also furnished with the informed consent form (Appendix F), which described the research project in detail, its potential risks, the concept of volunteerism, and confidentiality which the participants had to sign to confirm their consent.

#### **4.8.1.2 Privacy and confidentiality**

The involvement of human beings in the process of research has implications for their privacy. In the present study, measures were taken to ensure compliance with ethical considerations relating to the privacy of participants including assurance from the researcher that all the collected data were going to be treated in strict confidence. That assurance was provided in the information sheet (Appendix G), generated by the researcher for the study participants. Further measures to assure participants of confidentiality and privacy included non-disclosure of the names of interviewees together with their workstations. The researcher used letters of the alphabet and numbers as code names for the participants. During the data generation process, the researcher sought permission from the participants to audio record the interviews. Audio-recorded data were then transcribed and presented for analysis with code names to ensure anonymity. The essence of anonymity is that information provided by the participants should not reveal the source (Cohen et al., 2018:129). Thus, for this study, non-disclosure of names and codification of participants and responses ensured anonymity which also enhanced confidentiality.

#### **4.8.1.3 Access to results**

The researcher gave the participants assurance of making available the study findings to them upon completion of the inquiry. The information sheet (Appendix F), informed the participants of their right to access the study results and contact details of the researcher and promoter. The respondents were further assured that the data generated from them through the use of interviews and questionnaires was exclusively used for study purposes. During the data analysis process, the

researcher presented the reduced transcribed data to the participants to confirm that their views were correctly presented before the final consolidation of the results (Polit & Beck, 2003:573; Shenton, 2004:46).

#### **4.9 Limitations of the study**

The following were some of the limitations of this study.

- a. Convenient sampling was used to select the Highglen district in the Harare province for the study and as a result, only the views and perceptions of secondary school heads in Highglen were captured. Given the total number of public schools in Zimbabwe, the applicability of study results might be limited in scope.
- b. The study was conducted in a very unstable economic environment in which educators' remuneration was heavily eroded by inflation. Such a situation might have influenced participants to emotionally respond to the interview and survey questions that related to work performance to the extent of emphasising incentive-related issues.

#### **4.10 Summary**

Chapter four discussed the research design and methodology employed in the investigation of the secondary school heads' perceptions about RBM in public schools in Harare. A brief introduction was presented followed by a description of the research paradigm. Ontological and epistemological assumptions of the interpretivist research paradigm guiding this study were examined in this chapter. The interpretivist worldview focuses on building an understanding of the phenomenon from the perspective of the participants. Based on the preceding notion, the researcher subjected the participants to qualitative methods of inquiry. A description of a qualitative research design was given in this chapter. Within the qualitative design, the researcher highlighted the present study as a case study that involved secondary school heads in the Highglen School District of Harare. The above-stated group was considered the appropriate case for the study because they preside over the implementation of RBM in public schools. The nature of the study required the use of qualitative research tools. Hence, the generation of data on behaviours,

attitudes, and reactions of school heads to the RBM implementation was done using questionnaires, interviews, and focus group discussions. A sample of 12 secondary school heads was purposively selected to take part in the study. The chapter also highlights the ethical procedures followed in this study which include the UNISA ethical clearance, permission to conduct research from MoPSE, and informed consent from participating members. The above-stated ethical considerations were observed for the safety of both the researcher and participants and as a way to buttress the credibility of the study. The next chapter focuses on the presentation and analysis of data.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

The procedures and methods used to generate data were discussed in the preceding chapter. This chapter focuses on the analysis, interpretation, and discussion of the research findings. A qualitative approach to the presentation of research findings was used in this chapter. Data analysis ran concurrently with the process of data generation hence, this chapter treated the two as seamless. Analysis of the data on participants' profiles was done to reflect the distribution of school heads in the Highglen School District in terms of their gender, age, qualification, experience with RBM, and the size of the schools they lead. Qualitative data generated from the questionnaires, face-to-face interviews, and field notes were merged and categorised to show the emerging patterns of responses on secondary school heads' perceptions of RBM. The sifted data was then presented in a tabular form highlighting the themes, categories, and subcategories of responses given. The discussion of the research findings was done to provide answers to the research questions presented in chapter one and draw general conclusions about the study (Yin, 2016:206). Finally, I conclude.

#### **5.2 Analysis of data**

Qualitative data analysis strives to build an understanding of the phenomenon under study, synthesise the data and apply theory to the explanation of how and why participants behave in particular ways in given situations (Ary et al., 2010:481). Thus, the process of data analysis turned field data for this study into findings. To reduce the pressure of dealing with large volumes of data at the end of fieldwork, the process of data analysis ran concurrently with the process of data generation in this study (Cohen et al., 2018:315). Simultaneous generation and analysis of qualitative data in this study were also meant to enable the researcher to identify gaps and inadequacies in the generated data prompting the need to re-strategise for further generation of more precise and appropriate data to address the research questions (Miles et al., 2014:78; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016:202). The preliminary analysis of data



in this study started with scrutinising, commenting, and making notes on open-ended questionnaire responses. At this stage, the researcher examined the relevance and coverage of the participants' responses to the research problem and the research questions. Based on the preceding initial process, the researcher took note of the tentative themes and ideas from the study. The process also highlighted areas on which to focus in the interview sessions that followed and how the questions could be packaged to elicit the best responses that address the research questions (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016:198). In that way, the reprise of the same kind of responses was minimised. Thus, after every round of data generation, the researcher conducted a rudimentary process of analysis to plan the next data generation exercise.

Guided by the interpretivist paradigm, the analysis of empirical data commenced with the organisation of the participants' bio-data and status of the workstations to provide the background information of the participants and contexts in which the RBM system is practiced in Zimbabwean schools. Cohen et al., (2018:643) associate qualitative data analysis with the unraveling of in-depth, context-specific, rich, and subjective data to establish its meaning. Participants and institutional profiles were analysed in this study to provide insights into the caliber of personnel and contexts in which they operationalised the RBM system in the Highglen School District.

### **5.2.1 Approach to the analysis of data**

As alluded to in chapter four, Creswell's six-step model of qualitative data analysis was applied in this study. The preliminary stages of data analysis run concurrently with the data generation process. In preparation for the in-depth analysis, all audio-recorded interview data were transcribed and presented as text. This was followed by merging the interview scripts with open-ended questionnaire responses and field notes. The researcher proceeded with the organisation, grouping, and reduction of data into smaller chunks which formed the first step in the actual analysis of data for the study. The grouped data were then closely scrutinised to identify the important emerging trends and assign special codes to them. To maintain the anonymity of the participants and confidentiality of the responses, the researcher assigned codes to represent the participants as H1, H2 up to H9. School heads in acting capacity were

coded as AH1 up to AH3 and addressed by the same code throughout the process of data analysis and the whole study. Participants' responses were coded with single words or short phrases linked to the meaning. Codification in qualitative research refers to the process of assigning researcher-generated constructs that represent individuals, groups, and attributes of data to facilitate data analysis (Saldana, 2013:4). Context-specific heads' responses to the questionnaire and interview questions were summarised and presented to depict emerging patterns and themes which enabled the researcher to interpret and link the study findings to theory (Christensen & Johnson, 2014:767).

### **5:3 Profiles of the participants**

Research data was collected from secondary school heads in the Highglen School District schools in Harare. School heads in government-run secondary schools in the Highglen School District constituted the study population. A sample of twelve heads chosen from the Highglen School District secondary schools participated in this study. Personal and professional details for the twelve participants were captured on qualitative questionnaires hand-delivered to them. The questionnaire solicited the following participants' details: gender, age, qualification, promotional grades, and experience with both the RBM system and school management. Such information was deemed important for providing insights into the disposition of the participants and how they perceived the RBM system. Empirical data from the questionnaires revealed the background information and characteristics of the participants presented in table 5.1 below.

**Table 5. 1 Participants profiles**

	<b>Participant code</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Age Group</b>	<b>Academic qualifications</b>	<b>Professional Qualifications</b>	<b>Years of experience as a head</b>	<b>years of experience with RBM</b>
1.	H1	M	51-60	O'LEVEL	MED	17	12
2.	H2	M	51-60	A' LEVEL	MED	10	10
3.	H3	M	51-60	B.COM	MED	15	12
4.	H4	M	41-50	A' LEVEL	MED	3	10
5.	H5	F	51-60	B.A GEN	MED	8	10
6.	H6	M	61-65	O' LEVEL	MED	18	12
7.	H7	M	41-50	BSC.	MED	4	12
8.	H8	M	51-60	B.A	Grad. C.E	9	12
9.	H9	M	41-50	B.A	MED	10	10
10.	AH1	M	51-60	B. COM. ACC.	BED	11	12
11.	AH2	M	41-50	O'LEVEL	MED	6	10
12.	AH3	F	41-50	B.A Gen	Grad. C.E	4	10

**Key**

<b>O 'Level:</b>	<b>Ordinary level</b>
<b>A' Level:</b>	<b>Advanced Level</b>
<b>B.A Gen:</b>	<b>Bachelor of Arts General Degree</b>
<b>B.Sc. Gen:</b>	<b>Bachelor of Science general degree</b>
<b>B.COM Accounts:</b>	<b>Bachelor of Commerce in accounting</b>
<b>B.ED:</b>	<b>Bachelor of Education Degree</b>
<b>M.ED:</b>	<b>Master of Education Degree</b>
<b>Grad. C.E</b>	<b>Graduate Certificate in Education</b>

The data on the sampled participants described the general characteristics of secondary school leadership in the Highglen School District. As alluded to earlier under 5.2.1, the participants (H1 to H9) were substantive heads. They rose to the posts through promotion after satisfying the basic screening requirements as defined by the PSC and approved by the Permanent Secretary in the MoPSE. The other participants (AH1 to AH3) were substantive deputy heads acting in the position of secondary school heads. The preceding description of the participants thus demonstrates that Highglen School District schools are manned by a blend of mostly confirmed or substantive school heads and a few in acting positions.

Profiling of the participants' gender revealed a predominance of male school heads over female heads of schools. The preceding discrepancy in the distribution of educational leadership roles by gender in favor of males was described by Matope (2012:690) as an undesirable feature in the recruitment and promotion of education personnel in Zimbabwe. However, the data collected reflect the general composition of education sector leadership in schools with its inherent gender bias and how both parties as school leadership perceived the RBM's effectiveness.

Analysis of data on the age range of the participants revealed that public secondary schools in the Highglen School District were led by a blend of mature people aged between forty-one and sixty-five years. The distribution of the participants' age range indicates a balance between school heads within the seasoned but active age range of fifty-one to sixty years and the other age groups. Coupled with the stability of Highglen School District schools' leadership based on the age criteria of the heads, analysis of data also revealed that all the participants chosen for the study had the minimum required academic and professional qualifications to hold the positions. The eligibility criterion for the post of school head in Zimbabwean public schools is a bachelor's degree and a teaching diploma together with two years of experience as the vice head (Ndoziya, 2014:1; PSC, 2022:3). In this study, the least academically qualified participant had an ordinary level qualification and a Masters' degree in Education Management as their professional qualification. The highest academically qualified participants held a first degree in a teaching art or science subject and a professional qualification which was either a graduate certificate in education or a master's degree in education. Thus, based on academic and professional

qualifications as postulated by Ndoziya (2014:1) all participants had the requisite level of education to run public secondary schools and the use of acting head could not suggest a lesser caliber of participants.

Analysis of data on the participants' years of experience as secondary school heads indicated that most participants had a leadership experience span ranging between ten and eighteen years. A small section of the participants comprised relatively new school heads with less than five years of experience in their roles. Findings thus, demonstrated that all secondary school heads in the Highglen School District had hands-on experience with the RBM system for periods ranging over ten years. The evidence suggests that most of the school heads started to use RBM before promotion to their current roles. Such participants had the experience of both the supervisor and the supervisee in the school-based RBM system. Three of the twelve sampled participants were already confirmed heads at the time of the RBM system launch in 2010. This, suggests that they only experienced RBM from the perspective of supervisors in the school-based RBM system, even though they were supervised by district school inspectors who reside outside the schools. The purpose of the age and qualifications profiles, experience in leading public schools as head and finally dealing with RBM matters among the secondary school heads in this study was to demonstrate participants' ability to comprehend the RBM concepts and appreciate their meaning through applying them to the real-life work environment over some time.

#### **5.4 Characteristics of schools in the sample**

The Highglen School District is one of the seven education districts in the Harare metropolitan province. Thus, all the schools whose heads participated in this study were located in the urban setting. The Highglen School District covers the high-density residential locations of Highfield and Glen-Norah. Geographically, all of the sampled schools were nearby, surrounded by highly populous localities. The location of the schools, thus, influenced their sizes in terms of student and teacher population. Analysis of data on the schools' characteristics was done in this study to provide insight into the environment in which RBM was being implemented. To reflect on the background of the research phenomenon, public secondary schools in

the Highglen School District were profiled in terms of their sizes as characterised by the number of learners and the number of teachers appraised by the heads during the RBM process.

Variations in the sizes of the schools implied diversity in the heads' experiences in dealing with RBM and ultimately their perceptions of the system. Once again, to maintain the confidentiality of the data and anonymity of the secondary school heads, schools were coded as follows; HS1, HS2, and HS3 with HS1 representing mega schools, HS2 representing big schools, and HS3 representing the average schools with fewer than forty members of teaching staff. The term mega schools were coined by the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education to imply very big schools that accommodated learners above one thousand five hundred. Mostly, such schools conduct double sessions where the student population would be split into two groups with one group attending morning classes and the other one attending afternoon classes. Research findings from the qualitative questionnaires and interviews revealed the characteristics presented in table 5.2 below

**Table 5. 2 Highglen secondary schools profiles**

	<b>Category of school</b>	<b>School Code</b>	<b>Highest level Taught</b>	<b>School size / No. of Learners</b>	<b>No. of Educators/Appraisees</b>
<b>1.</b>	<b>HS1</b>	<b>MS1</b>	A'Level	1600	69
		<b>MS2</b>	A'Level	1670	67
		<b>MS3</b>	A'Level	1720	70
		<b>MS4</b>	O'Level	2000	76
<b>2.</b>	<b>HS2</b>	<b>BS1</b>	A'Level	800	44
		<b>BS2</b>	O'Level	1122	41
		<b>BS3</b>	O'Level	1200	46
		<b>BS4</b>	A Level	1100	49
		<b>BS5</b>	O' Level	1400	48
		<b>AS1</b>	O' level	216	12

3.	HS3	AS2	O' level	540	19
		AS3	O' level	600	18

Research data revealed a general predominance of big secondary schools with large numbers of teachers in the high-density locations of Highfields and Glen Norah. The sizes of the schools categorised above shed light on the heads' workload during the RBM work planning sessions, periodic performance reviews, and final evaluations. Although developmental management concepts would encourage heads to delegate responsibility to subordinates, final accountability for RBM quality and fidelity of the reports would always remain with the heads, hence, the need to highlight the sizes of the schools sampled.

Within the category of big schools, research findings indicate the presence of a participant, AH1, who is a head in an acting capacity, and a female head, [H7, implementing RBM. The preceding exposé, thus, suggests a representation of the participants' views across the divide. Whilst the open-ended questionnaires were administered to all the secondary school heads in the Highglen School District, personal interviews were conducted with heads purposively selected from the three categories of secondary school heads highlighted in Table 5.2. Information-rich participants from the three respective groups were chosen to participate in the face-to-face interviews.

### **5.5 Themes from the participants' responses**

Field notes and analysis of RBM documents in the different categories of schools enhanced the depth of the qualitative data in this study. Analysis of the various responses to the interviews and questionnaires produced findings denoting the themes as follows.

**Table 5. 3 Emerging themes and categories**

Emerging theme		Category	Sub-categories
1.	The meaning of RBM to school heads in the Highglen School District	1.1. The description of RBM by school heads	1.1.1. The definition of RBM to school heads. a. Conceptual definition meaning of RBM b. Functionalist meaning of RBM to school heads
		1.2. The components of RBM	1.2.1. The RBM planning 1.2.2. The RBM budgeting 1.2.3. The RBM personnel planning 1.2.4. The RBM monitoring and evaluation 1.2.5. The IRBM system
		1.3. The purpose of RBM in schools	1.3.1. Ensuring buy in and accountability for results 1.3.2. Improvement in the quality of services in schools
2.	Application of the RBM system to school administration	2.1. The inclusion of RBM in school heads administrative duties	2.1.1. Planning of school activities. 2.1.2. Financial management 2.1.3. Organisation of school activities 2.1.4. Personnel management
		2.2. The relevance of RBM to school heads instructional	2.2.1. Instructional program planning 2.2.2. Provision of teaching and learning resources



		leadership roles	2.2.3. monitoring and evaluation 2.2.4. Staff development
		2.3. The influence of RBM on school development	2.3.1. Results ownership and accountability at a personal level 2.3.2. Benchmarking school performance 2.3.3. The RBM influence on teamwork in schools
3.	The maintenance of the RBM system in schools	3.1. The implications of results-based rewards.	3.1.1. Financial rewards to support RBM uptake 3.1.2. Non-financial benefits to support RBM implementation
		3.2. The RBM in school decision support system	3.2.1. Use of performance information 3.2.2. RBM and external accountability 3.2.3. Importance of lessons learned
4.	The RBM implementation challenges	4.1. The personnel and financial related factors in MoPSE	4.1.1. Resistance by education sector personnel to embrace RBM 4.1.2. RBM skills shortages among school heads 4.1.3. Lack of leadership support on RBM 4.1.4. limited financial resources for RBM in school
		4.2. Technical factors impeding RBM	4.2.1. The complexity of the RBM system 4.2.2. Measurement of teachers' performance 4.2.3. The usability of the appraisal form in schools

		4.3. The organisational challenges in the MoPSE	<p>4.3.1. The organisational culture of MoPSE</p> <p>4.3.1.1. The educators' beliefs, and assumptions about RBM in schools</p> <p>4.3.1.2. The MoPSE bureaucracy and RBM implementation</p> <p>4.3.1.3. The MoPSE policy framework</p>
		4.4. The change management process in MoPSE	<p>4.4.1. Pre-RBM launch groundwork</p> <p>4.4.2. The transition from PA to RBM in schools</p> <p>4.4.3. The RBM post-launch support in schools</p> <p>4.4.4. The RBM buy-in in schools</p>
5.	Adaptations of the RBM system	5.1. The success factor for RBM in public schools	<p>5.1.1. Human resources factors enhancing RBM effectiveness.</p> <p>a. Improvements in working conditions for teachers</p> <p>b. Train for skills</p> <p>c. Motivate to solicit buy-in</p> <p>d. Build a culture of results and accountability in schools</p>

		5.2. The personnel performance appraisal form adjustments	5.2.1. Customise the appraisal form for MoPSE a. Length of the appraisal tool b. The language used depicts the education sector evaluation
		5.3. Revision of the policy framework impeding RBM	5.3.1. Revision of the MoPSE policies

Table 5.3, summarises the analysis of participants' views on the effectiveness of the RBM stem in the Highglen School District secondary schools in Harare. The empirical data collected through the use of face-to-face interviews, open-ended qualitative questionnaires, and field notes were coded and grouped following their meaning and contexts in which they were expressed to reveal five major themes derived from fifteen categories of responses. Each category comprised responses denoting a particular thread of similarity. Creswell's six-step model was applied to the process of data analysis which culminated in the emergence of the following themes:

- a. Perceptions built around the meaning of RBM to school heads in the Highglen School District;
- b. Perceptions about the applicability and relevance of RBM to school management;
- c. Perceptions built around the maintenance and sustainability of the RBM system in public schools;
- d. Perceptions built around the challenges of implementing the results-based management system in schools; and
- e. The envisaged adjustments to the RBM system to suit the needs of education sector management.

A thorough discussion of each of the above-stated themes is done in the next section.

## **5.6 Presentation and discussion of results**

To guide the flow of the study, discussions of the findings focused on the preceding five themes together with the related categories as presented in Table 5.3 above. The themes and categories constituted the headings and subheadings under which the grouped participants' views were discussed. In the different headings, the discussions sought to draw linkages between the research questions presented in chapter one, the research findings for the present study, and the existing literature on the subject. In the process, verbatim accounts of the heads' remarks during the face-to-face interviews and field visits were presented un-edited as quotations to corroborate points of view raised in the discussions. Johnson and Christensen (2014:831) describe such quotations as having the effect of bringing the readers of the study close to the participants and the real-world situation described in the research report. The discussion commences with the first theme.

### **5.6.1 Meaning of RBM to school heads in the Highglen School District**

This theme focuses on the school heads' level of understanding of the RBM system as a contributory factor to the perceptions forming behaviours in schools. School heads play a very important supervisory role in the implementation of RBM in public schools. Hence, their understanding of the meaning of RBM was considered key to the effective use of the RBM system. Furthermore, an exploration of the school heads' perceived meaning of RBM in this theme provided insights into the gap that exists between the literature meaning of the RBM system and how it is perceived and applied in the Highglen School District. Evidence from the study indicated that school heads varied in their understanding of the meaning of the RBM system. Equally, the pattern of variations was observed in participants' responses to questions on the purpose of the RBM in schools. The above phenomenon implies that the use of RBM in school is influenced by perceptions of what it means to different school heads and the purpose it is meant to serve. Examination of the school heads' description of the purpose of RBM in public schools provided insights into the causes of variations in the manner in which RBM is implemented in schools.

In the process, knowledge regarding the use of the RBM system in the Highglen School District was added to the literature. The next section discusses findings on the category of RBM meaning to school heads.

#### **5.6.1.1 The description of RBM by school heads**

It was noted that participants lacked clarity on the meaning of RBM to schools. The meaning of the RBM system to school heads in the Highglen School District was examined from three perspectives. Firstly, the theme focused on how the school heads defined by the RBM system in their respective schools to make sense of the perceptions around it. The preceding category of responses constituted the conceptual definition and functional meaning of RBM. Then, secondly, the theme focused on the school heads' description of the different components of RBM in their daily duties as a way of demonstrating a good understanding of the concepts. Thirdly, the theme focused on the perceived purpose of RBM in schools. Examination of the different participants' views on the purpose of RBM was meant to gauge the school heads' perception of RBM's appropriateness for use in the school system.

##### **5.6.1.1 a. Towards the definition of RBM from the participants**

Several participants responded to questions relating to the definition of RBM in ways suggesting that the secondary school heads in the Highglen School District had a limited understanding of what RBM entailed. This study considered the school heads' definition of RBM critical in providing insights into the gap that exists between the literature definition of the RBM system and how it is perceived and applied in the Highglen School District. Conspicuous in the evidence were the variations in the school heads' definitions of the RBM system. The variations suggested the different levels of school heads understanding of the RBM system. Both interview discussions and open-ended questions responses revealed that participants could describe different elements of the RBM system in isolation without putting them together systematically in an integrated way. From the responses, it emerged that participants viewed the RBM concept as too abstract for the comprehension of many educators. The participants' perceptions of the conceptual meaning and practical meaning of RBM are discussed below.

### ***I. The conceptual definition of RBM to school heads***

An exploration of the school heads' definition of the RBM system revealed that none of the sampled participants could clearly and accurately define the RBM system. It was quite apparent from the responses that many participants viewed the implementation of RBM in schools negatively because they had a vague idea of what it meant to them and their work. The most common attribute of RBM that emerged from the participants' responses was its link to employees' motivation through incentives. For example, the descriptions of RBM given by participants H5 and H3 respectively that; *"RBM is something to do with rewarding people for their performance, it involves defining one's KRAs, monitoring and evaluation"* H5 and that *"RBM is a system where one is awarded a salary or incentive according to results. It is a management tool to motivate workers"* H3 suggests that RBM is viewed as a mechanism to evaluate performance for remuneration. The general perception of the RBM from the participants' responses was that results should always be supported by commensurate rewards. Thus, in the absence of benefits attached to the work, the RBM was considered a burden in schools. The following excerpt describes the school heads' perceived understanding of the RBM system.

*There is very little understanding of the RBM system among secondary school heads. I believe that even at the head office this thing is not well understood. It seems like people only have a very general idea of the RBM system which is based on their definitions of the two keywords, results and management. It is more of a crammed definition that does not represent the deep knowledge of the system. Also, we always struggle with this thing RBM every year even though we use it every day.H2.*

Linked to the above sentiments, evidence generated during the familiarisation process suggested that a section of the participants was not comfortable with the RBM system due to a limited understanding of the concepts. The response was given by H5 and H7 to the appointment for interviews that; *"You would like to interview me about RBM? What is it all about now? I am now rusty, it has been some time since I talked about it. I need to read about it first"* H5 and that *"You mean that thing? Do I remember anything about it? H7 gave an impression that a section*

within the secondary school heads in the Highglen School District perceived the RBM system as an abstract concept divorced from their routine duties in school life. The preceding notion thus negates the contention that RBM is a way of thinking and an approach to working that looks beyond the processes and activities to focus on results (UN-Habitat, 2017:20). Referring to the RBM system as that “*thing*” suggested a degree of uncertainty. Besides the preceding evidence, it also emerged that secondary school heads in the Highglen School District coined the meaning of RBM based on the different phases of the RBM process such as planning, monitoring, and evaluation. However, it is worth pointing out that whilst the element of results constituted part of the term RBM, only a few participants, including H1 and H4 mentioned the importance of actual results in the management system. Generally, participants were having difficulties in integrating the result component into their descriptions of the different elements of RBM.

## ***II. The functionalist definition of RBM to school heads***

School heads are expected by the MoPSE in Zimbabwe to take custody of the RBM system in public schools and implement it in a standardised way. Therefore, their understanding of the meaning of the RBM system was considered of paramount importance. During interview sessions, participants provided rudimentary descriptions of RBM that included a performance-based management system, a performance rewarding system where remuneration was awarded to employees, according to the level of performance, and a system of planning for results. It was noted that participants generally perceived the RBM system as a performance-based approach to management where planning was done collectively by both the supervisor and supervisees. Linked to that, several participants described the RBM system in terms of the work plan agreement process. Evidence from the face-to-face interviews revealed that participants generally equated RBM system with the process of identifying key result areas and setting performance objectives.

Several participants highlighted that RBM was simply adding the notion of results to the system of performance management. In participants' views, performance management entailed planning the work to be done, agreeing on the plans, and implementing and reporting the results. The process of supervision in schools was

meant to ensure that both the teachers and the school heads perform their duties to the levels planned and agreed upon. Participant H1 described RBM as mainstreaming the result component to the performance management system to track the exact contribution of employees. The impression given by the different descriptions of RBM indicates that the RBM system was not well understood in the Highglen School District. Negative views about the RBM system such as *“The RBM is meant to increase the teachers’ workload”* H7 were from the perspective of limited understanding of how the concepts work. Thus, the low uptake and failure of the RBM system in the Highglen School District could be explained in terms of the civil servants’ limited exposure through orientation and training which left them with a faint idea of what RBM meant. It is important to note that a good understanding of the meaning of RBM among school heads is an important factor that could increase the chances of RBM’s effective implementation in the Highglen School District. The next section discusses the school heads understanding of RBM based on their description of the components of RBM concerning their scope of work.

#### **5.6.1.2 The components of the RBM system**

Further into the definition of RBM, participants also demonstrated their level of understanding of the RBM system by describing its constituent elements and how the elements relate to the school head's job. Participants' responses to questions about the elements of RBM revealed that most secondary school heads could describe the different phases that constitute the RBM process which are under planning, implementation monitoring and evaluation together with reporting. Findings from this study revealed that RBM terms that include Integrated Development Planning (IDP), Results Based Budgeting (RBB), Personnel Planning Services (PPS) Management Information Systems (MIS), and E-Government were not regularly used in schools RBM but participants could describe some of the aspects that make the RBM components.

##### ***I. Integrated Development Planning (IDP)***

Two aspects emerged from the participants under this sub-category of responses. Firstly, findings revealed that only H1 and AH2 could describe the School Development Plans and also District and Provincial Operation Plans as replication of



IDP at lower levels. Other participants indicated that the term IDP was new to them. Further analysis of evidence also revealed that whilst participants could describe school-based planning as involving drawing a school development plan, an annual supervision plan, and a school procurement plan, they encountered the challenge of incorporating the element of results in the process. Secondly, it was also noted that participants had a challenge understanding and scaling down data in the source documents, particularly the DIPA and ESSP for application to school-level development planning. To H7 and H9 the IDP and RBM planning in schools was two dissimilar processes. This implies that some participants in this study generally recited the RBM terms without fully understanding them. The evidence from this study, also revealed that participants could describe planning but not in the context of RBM.

## ***II. The Results Based Budget (RBB)***

The element of budgeting was discussed widely and participants were not clear on how RBB works at the school level. Participants confirmed that budgeting in schools takes place at the institutional level, culminating in the annual school budget presented to the parents' assembly at Annual General Meetings (AGMs). There was also consensus that budgeting done in schools lacked the results focus. Participants were very articulate with the budgeting process, but had challenges linking the budgets to the different elements of the RBM system. According to the participant H9, the budgets written by most heads on RBM forms were just numbers that meant nothing at all. Similarly, H7 explained that failure to understand the RBB concept was one of the reasons why RBM was failing. This is because there was no link between the school heads work plans and the results-based budgets. Hence, assessment of the results in schools cannot be expressed as a function of the RBB. Findings from this study also highlighted divisions among the participants as they responded to the question on the importance of results to budgeting. Several participants, including H3, H5, H6 and H7 dismissed the possibility of using results projection to allocate resources in schools. All of that suggested failure by school heads to scale down the RBB concept to suit the school requirement.

### **III. The Personnel Planning System (PPS)**

The term PPS was not known to most participants. It, however, emerged that after discussions the participants could link the RBM form to the personnel section of RBM. Discussions with participants, however revealed that the general perception was that RBM is meant to manage people in the workplace and the appraisal document was meant to collect evidence. Participants equated RBM with the aspect of rating employees' performance. Several participants indicated that they could not distinguish between the RBM process and the performance appraisal system that preceded the RBM system in terms of how they treat the human resources component and other elements. For example, the response given by participant H1:

*RBM is what school heads do daily in their respective schools that as planning, budgeting, monitoring, and evaluating teaching and learning processes. People get confused when it is expressed in black and white as RBM, otherwise, there is nothing new. That is what we have been doing and continue to do day in and day out.*

The above-stated remarks indicate that whilst some participants could name some of the elements of RBM, there still existed a gap in the participants' understanding of the implications of the results to the performance management system. Consequently, some of the participants perceived the RBM system in MoPSE as similar to its predecessor the Performance Appraisal (PA) system.

Research findings also indicated that the school heads' perceptions about the meaning of RBM based on its different components influenced the aspects of RBM emphasis in the respective schools. Some school heads emphasised the planning aspect of RBM while others made constant reference to reporting and performance rewards. Thus, from the research data, it emerged that within the same education sector and in the same locality of the Highglen School District, participants viewed RBM differently in terms of its meaning and uses. The preceding notion confirms literature that asserts that RBM is a broad management approach that could mean different things to different people (Hutton & Schroeder, 2007:426; UNESCO 2008:6).

#### ***IV. The RBM monitoring and evaluation system in schools***

The other element of the RBM system described by the participants was the monitoring and evaluation exercise in schools. Participants described RBM (M&E) simply as supervision that is conducted by the heads of the subject department, deputy heads, and school heads. The purpose of supervision was described by participants as tracking performance. The monitoring process in schools involves supervisors visiting the supervisees to observe how the supervisees carry out their planned work. Nearly all participants were able to describe the process of school-based supervision but without linking it to the RBM system. Only participants H1, H4, and AH2 mentioned and described the importance of targets and indicators in tracking performance. Besides that, participants could not articulately separate indicators and targets and all participants could not link the element of the result to the supervision processes.

#### ***V. The meaning of the IRBM system to school heads***

None of the participants was able to provide an outline of all the five components that constitute the Integrated Results Based Management System practiced in Zimbabwe. Probing during the interview sessions revealed that the terms IDP, RBB, RBPPS, MIS, and e-government were not commonly used in schools. Remarks by participant H5 that *“of all the terms given, I only know that our school has an EMIS number but I cannot link it to RBM”* suggest that the participants were not familiar with how the RBM system works in the schools. Also, the participants consistently referred to the personnel appraisal system as KRAs and equated the whole process of RBM with the work plan agreement. Perceptions about the effectiveness of RBM in schools were, therefore, formed based on the limited understanding of how the functionality of the different components could integrate to improve school performance.

##### **5.6.1.3. The purpose of RBM in schools**

Participants' views regarding the purpose of RBM in schools were considered important in this study as they helped the researcher to gauge the school heads' level of appreciation of the reason for implementing the RBM system in schools. The

behaviour of participants during the conduct of RBM activities was also considered to be influenced by the perceptions of what the RBM system is meant to achieve. From the responses, it was clear that the participants generally equated RBM with an extended scope of work. Participants negatively viewed the RBM system as a tool made by MoPSE management to ensure that civil servants are kept busy. However, participants H1, H4, and AH2 had a different view of RBM and perceived it as meant to organise the teachers' work, plan for results and reward hard workers. Good planning was perceived to be a prerequisite to improved performance. The preceding notion corresponds with Binnendijk (2000:6)'s contention that RBM has two faces, which are: accountability for results. For instance, external accountability would entail a process when educators report their performance to MoPSE officials to justify their mission. Participants, however, viewed RBM differently on its purpose of enhancing internal decisions based on gathered information. Analysis of research findings in this study was done under the preceding two subcategories of the RBM purposes in schools.

#### **5.6.1.3 a. Ensuring buy-in and accountability for results**

Participants generally applauded the RBM theory and expressed the feeling that if RBM is effectively implemented by skilled and well-informed personnel it could greatly improve the schools' performance. Participants H1 and H4 also highlighted that RBM creates an empowered worker if it is effectively used. That is through the process of identifying KRAs and setting their targets. Participant H3 believed that "*RBM gets people geared for work and when employees choose areas of focus and are given space and resources they succeed*". Such remarks imply that when allowed space to set their scope of work freely, employees own the process and take responsibility for results. The process of work plans agreement between supervisors and supervisees was perceived by some of the participants as replicating the integrated performance framework at the high level that takes the form of performance agreements between managers and subordinates (Thomas, 2005:2).

Several participants indicated that practically, it was difficult to empower employees through the RBM system. This is because the source documents such as the ESSP, MIPA, and DIPA mostly set unrealistic results which are not achievable. Participants

also felt that the process of planning and budgeting that is done with guidance from the ESSP and DIPA left employees with no space to make their own choices of the work plans. As a result, some of the participants dissociated themselves from the RBM system and perceived it as a forced program that they have no control over. They also expressed frustrations with the RBM system. The preceding findings confirm the assertion that educators viewed RBM as a ploy by top management meant to keep the educators busy (Muranda et al., 2015:103). Consequently, most participants highlighted that in their capacities as supervisees dealing with the DSI, they passively participate in the RBM discussions which depict the implementation of a system forced down the educators' throats. The remarks by participant H1 refer to:

*This thing, the RBM tends to be authoritative, supervisors tend to direct subordinates into making particular choices about the work plans, always saying do this and do that, contradicting the principle of RBM which encourages educators to have a degree of autonomy in choosing and planning the activities and methods they will use to execute the jobs. Supervisors in the school system are old-fashioned and stuck in the traditional management system where they are used to give instructions. Such a way of leading devoid the subordinates of chances to take initiative required of them under the RBM system. When supervisors shoot down the subordinates' work plans, the latter feels discouraged and disown the system which they would nickname 'the big man's thing.*

The responses collected in this study insinuated that the members at the lower level in the civil service, especially teachers associated RBM with punitive measures by the employer meant to burden them. Participants H1 and AH2 described the educators' perceived view of the RBM system as *punitive and a negatively stereotyped* system that does not have benefits. Participant H6 emotionally described the attitude of employees towards RBM as *'grossly negative'* and that *'people need money and not useless paperwork*. Sentiments expressed by participants thus revealed emotional detachment from the RBM system. Such sentiments contradict the best practice associated with the building of a result-ownership culture proposed by (Mayne, 2007:29). In line with the preceding best practice, Mayne encourages institutions such as schools to solicit RBM buy-in of the

participants, cultivate a result-oriented culture, and customise the RBM system to the needs of the education sector. Such initiatives would help to harmonise the perceptions of supervisors and supervisees about the RBM system. Bester (2012:30) concurs with the preceding notion in the description of RBM as a system whose effectiveness depends on the proper coordination of all parties and functions within the organisation.

From the evidence, it emerged that nearly all participants thought that due to guided RBM planning, most people wrote plans they were not capable of achieving, and also limitations in the budgets resulted in most of the plans not being executed. Thus, the notion of result ownership and accountability for results was a challenge in the Highglen School District. The general feeling was no one could claim ownership of results that they did not willingly plan for.

#### **5.6.1.3 b. Improvement of quality of service in the education sector**

It was noted from the findings of this study that improvements in the quality of services rendered in schools were one reason why BM in schools. Several participants, including H1, H2, H3, H4, AH2, and AH3 described the purpose of RBM in the MoPSE in terms of the KRAs which are quality and access of learners to education facilities. From the participants' responses, it emerged that some school heads in the Highglen School District had narrowed their views of the RBM system which was limited to the personnel performance appraisal document. Further analysis of the responses revealed that participants had challenges in using the appropriate terms for the RBM process. This is because on probing how RBM improved the quality of education, several participants mentioned the elements of effective planning with results focus, provision of budgets to support the plans, and also human resources with specific targets all of which are RBM processes. Evidence from this study, thus, revealed that participants had sketchy understandings of how the RBM system works, but could not package them into one clear answer. Responses to the question regarding improvements registered in schools as a result of RBM revealed that whilst participants could mention the potential of the RBM system to improve the quality of services, the RBM system had not registered any significant changes in the way services were rendered in the

Highglen School District schools. The general perception was that RBM cannot effectively change schools if it is not supported by incentives. Findings support Mavhiki et al., (2013:137)'s view of incentives as a driver for RBM implementation. Besides the issue of incentives, participants felt there was a need to advocate for RBM and intensify knowledge dissemination that RBM was more of an internal management philosophy than a tool for external accountability.

### **5.6.2 The application of the RBM system to school administration**

This theme focuses on the relevance and applicability of the RBM system to school management. The participants' views about the inclusion of RBM in the education sector management were considered important in this study as they provided insights into how and why school heads perceived the RBM processes in different schools. Generally, participants felt that RBM applied to the school heads' roles. Participant H4 viewed RBM as linked to the job description of the school head. Other participants, mainly H5, H8, and AH1 described RBM as very useful and applicable to the school heads' daily responsibilities. The duties of the school heads as identified by the participants fall into three categories presented below;

- a. The inclusion of RBM in the school heads' administrative duties;
- b. The relevance of RBM to school heads' instructional leadership roles;
- c. The RBM system and school performance;

Applicability and relevance of the RBM system to school administration denotes the elements of fitness for purpose of the RBM system to the different aspects of school heads' roles. Hence, the researcher sought to describe the link between the perceived applicability of RBM to school management and the different attitudes and behaviours of participants towards the RBM system during the execution of school heads' different roles.

#### **5.6.2.1 The inclusion of RBM in the school heads administrative duties**

Participants' responses to both the qualitative questionnaires and the face-to-face interview questions revealed that the secondary school heads in the Highglen School District generally perceived the RBM as a theoretically relevant tool that can be

applied to education sector management. Participants were able to describe the school heads' roles which include planning, supervision, performance appraisal, financial management, and compilation of reports for the district and provincial offices. In most of the above-stated duties, participants indicated that it was possible to apply the concept of results. However, most of the participants felt that practically it was difficult to adhere to the principles and procedures of RBM regularly when doing school administration.

Several participants indicated that there was a missing link between the theory and practice of the RBM system in schools. The preceding gap was a result of limited understanding among school heads regarding the RBM theory and its practical application in schools. Research findings revealed that on one hand, the participants indicated that they had challenges in understanding the meaning of the RBM system, and on the other hand, the same participants felt that RBM theory could be applied to the education sector management. The preceding exposé suggests a limited understanding of the RBM system among participants. The following excerpts from the participants regarding their level of understanding of RBM and the ability to apply RBM to school management suggest a disconnection between theory and practice:

*From the way we were taught during training, this system is not very different from the performance appraisal. It looks like it is just a question of changed vocabulary. People say there are changes but I cannot see them. I continue to treat key result areas as they were, objectives as they were and apply them in the same way we used to do in 2000. Therefore, to me, RBM is the same as the previous performance management and I cannot doubt its applicability now if we have been using it all along.*

Another participant H1 had this to say:

*Although I do not have a clear idea of RBM, from the way I see it, the reason we are in school is to produce results. Even outside the school in our private lives, we all have targets that we work to achieve. So my view of RBM is working to produce results and therefore it applies to school management. Schools exist to produce results. The fact that RBM is*



*applied by all from the top in the province and district and the entire education system means that it has some relevance.*

The preceding responses indicate that although there is a consensus that RBM can be used in school management, the current state of RBM implementation in the Highglen School District was soiled by limitations in knowledge and skills. These observations also suggest that participants' affirmations of the relevance and applicability of RBM to school management were from the perception of a superficial understanding of the RBM system and could not provide insights into its effective operationalisation. The researcher, therefore, probed participants to establish their perceptions of the relevance of RBM to the five administrative roles of the heads stated below.

#### **5.6.2.1 a. Planning of school activities**

This sub-category of the school head's administrative role focus on the perceived applicability of RBM to the planning processes in schools. Participants generally concurred that proper RBM planning helps schools to define the focal point where all the stakeholders (the heads, teachers, and students) direct their efforts. The preceding evidence from the study substantiates the assertion by Armstrong (2006:7) that plans for the targets and planned methodologies are vital elements needed for the achievement of organisational goals. Aligned with the above notion, participants' responses indicated a general concurrence that good planning informs action that leads towards the achievement of the best results in the school system. Besides, evidence from the study also highlighted that planning under the RBM system was considered an annual event scheduled for the beginning of the year when supervisors and supervisees were expected to agree on the work plans. In that regard, the study findings confirm observations made by Samkange and Dondofema (2016:789) that RBM in the public sector was mostly ceremonial. In practical terms, RBM planning was not different from planning under other performance management models.

A few participants mentioned that results-based planning was informed by the MoPSE strategic direction stated in the MIPA and DIPA and also that the process was result-focused. Thus, whilst participants agreed on the relevance of RBM to the

planning function of school heads, the main difference was on the “how” aspect of the planning process. Variations in the planning methodologies were explained in terms of the participants' failure to differentiate between the RBM system and previous performance management models. The low level of RBM comprehension by school heads is highlighted in the following excerpt:

*The theory of RBM is good, it encourages planning through the process of setting anticipated results and agreement on work plans, but it is the practical aspect that is poorly executed. People lack the know-how to plan which translates into poor implementation. When RBM was introduced people were not clear about what it was all about.*

Participants were divided on the practicality of using guiding documents such as ESSP and DIPA to plan school activities. A section of the participants felt that the call to follow guidelines from reference documents during the planning session was impractical since the documents were not always available in schools. As a result school heads just plan without referring to DIPA. Further to that, participants also viewed work plans derived from the DIPA as largely divorced from reality in schools. This is because the DIPA targets were perceived to be too high for some schools and also that the result statements were expressed in a way difficult to understand. Remarks by participant H3 that “*planning based on DIPA is difficult and it tries to ignore the differences in schools thereby making the whole planning process a fake. There is a serious knowledge gap*” suggest that for some participants, the inclusion of the result component guided by DIPA created planning complications. Additionally, some of the participants H3; H7; AH1 also felt that RBM was more inclined and applicable to production-oriented industries and was not suitable for service industries such as schools.

The other group of participants thought that RBM was a good planning tool and was relevant to the education sector management but largely affected by the absence of incentives. Without rewards linked to the RBM planning process, the RBM system was perceived as a burden. School heads did not see the essence of planning if they were not receiving incentives associated with the job to motivate them. The preceding findings revealed that in some schools in the Highglen School District,

RBM was lowly perceived as a futile exercise because it was not linked to financial benefits. The following citations highlight participants' views regarding the characteristics of planning in the secondary schools in the Highglen School District:

*For me, RBM-related planning is good because I know what it does. I know what to write in my RBM and what I write guides me on what to do, but for my other partners, it is just something they have to write down to get over it. Because it is required at the end of the day, people end up duplicating work plans they wrote last year and a year before last, and two years back and at times even circulate and share the same work plans across different subjects and departments with each member copying the plans word for word, H1.*

Similarly, participant AH2 aptly stated that:

*The RBM system is good if it is well implemented, however, no one takes it seriously and planning is just nominal, due to a lack of understanding and motivation to work. In our school and most likely many others, teachers and heads feel that RBM is a requirement for the job and therefore has to be done. However, that kind of thinking makes people write and copy information from colleagues, some of which would not apply to their situation. People do not understand RBM. There is a tendency to use wrong information.*

Participants' views, thus confirm that planning is part of the school heads' roles and that RBM applies to the planning function in schools. However, perceptions that the RBM planning process is an extra burden emanate from the fact that RBM is not well understood and also that there are no benefits associated with the process. The above-stated reasons prompted school heads to adopt a casual approach or rather pay lip service to the whole process of planning, implementation, and evaluation. Hence, the findings corresponded with Mundondo et al., (2019:148)'s explanation of the RBM system failure in Zimbabwe due to the skills gap.

### 5.6.2.1 b. Budgeting and financial resources management

This subcategory of responses examined the school heads' views about the applicability of RBM to the budgeting function in schools. The findings in this study revealed all participants agreed that budgeting and financial management are some of the major administrative responsibilities of the school heads in the MoPSE. However, participants revealed that terminology such as Results Based Budgeting (RBB) was not common in schools. It was also apparent from the responses that participants had challenges relating the budgeting process in schools to the RBM theory. Largely, participants flatly expressed reservations about the process of RBB in schools which they described as an irrelevant process. The preceding group felt RBM budgeting could never apply to schools as long as the employer was not providing financial resources for schools to work with during the RBM cycle. Such sentiments suggest failure by members to comprehend the RBM system and scale it down to suit the school-level budgetary procedures.

Contrary to the views expressed by the first group of participants above, participants H1 and H5, and H8 had different views about the applicability of RBB to school management. Participant H1 felt that RBB was more applicable and relevant to financial planning at the national level where different ministries were allocated resources and where funding is guaranteed from the treasury. At the school level, RBB was difficult to implement due to the irregular flow of funds into the schools. Participant H5 affirmed the relevance of RBB in schools, but indicated that it was a tedious process that school heads rarely followed. The following remarks were given by participants suggesting that despite understanding the role of RBM budgeting, school heads were not implementing it.

*The RBM budgeting process is relevant and applicable to the school system. I understand at the high level it translates into a performance contract. At lower levels, it is possible but difficult to enforce because school heads have no power to promote, demote or discharge their subordinates if they fail to meet the targets. School heads and heads of departments, (H.O.Ds) can use RBB when preparing and presenting departmental and school estimates of the required material. It is, however,*

*time-consuming to refer to the budgets on a day-to-day basis and no one does it, H5.*

Similarly, another participant stressed that;

*In theory, RBM budgeting at the school level is critical because all targets set have got monetary aspects in them. However, we do not often refer to the budgets once they are done and approved. Tracking performance progress will be done independently without looking at the approved budgets, H8.*

From the excerpts above, it emerged that whilst some participants could relate budgeting to the routine duties of school heads, the process was done just to comply with the requirements of the employer. As revealed by H7 that: “*On the issue of budgeting, people just put figures that do not translate into reality. Our employers need to provide resources for result-based budgeting to work,*” the process of budgeting was mostly done for external accountability and not for internal management of school resources. Thus, budgeting in schools negates the RBB principle of making decisions about the allocation of available resources based on estimated volumes of inputs required to achieve certain specific results (Binnendijk, 2000:20). Such decisions are not always easy to make and schools in the Highglen School District struggle to sustain the process. A close examination of the different participants' responses on the link between planned key result areas and the RBB component revealed that most school heads could not relate the two. Participants indicated that the cost description component which they completed on the personnel performance and appraisal form had no link to the budget projection for the year. Also, the amounts written on the appraisal forms were just arbitrary figures, not linked to any budgets. Thus, generally, all public secondary schools in Highglen School District purport to have embraced the RBM system, but remained stuck with the traditional activity-based budgets as suggested by the study findings. The relevance of budgeting is there just in theory.

### 5.6.2.1 c. Organisation of school activities

Scheduling and prioritisation of activities is an important component of the school head's responsibilities. Participants' responses were sought under this subcategory of school heads' administrative roles to establish heads' perceptions about the appropriateness of RBM theory as a tool to organise the activities in public secondary schools. Evidence from the study revealed that most participants were able to describe the sequencing of RBM activities. It also emerged that participants were conversant with the terms planning, monitoring, and evaluation. However, evidence from the study revealed that the practical application of RBM concepts to the school heads' administrative role of organising and controlling school activities was a challenge. Participants could regurgitate the RBM cycle, but could not describe how the results-based information influenced decisions at different levels in the cycle. For instance, participants could not link the KRAs to the budgets and decisions on priorities to make in the schools. Evidence from the study, thus suggested a superficial understanding of the RBM system and perceptions of its applicability was from an uninformed position.

Participants H3 and H1 had a better understanding of the RBM system and viewed the various pillars that anchored the RBM cycle as critical in helping to sequence events in schools. The following statements from participant H3 and H1 illustrate participants' perceptions about the use of RBM to instill order in schools.

*The RBM system is a good tool if it is applied properly. It encourages people to organise their work and do it properly. The RBM system gives people room to plan ahead of the year. It also helps school heads to review activities and plans. There is a time for everything in RBM. A time to plan, implement and evaluate. It gives an order to school life. The RBM system can be used to control the internal processes in the school. Performance reviews generate information that appraisers can use to track and correct the weaknesses of their subordinates at the same time identify skills they can make use of to further develop the school, H3.*

*The theory of RBM is good, it encourages planning through the process of setting anticipated results and agreement on work plans. I also believe*

*that the budgeting component is important in deciding what can be done now and what will be done later. It is the practical aspect that is poorly executed. People lack the know-how which translates into poor implementation. When RBM was introduced people were not clear about what it was all about, H1.*

It also emerged from the study that RBM was perceived as a good system that was poorly packaged and wrongly implemented. As a result, the RBM system elicited negative responses from both heads and educators in schools. Poor packaging of the system was linked to its introduction in an environment where the government was failing to provide a conducive work environment. With low salaries pegged below the poverty line, RBM could not thrive as it appeared more like an unnecessary extra burden (Mavhiki et al., 2013:137). Data from this study revealed that participants generally applauded the theory of RBM, which they felt could fit in the education sector if it is supported by teacher benefits, but were depressed by the non-availability of such benefits linked to the system.

#### **5.6.2.1 d. Personnel management in schools**

Most participants agreed that appraising the performance of both teaching and non-teaching staff was one critical role of the school heads. The above-stated affirmations correspond with the school heads' roles listed in the school leadership manual (GoZ, 2021:38). The process of performance appraisal was done as part of the RBM process. Participants' responses, however, revealed that the process was taken casually and the ratings awarded to appraises during RBM evaluations were not a true reflection of what was on the ground as suggested by the following statement by H7:

*Result based management system is a formality that people cannot avoid. But given an option, no one will pursue the RBM. It is a bother. You find that people talk about it when it is time to do the final rating and submission of validated scores.*

The citation indicates that some of the school heads viewed RBM as a burden and therefore perceived it negatively. It also emerged that participants were aware of the

need to appraise personnel performance, but they were not adhering to the procedures. Besides personnel appraisal, participants H1, H3, and AH3 also voiced the importance of personnel management to the deployment at departmental levels within the schools and at an institutional level. Responses could not show appreciation of the results influence in the personnel planning and appraisal processes.

#### **5.6.2.2 Relevance of RBM to school heads instructional leadership roles**

The participants in this study confirmed that school heads were instructional leaders charged with the responsibility to plan; provide learning resources; supervise teaching and non-teaching staff; evaluate staff performance and learning progress together with ensuring compliance with MoPSE policy guidelines. Generally, the participants perceived RBM as relevant to school heads' instructional leadership responsibilities. It emerged that from the several responsibilities outlined above, participants were able to locate the RBM process in the following four subcategories of school heads' roles.

- a. Planning of instructional activities;
- b. Providing of teaching and learning resources;
- c. Monitoring and evaluation;
- d. Developing staff.

A detailed discussion of each of the four sub-categories is presented below.

##### **5.6.2.2 a. Planning of instructional activities**

The general planning function of school heads was discussed in section 5.6.1.2 above. This sub-category of school heads' roles focuses on the applicability of RBM to instructional activity planning. The GoZ, (2021:38) defines setting the school vision, mission, and instructional goals for the school as one of the key roles of school heads in the MoPSE. Findings from the study also highlighted that despite the availability of the above planning guides in schools, heads of schools rarely referred to them during planning sessions. It was also clear from the responses that school heads were not familiar with the ESSP document that defines the MoPSE programs and expectations. This means that school heads generally planned for curriculum



implementation without reference to RBM guiding documents. Interview responses highlighted that participants perceived the RBM system as incapable of changing the planning process and planning outcomes. Hence, school heads did not take it seriously. Further to that, participants viewed the competence-based curriculum as challenging to understand and needed no additional burden.

Participant H1 had a different view of the role of RBM in instructional leadership planning. The remarks that the "*RBM system is very important in the planning of curriculum coverage and expected results. Those things [results and expectations] help us to know where we are going*" H1. The above remarks imply that some of the participants, had a fairly good understanding of the RBM system and they positively perceived it as useful. Participants AH3 and H8 also perceived RBM as relevant and important in driving the teaching and learning agenda in schools and also for comparison purposes. To H4 and H5, RBM was perceived as a good tool for both school management and teachers as it helped to define what needs to be done and the expected outcome. The use of RBM made facilitators/teachers in schools focus on key areas of instruction. However, commonly participants, felt that despite its relevance, RBM was negatively labeled as "*unpaid extra work*" and therefore, was resented by many. The labeling of RBM was a result of the non-availability of financial benefits and limited comprehension of how RBM planning could support instructional delivery.

#### **5.6.2.2 b. Providing of teaching and learning resources**

The findings in this study revealed that all school heads view the aspect of financial management as critical in supporting instructional delivery. The general perception was that school heads preside over the process of budgeting, collection of revenue, and disbursement of funds to various departments in the school. In that role, participants were divided over the issue of using the RBM to guide the process of resource allocation. The general perception was RBM cannot work in an environment constrained by numerous financial restrictions. That evidence again suggested the failure of the participants to scale down the RBM concepts and apply them at a micro level. Contrary to the general perception that RBM did not apply to the resources mobilisation and disbursement function, participant H5 believed that

RBM was applicable and could help in guiding different departments to justify requirements on the budgets. For management, RBM helps to make teachers accountable for their performance against the given resources. Thus, the preceding view corresponds with the notion of the integrated performance framework (Thomas, 2005:1).

#### **5.6.2.2 c. Monitoring and evaluation**

There was consensus among the participants that supervision constituted one of the key duties of the school heads. Several participants in this study also felt that monitoring and evaluation were part of the supervisory process in school. However, it emerged from the responses that the process of supervision in schools was not results-focused. The participants largely indicated that the most common kind of supervision done in schools was class visits where school heads observed teachers teaching. During the class visits, school heads generated narrative reports which were perceived as tedious and confusing. As a result, some of the participants casually compiled reports to present a physical copy of the report to the MoPSE supervisors. Thus, owing to the failure of some school heads to adhere to the proper RBM procedures, the RBM information gathered during the monitoring and evaluation in schools would not reflect the true picture on the ground. Participant H8 felt that there were too many loopholes in the RBM system to use in the monitoring and evaluation of performance. For instance, *“the monitoring process is irregular and information gathered does not have substance”* H8 and *“we have not seen anyone charged with underperformance which means RBM related supervision is fake”* H7, suggest that although the RBM system applies to instructional provision, the monitoring, and evaluation process is incoherently done and meant to fulfil job requirements. Responses to oral questions on when school heads were last supervised by the MoPSE officials indicated that most of the participants had gone for more than a year without external supervision. Also, participants could not relate the supervision by district or provincial officers to RBM. Data generated from the responses revealed that the monitoring and evaluation process was divorced from the RBM planning and budgeting discussed above. Such a practice negates the integration principle that underpins the IRBM system implemented in Zimbabwe.

Contrary to the negative perceptions about RBM monitoring and evaluation in schools, it emerged from the study that some participants subconsciously made decisions based on unrecorded monitoring and evaluation data in their respective schools. Teacher deployment and internal promotions to levels of HODs and other instructional responsibilities were done based on known information about members. However, such information was not always recorded in the narrative reports despite being a product of monitoring and evaluation. Thus, from the evidence, it was quite clear that the theory of RBM monitoring and evaluation was not distinctively understood by the participants. Rather, the RBM terminology used tended to portray a limited application of the concepts. Most participants equated and confined RBM monitoring and evaluation to the performance review sessions which are supposed to be carried out quarterly. Other activities in between the review sessions seem to be inconsequential to the heads and are perceived as routine supervision. The preceding findings suggest that participants had a sketchy view of the scope of the monitoring and evaluation processes which might have been key to their negative perception of the process.

Participants mainly from the mega schools viewed monitoring and evaluation as positive. They described it as a critical component that generates important information for decision-making. However, they also acknowledged that due to time constraints and the volume of work done by heads, performance reviews were the least considered aspect of RBM. Thus, contradicts the principle of RBM as argued by Kusek and Rist (2004:19) that monitoring and evaluation should be evident throughout the performance appraisal cycle. In line with the preceding view, monitoring and evaluation in schools should be characterised by the collection of school performance data at different levels followed by the provision of feedback. If done properly, such a process generates information on progress towards result achievement, areas for improvements, and suggested changes in work plans and appraisal of the extent to which the set indicators are achieved. Findings from the study, however, revealed that heads in the Highglen School District viewed the RBM system in the negative. Due to the negative perception of the RBM system, the monitoring and evaluation data was never taken seriously. All participants concurred

that monitoring and evaluation data was trivialised in schools because no one within the ministry hierarchy seemed to use the data.

Evidence from the study also revealed that school heads perceive monitoring and evaluation negatively as an extra burden and with the ultimate goal inclined towards generating data for external reporting. Such a view of the monitoring and evaluation reflected a limited appreciation of the RBM system in the Highglen secondary schools. For example, sentiments echoed by participant H5 that *“monitoring and evaluation process in schools is never taken seriously, but if well executed it is a good system. In our case, the process is concluded as soon as it is started”* imply that despite the applicability of monitoring to the school heads responsibilities, it was never done properly and it was perceived to have no significance to the process of instructional provision.

Other participants also gave the following remarks:

*Monitoring and evaluation of the school system are not done perfectly. Some people collect RBM information for onward transmission to higher offices two or three days before the close of the appraisal session. I do not think adequate supervision will have been done. Information derived from the process of monitoring and evaluation has no meaning AH2.*

*When we evaluate the success or failure of school activities we rarely refer to the appraisal form. It is also very important for one to take note that supervision of teaching is done traditionally. School administration carries out class visits and book inspections and writes critiques. The process is not regular in school, senior members of staff may go for years without being observed by the heads and the heads themselves may go for years without being supervised by the district and provincial inspectors. As for myself, I do not remember the last time I was supervised. Of course, once in a while, district and provincial teams visit inspection schools. Results-based management performance reviews are supposed to be carried out quarterly, but ironically all the reviews are done at the point of closing the appraisal cycle H1.*

The participant views presented above highlight that RBM monitoring and evaluation are done superficially and information gathered and recorded is not frequently used. Instead, informally gathered information that is not recorded on the RBM documents plays a critical role in instructional leadership decision-making.

#### **5.6.2.2 d. Staff development**

Participants viewed the other instructional responsibility of school heads as related to the capacity development of staff members. Several participants in the study confirmed that they had staff development as one of their key result areas. However, the element of factoring results focus on the staff development sessions was missing. Workshops were held in the schools, but were not particularly linked to the RBM system. Responses to the question on training needs on the RBM form indicated that participants completed that section of the appraisal form at the point of submission. Capacity development in most schools was done without reference to the RBM system.

#### **5.6.2.3 The influence of RBM on overall school performance**

Participants' views on the influence of RBM on the overall performance of the school were explored to gauge the extent to which participants explained by differences in school performances to the uptake of the RBM system. There were mixed views regarding the influence of the RBM system on school performance. Extreme negative views that dismissed RBM as useless and incapable of influencing changes in the performance of the schools appear to have been influenced by unmet expectations of the RBM system. For instance, the views echoed by participant H6 that "*RBM is difficult to apply to the education sector because it is not production oriented and it has not benefited us like we used to do in the past, we do not see its importance*" suggest negativity arising from a crisis of expectations. Most of the participants were however of the opinion that if RBM is done properly and supported by the right set of incentives could significantly improve school management. Evidence from both questionnaires and interviews revealed that if effectively implemented RBM can influence school improvement through the following mechanisms.

- a. Results focus at different levels
- b. Benchmarking school performance;
- c. The RBM influence on teamwork in schools.

The preceding three areas of RBM influence on school improvement constituted subheadings under which study findings were discussed.

#### **5.6.2.3 a. Results focus on different levels**

The findings of this study revealed that the notion of results in the RBM system was largely nominal to school heads. Participants indicated that the theory of RBM was easier said than done confirming Madhekeni (2012:128). Focusing on results was only possible on paper when schools draw their work plans and state anticipated results. In H6's opinion, translating the results-focused plans to reality was impeded by many things such as financial resources, time, and skills to follow through with the plans. Several participants mentioned the economic environment that affected parents who fund school activities as one critical challenge to the effectiveness of RBM in the Highglen School District. Discussions around how the RBM was supporting result focus in Highglen School District schools revealed that participants were at a different level in their understanding of the RBM system. Whilst the general feeling was dismissive of the practicality of the RBM theory's emphasis on results taking precedence over all processes in schools, participants H1 and H9 were lone voices who supported the critical role of SMART result statements as providing direction to the flow of school activities. In their opinion H1 and H9 well stated results guided teachers and school heads on what to aim for. It also helped with targets and indicators that help to track performance. It also emerged that participants acknowledged that results-based planning done at the ministry level, culminating in the ESSP and DIPA program outputs provided a guideline on the minimum ministry or department expected results only that school heads were not keen to commit to them.

Asked about the regular use of result statements as guides in school planning, participants indicated that the only time they referred to anticipated results was when they agree with supervisors and when they rated performance at the close of the

session. The implications of the responses were that of limited RBM buy-in in the Highglen School District and also that participants negatively perceived the RBM system to the extent of dismissing its potential benefits. Failure to appreciate the reason for introducing RBM in school created an impression of RBM as an unnecessary burden. Mavhiki et al., (2013:135) describe the purpose of RBM as providing a solution to the deteriorating services in government institutions. Evidence from this study revealed that the conduct of members during RBM in the Highglen School District was largely a negation of the government's efforts to improve the quality of education.

#### **5.6.2.3 b. Benchmarking school performance**

Participants indicated that the RBM system made employees set their standards and targets, guided by the expected performance highlighted in the DIPA. The identified challenge with the benchmarks in schools is that they remained on paper. Participants commonly highlighted that after defining the plans and completing the performance standards and targets columns, they never referred back to the RBM document to evaluation day. It was cited that "*teachers and school heads do not take RBM worthwhile because they are not financially rewarded for meeting targets and excelling. Generally, staff members are disinterested*", H8. Evidence also revealed that the notion of benchmarking was not clearly understood by the participant. Several participants indicated that the set standards during the RBM performance cycle were merely figures and statements that did not reflect the intentions of the teachers and school heads. Probing further into how benchmarking could help to improve school performance, revealed that participants felt that if all schools met the minimum expectations stated in the source documents then the school will improve and grow uniformly. However, the preceding view was dismissed by participants who include H7, H5, H6, and AH1 on account that variations in the schools' capacities to mobilise resources for RBM purposes made it difficult to achieve uniform growth in schools.

#### **5.6.2.3 c. The RBM influence on teamwork in schools**

The importance of the team was widely discussed during the interview sessions and most participants expressed sentiments that teamwork encouraged buy-in and

collective ownership of results. There were, mixed reactions on the link between RBM and team building as well as teamwork in schools. Participants that include H1, H4, H8, and AH3 thought that RBM encourages teamwork through performance agreements at different levels. The preceding group of participants positively perceived RBM as an instrument that calls for collective effort between stakeholders particularly supervisors and supervisees. Besides, participants felt that effective implementation entails the involvement of key stakeholders from the planning stage right around the process to the reporting of performance. However, it emerged that practically, participants were encountering challenges in sharing the visions and collectively planning for results. Several participants in this group highlighted that low-level staff was mostly influenced by stereotypes that supervisors were bent on fixing the supervisees and therefore negatively viewed any initiative from school administrators including the RBM system.

Discussion around how the RBM process was conducted in the schools revealed that supervisors and supervisees only met to sign performance agreement forms at the beginning and the performance rating stage. Thus, teamwork was failing in most Highglen School District schools due to the failure of school heads to follow proper RBM procedures. That could have been influenced by a limited understanding of how the RBM system works and the prerequisites for its effective implementation. The More positive perceptions about the influence of teamwork on school improvement were given by H1 that *"in our school, RBM has taught us to delegate authority. I plan with HoDs as a team and I rate their performance based on that. They do the same thing in their departments"*. Also, participants generally shared H4's view that RBM required the support of incentives to sustain team spirit and the achievement of collective goals. When team members were recognised and awarded benefits, they tended to effectively participate in school programs and strive to post good results. From the evidence, it emerged that RBM works effectively in environments with incentives.

The other group of participants comprising H6, H7, and AH2 had a different view of the RBM system. Participants in this group viewed RBM negatively and therefore, dismissed its potential to influence improvements in the schools. Sentiments like *"over the past five years, RBM has not helped in any way. We have done well on our*



*own using other strategies, not this thing" H6 and that "RBM is useless. There is no quality improvement or access that we write every year. When I talk about RBM, I attract more enemies and resentment than friends and team members so it does not work" H7 suggests both resentment and limited understanding of the RBM system and how it works. Resentment of the RBM was linked to the absence of incentives linked to it.*

Analysis of evidence in this theme thus revealed that the RBM system was relevant and applicable to the education sector management. Evidence indicated that RBM could be effectively applied to most of the school heads' roles that include planning duties and instructional resources provision duties, staff development and overall school improvement. However, participants were divided in their perceptions about the effectiveness of RBM in delivering school heads' daily duties. Three aspects that influenced negative perceptions of the Highglen School District, school heads about RBM were their limited understanding of how RBM works, the lack of incentives to promote its effectiveness, and the burdensome character of the RBM processes.

### **5.6.3 The maintenance of the RBM system in schools**

This theme examines participants' views regarding the sustainability of the RBM system in the public education sector. How the RBM system is sustained influences the perceptions of the RBM implementers in schools. Consequently, the behaviour of the parties involved in the RBM processes is guided by their perceptions. The research explored participants' views on the sustainability of RBM in the Highglen School District schools to explain the link between the RBM implementation processes and related perceptions. It was noted in this study that most school heads perceived the RBM system negatively because they were meant to believe that RBM is linked to financial benefits. Failure to get the expected benefits resulted in the frustration of many participants with the IRBM system. Evidence from the study revealed that the sustainability of the RBM system was mostly influenced by two aspects which are

- a. Provision of results-based rewards to educators and
- b. The use of RBM in the internal school decision support system.

Participants' views were examined in this theme under the two broad categories stated above.

### **5.6.3.1 Provision of results-based rewards to educators**

Under this current theme, participants' responses to the open-ended questionnaire and interview questions revealed general disapproval of the RBM system, which participants perceived as extra work due to the non-availability of benefits. Responses to interview questions highlighted the need to address the working conditions of the teachers first as a prerequisite to initiating the change of the RBM magnitude. With a demotivated staff in schools, the chances of RBM's success in changing the workplace culture in schools seemed very negligible. Evidence from the study revealed that the issues influencing the uptake and effectiveness of the RBM system in schools revolved around associated benefits, without which the RBM system was perceived more like a burden by the educators. The preceding participants' views correspond with observations made by Jaricha and Dzimiri (2019:261) that incentives are critical in supporting the RBM initiative. Analysis of participants' responses to the nature of anticipated benefits revealed that the most preferred form of benefits was monetary or financial rewards linked to the performance level as determined by the weighted rating. Several participants that include H1, H3, H4, H8, and AH3 also felt that non-financial benefits were required to complement the financial benefits. Evidence relating to the two categories of benefits is discussed below.

#### **5.6.3.1 a. Financial rewards to support RBM uptake**

It was noted that the uptake of the RBM system in schools was very low. The participants indicated that RBM was negatively perceived in their schools as an extra burden that has not benefited anyone. Analysis of the reasons for the low RBM uptake revealed that the absence of financial rewards linked to it caused the whole process of rolling out the RBM system as a new management approach to flop. Evidence from both open-ended questionnaires and interviews in this study underscored the importance of supporting the RBM implementation with a variety of financial benefits, among them performance-related financial benefits. Such benefits were considered critical to the teachers as they would separate high performance

from low performance. Participants felt that acknowledgment of performance variations through rewarding high performers would inspire a sense of competition and motivate all teachers to embrace RBM. Several participants concurred with participants H1 that;

*People thought RBM was tied to the monetary benefits on scoring a particular mark, when that failed to happen nobody takes it seriously anymore. It is worse in conditions where teachers' salaries are low. People expect survival rewards before extra work.*

Similarly, another participant H3 expressed sentiments that:

*For RBM to work, those who perform should be rewarded. As implied by the name result-based management, the employer needs to reward the performance of individuals. High performance should be given commensurate recognition. Over and above the performance-related pay. I believe other incentives should be given to teachers and heads based to encourage high performance, which would surpass the set standards. Such incentives do not need to come from the employer only, but from all stakeholders who appreciate RBM.*

The issue of benefits was widely discussed in the interviews. From the discussions, it emerged that participants were generally in agreement on the perceived critical role of performance-related salaries and incentives in supporting the effective uptake and implementation of the RBM system in schools.

### ***I. Performance-related salaries and incentives***

Participants' views in this category of responses suggested two kinds of monetary rewards which are performance-based remuneration and incentives for the employer to motivate performance. Concerning the first kind of monetary rewards, evidence from the study indicated that all participants believed that achievement of the set results should be used as a benchmark to determine variations in the level of teachers' rewards. In line with the preceding notion, participants voiced that RBM should lead to the classification of teachers and profiling them as below-average, average, and above-average performers. The general feeling among participants

was that rewards and sanctions linked to RBM would follow the above-stated grades. Participants H2, H3, H5, H8, and AH1 highlighted that the general expectations of the educators were that, upon scoring a result-based performance rating of four, or five on a scale of one to five, the educator's salary will increase by a percentage of their gross earning per month as determined by the employer. In the preceding system, a rating score of three would represent average performance, four, above average, and five representing excellent performance respectively. From the participants' responses, it emerged that heads would expect all above-average performance in the school system to be financially rewarded. Such rewards would then separate high performers from low performers.

Linked to the notion of result-based rewards, evidence from the study also suggested that the prevailing poor conditions of service in the public sector institutions had the effect of dampening the motivation of the teachers to pursue RBM. The above findings correspond with conclusions drawn from Mavhiki et al., (2013:136) and Mundondo et al., (2019:149) that low levels of motivation contributed to the low uptake of RBM in Zimbabwe. It was noted that most participants perceived the RBM as implying a mechanism to reward according to performance. Linked to the above notion, participants H1 and H8 described the ideal situation for RBM in schools as one where the annual performance rating will be immediately followed by related teacher benefits. Participants agreed that employees will apply more effort to their work if they perceive the existence of a strong link between performance and reward, and reward and personal goals. The preceding view, thus, explains the perceived link between monetary rewards and the low uptake of the RBM system in the Highglen School District schools.

## ***II. Result-based Incentives at the school level***

The second form of monetary benefits included incentives to be given to teachers in achieving and surpassing certain benchmarked targets. Evidence from the interviews and the open discussion with school heads revealed a general perception that the increased resentment of the RBM system is largely linked to the removal of school-based incentives in Zimbabwe. Participants highlighted that educators in the Highglen School District schools negatively identified the RBM system with an increased scope of paperwork that had no benefits to them. The paradox of more

work and no money that characterised the RBM system in Zimbabwe created resentment with the system from top leadership to the lowest shop floor operator. According to the participant H6 "*civil servants need more money and not paperwork*". Another participant H8, explained the laxity of the district and provincial supervisors in following up on RBM issues in schools in terms of the absence of related benefits accruing to them. The following excerpt from a participant represents the perceptions of some of the school heads:

*As I said before, the RBM system works with money. Both supervisors and supervisees expect incentives for applying RBM in the workplace. You see, the district inspectorate and provincial inspectorate, and even head office staff never come to inspect what we do regarding RBM because they do not get anything out of it, H8.*

Also, participants H7, H4, H8 and AH3 supported remarks given by AH2 that:

*There is a general reluctance toward the RBM system implementation. Without rewards accompanying the RBM people do not support the new system, there will always be resistance to change and people will tell you that we have been doing things in a particular way for quite some time, so why should we change now?*

Further comments from the participants during the interviews also indicated that teachers were highly demotivated by the absence of a criterion that differentiated teachers who did the extra from the ones who focused on basic performance. The preferred criterion to classify efforts applied to the work environment was performance rating, particularly under the RBM system. It also emerged that participants viewed incentives such as once-off performance-related bonuses for the high fliers as an ideal form of a motivator for the RBM implementers. The preceding line of thinking confirms propositions in the literature that incentives are critical for nurturing a result-based management culture and that RBM should be clear about the benefits that accrue to a teacher as a result of high performance (UNESCO, 2017:11). Findings from the study also relate to Muranda et al., (2015:104) proposal that MoPSE should have a separate RBM budget to cater for performance-related rewards.

The effects of financial and non-financial benefits to the educators were perceived to be increased buy-in of the system and support a result-oriented culture in the school system. Once incentives were introduced to support the RBM system, participants felt that it will mark the departure from a casual approach towards the RBM system to a serious program characterised by accountability. Naturally, the education sector will start to demand performance information at the school level, district level, and upwards to justify the rewards. The preceding views of participants H4, H5 AH1, and AH3 support observations by Pazvakavambwa (2015:215) that there should be clear evidence of the use of performance information to inform the provision of incentives and adjustments of the system.

However, notwithstanding the general agreement among participants on the need to attach financial benefits to high RBM target achievements, evidence from the study also revealed variations in perceptions on the issue of dealing with average to below-average performance. On one hand, participants H3, H5, and H8 felt there was a need to punish low performance with demotion if the low-performing members were in promotional grades and downgrading the ordinary members in the teaching services to a lower salary grade for a prescribed time. The above perceptions were summarised by participant H7 in the following remarks:

*If the RBM system has to be taken seriously, then the employer should differentiate people's performance and motivate high performance through an incentive system while at the same time taking corrective action on non-performers through demotion and withholding other benefits. If nothing good is done to high performers and the opposite is done to low performers, then this RBM system will always never bear fruit.*

Alternative views on the other hand perceived the preceding suggestion as punitive and likely to cause more disapproval of the RBM system. Aligned to the second general perception of RBM, participants H4, H1, and AH3 shared similar sentiments as expressed by AH3 that "*RBM should not result in the withdrawal of benefits for employees. If it assumes that negative role, some supervisors may use it to settle disputes with their supervisees and instill fear in the subordinate staff members*". Thus, from the evidence, it emerged a section of the participants in this study also perceived RBM as a potentially good and effective system if well supported.

Participants were also divided in their perceptions of how the average and below-average performers were supposed to be dealt with.

### **5.6.3.1 b. Non-financial benefits linked to RBM**

This category of the RBM system-related benefits was perceived to be relatively indirect to serve as motivators, though equally important in eliciting a positive response to the effective implementation of RBM than the previous one. Evidence from both the open-ended questionnaires and face-to-face interviews revealed that participants perceived non-financial accolades linked to their participation in the RBM system as critical morale boosters in schools. In H1, H2, and AH1's views, some of the preferred non-financial benefits linked to the RBM system included re-grading upwards and de-bunching of employees according to performance, facilitating promotions to substantive grades, and accelerated advancements. The non-financial benefits were discussed below

#### ***1. Re-grading and de-bunching of teachers***

It was noted from the findings that participants were particularly demotivated by the RBM system's insensitivity to employees' performance variations. Several participants that include H2, H3, H4, and AH1 highlighted that there was discontentment among teachers arising from the notion that RBM was advocating for results yet it was not acknowledging the effort towards results achievement. The following remarks represent the perceptions of the participants regarding the effects of treating high performers and low performers all the same and branding them as equals in terms of output and associated benefits;

*There is a need to separate the grades of employees if RBM has to work. High performers must be rewarded for their effort. The current system has bunched all employees into one grade. There is nothing to show the difference between those who give their best and those doing nothing. It is discouraging that we are treated as equals by the RBM, H7.*

Evidence from the study suggested that de-bunching employees into separate grades and awarding different performance-related salaries would help employees anticipate something from implementing the RBM system. It was noted from the

evidence that participants differed in their perceptions regarding non-financial benefits with H6, H7, H8, AH2, and AH3 expressing the view that titles and grades without money were just as good as nothing. Contrary to the preceding perceptions, other participants that include H1, H3, and H4 valued recognitions and other accolades such as school-based titles, district titles, and provincial awards of merit. Such thinking, suggests the perceived role of RBM as a motivator in the workplace. The participants' perception of recognition of performance without financial benefits validates literature that associates motivation with the content of the job itself or outcomes derived from it such as achievement, recognition for achievement, advancement, growth, and learning (Luthans, 2011:165; Robbins & Judge, 2017:250; Anderson, 2017:61). In line with the preceding notion, evidence from this study, thus, suggested the need for the PSC as the employer to consider separating the grades of the employee based on RBM information and effect promotion to the next level or demoted based on annual performance information. However, proponents of the preceding line of thought indicated that the practicality of non-financial benefits and extra burden associated with RBM work was difficult in a hand-to-mouth work environment prevailing in Zimbabwe.

## ***II. Facilitating promotion to senior grades***

Closely linked to the notion of classifying teachers' performance grades based on RBM information, it was also noted that RBM performance rating could be used to fast-track the progression of high fliers to the next promotional level. Participants [H1, H2, and H6] agreed that the former system of appointment, re-grading, and promotion had facilitated the quick movement of high performers through evaluation forms which were filled in by heads annually. They, therefore, suggested the need to blend the old system with the RBM to get the best of it. Participant [H6] suggested that "*incorporating elements of the RBM system into the old system based on ED 94 would yield the best result for the education sector management.*" The ED 94, meaning Education Form number ninety-four was an assessment tool used by the employer before the onset of performance appraisal to assess the suitability of education sector personnel to rise to the next level based on mastery of certain job-related skills and attributes (Saurombe, 2014:172). Sentiment to retain aspects of the



old system suggests that comparatively, some of the participants perceived the old order as better than the RBM system.

### ***III. Accelerated advancement***

Research findings also revealed an apparent sense of deception associated with the perceived changes in the mode of operation from the original promises made at the launch of the RBM system. It emerged that participants largely expected the RBM system to help high performers rapidly progress through the different grades in public service. Participants highlighted that the RBM system was negatively viewed in the education sector because good results meant nothing to employers. In participant H7's view, "*we expected this RBM system to facilitate progression, which is what we were made to believe. It takes too long to move from one grade to the next. We thought RBM was going to facilitate quick movement*". Another participant H6 indicated that most school heads had given up on the possibilities of accelerated advancement with what was promised and they perceive the RBM system as an empty promise. Participant H7 further suggested that high-performance rating scores could be used to justify the progression of members beyond their ceiling grade at the earliest possible time.

Participants highlighted that during sensitisation tours that preceded the launch of RBM in the Highglen School District, the advocates of the RBM and its presenters insinuated the availability of many monetary and non-monetary benefits to members of the civil service that include public school heads. When such benefits were not provided owing to many factors that included the poor performance of the Zimbabwean economy as alleged by Mavhiki et al., (2013:137), most educators just disengaged themselves from the system. The need to support RBM implementation with appropriate benefits as a way to build acceptance was discussed in the literature under the rubric RBM implementation best practices (Mayne, 2007:14). Evidence from the study revealed that lack of communication on the way forward following the employer's failure to pay performance-related salaries and other benefits eroded the trust of most teachers leaving them with a feeling of deception. Participant H8 described such a feeling as a contributory factor to negative perceptions and carefree attitudes towards the RBM system in schools. Another

participant AH2 suggested that non-financial rewards like issuance of certificates of competence or any such small accolades from the secretary of education in acknowledgment of the educators' efforts in the implementation of RBM would have served to maintain trust between the employer and the employees. The same trust would then encourage buy-in and effective implementation of the RBM system.

### **5.6.3.2 The use of RBM in the school decision support system**

Binnendijk, (2000:6) describes the dual roles of RBM in public entities as external accountability and internally as an aid to the decision-making process. Evidence from this study indicated that the driving force for school heads to implement RBM in the Highglen School District was mostly fear of reprisal. It was noted that in most schools the RBM system was perceived as a policy and therefore, its implementation was mandatory. Because of the perceived status of RBM as a policy instrument, most participants confirmed that did not follow the laid down procedures. Several participants, including H2, H3, H7 and AH2 shared similar sentiments H4 that:

*Generally, teachers just implement RBM for the sake of fulfilling the job requirements. If there were incentives for teachers who perform better, than members' would generally take RBM seriously and provide accurate data. Otherwise, without financial benefit, I tell you people will continue to give you figures from their heads not from the assessment of performance.*

Based on the citation above, it emerged that participants generally perceived RBM as meant for other people and not for school-based decisions or lessons for past activities. Responses to the questions regarding the type and quality of information collected during RBM revealed that participants presented positive ratings and comments to ensure that no one is disadvantaged if the employer decides to reward them. Also, faulting the procedures meant that school heads hardly captured accurate records of teacher performances.

### **5.6.3.2 a. Use of performance information in schools**

Participants were divided in their perceptions of the possible use of performance information. The general perception was that if the RBM process is followed accurately, then performance information could be used to motivate employees, through promotions, salary increments, and a variety of incentives. The above-mentioned roles of performance information were inhibited by the absence of willpower to use the data on the part of the employer and also due to the poor quality of data presented by school heads. Evidence from the study revealed that there was no ownership of the RBM process among school heads to the extent that performance information was mostly collected and presented for compliance purposes. As a result, most participants expressed reservations about the usability of RBM information in schools.

It was noted from the findings that the casual approach to the implementation of RBM in schools led to the presentation of the useless RBM performance data. Coupled with that, some of the participants, including H5, H9, and AH3 also highlighted that they lacked the skills to closely follow RBM procedures and they did not have the motivation to learn them because there were no benefits. Responding to the question on the frequency of referring to RBM data in school decision-making, all participants highlighted that they hardly consider such information in their daily decision-making process, suggesting that many school heads viewed RBM as someone else's business that had little significance to them. The preceding findings contradict the principle of learning from experience which underpins the result-based management process (Vahamaki et al., 2011:62). Literature on the RBM best practices, stresses the use of performance information for learning (Mayne, 2007:92). If done properly, RBM information defines what works and what does not work in schools, thereby giving educational managers room to act on the winning strategies.

Participants H4 and H7 shared similar sentiments that the absence of documented cases of rewards, punishments, or even warning letters from the employer which are traceable to RBM suggests that none in the MoPSE hierarchy uses RBM information for decision-making. In H6's opinion, filled-up RBM forms are gathering dust at the

province and head office and none looks at them. Consequently, school heads generally perceived the RBM system as a useless exercise. Correspondingly, participant H8 aptly indicated that *“if RBM information is not used by the owners you cannot expect us to use it”*. Besides, one cannot take fabricated information for decision-making H8. Whilst, the collection of information without putting it to use defeated the whole purpose of an RBM process. According to Pazvakavambwa (2015:118), the use of performance information in school decisions induces the desire to generate more credible information. Thus, as a condition to enhance RBM in schools, participants H7 and H8 felt that the MoPSE needed to support the process by acting on result-based recommendations made on education sector personnel.

Evidence from the study also indicated a failure to appreciate the purpose of RBM as an internal administrative tool made most school heads perceive it as a separate piece of work divorced from their daily chores. As a result, the general perception of RBM among school heads was negative and the data from RBM was casually collected and fabricated. Such behaviour in the participants is amplified by the following participants' responses:

*People only start to worry about RBM when it is time for the rating. The rating marks do not reflect on performance, they are just marks put by supervisees that have no meaning at all. You find that a person scoring a one and another scoring a four are all bunched together irrespective of the results H7.*

From the preceding annotations, it is evident that participants did not put significance to performance data. What seemed to be of the essence to participants was RBM task completion and not the effectiveness of the completed tasks to the education system. Thus, based on the preceding sentiments, it became evident that RBM information collected on the appraisal template in schools can never be trusted and effectively used to guide decision-making. It was noted that there is a gross misrepresentation of performance in the data presented in the RBM-validated summaries from schools. Literature relates the problems suggested by research findings to measure fixation and sub-optimisation (OECD/DAC, 2018:22).

A relatively small section of the participants positively perceived the RBM and highlighted that even without benefits they had embraced RBM for administrative reasons. Participants that include H1, H5, and AH1 thought that benefits or no benefit, good results-oriented planning had several advantages to school leaders. According to H1 *"proper RBM procedures make appointments to internal positions demotions and assigning work to individuals easier because there will be evidence"* Participant H5 perceived RBM as critical in aiding decisions on the funding of different departments and projects in the school. Accordingly, informed on the results information, some departments could be given more resources, and others trimmed off their budgets.

From the participants' responses, it emerged that participants perceived RBM differently in terms of its role in generating information for decision-making in school. A closer look at the responses suggests variations in the level of understanding of the RBM concepts. The group of participants more enlightened about RBM embraced it and positively perceived its information generation. The group of participants with limited appreciation of RBM perceived it as a burden.

#### **5.6.3.2 b. The RBM system and external accountability**

Participants' responses generally highlighted that the RBM information was not frequently used in schools but to show compliance to the employer. Participants that include H7 and H6 felt that the practicality of RBM in schools was a challenge and hence, they felt that most school heads were fabricating information to please the employer. In H7's view, both supervisors and supervisees were just pretending to be doing RBM yet they were compiling figures and comments from their heads. According to H6 *"teachers write down key result areas they never fulfill just to show the MoPSE official what ideally they should be doing and not what exactly will be on the ground."* Participants explained the preceding behaviour in terms of the absence of incentives and also a lack of knowledge regarding how they could apply RBM to school management. In the absence of the above-mentioned two roles of RBM, it meant its implementation in the Highglen School District was mostly perceived as meant to ensure justification of being to the employer.

### **5.6.3.2 c. Drawing lessons from the RBM implementation process**

It was noted from the participants' responses that the poor quality of data made it difficult for the school heads and teachers to draw lessons from the RBM process. Besides, participants indicated that due to non-adherence to the laid down RBM procedures, most school heads fail to appreciate what they would have done correctly or wrongly. Participants H2 and H7 highlighted that RBM was perceived to have little significance in terms of learning because RBM information is always collected at the point of closing the cycle. Such a practice negates the RBM principle of continuous learning at the different stages of the performance cycle that prompts redefinition of the scope of work and refocusing.

This finding from the study thus, suggests three elements which are limited appreciation of the RBM processes among school heads that influence the perception that RBM is someone's business. Also, the casual approach to RBM translates into an exercise meant to justify the presence of school heads on the job or external accountability. Finally, negativity towards RBM leads to shortcuts in RBM implementation for compliance but without lessons learned.

### **5.6.4 The RBM implementation challenges at the school level**

This theme focuses on the challenges encountered by schools in their efforts to effectively implement the RBM system in the Highglen School District. Research findings revealed that schools faced a host of implementation challenges that include human resources challenges, financial resource constraints, and technical challenges. An exploration of participants' views on the challenges inhibiting effective implementation of RBM in school was considered critical in explaining some of the behaviours and attitudes of school heads during the RBM processes in schools. The theme examines findings from three broad categories of challenges which are;

- a. The personnel and financial related challenges in MoPSE;
- b. Technical challenges;
- c. The organisational challenges in MoPSE.

The categories of challenges impeding the RBM system in schools constitute the discussion subheadings below.

#### **5.6.4.1 The personnel and financial resources related challenges in schools**

It was noted from the participants' responses that the implementation of the RBM system in the Highglen School District was largely compromised by the incapacity of the human resource component. Several participants including H2, H7, H5, H8, AH1, and AH3 cited personnel-related problems such as resistance to change, lack of skills, absence of a sound RBM leadership, and a dismal lack of understanding of what RBM entailed among school heads as some of the challenges impeding the effective implementation of the RBM system. The preceding challenges affecting the RBM system were examined in detail below together with related perceptions about the RBM.

##### **5.6.4.1 a. Resistance by education sector personnel to embrace RBM**

The RBM system like any other change initiative was bound to encounter resistance from the implementers (Chikasha & Gwata, 2014:284). The findings in this study validate the preceding literature. In AH2's view, any new developments stimulate some form of resistance because there is a general fear of change. Several other participants that include H2, H4, and H5 share the above view that RBM in Zimbabwe was suffering resistance as a result of fear that it might affect some sections of the workforce. As a result of the fear of change, most participants highlighted that they were continuing with the old ways of doing things. Thus, fear of embracing the new RBM system perpetuated the continuation of the old management approach which emphasised inputs and processes in schools.

A close analysis of the responses on the sources of resistance revealed that the low uptake of the RBM approach in the Highglen School District is attributable to the non-disclosure of the rewards and penalties associated with the implementation of RBM in schools. Participants expressed fear of losing statuses and downgrading if they fail to measure to the RBM expected levels. The civil servants' innate inclination to resist change, leadership void, and the top to down implementation strategy as discussed as subcategories of sources of resistance to RBM are discussed below.

***i. Innate civil servants' resistance to change***

Research findings highlighted displeasure among members of the teaching staff with the change of any kind. Notwithstanding the element of rewards, a section of the participants in this study felt that the RBM system was an unnecessary change. The preceding evidence confirms literature that asserts that RBM sometimes fails because some people are afraid of change which might erode years of their built experiences (Mayne, 2007:91). Such advocates for the maintenance of the pre-RBM status quo expressed a feeling that without benefits attached to the RBM approach to managing the education sector, the change was a liability and hence undesirable. It also emerged that participants perceived the RBM system as a political project introduced for expediency and not necessarily to change the civil service performance H6 and H7. The preceding attitude relates to literature that refers to the public servants' view of the RBM system as someone else's business (Madhekeni, 2012:125). Further to the above-stated assertion, evidence from this research revealed deep-seated resentment towards the RBM system by participants as highlighted by the following citations;

*RBM does not help at all, people view it in a very negative way, and they do not like it. They are not interested in the use of the RBM instrument, and in fact, performance appraisal was better because there were benefits linked, we have not witnessed any benefits from this system, so it is better to through it way H6.*

Also remarks by AH2 “*We have no reason to change, we have been with the system for many years now, what is particularly new?*” suggest that participants were not ready for the change. The above view confirms the general notion that civil servants tend to slowly embrace change. The remarks given by the participants about changing to the RBM suggested that a decade after its launch, most schools in the Highglen School District were still conducting business as usual. The above notion suits Madhekeni (2012) cited in Mavhiki et al., (2013:136)'s description of Zimbabwean public service employees.



The nature of resistance to RBM in the education sector as suggested by findings from the Highglen School District require some cultural change initiative to re-orient the school heads' mindsets towards the RBM system. This is in line with the UN-Habitat (2017:2) description of the RBM system as a mindset and a way of working. Such an initiative could take a long time and may require dedication. From the responses, it emerged that most participants were not patient to wait for the fruition of RBM in the development of their schools. Mayne (2007:89) however describes the process of cultural change in public sector institutions as long and iterative due to policy shifts and politics of succession. Public sector reforms that include the promotion or demotion of change agents, movement of change advocates to other geographical areas, changes in political dispensation, and ideological focus often lead to distortions in the public sector change continuum. It always takes some time to fill up the gaps which causes the public sector change process to slow down.

In Zimbabwe, a lot of changes took place in the past decade (2010 to 2020), which include changes in the leadership of the Ministry of Public Service Labour and Social Welfare that employ all teaching staff in the civil service and the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education, in whose schools RBM is practiced. Evidence from the study indicated that the socio-political changes in Zimbabwe impacted negatively the public education sector's RBM trajectory. This was manifested through frequent staff changes at the highest levels within the public service resulting in a loss of institutional memory and leadership for the RBM system. Policies and emphasis on RBM and performance changed as different ministers from across the political divide took over the reins of the public education sector. The changes also included the departure of the Zimbabwean first republic head of state and the ascendance of the second republic leadership. The implications for all the preceding changes to the success of the RBM system were a slowed-down process.

## ***ii. The change management process***

The RBM system in the public education sector has been described as a shift in the way of thinking and doing work within the school system. Research findings however indicate that preparations for the introduction of RBM in the Highglen School District failed to address the fundamental principles of change management, especially on

the aspect of building buy-in and support of the top leadership. Findings revealed that participants in this study were not prepared for the change to the RBM system. Participants [H2, H5, and H6] described the change to RBM as very abrupt without a defined transitional phase from the performance appraisal system. According to [H6] *"people were just told that we now do RBM and go sign the performance agreement forms"* Research findings reveal that RBM in schools was perceived as a forced instruction from the MoPSE leadership. Besides, the issues top-down launch approach, participants also expressed displeasure at the transitional period and the absence of specialists on the ground to explain what was happening. Literature on the successful implementation of the RBM system underscores the need for sound change management strategies that assist in the transformation of existing ways of doing things to the new culture (Bester, 2012:31; Chikasha & Gwata, 2014:284).

Managing the change process requires the building of momentum for change at the different levels of school management through fostering new values linked to the desired goals. Contrary to the preceding view, research findings revealed that participants were still generally stuck with the past process-based management approach. Nearly all participants indicated that they had not received meaningful support from MoPSE to help them to transition from the old management system to the new RBM system. Similarly, Chikasha and Gwata (2014:284) explained the failure of the public service workforce to embrace RBM in terms of a lack of support from the employer. Further to that, findings from this study revealed that the PSC as the custodian of all the human resource components of the public sector did very little by way of training to promote the transition to RBM. As a result, it emerged from this study that a majority of the participants still perceived the former system of appointment, re-grading, and promotion based on ED 94 more positively than the RBM system. The reminiscence of the past management system that characterised responses from the participants suggested an underdone process of managing the transition that did not build adequate momentum for the adoption of the new way of doing things. Evidence from the study suggested the existence of a greater force of resistance to implementing RBM than the desire to promote it. Failure by the PSC as the employer of the educators and the sole change agent for RBM to present

effective strategies to mitigate resistance indicates that the transition was poorly planned for and managed.

### ***iii. Localisation of the RBM approach***

The negativity towards the RBM system demonstrated by participants in this study also stemmed from the way it was introduced to the public education sector. Data from this study suggests that school heads in the Highglen School District felt RBM was not a local product and therefore challenges relating to its understandability were a result of its eccentric status. Participants that include H5, H6, H7, and H8 described RBM as a foreign system that did not apply to the situation in the Zimbabwean education sector. Further to that, participants H6 and H2 shared similar sentiments that RBM was wrongly placed in the service industry as it is more suitable for production-based industries. Also, participant H1 further stressed the perceived alien nature of RBM to the education sector management in the remarks that:

*It looks like RBM was imported from somewhere wholesale and dumped on the education sector without a proper explanation of how it works. People are forced to understand it. It has to be remodeled or redone according to the situation in Zimbabwe.*

The preceding evidence suggests resistance to RBM which is based on the notion that it is a deal between political leadership that does not benefit the grassroots. General sentiments from this study confirm literature that asserts that management theories that are imported from advanced countries to developing countries, often encounter resistance and are perceived negatively as inapplicable (Common, 2011:432; Madhekeni, 2012:126). Tied to the notion of the perceived foreign status of the RBM system, participants expressed concern over solutions to the education sector management problems which are prescribed by people outside the system and as far as Malaysia. Participants also indicated that they were particularly bothered by remedies offered to the schools' problems that did not include the input of heads as foot soldiers. In H7's view, "*the top-down implementation strategy, gives an impression that RBM is a top management's thing and therefore we blame them for bringing something they did not understand*". It emerged that the negative

perceptions about RBM were instrumental in the carefree behaviour of teachers who apportioned all the blame for the failure of the RBM system to the next level without being accountable for the success and failure of the system themselves. Participants generally, explained all problems associated with RBM implementation in terms of wrong decisions made by superiors in government. Further analysis of the evidence from interviews revealed an underlying feeling that the RBM system needs to be customised to the needs of public education management for the education sector personnel as implementers to appreciate its relevance and buy into it.

#### **5.6.4.1 a. Lack of RBM knowledge and efficient skills among school leaders**

Perceptions about the effectiveness of the RBM system in the education sector were also shaped by the extent to which its implementation was constrained by manpower incapacities. Findings from this study revealed that RBM was largely perceived as a failure because of limitations in the MoPSE personnel in terms of skills to support the change initiative. Participants also concurred that a human resource component with the required skills to steer the change process is a critical factor in the effective implementation of the RBM system. However, such skilled personnel with dedication were generally in short supply in most schools. According to participants H6 and 8, the poorly performing Zimbabwean economy was a major factor in the skills flight that includes RBM gurus. The need for skilled personnel to steer RBM processes was highlighted by Mayne, (2007:920); Mavhiki et al., (2013:138), and Jaricha and Dzimiri, (2019:360). The participants' views about the skills challenges in the RBM implementation in Zimbabwe are examined in the next section.

##### ***i. Limited RBM skills training***

Data from the study indicate that a major challenge compromising the success of RBM in Zimbabwean schools was limited knowledge and skills about RBM among the school leaders. Participants were divided on the extent to which the government provided the needed training for effective RBM implementation. A section of the participants supported [H6]'s dismissal of the PSC and MoPSE efforts to impart RBM skills completely. The other group acknowledged the piecemeal approach to MoPSE organised training of teachers on RBM. The following excerpts from the findings demonstrate the divergent opinions among participants.

*The Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education has done nothing to prepare us for RBM, no seminars or workshops were done to train us. The Ministry only provides a submission due date for RBM forms and nothing really serious comes from there, H6.*

Similarly, participant H7 had this to say "*The Ministry has done absolutely nothing to support us. It seems that members at the top do not understand the system of Nitti-grits. We need to invest in trying to understand the system first*"

Sympathisers with the system had a slightly different view of the training done by the responsible authority. They acknowledge having received training though it might have been inadequate. Participants H2, H4, and H8 highlighted that the training sessions conducted by PSC in the run-up to the launch of RBM did not fully equip the school heads with the knowledge to lead the RBM process. In the participants' views, the RBM workshops were too brief and trainers were not conversant with the RBM concepts. The preceding exposé suggests a limited appreciation of the RBM system to both the supervisors and supervisees due to limited exposure to the RBM experts through training. Literature affirms the preceding findings that explain the failure of the RBM system in the Zimbabwean public service in terms of the skills gap in the lower-level personnel due to inadequate training (Mundondo et al., 2019:144). Evaluations of the RBM implementation processes across different countries of the globe highlighted the critical role of knowledge and skill development in the success of the system (Vahamaki et al., 2011:24).

Contrary to the above notion participants' responses projected RBM as a complex management system that has not been fully understood and appreciated in the Highglen School District. Further to that, participants also clearly stated that the poor working conditions in Zimbabwe contributed to the government's attraction of low-caliber of workers and promotion of members with limited skills and competencies. Such employees are often considered as a measure of last resort (Mutambatuwisi et al., 2016:92). In the Highglen School District, evidence suggested that over and above the low-quality employees joining the civil service the country suffered skills flight due to the melting economy starting from early 2000. The perceived skills gap compromised the successes of RBM in Zimbabwe. Several participants Including

H5, H6, and AH3 highlighted poor RBM skills among school leaders and district leaders who supervise school heads. Such a state of affairs was making it difficult for school heads to evaluate qualitative aspects of RBM and give a meaningful rating. Participants also further described the school system as offering a variety of complex RBM activities and procedures that require specialised data collection tools and methodologies. Without specialist skills, participants H1 and H6 perceived RBM as all about the generation of useless data. Evidence from the study indicated most school heads in the Highglen School District lacked such skills.

#### **5.6.4.1 b. Lack of leadership support on RBM in the MoPSE**

The transition from the activity and process-based management system that characterised the pre-RBM Zimbabwean education sector to the new model that focused on the actual results in schools required strong leadership support and advocacy for the change initiative. Findings from the study indicated that there was a pressing need for strong, articulate, and inspiring leadership to champion the cause of RBM in the Highglen School District. Data from informal discussions with school heads during field visits indicated several participants doubted their capacity to assist their subordinates with RBM technical issues. Coupled with the preceding issue of incapacity among school leadership, evidence from the study also gave two dimensions to school leadership. The first view of school leadership was perceived to be that is authoritarian. According to participants' responses, such leadership simply instructs subordinates to carry out RBM-related instructions or face the consequences of non-compliance. An element of force that manifests in threats to invoke the statutory provisions characterises authoritarian school leaders. Several participants including H6, H8, AH1, and AH3 identified with this dimension of leadership. It emerged from the study that forcing the RBM model down the throats of educators was the only way out since it was widely ostracised in schools.

The second dimension of leadership comprised clueless leaders, without a clear idea of what is required for a successful RBM system. This characteristic is apparent at the level of top leadership in MoPSE and also at the school level. Participants' responses to the qualitative questionnaire revealed that school heads in the Highglen School District felt that top officials in the MoPSE were using policy as an

instrument to dictate the implementation of RBM which elicited negative perceptions at lower levels. Leaders at the school level did not have confidence in their superiors who initiated them to the RBM system. Participants H7, H8, and AH felt that such leadership did not have any value addition to the RBM advocacy. The above-stated scenario in the Highglen School District schools contradicts the literature on RBM which underscores the need for leadership that demonstrates attitude and behaviour for success (UN-Habitat, 2017:10). It emerged from the study that participants viewed MoPSE leadership as also lacking in the informed demand for results and that they were not always visible in schools. As a result, teachers and school heads perceived RBM as not important. It emerged from the study that participants valued the catalyst role played by the MoPSE district and provincial leadership in RBM implementation. To build effective leadership for RBM, Pazvakavambwa (2015:194) recommends inculcating the values of transformational leadership and functional leadership into the secondary school heads. Such values are considered key to the institutionalisation of the RBM system in school, soliciting buy-in, and building structures and teams for its effective implementation. The following citation describes participant AH2's perception of the role of leadership in RBM.

*For RBM to be effective, there is a need for supervision to be stepped up. Districts and provinces should have RBM teams who come around to check on our work and periodically give feedback. Otherwise, no one takes this thing seriously.*

Another participant had this to say;

*For RBM to work, managers need to be serious about it from the first day of the school calendar. Planning should be done on time and realistically and managers should check and advise. District and provincial management teams should supervise and arrange seminars and workshops to give generalised feedback and corrections. Otherwise, we will go on autopilot, H3.*

Remarks by participants, thus, suggest the need for active leadership and regular supervision followed by informative feedback. Evidence from the study also revealed the urgency with which feedback has to be given by leadership following supervision

and submission of reports. Data from interview sessions revealed that districts and provincial teams rarely visit schools and that feedback on RBM has never been given since its inception. That raised suspicion on whether the ministry leadership ever read or even pass a glance at the RBM completed forms. Consequently, such behaviour was perceived by participants as killing the spirit of RBM. Supporting research findings on the importance of feedback on evaluation from leadership, London, Mone, and Scott (2004:326) posit that employees such as teachers in public schools need feedback to calibrate their performance and adjust. Thus, results work with feedback to enhance performance. In line with the above-stated explanation, it, therefore, follows that leadership has to be assertive, visible, time conscious, and keen on result information to promote effective implementation of RBM. The demand by leadership for result information should be complemented by appropriate and timeous feedback. According to Pazvakavambwa (2015:214), leadership should ensure the timeous deployment of the DIPA manuals for effective RBM planning and implementation. Contrary to the preceding attributes of RBM effective leadership documented in the literature, evidence from the study revealed that leadership in the education sector was indifferent to matters about RBM and was rarely on the ground supervising.

Ordinarily, one would expect the school leadership, as the custodians of policy in the education sector to encourage and support the implementation of RBM by speaking positive things about the system when addressing supervisees. Several participants including H2, H3, H5, H6, H7 AH2, and AH3 concurred that there existed a leadership void in MoPSE when it comes to RBM championing. In H6's opinion *"addressing RBM matters in schools makes me very un-easily because it is a delicate subject."* The preceding citation negates the RBM best practice on the role of leadership. The literature further affirms that the success of the RBM implementation process largely depended on the commitment of the leadership to the cause of the system and their ability to walk the talk in nurturing an effective RBM system (Mayne, 2007:21). Research findings in this study, however, reflect the opposite of the documented best practice. It emerged from the study that besides the limited leadership voices advocating for RBM, participants lamented the hollowness in the top leadership's depth of understanding of the RBM system as negatively



impacting the prospects of an effective system. This was revealed in one participant's comments:

*There is no uniformity in what different people perceive as RBM. Nobody is keen to understand it and nobody takes it seriously. The Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education has done absolutely nothing to follow up on the short periods of training with support on the RBM implementation. This is because most of the officials at the top do not seem to understand it, H7.*

These sentiments revealed the loss of confidence in the leadership as torchbearers in the effective implementation of the RBM system and abject resentment of the system. Evidence from the study seems to suggest that negative perceptions about the RBM system arose from the leadership's limited awareness of the RBM system and failure to guide how the RBM approach works. This was further revealed by responses that insinuated that some of the MoPSE top officials who introduced RBM could not articulate with clarity what RBM was and in some cases, they failed to adequately respond to questions raised by trainees.

A close analysis of the participants' responses indicates that the MoPSE failed to solicit the buy-in of the leadership and sensitise them about the vision of the sector, the purpose of RBM, and its related benefits. The preceding observations from the study validate literature that encourages the training of leadership and soliciting of buy-in as a prerequisite for effective implementation of the RBM system (Binnendijk, 2000:22; Mavhiki et al., 2013: 136; Jaricha & Dzimiri, 2019:362). Loss of confidence in the leadership's capacity to handle RBM matters compromised the education sector-top officials' perceived expert power base creating an impression of one blind man leading another. There was a general impression among participants that the RBM system was not adequately planned for. There were no concrete arrangements for post-launch support mechanisms where leadership would initiate seminars, workshops, conferences, and symposia to showcase RBM's best practices.

#### **5.6.4.1 c. Limited financial resources for RBM in schools**

Research findings revealed that school heads generally perceived the RBM system as a financial burden to most schools. The participants indicated that the RBM-related expenses could be categorised into two groups which are financial resources for the procurement of inputs and other relevant material such as teaching and learning required for results. Also, the RBM system was deemed expensive in terms of providing resources for logistical support during the implementation process. Several participants including H1, H2, H5, H5, and H7 thought that lack of financial resources compromised the execution of RBM procedures such as consistent supervision, building capacity for RBM implementation among educators, and the general administrative requirements for RBM to function. All the above-stated requirements suggest the need for financial resources to sustain the RBM system in schools. Participants' views were analysed from the two perspectives of RBM financial needs highlighted above to describe and explain the behaviours of school heads during RBM implementation.

##### ***i. Financial resources for RBM logistical support***

Literature on the impediments to effective implementation of the RBM system cites the inadequacy of financial resources within governments and institutions as having ruined the RBM initiative in most developing economies (Gutuza, 2016:395). Evidence from the study revealed that most participants viewed their limited exposure to RBM concepts as a direct result of the government's failure to fund the project fully. Several participants indicated that they were exposed to only one day of training for RBM owing to budgetary constraints. Other participants that include H1, H6, and AH 1 indicated that did not receive training on RBM at all. The preceding evidence negates the RBM principle of equipping strategic leadership with the requisite skills to run the show. Besides the issue of training, participants also highlighted that absence of supervisors on the ground to check on RBM progress and problems owing to budgetary constraints adversely affected the RBM rollout process. It emerged from the study that some schools had not been visited by MoPSE officials to check on RBM for more than five years. Participant H8 aptly said "*year in and year out we only submit validated summaries to MoPSE, no one comes*

*here to inspect they have no funds up there".* As a result of the absence of visiting supervision teams in schools school heads did not take RBM seriously. A participant [H5] indicated that it was public knowledge that the district had no transport and therefore was unlikely to arrange impromptu RBM checks.

***ii. The RBM financial burden on schools***

It was noted that most schools were encountering financial challenges to sustain the RBM processes. Some participants that include H3, H5, H7, and AH3 highlighted that the printing of stationery and procurement of material required to achieve set results was out of reach for most schools. In H3's view, the implications of the high cost of running RBM in schools were that heads and teachers signed copies and stalk them in shaves without using them. Also, another participant, H5 stressed that limitations in the school's financial resources force school heads to opt for very cheap and inexpensive targets that are achievable. Thus, study findings revealed that RBM was not utilised to capacity as school heads were keen on task completion without zooming into the quality of the results. The following excerpts from the study highlight the perceived implications of budget limitations to the effective execution of RBM in the Zimbabwean school system.

*Funding is key to the effective implementation of the RBM system. In the past years, there used to be per capita grants given to the school to support internal processes. Now without support from the government, RBM is a financial burden to the schools. The ministry itself cannot carry out supervision of RBM in schools because they do not have vehicles, fuel, and other requirements for supervision. AH2*

Another participant H3 felt that owing to financial challenges in schools most school heads were not seriously following the procedures of RBM. This is because they did not have the financial resources to cover the RBM demands H3. Data from interviews also revealed that schools vary in terms of their sizes and resources which implies variations in the capacity to effectively provide requirements for RBM. However, a comparison of the mega and small schools' responses in this study indicated that a majority of schools in the urban setting could afford basic facilities like printing RBM appraisal forms, buying stationery for teachers, and supporting in-

house training activities. Thus, whilst setting the infrastructure for RBM implementation was perceived as a relatively expensive exercise, on the ground it turned out that in an urban setting, even small schools could afford to provide RBM forms to members and basic teaching and learning material. What seemed to be key to the whole process of RBM, was the motivation of the concerned parties.

A participant H7 took a slightly different view in describing the implication of resource constraints to the success of the RBM system. In H7's view, RBM cannot work effectively if schools do not have enough resources. It was felt that the policies inhibiting the exclusion of learners from class on account of non-payment of fees had detrimental effects on the success of RBM. Similar views were expressed by H2 and H6 who stressed that without financial resources to provide inputs, there can never be meaningful evaluation in schools and any other public sector institutions and as a result, RBM neither helps implementers with information to make decisions nor lessons from covered activities.

#### **5.6.4.2 Technical factors impeding RBM**

Research findings in this study highlighted two main areas of contention regarding the effectiveness of RBM in schools. The first one pertained to the value of educator contribution to the ultimate result of the learners and, the second one involve, the calculation of non-quantifiable efforts to the education sector. Participants felt the qualitative aspect of the KRAs description and time requirements were more theoretical than practical in schools. Findings from the study confirmed literature that suggests the need for experts to deal with the problem of measurement and reporting (Mayne, 2007:90). In support of the preceding view, Mundondo et al., (2019:146) state that RBM requires experts in measurement and appropriate tools of the trade for it to be effective. Such expertise help to translate the RBM theory into practice.

Participant opinions on the procedures followed during the RBM were solicited to describe and relate the perceptions of school heads to the effective implementation RBM system in the Highglen School District. Findings revealed that RBM was generally perceived as a cumbersome process that requires some level of effort to understand. A section of the participants that include H5, H7, H8, and AH2 described

the RBM as a complex process that required thorough induction before implementation. Areas of concern raised by participants mostly to do with understanding the requirements of RBM and appropriate interpretation of the terminology. Further analysis of the participants was done under the subcategories of RBM perceived challenges below.

#### **5.6.4.2 a. Complexities of the RBM process**

Evidence from the study indicated that there were mixed feelings about the RBM process with a section of the participants describing it as a complicated model for application by a majority of educators. The complexity of the system was defined in terms of the language used in the source documents which are ESSP, MIPA, and DIPA. A section of the participants indicated that they had challenges understanding the layout of instructions in the DIPA. In participant AH2's view, working with DIPA was like "*searching a needle in a hay bale*". The participant's remarks imply that the source document is too dense and requires simplification and scaling down of details. Evidence from the study suggested the need to repackage the source documents and simplify the language. Bester (2012:33) cited in Jaricha and Dzimiri (2019:367) described RBM as a complex system that requires adequately trained manpower with appropriate skills to apply to different institutions. Evidence from the study confirmed the literature as highlighted by the following citation.

*Schools are supposed to receive the Departmental Integrated Performance Agreement (DIPA) which is derived from the Ministerial Integrated Performance Agreements (MIPA). Firstly, such documents never come on time, and secondly, they do not make sense to us at all. You just are given the DIPA or MIPA documents by the supervisors and asked to make sense of it on your own. As for the ESSP most of us have not had a chance to see it, H7.*

The general feeling among the participants was that the RBM language and layout of the source document were too abstract for the comprehension of ordinary teachers and school heads. The ESSP and DIPA documents, which serve as operational manuals for school RBM implementation, presented understandability challenges to the school heads who preside over the process at the school level. The ESSP and

DIPA documents were also perceived to be too big and generalised making the RBM process difficult to follow. The personnel performance appraisal form used in the public service as a data collection instrument was perceived to be text-heavy and collected data that did not add value to educators' work. Only a few participants had a different perception of the RBM system. Sympathisers with the RBM system who included H1, H4, and AH1 described their perception of RBM as fairly positive. The participants nursed hope in giving RBM time to mature and bear fruits. To the sympathisers, the RBM system was good and understandable. The only missing link in the system was the absence of benefits related to performance.

#### **5.6.4.2 b. Measurement of teachers' performance**

A survey of participants' views on the heads' capacity to report accurately on performance indicated that most of the school heads in the Highglen School District had challenges in identifying what to measure during the RBM process. Participants H5, H6, and AH2 indicated that they had challenges in measuring some of the achievements of the educators such as soft skills and tacit knowledge which is difficult to quantify. It was also noted that the process of measuring performance in schools was highly subjective. Several participants that include H2, H3, H5, H6, AH1, and AH2 believed that quantification of the teachers' output was a difficult exercise that required a specialist. This is because the products of the teacher-pupil interaction were not visible nor felt in the immediate period.

Participant H6 cited the hidden curriculum where learners just adopt untaught mannerisms from association with certain teachers as immeasurable. Participants cited the complicated nature of measuring qualitative effort and disaggregating group performance into individual contributions as one big challenge to the implementation of the RBM system in schools. For example, participant H4 described results in high schools as a product of many players. Specialist teachers and parents contribute in many different ways to the ultimate result and accurate measurement of one's contributions is a challenge. It also emerged from the responses that due to the attribution/contribution challenge, some members always tend to ride on other members' performance. Aligned to the attribution/contribution challenge, participants generally perceived the RBM as a production-oriented management philosophy and

not suitable for the service industry like education. Participants' responses in the interview sessions indicated that the data collected at the school level were mostly of poor quality and could not possibly work in decision-making.

A few participants H1, H4, and AH1 also expressed discomfort with the mathematical computations of the final rating score. Besides, participants also indicated the process of allotting weighted values to the description of output in terms of quantity, quality, cost, and the time factor was one grey area that required due attention for RBM to be effective in the public school system. It emerged from the study that the qualitative output weights written by school heads on their RBM forms were generally random values as participants were not paying due attention to the computation process. Several participants confirmed that the process of performance reporting was done to complete the requirements of the job and most ratings were not authentic. To address the above challenge, evidence from the study suggested capacity building on measurement and reporting, together with demonstrating the use of such information by the MoPSE.

#### **5.6.4.2 c. The usability of the appraisal form in schools**

Findings from the study revealed that participants perceived the appraisal form as too long and demanding a lot of time to populate. A general feeling among participants was that to enhance effectiveness, the RBM form needed to be shorter and more succinct. Vahamaki et al., (2011:50) describe the RBM system as a complex management approach that is difficult to deal with in its totality. Participants described the RBM form complexity in terms of the RBM level of difficulty to comprehend. Owing to understandability challenges, participants H7 and H8 described the RBM appraisal form as unfriendly to users and also in need of simplification in terms of content.

Findings also revealed that for effectiveness, the RBM form needed downscaling in terms of its size and some of its areas simplified for ease of understanding. It also turned out that, negative perceptions about the effectiveness of RBM were built around the length of the data collection instrument, the diction used to frame the guidance and the tediousness associated with completing the form. Negativity emanated from lack of compensation related to compliance with such hard work and

no feedback to suggest that the RBM information was read and incorporated into the teachers' daily work. The preceding evidence corroborates literature that asserts that lack of incentives slows down the RBM implementation in the public sector as employees would expect benefits associated with the volume of work (Mundondo et al., 2019:148).

#### **5.6.4.3 Organisational challenges in the MoPSE impeding the RBM**

The researcher explored participants' views regarding the contribution of MoPSE as an organisation for the success of the RBM system in the Highglen School District. This was done to identify the perceived role of the organisation in building a culture of performance. Findings from this study revealed that the MoPSE organisational culture has profound implications for the uptake of the RBM system in schools. Aspects of culture identified in this study to have some influence on the implementation of RBM in schools include, but are not limited to the beliefs, values and assumptions of teachers, MoPSE policy framework, and the bureaucratic structure of MoPSE. Participants' views were discussed under the above-stated three subcategories.

##### **5.6.4.3 a. The educators' beliefs and assumptions about RBM in schools**

Findings from this study indicated that despite the eleven years of implementing the RBM system in Zimbabwe, participants were still generally comfortable with the old ways. In participant H6's view, the ED 94 and performance appraisal system formerly used by MoPSE were well coordinated and had benefits to the teachers. Further analysis of the participants' views suggested that some of the participants resisted the change initiative because they were afraid of victimisation on achievement of low grades and losing the already achieved grades. The belief that RBM would expose incompetence and laziness among teachers and school heads influenced negativity towards the system and a push back attitude. Besides, it was also apparent from the participants' responses that the RBM system was perceived to link to financial benefits and therefore, the absence of such benefits in schools meant that resources were corruptly channeled elsewhere. In participant H2's view, *“As the name suggests, high performance should be rewarded and its common*



*sense that, if those benefits are not there it means someone is enjoying them on our behalf.”*

The feeling of deception among educators contributed to resentment towards RBM and a general carefree during the RBM processes. Participants confirmed the signing of supervisees' work plans and left the members to evaluate themselves. It was also noted that supervisees awarded themselves ratings that the supervisor would only endorse with their signatures. The above-stated exposé was described by H7 as follows *"members set their KRAs, evaluate themselves, and rate their performance. That does not work. We cannot use such information for decision making, it's false information and does not contribute to performance improvement."* Evidence from the study thus, suggests that some school heads tend to accept baseless ratings from their supervisees without questioning because they also provide the same kind of information to their supervisors.

Open-ended questionnaire responses indicated that whilst it was policy to request a completed RBM form on applying for regrading, no one seemed to look at it closely beyond just checking the scores. Jaricha and Dzimiri, (2019:365) describe the MoPSE top officials as having failed to evaluate RBM and also to cause evaluation of the same in schools. As a result performance, related information at different levels in the MoPSE and mostly in schools was believed to be valueless. To address the discrepancy, participants felt that the starting point was to nurture a result-oriented culture by awarding benefits to implementers of the system. Participants agreed on the need for the MoPSE to engage the PSC on the issue of providing incentives for implementing the RBM system in schools. Remarks by AH2 that *"those who supervise and follow RBM should be rewarded"* implied benefits for using the system. Over and above the issue of incentives, participants also highlighted the need for feedback.

Evidence from the study also revealed that the participants could not pinpoint and describe the benefits of RBM to school management. A general feeling among the participants was that information collected during RBM is never used. All participants expressed doubt if ever the RBM forms are opened for perusal once they are delivered to the district offices and beyond. Such a feeling among the school leaders

gave the impression of RBM as implying teachers toiling for nothing. To address the above-stated challenge, participants' responses suggested the need to make result-based management information an integral part of the education sector decision support system and demonstrate its importance. Once that is done, all levels of management would step up supervision and checks and balances to increase the fidelity of data.

An emerging sub-culture pointed out by participants that were linked to RBM is corruption. Evidence from the study also revealed that participants were concerned about corrupt activities in schools during the RBM process. Participants H7 and AH2 described the awarding of high marks during performance ratings to undeserving members to facilitate promotion as a form of corruption. It emerged from the responses that despite copying and pasting work plans, some members consistently score high marks. Several participants H1, H2, H3, H4, H8, AH1, and AH3 also linked the notion of good competitive results as an influencer to paid extra lessons that are conducted in schools. Participants also highlighted some of the teachers were using RBM as a cover for paid extra lessons. Thus, participants also perceived RBM as harboring some traits of undesirable sub-culture.

#### **5.6.4.3 b. The MoPSE Bureaucracy and RBM implementation in public schools**

Findings from this study revealed that part of the MoPSE culture included rules and regulations that defined the way things should be done. Participants indicated that the rules were conceived ministerial level and passed downwards to the lowest level and followed by all without changes. A problem with the above structure as identified by the participants involved the rate at which the Zimbabwean economy, society and technological pace were changing. Such changes needed lean and flexible structures. For example, participants mentioned that school fees in Highglen's S2 schools were pegged at ZWL \$10.00 per student per term. The amount could not support learning (tuition) requirements for successful RBM implementation in schools yet adjustments to the fees were done at the cabinet level and took a lot of time. Participants also raised the issue of school levies which supported the daily activities in most schools that were only approved by PEDs and sometimes the PS. Turn

around period for the approvals was relatively long owing to bureaucracy which negated the agility notion of the RBM system.

During the interview sessions, participants described the MoPSE as a conservative ministry that mostly relies on a top-down communication approach. As a result, initiatives like the RBM system were passed down from top leadership to the grassroots level as instructions were detested. Participant H7 consistently referred to the RBM system as “*their thing*” because teachers were not involved in the decision about its applicability. Several other participants [H6, H7, H8, AH1, and AH2] perceived the RBM negatively as an imposition on them. Participants' responses revealed that most school heads had not embraced the cultural change from process-oriented to result-focused methodologies. This was in part a result of how the change initiative was cascaded to the lower levels H1 and H4. It was noted that MoPSE officials and some school heads were using threats of dealing with defiant teachers instead of selling the idea to enforce RBM implementation.

The RBM, as a cultural change required the buy-in and support of the top leadership whose role among other duties included crafting reference documents and providing policy guidance to the lower levels of RBM (Mavhiki et al., 2013:136). This study indicated the opposite as participants highlighted that they were never given RBM support from MoPSE beyond the pre-launch one-day training sessions. Nearly all participants concurred that there was inadequate to literary no post-launch support for the RBM initiative. Binnendijk (2000:23) asserts that leadership in the RBM system can promote effective implementation of the RBM system through sending strong messages of RBM support to their subordinates, giving speeches about RBM, participating in training workshops, and providing adequate budgetary support for RBM. In contrast, the findings from this study indicated that the top managers in the MoPSE had not been thoroughly prepared to manage the change initiative of the RBM magnitude, and therefore, they could not support those below them. At the school level in the Highglen School District, participants confirmed that they were not equipped to expertly stand before their teams and advocate the implementation of RBM.

### **5.6.4.3 c. The MoPSE policy framework**

Perceptions about the RBM's effectiveness in the education sector were built around the extent to which the policy framework supported or hindered the effectiveness of the result-based management system. The application of RBM as a performance management system is sanctioned by the statutory instrument 1 of 2000 here referred to as S.I of 2000. Whilst the preceding instrument defined related consequences for achieving a certain level of performance in RBM, participants felt that the Secretary's Circular 6 of 2014 seemed to contradict the whole thrust to support RBM implementation in public schools. Findings relating to the two circulars and their perceived implications for the effective implementation of RBM in schools are discussed below.

#### ***1) The statutory requirements and RBM implementation***

In Zimbabwe, all public servants are subjected to a performance evaluation exercise on an annual basis as sanctioned by the SI of 2000:12. According to the instrument, performance assessment can culminate into re-grading, demotion, and, in extreme cases of adverse reports, cause discharge of members from the civil service. The notion of defining the standard level of expected performance and ramifications for failing to perform to the expected level creates discomfort with the RBM system among the participants. Evidence from this study suggests that a majority of participants provided information on RBM to comply with the policy. There is a seeming lack of buy-in and participants confirmed that they implemented the system for compliance purposes only. Findings also suggest that both supervisors and supervisees were content with the state of affairs as no one seemed to be bothered by where the RBM data came from, its quality, and fidelity as long as there was evidence of compliance with the policy on paper. The following citations reveal the perceived importance of paper-based information in the system that was deemed to be RBM. "*Because RBM is required, at the end of the day people end up duplicating what they wrote last year even a year before last*" H1. Also, H7 stated that "*Nobody is keen to understand the RBM system, to know what it is as long as they have their papers signed.*" The annotations suggest that members are more interested in showing allegiance to the employer.

*Teachers feel that RBM is to be done and therefore they just write to fill up the forms and even duplicate information from colleagues. Even if you look at the performance evaluations, the information on paper does not reflect what is on the ground. If people get serious with RBM, they will get something completely different, AH2.*

The preceding citations suggest that participants are more concerned with completing the appraisal form and having all spaces on the form filled up rather than achieving a real change in school performance. The need to comply with policy has, thus, reduced the RBM system to a paper exercise that does not help in any way (Mutambatuwisi et al., 2016:91). Evidence from the study indicates that the fear of punishment for not taking part in the RBM process overwhelms the participants, causing them to put on paper information that does not relate to their day-to-day activities. One participant also highlighted that throughout the structure of MoPSE, no one takes RBM seriously to work within the parameters of time. Work plans could be agreed upon, signed, evaluated, and rated at the same time. Evidence from this study also insinuated that supervisors at the top were only keen on the production of the validated ratings which represent the level of performance. This is because no one follows up on the performance reviews. Evidence from the study also revealed the absence of corresponding feedback on performance monitoring and evolution exercises which presented an impression that RBM was not taken seriously.

Participants in this study expected feedback on performance to culminate in promotion, demotion, or discharge from the service. Without evidence linking RBM to the resultant status presented above, participants expressed doubt on the enforceability of the RBM system in terms of the S.I of 2000:12 pronouncements. It also emerged from the study that despite the absence of evidence linking RBM to the discharge of non-complying and underperforming members, participants were concerned with that possible worst-case scenario. Participants, therefore, tried to safeguard colleagues during performance monitoring and evaluation sessions by recording false data and awarding average marks. The preceding view confirms the prevalence of the central tendency bias effect on RBM performance data (Siddique, 2010:43; Mensah-Boachie & Seidu, 2012:78; Raveendra et al., 2018:316).

The preceding exposition about the implementation of RBM in the public sector corresponds with the situation in Zimbabwean schools as highlighted by the participants. It emerged that enforcement of the provision of S.I 1 of 2000 on RBM implementation required buy-in from top leadership and a demonstration of interest to enforce the statutory provision.

## **2) Policy inconsistencies**

Statutory Instrument 1 of 2000, which prescribes the mandatory status of the RBM system to all public sector employees in Zimbabwe, insinuates the need to reward high performance and punish deficient performance. Evidence from the study highlighted the dichotomy between the education sector policy framework and the principle underpinning the RBM system in Zimbabwean schools. Swiss and Strauss (2005:32) argue that RBM is a proactive and agile management system that focuses on results. Through a continual focus on results, RBM should drive school heads and teachers to think ahead and always strive to find new ways of reaching higher levels of performance. In contrast to Swiss and Strauss (2005:32)'s view of RBM as a nimble management approach, several participants including H2, H3, H5, H8, and AH1 expressed reservations about trying new ways of doing things. Participants feared that low performance due to failed experimentation with new models could lead to disciplinary action. Such an environment was perceived as risky and therefore, no one dared to try it. The participant behaviour highlighted above, thus, contradicts the RBM principle of, *“Do, Learn and Adjust”* (Swiss & Strauss, 2005:25). In concurrence with the preceding view, Mundondo et al., (2019:149) assert that literature indicates that the RBM system in Zimbabwe failed to create a culture of learning which greatly compromised its effectiveness. Evidence from the study suggested that participants were generally comfortable with sticking to the tried and tested ways of doing things, even if such methods were not yielding the best results. Such kind of behaviour, thus, negates ethos at the core of RBM, which encourages innovation to optimise productivity.

Participants' responses also highlighted another area of policy inconsistency where on one hand Statutory Instrument I of 2000: 12 implied performance-related bonuses and rewards as motivators and on the other hand the Secretary's Policy number 6 of

2014 outlawed the use of incentives to motivate employees in schools. Without incentives, the RBM system has proven to be a difficult instrument to use in the Highglen School District just as it has proven to be in many other geographical spaces. Se from the participants corresponds with Mutambatuwisi et al., (2016:92) observations that in change initiatives, such as the RBM system, people would always ask '*what is in it for me,*' implying expectations of rewards linked to the implementation of the system. The UN-Habitat (2017:16) postulates that institutionalising the RBM fully is a difficult task that requires time and appropriates financial resources to provide incentives. Findings from this study affirmed literature as highlighted by the following citations,

*For RBM to be effective, managers need to be serious about it in the first days of the school calendar. Those who perform well should be incentivised. Because it is called RBM, managers should incentivise or reward the performance of individuals. High performance should be given commensurate salaries. I also believe incentives do not necessarily have to come from the national fiscals but can be scaled down to the school level for all stakeholders to appreciate RBM. Policies restrain heads from innovating. We cannot align RBM to the education sector's needs without addressing the policy issues. A conducive result-oriented work environment in the schools is required and it can only be built with improved working conditions and incentives for hard work. I think there should be political will on the part of the employer to create an effective system and the contents of this discussion should be escalated to platforms such as the parliamentary portfolio committee on education, H3.*

*If funded properly it is a good system and applicable, there should be resource provision and incentives to motivate performance. However, in the current situation, there is no motivation and schools face too many restrictions on the raising of funds to support school activities, AH3.*

These perceptions, relating to policy-related constraints, participants revealed that their main concern was the completeness of the appraisal forms even if they were populated using false information. Asked whether heads use RBM information for

decision-making, the general view indicated that there was very little or no truth in the data collected for RBM appraisals. The quality of the data was poor and therefore could not be used for decision-making purposes. Findings in the study confirmed literature that the presentation of poor quality data for purposes of upward reporting was viewed as one major problem associated with a policy that affected the implementation of RBM (Pazvakavambwa, 2015:72). According to Mavhiki et al., (2013:136), when teachers perceive RBM as irrelevant and of no value to their work, they do not mind the quality of data they present.

#### **5.6.4.4 The change management process in MoPSE**

This theme focuses on the participants' perceived level of understanding of the RBM system based on the strategies used to prepare and manage the transition from the performance appraisal system to RBM. Participants' views were examined in this theme to establish the school heads' perceptions about RBM that are linked to how the change was introduced to them. Participants identified two levels in the management of the RBM change initiative in Zimbabwe. The two levels are pre-launch preparations and post-launch support. It was noted that participants perceived the RBM initiative as haphazardly done.

##### **5.6.4.4 a. Pre-launch preparations for RBM in schools**

The present theme focuses on the participant's perception of RBM effectiveness based on the level of understanding linked to the preparation for the introduction of the RBM system in schools. It was clear from the responses that the only initiative to prepare education sector personnel for the launch of RBM was training. All participants indicated that there were not exposed to the piloting of RBM or even heard about it before. Participants also stated that the transition to RBM was just characterised by an instruction to sign a new form with the work plan. It was apparent that advocacy for change in both electronic and print media did not cover adequate ground to prepare teachers and other education sector personnel for the change.



### ***i. Training of school heads in RBM***

Participants were divided on the issue of prelaunch training. The general perception was that training delivered to MoPSE personnel was too brief. Several participants H1, H2, H3, H5, H8, AH2, and AH3 indicated that they attended only a one-day training workshop on the RBM facilitated by PSC. Other participants highlighted that they were inducted into the RBM through staff development sessions at the district level and cluster level. The preceding findings corroborate the affirmation that limited appreciation of the RBM theory among educators was due to inadequate training on the subject (Madhekeni, 2012:125; Samkange & Dondofema, 2016:789). Madhekeni (2012:125) further stated that owing to financial difficulties in Zimbabwe, RBM training in Zimbabwe was extended mostly to senior members of government and covered only six of the ten provinces. To demonstrate the inadequacy of training, one participant stated that;

*I did not receive any form of training on RBM from MoPSE. If anything, I only got to know about RBM through discussions with colleagues and through meetings that were called by the district office where RBM was part of the agenda, H3.*

Just as a participant H6 also flatly denied having received any form of training on RBM. It was noted that some of the school heads in the Highglen School District did not receive any training but got to know about RBM through reading and trial and error at work. Close analysis of the responses revealed that the quality of training services rendered to the educators was poor and most of the facilitators were not articulate. [H2] described the workshops as "*too brief and yet were meant to prepare school administrators who were later to train the rest of the staff*" H2.

Another participant AH1's response to the same question on training rigor highlighted that even some trainers were not conversant with the RBM system as they could not satisfactorily answer some questions from the trainees. However, the participant did not completely dispel the training as useless since there was some new knowledge gained. Participants H4 and H7 also confirmed that training was led by facilitators who appeared to be unclear of the RBM concepts themselves. Samkange and Dondofema (2016:789) made similar observations that limited understanding of the

RBM system in Zimbabwe was mainly attributed to the fact that RBM knowledge was cascaded down to the lower levels in the civil service by facilitators from the PSC who seemed to have limited knowledge about the system. Data from this study confirm observations that inadequate training and skills development impede the effective implementation of the RBM system (Mayne, 2007:100). Transitioning from the performance appraisal system to RBM was more like moving into an unknown area.

A big cultural change initiative like RBM in the MoPSE required a re-orientation of the educators' mindset from focusing on methodologies of doing things to the actual product. Such change required high-level training of the heads of schools to prepare them for the role of change agents. From this study's findings, it was clear that the school heads as change agents were not ready to take on the initiative. Evidence suggests therefore that the transition from performance appraisal to RBM was not well managed. In Mayne (2007:100)'s view, change to RBM requires adequate training and skills development without which the change is bound to fail. In the same way, Pazvakavambwa (2015:180) underscored the importance of training in skills-building and facilitation of cultural change in schools. Without well-trained personnel in the school system, a lot of questions remained unanswered which, in a way, negatively influenced implementers' perceptions of RBM and also confidence in it. The research findings confirm the literature that the implementation of the RBM system in the Zimbabwean education public sector was marred by the poor state of readiness among the workers (Madhekeni, 2012:127). In the context of this study, evidence of limited mastery of the RBM basic concepts among the Highglen School District School heads' suggested limited appreciation of both the conceptual basis of RBM, its purpose and perceived benefits to the teachers' work environment.

## ***ii. Piloting the RBM in schools***

It emerged from the responses that participants equated the level of difficulty in linking the RBM system to school management with a gap in preparatory activities. Participants including H6 and H9 described the RBM system as a foreign project that was introduced to Zimbabwe without even protesting it. Participants explained the challenges faced by school heads in applying RBM theory to their daily work in terms

of a theory that was never customised to the local conditions. In H9's view, "*there was the need for the Zimbabwean government to test the relevance of RBM in at least one school in all the provinces as a way to measure feasibility.*" From the evidence, it emerged that participants acknowledged the difference between the country where the RBM system was imported and Zimbabwe. Such differences could have been bridged by piloting RBM first and adjusting according. Participants felt that school heads were learning about RBM as they were implementing it because a stage was omitted during the preparations phase.

### ***iii. Preparations of supporting instruments for RBM implementation***

Evidence from the study also revealed that MoPSE did not invest in the preparation of policies to support the implementation of RBM in schools. Accordingly, participants felt that the Statutory Instrument 1 of 2000 which was done before RBM needed revisions to factor in the new development. Members of the teaching fraternity in the public sector continue to be guided by the Statutory Instrument 1 of 2000. None of the participants confirmed having policy circulars from MoPSE on RBM. Participants thought that relevant new policies were needed to enforce the implementation of the RBM in schools. The comments by participants H7 and AH3 that "*RBM has no legal support, what appears in the statutory instrument is the performance appraisal system*" H7 and that "*we need something to fall back on when members resist RBM instructions,*" AH3. From the evidence, it was noted that the preparatory stage of the RBM launch showed some gaps.

#### **5.6.4.4 b. The post-RBM launch support for school heads**

It was noted that after the launch of RBM in 2010, some school heads did not get refresher courses on the subject. Participants H2, H5, and H9 felt that there was a need to consistently refresh school heads on the RBM basics. However, participants revealed that at the district level, some form of capacitation continued. Besides the district-level workshops, participants highlighted that they also met as clusters to discuss the RBM and even collectively draw work plans. From the district and cluster level capacitation, participants expressed concern over the non-availability of experts to provide RBM guidance. It was also noted that the collective formulation of the RBM work plans led to the production of similar work plans for the whole cluster.

Coupled with that, participants' responses to interview questions highlighted a tendency by school heads to duplicate each other's work plans without adjusting them to suit different situations. The implications of duplicating work plans are that, school heads work towards producing paper based evidence of RBM implementation without applying the concepts to their daily duties. Analysis of the responses, therefore, suggested that post-launch support for RBM in the Highglen School District did not equip school heads with a better understanding of the RBM system. The collective drawing of KRAs and duplication of work plan served to generate evidence of participation to the employer. Thus, post-launch activities strengthened the notion of RBM for external accountability and not decision-making.

### **5.6.5 Suggested adjustments to the Zimbabwean RBM system**

This theme focuses on the perceived adjustment required to enhance the effectiveness of the RBM system in the public education sector in Zimbabwe. There was consensus in participants' responses regarding the relevance and appropriateness of the RBM theory to the needs of the public education sector in Zimbabwe. What appeared to be problematic was the translation of theory to practice which implied the need to capacitate the implementers. Thus, findings suggested paying attention to the human resources enablers of RBM implementation. Participant responses also indicated the need to revise the appraisal form as a data collection instrument and make it more appropriate to the services of the teacher. The third category of responses suggested the need to bridge the divergences between education sector policy frameworks through revisions of obsolete policies and the deletion of other policies that seemed to contradict the ethos of the RBM system. All three categories of responses will be discussed below. The discussions will focus on the perceived influence of the preceding factors on effective result-based planning, monitoring, evaluation, and reporting in schools.

#### **5.6.5.1 Human resources factors enhancing RBM effectiveness in schools**

According to Shangahaidonhi (2013:581), the human resource component is key to the achievement of tangible results in any organisation. Participants identified three elements linked to the human resources component that could potentially improve the uptake and effectiveness of the RBM system in schools. The elements are;

improved conditions of work for the teachers, teacher training for RBM skills, and building a culture of results and accountability in schools. The researcher explored the participants' views on the influence of the preceding factors on the effective implementation of RBM. Behaviours of school heads associated with the three categories of RBM enhancers were examined below.

#### **5.6.5.1 a. Improvement of the teachers' working conditions**

It was noted from the findings that participants expected a matching reward for every task and effort applied to RBM in schools. This was revealed by participants in the discussions held during site visits. It emerged that participants generally concurred that over and above the reward-based performance pay structure, the MoPSE needed to create a conducive environment for the effective operationalisation of RBM. Such an environment was perceived to be characterised by the provision of sustainable above-poverty-line salaries and a model for incentivising high performance in different schools. Participants H1 and H4 felt that sustainable salaries and allowances make teachers focus on their work and avoid fleecing and coercing parents into giving them incentives. It also emerged that in the spirit of devolution, district offices could be given authority to incentive outstanding in-class and out-of-class activities and pass reports to provinces and ultimately the secretary for education. Responses to Participants viewed a possibility of enhancing RBM effectiveness through the conduct of RBM championship, role modeling, and galas at which outstanding performances may be celebrated. Just like in the concept of performance-based rewards, the MoPSE could regulate the incentives by defining benchmarks for high performance and attributes to be incentivised.

Throughout the interviews, participants continued to refer to the issue of incentives which are critical to the effective implementation of the RBM system in the education sector. Outstanding comments on the need for incentives were given by participant AH2 who stated that *"without incentives, people do not support RBM because there are stereotypes."* The stereotype referred to by the participant is the general perception held by educators that RBM is a burdensome alien (Machingambi et al., 2013:267; Muranda et al., 2015:100). As a recommendation, participants proposed the introduction of reward-based performance in the education sector. Participants in

the study suggested that MoPSE needed to define the levels of performance and link the rewards to each level. According to H6 the *old notching system used to work very well with the old system of ED 94 and therefore RBM needs to retain some of the elements.*” The elements referred to include the following grading format;

**Table 5. 4 Hypothetical RBM notching sequence**

<b>Performance Rating</b>	<b>Notches</b>	<b>Bonus</b>	<b>Non-monetary reward</b>
5	3 notches	Full Bonus	Eligible for promotion to the next grade
4	2 notches	Half Bonus	Eligible for promotion within the same grade
3	1 notch	Nil	Retain the same status
2	0 notches	Nil	Retain the same status
1	in-service	In service	demotion

A notch recommended by participants represented a percentage of the employee's gross salary per month. Evidence from the study indicated that a popular hypothetical notch for RBM rewards was pegged at one percent of a member's gross salary. Several participants including H1, H2, H3, H5, H8, AH2, and AH3 concurred that a basic salary increment of one percent compounded by the number of notches could suffice as a starting point. Evidence from the study also revealed that participants valued the general improvement in the civil service working conditions as one very critical success factor for RBM.

#### **5.6.5.1 b. Teacher training for RBM skills**

Responses from all participants in this study highlighted the need to capacitate teachers and heads through training in RBM implementation to build awareness and appreciation of the system in them. Building a skills base at grassroots levels in the school system was perceived as essential to ensure appropriate and correct

interpretation of the RBM documents. Sentiments from participants revealed the dire need for the education sector personnel to appreciate the role of RBM planning, monitoring, and evaluation and apply it to their daily duties from an informed point of view. Participants perceived their daily planning of schoolwork as divorced from the RBM planning activities since they never refer to their documents after the agreement dates. Analysis of the conditions required for effective implementation of the RBM system in schools revealed the need for training as a prerequisite to building knowledge for the correct application of the concepts. Further to that, participants proposed post-RBM launch activities that keep members abreast with changes in the RBM system. In H1's view, *"The most important enhancer of RBM in Zimbabwe is the retraining of all the implementers of RBM and if possible redesigning the RBM form, H1.* Similarly, H8 felt that *"The MoPSE needs to introduce training for new members and refresher courses for the old members so that educators understand the RBM system," H8.*

Other participants that include H7, H9, and AH2 stressed that the training needs component of the RBM form was of no essence since no one arranged to address the training needs.

Participant AH2 stated that

*In my view, everything revolves around knowledge of RBM. This thing is not well understood by people. If it has to succeed, the MoPSE needs to think about ways to build a real understanding of RBM among all members. In this case, training at district and provincial levels will do. For school heads, annual conferences like the NASH conference could be used to educate people about RBM because most of us are at the lowest level of understanding. The thing confuses.*

This evidence, from participants argues that the critical human resource success factor for the implementation of a results-based management system in schools involves the capacitation of teachers. Literature on the implementation of RBM supports the proposition above adding that the need for intensive training as key to the success of the RBM system in schools (Samkange & Dondofema, 2016:790). Similar sentiments were made by Mundondo et al., (2019:147) who suggest the

need for time and resources to prepare teachers and heads for effective RBM implementation. Evidence from this study corroborates the above-stated view.

Research findings indicate dire need for capacity building among educators facilitated by school leaders for them to be able to handle the RBM system more effectively. Evidence from the study also indicated that other areas of the performance management system that seemed to present challenges involved the measurement of performance and attribution of results. Findings from the study indicate that the bunching of scores around three and four in RBM final annual evaluations was largely due to lenience bias as heads and their subordinates tried to maintain cordial relations. Saurombe, (2014:325) asserts that due to a lack of expert training on performance management implementation and evaluation, heads tend to be lenient in their rating of performance. Participants' responses indicate that negative perceptions about the RBM were mostly a result of a lack of understanding of the management philosophy and its potential benefits. Participants, H1; H2, H8, AH2, and H9 agreed that the Highglen School District leadership needed thorough training in RBM to enable them to lead the rest from an informed position. Research findings confirm skills deficiency on the part of the school heads who were expected to capacitate others. In support of the above contention, the literature suggests that adequate training is key to effective RBM implementation for without it the system is sure to fail (Mayne 2007:100, Samkange & Dondofema, 2016:789).

Participants proposed pre-implementation training of education sector personnel where all educators are exposed to the RBM concepts as they prepare to join the teaching profession. It was suggested that the pre-implementation program be infused into graduate and post-graduate teacher training courses as a study module to prepare prospective educators to embrace RBM theory. This is in line with Oladele (2010:173)'s contention that the first step in institutionalising RBM is the training of its implementers. After joining the service, both new and old members can be subjected to periodic in-house training and in-servicing as some form of post-launch support to sustain the momentum of RBM implementation. The proposition further reinforces research findings that highlighted the educators' anticipations for ongoing training on RBM rather than holding a one-stop show, which left members with an unclear view of the RBM system. The remark by participant H1 that *“people are forced to*



*understand RBM and it has to be redone for people to understand it*” indicated that a section of the participants still needs guidance and capacitation on the use of RBM in schools. Similarly, H7 underscored a lack of understanding of the RBM system and the need to invest in training first to equip implementers with the correct knowledge. Participant H7 emotionally highlighted that the RBM will never be friendly to the educators as long as they did not have a full appreciation of the system and what it can do for them.

#### **5.6.5.1 c. Building a culture of results and accountability**

Based on the findings relating to challenges in the implementation of the RBM in the Highglen School District, participants suggested the following perceived ways in which the RBM system could be made more effective in the school system. Besides the use of incentives to improve the uptake and effective implementation of the RBM system in the public education sector, participants highlighted the need to effectually use performance data in decisions about teachers. For example, participants H1, H4, H8, H9, and AH2 suggested the need for leadership to request and use performance data to reward and punish the different levels of performance. It was also noted in participants' responses that regular monitoring, evaluation of RBM activities, and giving feedback were critical in keeping teachers on high RBM alert. Ironically, in the Highglen School District RBM monitoring and evaluation were not regular and consistent. As a result H9 commented that *"RBM is never taken seriously in schools because no one takes it as their responsibility in the MoPSE. Officials never visit schools."*

According to Binnendijk (2000:6), result-based management has two faces, which are: accountability for results, when educators report their performance to external stakeholders to justify their mission; and managing for results when education sector management makes decisions based on feedback. To enhance the effectiveness of RBM in the above-stated functions, the MoPSE should ensure that it has the right people in the right places to run with the RBM agenda and a conducive work environment. Such people are expected to have the appropriate skills and the full backing of top leadership through continual capacitation to keep them abreast with the changes. Finally, the work environment should encourage innovation through the

delegation of decision-making powers to the lower levels and uphold such decisions. Failing to achieve after trying a change should be applauded rather than punished.

#### **5.6.5.2 Adjustments to the performance appraisal instruments**

As alluded to in Section 5.6.4.2 the RBM system in the Zimbabwean education sector is perceived as a complicated and time-consuming exercise. The complications referred to are linked to the structure of the appraisal form and the language used in the guiding manuals which are the DIPA and MIPA documents. To enhance the effectiveness of the RBM system in the Highglen School District participants indicated that the starting point is the simplification of the appraisal tool to make it user-friendly to all. Participants indicated that the appraisal questionnaire was too involving and it needed to be streamlined. To support the view emphasising the strenuous nature of the RBM system as an impediment to its effective implementation, one participant, H9 stressed that RBM was frustrating and time-wasting. In concurrence, another participant, H8 suggested that for effectiveness, the RBM tool needs to be simplified in terms of the content required which makes it very unfriendly. Based on the preceding views, it, therefore, emerged that there is a need to adjust the RBM data collection tool to make it short and precise.

In reducing the size of the tool, one participant H4 hinted at the need to create an education sector appraisal tool that paid special attention to the salient issues in the educators' daily work. Such a tool is envisaged to focus on the collection of education sector-related performance information and leaves out other sections of nonperformance data for other programs. Participants highlighted misgivings on the importance of interim progress reviews, final reviews, and personal dimensions as irrelevant and therefore unnecessary. Such data broaden the scope of RBM making it too general and of little value to the school system. Information gathered from informal discussions on the appraisal form highlighted that it is all over and does not address the needs of the education sector. Literature on RBM implementation in Zimbabwe corroborates the proposition for adaptation of the appraisal system to the needs of the public education sector (Pazvakavambwa, 2015:175; Jaricha & Dzimiri, 2019:368). Findings from the study revealed that the generalised nature of the RBM appraisal form used in Zimbabwe enticed negativity as teachers perceived it as

unreasonably long and difficult to follow. Participants also viewed the RBM form as too divorced from the education sector's needs. The preceding evidence suggests no involvement of teachers in the design of a tool for their daily use. The above-mentioned state of the RBM appraisal form is also highlighted in the notion by Saurombe (2014:203) that the performance management appraisal form was launched without piloting the educators to check for its appropriateness.

Coupled with the notion of a lengthy appraisal instrument, participants raised the issue of the complex nature of the DIPA and MIPA documents. The RBM manuals were said to be difficult to understand and that they have too many details that made identification of KRA references and description look like searching for a needle in a haystack. The DIPA, as an everyday manual, needed to be streamlined and presented in simple language. Most of all, participants underscored the need to avail it on time to give meaning to the planning process. The preceding views are supported by literature that the jargon used to write the DIPA is too complicated (Jaricha & Dzimiri, 2019:259). Given that the DIPA is meant for use by educators on a day-to-day basis, the researcher proposes the involvement of educators from the different levels of the system to participate in the compilation of the various items that constitute the document to ensure buy-in. For effectiveness, the DIPA should highlight the post-school benefits of the education system and propose credit to the educators. Supporting the notion of inclusivity in building the RBM instruments, Mayne (2007:98) postulates that operational legitimacy and relevance, which are ascertained by the users, are key to success. Participants felt that a customised tool to assess specific aspects of teaching was considered more appropriate than a general tool with too many aspects to focus on. An attempt to focus on too many things is likely to fail in all through spreading effort. Thus, the best tools can only be designed with the full involvement of the users incorporating their views and then gradually expanding from the bottom upwards. Next, I discuss the link between the theoretical framework and the study findings.

### **5.7 Relevance of the Goal Setting Theory to the study findings**

This section of the study locates the research findings within the context of the theoretical framework. The theory underpinning the study is Goal Setting which

states that people with specific hard goals perform better than those with lower vague goals. This is informed by the notion that values and goals which are cognitive elements determine behavior. The presentation, analysis and interpretation of the study findings was informed by the preceding view regarding goals or results in an RBM process. As a performance management system, RBM is driven by goals that sets the direction for individuals and institutional performance. Hence, analysis of the study finding followed the structure defined theory. The goal setting principles of clarity; challenge; commitment; feedback and complexity were used to Interpret and discuss the findings. Accordingly, in all the five themes presented in section 5.5, the interpretation and discussion of the study findings were based on the principles of goal setting. The first theme derived from the findings revealed that clarity regarding the meaning of the RBM system to school heads influenced positivity or negativity of the school heads towards the RBM system. In essence, failure to understand the meaning of RBM led to the school heads' incorrect application of RBM the concepts to their routine job-related activities. The second theme examined the application of RBM to school management. Set results provide an impetus for the level of performance. Evidence from the study confirmed that planning is critical and constituted the integral part of the school heads' job. Planning involved setting objectives and goals that guide the institutional operations. Adherence to proper results planning enhanced the achievement of results. However, in contrast, evidence from this study revealed a void in results based planning in schools. Thus, in that way, application of theory to the discussion about RBM planning helped to reveal the gap that exists in the operationalisation of RBM in the Highglen School District. The third theme focused on mechanisms to ensure participants' commitment towards an RBM process. Analysis of study findings indicated that RBM alone cannot self-sustain. Acceptance and effectiveness of the RBM system require the support of incentives to ensure that participants buy into the programme and commit themselves to it. The fourth theme examined the complexity of the RBM process to the educators. In discussing evidence leading to the While the fifth theme looked at ways to adjust the RBM process in view of the five principles of the goal setting theory stated above.

## 5.8 Summary

In this chapter, empirical data was analysed and emerging themes were presented and discussed in detail. The findings of this study revealed the prevalence of five themes that influenced the perceptions and behaviour of school heads during the implementation of RBM. It emerged from the study that RBM was not well understood by school heads as implementing partners and hence they perceived it negatively as an extra burden. To examine the school heads' perceived level of understanding of the RBM system, a thorough examination of the conceptual and functional meaning of RBM was done. School heads' understanding of RBM was also sought from their description of the components of RBM and its purpose. All the above, evidence indicated that RBM was not clearly understood by its users. The chapter also examined the evidence on the relevance and applicability of RBM to the administrative and instructional leadership roles of the school heads. It was clear from the findings that RBM was a relevant management approach that suited school administration. Nevertheless, its ineffectiveness in turning around school lay in the school heads' failure to apply to results component to the process. School heads continued with their old ways of doing things instead of embracing the result element of administrative and instructional leadership roles.

The sustainability of RBM in schools was examined under benefits to support RBM as an extrinsic motivator and the RBM-induced decision-making tool as an intrinsic motivator. Participants preferred the use of benefits to boost the uptake of RBM in schools. The RBM Implementation challenges were discussed under the subcategories of personnel and financial-related, technical challenges, and organisational-related challenges in the MoPSE. It was noted that RBM faced numerous challenges as a result of limited skills to implement RBM, limited finances, school heads' failure to comprehend the data collection instrument requirements, time constraints, and poor preparations for the changeover from PA to RBM. Finally, a fifth theme emerged relating to measures advanced by participants as recommendations for increased uptake and improvements in the effectiveness of the RBM system. Data revealed statutory defects which had the effects of demotivating performance. Hence, the fifth theme focused on ways to build a strong understanding of the RBM system and its increased uptake. In that section, the

chapter recommended pre-training and post-launch support of all education sector employees in RBM and even the inclusion of an RBM module in undergraduate and postgraduate education courses. All the above were done alongside streamlining the data collection tool and inclusion of benefits to the appraisal system.

## **CHAPTER SIX**

### **SUMMARY OF THE STUDY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **6.1 Introduction**

This study on the secondary school heads in the Highglen School District's perceptions of the effectiveness of RBM was presented in six chapters. The present chapter provides a summary of the study in the format of summaries of all the preceding five chapters and a summary of the research findings. That is followed by conclusions drawn from the study findings. Recommendations for further investigations and improvements of the RBM system are made in this chapter.

#### **6.2 Summary of the study**

The purpose of this study was to explore the perceptions of secondary school heads about the effectiveness of the RBM system in the Highglen Educational District in Harare. The study was guided by the following set of objectives stated in section 1.5.

##### **Broad Research Objective**

To describe secondary school heads participating in this study's perception about the effectiveness of RBM in schools in the Highglen School District in Harare.

##### **Specific research objectives**

- a. To describe the secondary school heads' perceived level of understanding of the RBM system ;
- b. To examine secondary school heads' perceptions about the applicability of the RBM elements to public sector school administration in the Highglen School District in Harare;
- c. To describe secondary school heads' perceptions about the sustainability of results-based management in public schools;
- d. To describe the perceptions of secondary school heads about the challenges of using the RBM model to improve school performance in the Highglen School District in Harare;

- e. To propose and recommend improvements to the RBM model in Zimbabwe and implementation strategies that enhance its effectiveness in public schools in the Highglen School District in Harare.

Research objectives were used in this study to guide the search for answers to the research questions. They also informed the sequencing of the study into six chapters as highlighted in section 1.13. Chapter one dealt with the context of the study. Chapter two examined the theoretical framework and conceptual model of the RBM system. Chapter three presented the review of related literature while chapter four described the research methodology and design. Chapter five dealt with data analysis, presentation and discussion. Finally, chapter six presented the summary of the study, conclusion and recommendations.

### **6.2.1 Summary of the research findings**

The study drew five broad themes that were presented in chapter five section 5.5. From the emerging themes, the study made the following observations.

#### **a. The RBM system has different meanings to school heads in Highglen School District**

The first theme in this study revealed a gap in the level of secondary school heads' appreciation of the RBM system. Findings indicated existence of multiple meanings of the term RBM among secondary school heads in the Highglen School District. Notwithstanding the variation in the School heads' description of RBM, there was a general convergence in the school heads' perception of RBM system with as a model that is meant to reward performance. The study found out that school heads who lacked clarity of what RBM entailed and meant negatively perceived the use of the RBM system and its effectiveness. The vagueness of RBM meaning to school heads created an illusion of a difficult management approach among the users causing it to fail.

#### **b. The school heads' management roles fit into the RBM system**

The second theme was discussed under section 5.6.2. Findings from this study revealed that the RBM model used in Zimbabwe was relevant to the needs of



education sector management. Findings also revealed that, contrary to notion that RBM was an extra burden to school heads, the RBM system supported the school heads' administrative and instructional leadership duties. However, in the outlined duties, evidence revealed that school heads did not have the political willpower to enforce the RBM system and follow its procedures in their daily routines, section 5.6.2.2. Besides the issue of material benefits, school heads also remained in the "business as usual" mode because they perceived the RBM processes as cumbersome and difficult to follow. Further to that, there was a feeling among school heads that RBM was good as a theory but difficult to translate into practice.

Section 5.6.2.3 discussed the implications of RBM in school improvements. The findings revealed that the application of the RBM system to the internal processes of information gathering and decision making was overshadowed by resentment of the RBM system as more work with no benefits. Hence, the school heads showed no commitment to applying some of the RBM concepts to their administrative and instructional roles, even in instances they appreciated the potential of RBM in improving school performance.

### **c. The use of incentives to maintain the RBM system in schools**

The third theme was discussed in two categories in section 5.6.3. The theme focuses on ways in which an effective RBM system can be maintained in the public school system. It was clear from both the review of related literature and the empirical study findings that as a management system, RBM required mechanisms to support its acceptance and maintenance in the public sector institution. School heads generally perceived RBM as an extra burden if it is not supported by rewards for reaching a certain level of performance. Sections 5.6.3.1a., and 5.6.3.1b., presented the preferred financial benefits and non-financial benefits to support the uptake and implementation of the RBM process. Besides, the use of financial benefits to support RBM, section 5.6.3.2 of the study also highlighted the use of performance information in school decisions as one way to maintain the RBM system in schools. The potential of RBM to self-sustain as an internal decision support system in the MoPSE required school heads to make a deliberate effort to demand and use performance information for use in decision making.

#### **d. The RBM implementing challenges in schools**

The challenges to the effective implementation of the RBM system in the Highglen School District were categorised into three groups consisting of personnel and financial resources related limitations; technical limitations and the MoPSE organisational related challenges, section 5.6.4. Personnel factors related to the RBM knowledge and skills deficiency among RBM implementers in the Highglen School District. As discussed in section 5.6.4.1, knowledge and skills deficiencies among school heads and teachers in the Highglen School District had adverse effects on the results-based planning, budgeting and monitoring and evaluation of instructional delivery. Technical factors affecting the implementation of RBM in the Highglen School District were discussed in section 5.6.4.2. These included challenges of understanding the RBM requirements and processes as presented in the source documents, which are the ESSP and DIPA. Also, the lengthy personnel appraisal form was considered to be laborious and time-consuming.

The MoPSE organisational challenges were discussed in section 5.6.4.3. Accordingly, the study highlighted a discrepancy between the educators' beliefs and expectations of the RBM system and the implementation recommended by the MoPSE. Evidence from the study revealed that the MoPSE as an organisation required internal reforms of its structures and operations to support the implementation of the RBM system, section 5.6.4.3b. To sum up the RBM implementation challenges, the study noted that the transition to RBM was not well managed and left several school heads clueless on the differences between RBM and its predecessors and also the behaviours expected of them in the new setting as discussed in the section.5.6.4.3c.

#### **e. The suggested adjustments to the RBM system**

According to the study findings in section 5.6.5, there is potential for RBM implementation to improve school performance in the MoPSE. It was also noted from the study findings that there are several ways in which the implementation of the RBM system in schools could be enhanced. Section 5.6.5.1 discussed the human resources aspects that needed adjustment to enhance the effectiveness of the RBM system. At a policy level, participants highlighted the need for government to improve

the teachers working conditions to match the required RBM work related effort to the teacher benefits, section 5.6.5.1a. It was also noted that the clarity of the progression steps linked to performance levels had the potential to motivate teachers by raising the expectation of the benefits.

The other factor emerging from the findings of this study was the need for leadership to deliberately demand and use performance information as a way to build a performance culture in schools, section 5.6.5.1c. Concerning the appraisal form, findings from this study indicated that the personnel performance work plan and appraisal form were too long and cumbersome, section 5.6.5.2. Above and beyond the lengthy appraisal form, it was also noted in section 5.6.5.2 that the appraisal form was difficult to follow and the source documents were written in complex jargon and contained too much detail. Next, I discuss the conclusions drawn from the study.

### **6.3 Conclusions from the study**

Findings of this study led to the following conclusions.

#### **6.3.1 The general awareness of the implications of the RBM system in schools**

There is generally limited awareness of what the RBM system entails, among secondary school heads. The RBM system carries different meanings in different schools. As a result, it is applied differently in the different schools.

#### **6.3.2 The myths about the meaning of the RBM system in schools**

This study concluded that the depiction of RBM as a production oriented management system that does not apply to services like school management is a myth. It is also a statement rejecting the responsibilities associated with the RBM system.

Regarding the applicability of the RBM system to school management, this study concluded that the RBM system applies to both the administrative roles and instructional leadership roles of the school heads. School heads perform most of the tasks associated with the RBM system which include planning, monitoring staff and learner performance, evaluation of performances in the school, budgeting and

reporting school progress and challenges to MoPSE as their routine duties. The challenge noted in the school RBM system was mainstreaming the result component in the above-stated school heads' duties. Subsequently, this study considered the failure of the school heads to apply the RBM concepts to their administrative duties as linked to the school heads' low level of RBM understanding rather than the technical inappropriateness of the RBM system.

### **6.3.3 School heads view the RBM as an external accountability tool**

Perceptions of the school heads about the RBM system in this study partially reflected the ethos of the RBM system. The study concluded that there is a greater concern about demonstrating compliance with MoPSE requirements of filling in the RBM forms than applying the RBM concepts to guide the internal processes in the schools. School heads equated the RBM system with an external accountability mechanism that has little significance to their daily routines. This study also concluded that what school heads perceived as RBM is the process of drawing work plans, setting objectives, and stating methodologies to achieve the set objectives together with performance evaluations which are mostly planning. The above-stated activities were merely done to fulfil the employment requirements of the MoPSE. On a day to day basis the plans were never applied.

An important aspect of the RBM system is information gathering for use in decision making. This study concluded that the notion of using performance results to make decisions about school improvements was a common practice in the public school system. The challenge linked to it was in the process of collecting and recording the performance information in the context of RBM. The study noted that school heads used the unrecorded performance information to decide on personnel in the schools. Such information was subject to manipulation. The performance information that is recorded during the monitoring and evaluation process was of poor quality because of a lack of RBM buy-in among school heads. Negative perceptions of the RBM system influence the collection of poor-quality data that cannot be used to make decisions about school improvements.

### **6.3.4 The cost implications of running the RBM system in schools**

The general conclusion from the literature is that the RBM system is an expensive model to sustain particularly for public institutions. Contrary to the above conclusion, this study concluded that the preceding notion is true at the country level where nations fund all the modalities for RBM implementation. The RBM resource constraint factor in the Zimbabwean education sector lay at two levels; the school being the micro-level and the government that provided financial grants to the MoPSE being the macro-level. At the school level, the financial burden was considered to be minimal as it mostly comprises the production of the appraisal forms which are required once a year. Based on the empirical evidence, this study concluded that schools that can afford to provide basic materials that include stationery, infrastructure together with teaching and learning resources to sustain the operations of the school have greater chances of funding RBM stationery in schools.

Further conclusions made were that the failure of the RBM system to influence changes in schools was due to the school heads' incapacity to plan within the budget limits. Failure to follow procedures associated with the integrated performance management framework contributed to a mismatch between school budgets and the perceived RBM requirements. Also, public sector schools do not regularly receive funding for activities such as the RBM system from the national reserves, hence, the study concluded that resources constraints at the macro level did not have a significant adverse effect on the operationalisation of RBM as a management philosophy beyond influencing the teachers' conditions of work.

### **6.3.5 How to maintain the RBM system in public schools**

The study concluded that the RBM system cannot self-sustain as an intrinsic motivator. Implementation of the RBM system without the support of related financial benefits was the greatest challenge affecting the RBM system acceptance and its use in schools. Evidence from the study revealed that for the RBM system to gain acceptance and effectively influence changes in the performance of public schools, it requires the support of both monetary and non-monetary benefits. In Zimbabwe, it was also noted that the poorly remunerated public sector employees viewed the lack of incentives as a deterrent factor to the effective implementation of the RBM

system. This is so because there is evidence of greater concern over survival needs among teachers to such an extent that research evidence reflected the predominance of the need to buttress teachers' meagre salaries with RBM incentives. Consequently, the unconcealed resentment of the teachers towards the RBM system was linked to a feeling of deception by the employer who failed to provide the anticipated rewards linked to the RBM system. The questions "whose results" and "what is in it for me", implied that incentives and rewards are the keys to unlocking the potential of the RBM system's effectiveness in Zimbabwean schools.

Also, the link of the RBM system to a foreign change agent, Dr. Rasappan from Malaysia gave the RBM system an impression of a foreign project. That triggered school heads' memories of bad experiences associated with foreign projects that include the Economic Structural Adjustment Program (ESAP) in Zimbabwe. The ESAP program was associated with suffering and downgrading the general standards of living for the workers.

### **6.3.6 The implications of effective school leadership in RBM implementation**

This study concluded that a missing link in the Zimbabwean RBM system implemented in schools was the absence of an effective leadership, comprising RBM specialists and advocates capable of inspiring other members by walking the talk. Perceptions of school heads in this study highlighted a lack of enthusiasm to implement RBM on one hand and a general lack of understanding of RBM matters on the other hand. School heads as middle managers lacked the capacity and willingness to influence teachers in their schools to implement the RBM system.

Further to that, the study concluded that the ineffectiveness of the RBM system in schools was a result of the very limited supervision of the RBM processes at the school, district, and provincial and national office levels. The irregular visits by the MoPSE district and provincial staff to monitor RBM in schools were construed as implying that the RBM system is not taken seriously in the public education sector. School heads perceived the RBM system as lacking the support of the MoPSE leadership who was supposed to spearhead the initiative.

### **6.3.7 The difficulties associated with implementing the IRBM model**

Owing to the mathematical computations required in evaluating performance during RBM, some school heads viewed the whole RBM process as complicated and unsuitable for use in busy work environments.

Further conclusions were that, the diction used in the appraisal form needed simplification for the conception of low-level employees. Also, it was observed from the study that leaving the burden of accountability for results to the job holder in a school environment with multi-stakeholders was one deterrent factor to the success of the IRBM system.

## **6.4 The recommendations of the study**

This study explored the perceptions of secondary school heads on the effectiveness of results-based management in the Highglen district, Harare. The following recommendation from the study related to the findings emerged from the interviews and questionnaires. The recommendation will be presented under the following two subheadings.

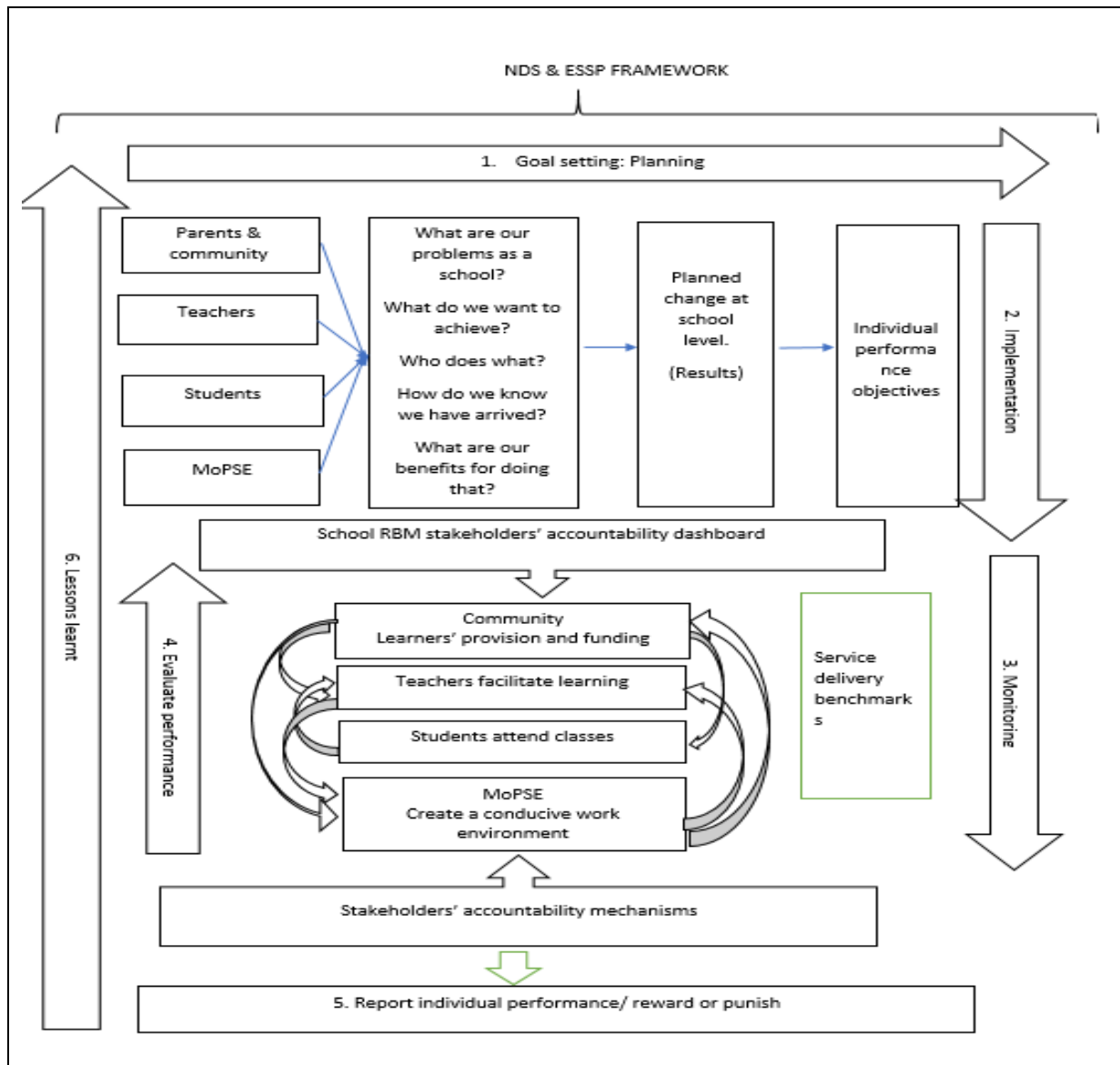
- a. The recommendations to MoPSE
- b. Recommendations for practice to improve the RBM effectiveness

### **6.4.1 Recommendations for policy making**

#### **6.4.1.1 Customisation of the RBM system to the education sector needs**

The imported version of the RBM system implemented in Zimbabwean schools was perceived by secondary school heads as remotely linked to education sector needs. Linked to the preceding challenges, this study recommended the need to build an education sector RBM system with the full involvement of educators. Terminology and the structure of the appraisal form required fine-tuning to reflect the aspirations of the education sector. Guided by the major education sector policy pronouncements such as the Education Sector Strategic Plan (ESSP) 2019-2023 or National Development Strategy for example the (NDS:1, 2021-2025), the study recommends five-year periodic reviews of the RBM system to align with the sectorial

strategic goals. Thus, the RBM source documents such as the DIPA need adjustments in focus to align with the NDS1 planning period. Further to that, Implementation of the customised RBM system requires the involvement of all stakeholders in the process hence, the suggested addition of the stakeholders' accountability dashboard and mechanisms to ensure full participation of all. The following diagram figure 6.1 presents a graphic conceptual model for the implementation of the customised school RBM system.



**Figure 6 1: The new proposed implementation format for school RBM system**

The model presents the national development strategy (NDS) as the broader framework that inform the education sector strategic plan (ESSP). School RBM



system is guided by the ESSP and stakeholders refer to the ESSP when defining their goals at school level. The four stages that characterise the RBM system namely planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation and reporting remain operational. Additional features as proposed by the model include inclusion of the stakeholders at the level of planning, implementation and evaluation as follows.

*a. Stakeholders involvement at planning*

Setting goals for the school entails defining the level of anticipated change. The current RBM system assumes all parties take responsibility to support goal achievement and there are no mechanisms to hold stakeholders accountable for results except for the job holder. Involvement of participants at planning level and defining the expected contribution of each culminate into responsibility based goals and targets for the key stakeholders. For instance at the planning level the expected contribution of the school head is defined and the associated benefits and punishment for goal achievement and failure respectively are also defined and publicised for other stakeholders to know. The contribution of the parents' assembly towards goal achievement is also defined together with implications for failure to comply. At the level of planning, the government pronounces the legal framework that compels parents as key stakeholders to support the school RBM. The government's obligations toward goal achievement at school level are stated and mechanisms to hold the government accountable for results are also defined. Such planning promotes multi-stakeholders accountability for results mechanism. It also reinforces the notion of results ownership.

*b. The stakeholder accountability dashboard*

Once work plans are defined at school level and each stakeholder is assigned responsibility for goal achievement, the next stage involve setting up a stakeholders' accountability dashboard. This functions in more of a stick and carrot model. The school heads will receive stated benefits upon reaching the defined level of performance as defined and highlighted on the dashboard. Parents' contribution and government contribution will also be highlighted on the school dashboard. Since all stakeholders complement one another in the performance process, the dashboard helps to highlight deficient areas and progressive areas together with the responsible

stakeholders. Thus the accountability dashboard provides a platform to monitor performance and evaluate each performance against set goals. In that way, the burden of accountability is spread to all.

To enhance the effectiveness of the accountability dashboard, the study also suggest the provision of mechanisms for each stakeholder to hold the other stakeholders accountable for results. For instance, if the teachers' conditions of service are compromising performance of the schools, the critical question would be how can the teacher hold the government accountable? Also if parents are not funding the schools, what legal processes can the school follow to hold parents accountable for results? The platform also provides for ways in which learners can be involved in the performance management process of their respective schools and their moral obligations and rewards for participation. Evaluation of the final performance of school heads therefore is done in the context of all other stakeholders' contribution and is likely to provide an accurate reflection of one performance or failure.

#### **6.4.1.2 Involvement of staff associations in adjusting the Zimbabwean RBM model**

The RBM system was viewed as a testimony of the failure of a foreign-grown concept to fit into the MoPSE administrative environment. Linked to that, the study noted that capacitated school heads with an in-depth understanding of the nature of the prevailing conditions in the Zimbabwean schools and problems to be addressed were perceived as a critical component required in the national change management leadership team for the public education sector RBM system. Such technocrats with expert authority under the banner of the National Association of Secondary School Heads (NASH) were considered important members of the provincial, district, and cluster-level RBM teams to advocate for and play oversight of the RBM implementation at their different levels. They will also address the RBM concerns of the educators on regular basis.

### **6.4.1.3 Training and awareness building**

The study recommended thorough training and awareness building that precedes the implementation of the RBM system. This is to ensure that educators appreciate and buy into the Zimbabwean Education Sector Results-Based Management (ZESRBM) system. To achieve that, the following methods of training were recommended for the education sector.

#### ***i. Incorporating the RBM system into the curriculum of teachers in training***

The study recommends dialogue between the MoPSE and the MoHTS on the inclusion of a module on RBM in the teachers' training course. Teacher training colleges and universities offering education qualifications were viewed as important agents in the delivery of suitable ZESRBM content for the education sector personnel. For the above-stated reason, this study recommended the inclusion of the ZESRBM theory and practice module in the teaching qualification curriculum. The inclusion and teaching of RBM modules alongside the pedagogical courses would help to ensure that teachers will join the teaching services with an appreciation of operational management philosophy. For practicing members of the teaching services, a facility for servicing through distance learning could be added to ensure that all members in the education sector have a basic understanding of the ZESRBM system.

#### ***ii. Induction of newly appointed school heads***

This study recommend that thorough induction training be incorporated into the probationary period checklist for the newly appointed school heads such that on completion, they garner respect from their subordinates for a higher level of RBM understanding.

#### ***iii. In house training***

The study recommend refresher courses on RBM for school heads organised by the employer on a regular basis. Such courses could be held online or arranged locally as in-house training conducted at the school level for school heads to refresh and enhance their understanding of the RBM system. Such training was perceived as

relatively cheap in terms of financial requirements yet very critical in keeping the education sector personnel abreast with the changes in the management philosophy.

***iv. The RBM system awareness creation in schools***

The study also recommended the establishment of RBM demonstration schools in every educational district to showcase RBM best practices. The RBM demonstration centres to be manned by RBM experts capable of walking the show.

***v. Using RBM championship to create awareness in schools***

To demonstrate the effectiveness of RBM, this study considered the use of RBM championships held at district, provincial and national levels to be another way of building awareness and marketing the benefits of RBM in schools. Recognition of the RBM championship at annual events such as the secretary's merit awards could generate interest among school leadership leading to an information search and a desire to participate in RBM.

**6.4.1.4 Formulation of policies to ensure compliance**

To address the issue of ownership, this study recommended the provision of a stand-alone RBM code that constituted part of the education sector personnel's employment contract. Making RBM implementation a contractual obligation for the members of the teaching fraternity and supporting the contracts with well-structured rewards for reaching certain levels of performance was considered to be critical to induce the desire to understand more about the RBM system and the willingness to demonstrate proficiency in its implementation. On the other hand, the contract will also spell out the action taken for failing to comply with the contractual requirement.

**6.4.2 Recommendations for improving the RBM effectiveness**

The following recommendations were made for school heads to improve the uptake and effective implementation of the RBM system in schools.

#### **6.4.2.1 The integrated performance framework cascaded to the school level**

The study recommends the cascading of performance contracts to lower levels in the education sector. To build a culture of results in schools, the study recommends the inclusion of an RBM budget component during the school's annual budgeting process. Such a measure was perceived as critical in encouraging accountability for results on one hand and quelling resource constraint elements impeding effective operationalisation of RBM on the other hand. School budgets need to reflect the requirements of the different specific departments which are placed against the anticipated result. Keeping such knowledge in the public domain helps with accountability issues in schools and encourages adherence to the RBM plans.

#### **6.4.2.2 Adherence to the stipulated RBM time frames**

This study recommends adherence to stipulated activity time frames during the RBM performance cycle. Each set of RBM activities is to be supervised and approved by the relevant department to avoid situations where appraisal forms are filled in all at once from agreed work plans to final performance rating. Linked to that, the study recommended timeous reporting of performance results by schools, followed by time-framed acknowledgment and feedback from MoPSE. Result-focused feedback to educators' performance reporting would also include rewards for good performance and corrective action for poor performance. Once the culture of asking for results within the set time frame is cascaded from the top leadership in MoPSE, different levels would work towards providing such results as a way to account for their time.

#### **6.4.2.3 Building school leadership capacity to implement the RBM system**

The RBM system implementation in Zimbabwean schools was seriously impeded by the absence of able and enthusiastic leadership. School heads as middle managers in the education sector were recommended for special training in RBM leadership to enable them to walk the talk. The training for school heads to focus on how to manage schools with a result focus and applying the RBM concepts to their daily duties. At the school level, the trained school heads provide advocacy for RBM usage, stimulate interest and guide their subordinates in the implementation of

school RBM. To reach the above level of school heads, the study recommends the periodic capacity development for school leaders. Such RBM capacity development can be arranged at the district level, cluster level or at the school.

#### **6.4.2.4 Encouraging continual RBM discourse in schools**

Linked to the cultural change aspect associated with the RBM system, the study recommended continual discourse around the importance of results information from the MoPSE national office cascaded to the school level. At the school level, the study recommends making RBM a termly meeting agenda in schools to ensure that members are kept updated. A further recommendation made relates to the provision of RBM reports by HODs on termly RBM related activities and escalating the reports to the district level and upwards.

#### **6.4.3 Recommended areas for further investigations**

Further research in the following areas may help to enhance the findings and conclusions of this study.

- a. A study to broaden the perspective of RBM in schools by studying the perceptions of teachers about RBM as shop floor operators.
- b. Another study to explore the perception of school heads about the effects of using quantitative measurement of performance to describe the contribution of teachers during the RBM process would help to improve this study.
- c. A research study to further understand how RBM relates to the ways in which the use of performance information could be enhanced in schools to support the effective implementation of the RBM system would be in order.

#### **6.5 Final reflection**

This study provided some insights into the challenges compromising the effectiveness of the RBM system in Zimbabwe and possible ways of addressing the challenges from the perspective of secondary school heads. Among the challenges impeding the RBM system implementation, the study noted the understandability problems of the users that were exacerbated by the limited and incoherent training.

Linked to the limited understanding of RBM, the study also noted a lack of buy-in and resentment of the RBM system among school heads. To address the preceding challenges, the study made some recommendations to both the MoPSE and school heads for improved uptake and effective implementation of the RBM system. This study helped the researcher to develop a deeper understanding of the RBM system. Analysing and interpreting the views of the participants in the light of the Goal Setting Theory provided the researcher with a different perspective of the RBM system. The use of the Goal Setting Theory in directing the conduct of this study helped the researcher to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the current IRBM model in Zimbabwe. It became apparent to the researcher that RBM work if it is subjected to the principles of goal setting. Any departure from the laid down principles of goal setting renders the RBM system ineffectiveness.

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# APPENDICES

## Appendix A: Registration with UNISA



2032

A I R M A I L  
DHAKWA H MR  
214 THE REMBRANDT,  
22 COLQUHOUN STREET,  
AVENUES  
HARARE  
ZIMBABWE

STUDENT NUMBER : 48780359

ENQUIRIES TEL : 0861670411  
FAX : (012)429-4150  
eMAIL : mandd@unisa.ac.za

2020-05-04

Dear Student

I hereby confirm that you have been registered for the current academic year as follows:

Proposed Qualification: PHD (EDUCATION) (90019)

CODE	PAPER	S NAME OF STUDY UNIT	NQF crdts	LANG.	PROVISIONAL EXAMINATION EXAM.DATE	CENTRE(PLACE)
@ TFPEM01		PHD - Education (Education Management)	**	E		
TFPEM01		PHD - Education (Education Management)	**	E		

@ Exam transferred from previous academic year

You are referred to the "MyRegistration" brochure regarding fees that are forfeited on cancellation of any study units.

# Your attention is drawn to University rules and regulations ([www.unisa.ac.za/register](http://www.unisa.ac.za/register)). Please note the new requirements for reregistration and the number of credits per year which state that students registered for the first time from 2013, must complete 36 NQF credits in the first year of study, and thereafter must complete 48 NQF credits per year. Students registered for the MBA, MBL and DBL degrees must visit the SBL's E5Online for study material and other important information.

Readmission rules for Honours: Note that in terms of the Unisa Admission Policy academic activity must be demonstrated to the satisfaction of the University during each year of study. If you fail to meet this requirement in the first year of study, you will be admitted to another year of study. After a second year of not demonstrating academic activity to the satisfaction of the University, you will not be re-admitted, except with the express approval of the Executive Dean of the College in which you are registered. Note too, that this study programme must be completed within three years. Non-compliance will result in your academic exclusion, and you will therefore not be allowed to re-register for a qualification at the same level on the National Qualifications Framework in the same College for a period of five years after such exclusion, after which you will have to re-apply for admission to any such qualification.


Readmission rules for M&D: Note that in terms of the Unisa Admission Policy, a candidate must complete a Master's qualification within three years. Under exceptional circumstances and on recommendation of the Executive Dean, a candidate may be allowed an extra (fourth) year to complete the qualification. For a Doctoral degree, a candidate must complete the study programme within six years. Under exceptional circumstances, and on recommendation by the Executive Dean, a candidate may be allowed an extra (seventh) year to complete the qualification.

CREDIT BALANCE ON STUDY ACCOUNT: 45.00

Yours Faithfully,

Dr F Goolam  
Registrar

0108 0 00 0



University of South Africa  
Pretorius Street, Muckleneuk Ridge, City of Tshwane  
PO Box 392 UNISA 0003 South Africa  
Telephone: +27 12 429 3111 Facsimile: +27 12 429 4150  
[www.unisa.ac.za](http://www.unisa.ac.za)

**Appendix A: Request for permission from Permanent Secretary to conduct research in MoPSE**

Vainona High School  
P.O. Box, BW 490  
Borrowdale  
Harare

24/08/2020

The Secretary  
Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education  
P.O. Box CY 121  
Causeway  
Harare

Dear Sir/Madam,

**RE REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT HIGHGLEN DISTRICT SECONDARY SCHOOLS OF HIGHFIELD 1 &2, GLEN NORAH 1 &2, MUKAI, KWAYEDZA, MHURIIMWE, MBIZI, SOUTHLEA, LORD MALVERN, APEX BOARD AND JAIROS JIRI.**

I am a Doctoral student at the University of South Africa. I kindly request your permission to conduct a study in the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education's Highglen District of Harare. The research sites will be the 12 Secondary schools in Highglen where I wish to collect data for my studies.

The title of my thesis is **Secondary school heads' perceptions of the effectiveness of result-based management: Highglen district, Harare**. The study will involve the completion of a hand-delivered qualitative questionnaire on result based management followed by the conduct of face-to-face interviews with the secondary school heads (school heads). Participation in this study will be voluntary and participants will be free to withdraw from the study at any time without giving reasons and incurring a penalty.

The information collected from the participants will be used solely for the purposes of this study and will be treated in strict confidence. Once completed, it is my hope that the study will provide insights into the uptake and operationalisation of result-based management systems in the public-school system.

Yours faithfully



Dhakwa Hapias (Mr.)



## Appendix B: Request for permission from the Provincial Education Director to conduct research in Harare province

Vainona High School  
P.O. Box, BW 490  
Borrowdale  
Harare

24/08/2020

The Provincial Education Director  
Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education  
Harare Metropolitan Province  
P.O. Box CY 1413  
Causeway  
Harare

Dear Sir/Madam,

**RE REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT HIGHGLEN DISTRICT SECONDARY SCHOOLS OF HIGHFIELD 1 &2, GLEN NORAH 1 &2, MUKAI, KWAYEDZA, MHURIIMWE, MBIZI, SOUTHLEA, LORD MALVERN, APEX BOARD AND JAIROS JIRI.**

I am a Doctoral student at the University of South Africa. I kindly request your permission to conduct a study in the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education's Highglen District of Harare. The research sites will be the 12 Secondary schools in Highglen where I wish to collect data for my studies.

The title of my thesis is **Secondary school heads' perceptions of the effectiveness of result-based management: Highglen district, Harare**. The study will involve the completion of a hand-delivered qualitative questionnaire on result based management followed by the conduct of face-to-face interviews with the secondary school heads (school heads). Participation in this study will be voluntary and participants will be free to withdraw from the study at any time without giving reasons and incurring a penalty.

The information collected from the participants will be used solely for the purposes of this study and will be treated in strict confidence. Once completed, it is my hope that the study will provide insights into the uptake and operationalisation of result-based management systems in the public-school system.

Yours faithfully



Dhakwa Hapias (Mr.)

**Appendix C: Request for permission from the District Schools Inspector,  
Highglen School District**

Vainona High School  
P.O. Box, BW 490  
Borrowdale  
Harare

24/08/2020

The District Schools Inspector  
Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education  
Highglen District  
P.O. Box HD 270  
Highfield  
Harare

Dear Sir/Madam,

**RE REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT HIGHGLEN DISTRICT SECONDARY SCHOOLS OF HIGHFIELD 1 &2, GLEN NORAH 1 &2, MUKAI, KWAYEDZA, MHURIIMWE, MBIZI, SOUTHLEA, LORD MALVERN, APEX BOARD AND JAIROS JIRI.**

I am a Doctoral student at the University of South Africa. I kindly request your permission to conduct a study in the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education's Highglen District of Harare. The research sites will be the 12 Secondary schools in Highglen where I wish to collect data for my studies.

The title of my thesis is **Secondary school heads' perceptions of the effectiveness of result-based management: Highglen district, Harare.** The study will involve the completion of a hand-delivered qualitative questionnaire on result based management followed by the conduct of face-to-face interviews with the secondary school heads (school heads). Participation in this study will be voluntary and participants will be free to withdraw from the study at any time without giving reasons and incurring a penalty.

The information collected from the participants will be used solely for the purposes of this study and will be treated in strict confidence. Once completed, it is my hope that the study will provide insights into the uptake and operationalisation of result-based management systems in the public-school system.

Yours faithfully



Dhakwa Hapias (Mr.)

## **Appendix D: Request for permission from secondary school heads to enter into schools**

Request for permission to conduct research at **Highglen District Secondary Schools of Highfield 1 &2, Glen Norah 1 &2, Mukai, Kwayedza, Mhuriimwe, Mbizi, Southlea, Lord Malvern, Apex Board and Jairos Jiri.**

Title: **Secondary school heads' perceptions about the effectiveness of result-based management: Highglen district, Harare.**

Date: 24/08/2020

I, Hapias Dhakwa, am doing research under the supervision of L.D.M, Lebeloane, a professor in the Department of Educational Leadership and Management towards a PhD, in Education Management at the University of South Africa. We are inviting you to participate in a study entitled; **Secondary school heads' perceptions of the effectiveness of result-based management: Highglen district, Harare.**

**The study aims to explore the perceptions of secondary school heads about the effectiveness of result-based management in Highglen district Harare.**

Your school has been selected because of the assumption that you can provide the researcher with valuable information based on your experience with result-based management.

The study will entail the following procures:

- Completion of a hand-delivered qualitative questionnaire on result based management. The questionnaire might take you approximately 40 minutes to complete.
- Conduct face-to-face interviews with the purposively selected secondary school heads in the Highglen district. The interview sessions will last about 30 minutes
- With your permission, the interview sessions will be audio recorded for the purposes of data storage and transcription after the interview.

The benefits of this study are that it is envisaged to contribute to the body of knowledge about result based management as a management philosophy in the public education sector. The study will unpack the myths, fears, attitudes and perceptions that surround the implementation of the result-based management system. In the process, insights into possible measures to improve the uptake and operationalisation of result-based management will be shared.

In my understanding of the study, there will be no potential risks associated with it. There will be no incentives for participation in the research.

Participants will be provided with feedback on the research findings through copies of the thesis that will be submitted to the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education. A summary of the findings and recommendations of the study will also be presented to the District schools Inspector, Highglen.

Yours Sincerely



Hapias Dhakwa

## **Appendix E: Participant information sheet**

### **PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET**

Date: 24/08/2020

Title: **Secondary school heads' perceptions of the effectiveness of result-based management: Highglen district, Harare.**

#### **DEAR PROSPECTIVE PARTICIPANT**

My name is Hapias Dhakwa and I am doing research under the supervision of L.D.M Lebeloane, a professor in the Department of Educational Leadership and Management towards a PhD at the University of South Africa. We are inviting you to participate in a study entitled; **Secondary school heads' perceptions of the effectiveness of result-based management: Highglen district, Harare.**

#### **WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY?**

This study is expected to collect important information that could provide insights into the different perceptions that influence the uptake and effective operationalisation of result Based management systems in public sector institutions. The study will also contribute new knowledge on (RBM) to the existing body of knowledge that could influence change in the perceptions of school heads and educators about the (RBM) system and ultimately improve the management of schools.

#### **WHY AM I BEING INVITED TO PARTICIPATE?**

You are invited because as a secondary school principal, you are the custodian of the (RBM) system at the school level and therefore you were purposively chosen to participate in the study because of your knowledge of and experience with (RBM) system implementation as an appraiser at school level and appraisee at the district level.

I obtained your contact details from the Highglen district office. As standard procedure for the conduct of research, after being granted permission to carry out the study in Highglen district by the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education, Zimbabwe, I also applied for access permission into the Harare School from the Provincial Education Director (PED) Harare and access into the Highglen district from the District Schools Inspector (DSI). Based on the clearances to conduct research in Highglen, I was also provided upon request, with names and contact details of persons who constituted my sample frame, of which you are one. The total number of participants in this study is 12 secondary school heads, all in the Highglen district.

### **WHAT IS THE NATURE OF MY PARTICIPATION IN THIS STUDY?**

The study involves the completion of a qualitative questionnaire which is followed by the conduct of semi-structured face-to-face interviews with the 12 secondary school heads. With your permission, an audio recorder will be used to capture the interview sessions for post-interview transcription. The duration of your involvement with the completion of the questionnaire is approximately 40 minutes and your participation in the semi-structured interview will be approximately 30 minutes. The questions that will be asked during the face-to-face interviews will be mostly in open-ended format and revolve around participants' perceptions about (RBM) effectiveness, challenges faced by school heads in implementing the (RBM) system, school heads' (RBM) capacity development, conditions for successful implementation of (RBM) and what may be required to improve on the uptake and effectiveness of the (RBM) system.

### **CAN I WITHDRAW FROM THIS STUDY EVEN AFTER HAVING AGREED TO PARTICIPATE?**

Participating in this study is voluntary and you are under no obligation to consent to participation. If you do decide to take part, you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a written consent form. You are free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason. However, I would like to notify that with the questionnaires, although confidentiality and anonymity will be maintained, the participant may not be able to withdraw a submitted filled in questionnaire. Withdrawal can only be before submission of the responses.

### **WHAT ARE THE POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY?**

The study is likely to benefit the participants through provision of insight into the state of (RBM) implementation in Zimbabwe presently and the challenges regarding its practicality. That process will help to demystify the system and in long run change the negative perceptions and improve the uptake and effectiveness of the (RBM) system.

### **ARE THERE ANY NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES FOR ME IF I PARTICIPATE IN THE RESEARCH PROJECT?**

There are no foreseen risks associated with the present study that focuses on school heads' perceptions of a management approach. The study will not discuss sensitive matters outside the parameters of (RBM) implementation at school level. The remotely related discomfort could arise in cases where participant express lack of the basic understanding of (RBM) and they uncomfortable to reveal it. The researcher will inform the participant of their voluntary participation in the study from the onset and even after signing the informed consent form, the researcher will inform the participants of the right to withdraw from the study without notice and penalty.

**WILL THE INFORMATION THAT I CONVEY TO THE RESEARCHER AND MY IDENTITY BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL?**

You have the right to insist that your name will not be recorded anywhere and that no one, apart from the researcher and identified members of the research team, will know about your involvement in this research. Your answers will be given a code number or a pseudonym and you will be referred to in this way in the data, any publications, or other research reporting methods such as conference proceedings.

Your answers may be reviewed by people responsible for making sure that research is done properly, including the transcriber, external coder, and members of the Research Ethics Review Committee. Otherwise, records that identify you will be available only to people working on the study, unless you permit for other people to see the records.

**HOW WILL THE RESEARCHER(S) PROTECT THE SECURITY OF DATA?**

Hard copies of your answers will be stored by the researcher for five years in a locked filing cabinet at home for future research or academic purposes; electronic information will be stored on a password-protected computer. Hard copies will be shredded and electronic copies will be permanently deleted from the hard drive of the computer through the use of a relevant software programme.

**WILL I RECEIVE PAYMENT OR ANY INCENTIVES FOR PARTICIPATING IN THIS STUDY?**

There will not be any payment for participating in this research. The researcher will, however, provide disposable face masks to the interviewees who may opt for them to use during the interview sessions.

**HAS THE STUDY RECEIVED ETHICS APPROVAL?**

The study has received written approval from the Research Ethics Review Committee of the College of Education, UNISA. A copy of the approval letter can be obtained from the researcher if you so wish.

**HOW WILL I BE INFORMED OF THE FINDINGS/RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH?**

If you would like to be informed of the final research findings, please contact Hapias Dhakwa on +263776401450 or email [hdhakwa@gmail.com](mailto:hdhakwa@gmail.com). The findings are accessible for five years.

Should you have concerns about the way in which the research has been conducted, you may contact Professor L.D.M Oupa Lebeloane using the following details.

Department of Science and Technology Education

College of Education

UNISA

Email: [lebelldm@unisa.ac.za](mailto:lebelldm@unisa.ac.za)

Telephone: +27124294433

Fax: 0866421620

Thank you for taking the time to read this information sheet and for participating in this study.

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Hapias Dhakwa', is positioned above the printed name.

Hapias Dhakwa

**Appendix F: Consent to participate in this study (Return Slip)**

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (participant name), confirm that the person asking my consent to take part in this research has told me about the nature, procedure, potential benefits and anticipated inconvenience of participation.

I have read (or had explained to me) and understood the study as explained in the information sheet.

I have had sufficient opportunities to ask questions and am prepared to participate in the study.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without penalty.

I am aware that the findings of this study will be processed into a research report, journal publications and/or conference proceedings, but that my participation will be kept confidential unless otherwise specified.

I agree to the recording of the \_\_\_\_\_

I have received a signed copy of the informed consent agreement.

Participant Name & Surname (please print) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Participant Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Researcher's Name & Surname (please print) Hapias Dhakwa

Researcher's signature



Date



## **Appendix G: Cover letter for open-ended questionnaires**

### **Title of the questionnaire: secondary school heads**

Dear respondent

This questionnaire forms part of my doctoral research entitled: Title or provisional title of the research project

**Secondary school heads' perceptions about the effectiveness of result-based management: Highglen district, Harare** for the PhD in Educational management at the University of South Africa. You have been selected by a random sampling strategy from the population of 12 secondary school heads. Hence, I invite you to take part in this survey.

The aim of this study is to explore the perceptions of secondary school heads on the effectiveness of result-based management in Highglen district Harare. The findings of the study may benefit practicing members in the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education through its contribution to the body of knowledge about result based management as a management philosophy in the public education sector.

You are kindly requested to complete this survey questionnaire, comprising five sections each with five open-ended questions as honestly and frankly as possible and according to your personal views and experience. No foreseeable risks are associated with the completion of the questionnaire which is for research purposes only. The questionnaire will take approximately twenty minutes to complete.

You are not required to indicate your name or organisation and your anonymity will be ensured; however, an indication of your age, gender, occupation position etcetera will contribute to a more comprehensive analysis. All information obtained from this questionnaire will be used for research purposes only and will remain confidential. Your participation in this survey is voluntary and you have the right to omit any question if so desired, or to withdraw from answering this survey without penalty at any stage. After the completion of the study, an electronic summary of the findings of the research will be made available to you upon request.

Permission to undertake this survey has been granted by the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education and the Ethics Committee of the College of Education, UNISA. If you have any research-related enquiries, they can be addressed directly to me or my supervisor. My contact details are: 0776401450 e-mail: [hdhakwa@gmail.com](mailto:hdhakwa@gmail.com) and my supervisor can be reached at +27834538148, Department of Educational Leadership and Management, College of Education, UNISA, e-mail: [lebelldm@unisa.ac.za](mailto:lebelldm@unisa.ac.za)

\_\_\_\_\_.

By completing the questionnaire, you imply that you have agreed to participate in this research.  
Please return the completed questionnaire to Hapias Dhakwa, before \_\_\_\_\_

## **Appendix H: Questionnaire for school heads**

**Title:** Secondary school heads' perceptions about the effectiveness of result-based management: Highglen district, Harare.

To be filled in by Secondary school heads in the Highglen District.

**Purpose:** The purpose of the questionnaire is to explore the secondary school heads' perceptions about the effectiveness of result based management in the running of public secondary schools. Participants are encouraged to answer all questions honestly.

### **SECTION A**

**Please fill in your response in the appropriate space below.**

#### **1.0 Biographical Data**

1.1 What is your gender?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

1.2 What is your age category?

.....  
.....  
.....  
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1.3 What is your highest professional qualification?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

1.4 What is your current promotional grade?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

1.5 How long have you been in the grade you indicated in 1.4?

.....  
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### **SECTION B**

#### **2.0 Result based management RBM appreciation**

2.1 Describe your role in result based management implementation at your school?

.....  
.....

.....  
.....  
.....

2.2 How long have you been in the role you indicated in 2.1?

.....  
.....  
.....

2.3 How did you learn the skills required to implement result based management in your school?

.....  
.....  
.....

2.4 How long did it take you to learn the result based management implementation skills?

.....  
.....  
.....

2.5 How do you perceive your level of understanding of the result based management concepts as applied to your school governance? Briefly explain your answer

.....  
.....  
.....

**SECTION C**

**3.0 Application of RBM to schools management**

3.1 Which aspects of result based management are most applicable to school management?

.....  
.....  
.....

3.2 Describe your perception of result based management in the planning of teaching and learning activities in your school?

.....  
.....

.....  
.....  
3.3 How does result based management support the budgeting of resources in your school?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

.....  
3.4.1 Can you please explain the relevance of result based management to monitoring and evaluation of activities in your school?.....

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.....  
.....  
.....

3.5 Describe the general attitude towards the use of result based management in your school?

.....  
.....  
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.....

**SECTION D**

**4.0 Conditions for successful implementation of result based management system in the school system**

4.1. Describe your motivation to implement result based management?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

4.2 How is result based management implementation supported in your school?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

4.3. Describe the conditions outside your school that you consider critical for the implementation of a result based management system?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

4.4 Describe your perception regarding the degree of complexity of the current result based management appraisal system to your subordinates? Please explain your answer

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

4.5 Can you please highlight any other relevant features that may affect the usability of the current result based appraisal form in your school?.....

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

## **SECTION E**

### **5.0 Aligning RBM components with the Zimbabwean system of education**

5.1 Describe your perception of the relevance of result based management to the effective running of your school?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

5.2 Do you see the result based management system as the ultimate solution to the education sector performance challenges? Please explain your answer.

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

5.3 How do you perceive the importance of your school's result based management appraisal information to the decision making process at the district, provincial and national levels?.....

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

5.4 Can you please comment on the user-friendliness of the DIPA documents to you as the result based management supervisor in your school?.....

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

5.5 Can you please give your views on the changes that should be made to the result based management system in order to make it an effective public sector education management tool?.....

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

Thank you very much for sparing time to respond to the questionnaire

## **Appendix I: Interview guide for secondary school heads**

NAME OF INTERVIEWER.....

DATE.....

CODE OF INTERVIEWEE.....

TITLE.....

### **1. RESULT BASED MANAGEMENT APPRECIATION**

- 1) Describe your understanding of Result Based Management system?
- 2) How long have you been implementing the (RBM) system and in what capacity?
- 3) Describe the kind of training on the operationalisation of (RBM) that you received. How long was it?
- 4) Which components of (RBM) system are you familiar with? How do they support effective school management?

### **2. FACTORS INFLUENCING THE APPLICATION OF RBM?**

- 1) In your opinion what conditions support the effective implementation of (RBM) in schools?
- 2) How has traditional management practice promoted or hindered the acceptance of the (RBM) system in Schools?
- 3) What institutional and technical factors militate against the implementation of (RBM) in your school?
- 4) How has the government supported the implementation of RBM in schools
- 5) Describe the factors that motivate you as school heads to implement (RBM) in your schools?
- 6) How important is the goal achievement culture in your school

### **3. APPLICABILITY OF RESULT BASED MANAGEMENT**

- 1) Describe your perceptions of the merits of an (RBM) system for education services?
- 2) How has RBM assisted you as a principal in effectively managing your school?
- 3) How have you applied result based management to
  1. Planning,
  2. Budgeting
  3. Monitoring and evaluation



#### 4. Decision making

4) What do you think should be done to ensure RBM effectiveness is enhanced and more relevant to local public schools? Explain your answer.

#### 5. PROSPECTS OF REALIGNING RESULT BASED MANAGEMENT TO EDUCATION SECTOR NEEDS.

1) How can (RBM) support backward, forward and horizontal linkages between stakeholders in the pursuit of quality?

2) How can the (RBM) system be sustained at the school level?

3) What other contributions would want to make toward the discussion?

Thank you very much for taking the time to participate in this interview.

## Appendix J: Ethical clearance from CEDU Ethics Review Committee



**UNISA COLLEGE OF EDUCATION ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE**

Date: 2020/11/11

Dear Mr H Dhakwa

**Decision:** Ethics Approval from  
2020/11/11 to 2025/11/11

**Ref:** 2020/11/11/48780359/16/AM  
**Name:** Mr H Dhakwa  
**Student No.:** 48780359

---

**Researcher(s):** Name: Mr H Dhakwa  
E-mail address: 8780359@mylife.unisa.ac.za  
Telephone: +263776401450

**Supervisor(s):** Name: Prof. LDM Lebeloane  
E-mail address: lebelldm@unisa.ac.za  
Telephone: +27 12 429-4433

Name: Dr RI Lumadi  
E-mail address: lumadri@unisa.ac.za  
Telephone: 012 429 2123

**Title of research:**

**Secondary school principals' perceptions of the effectiveness of result-based management: Highlens district, Harare.**

**Qualification:** PhD Education management

---

Thank you for the application for research ethics clearance by the UNISA College of Education Ethics Review Committee for the above mentioned research. Ethics approval is granted for the period 2020/11/11 to 2025/11/11.

*The low risk application was reviewed by the Ethics Review Committee on 2020/11/11 in compliance with the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics and the Standard Operating Procedure on Research Ethics Risk Assessment.*

The proposed research may now commence with the provisions that:

1. The researcher will ensure that the research project adheres to the relevant guidelines set out in the Unisa Covid-19 position statement on research ethics attached.



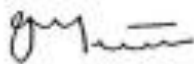
University of South Africa  
Pretor Street, Muckleneuk Ridge, City of Tshwane  
PO Box 392 UNISA 0003 South Africa  
Telephone: +27 12 429 3111 Facsimile: +27 12 429 4150  
[www.unisa.ac.za](http://www.unisa.ac.za)

2. The researcher(s) will ensure that the research project adheres to the values and principles expressed in the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics.
3. Any adverse circumstance arising in the undertaking of the research project that is relevant to the ethicality of the study should be communicated in writing to the UNISA College of Education Ethics Review Committee.
4. The researcher(s) will conduct the study according to the methods and procedures set out in the approved application.
5. Any changes that can affect the study-related risks for the research participants, particularly in terms of assurances made with regards to the protection of participants' privacy and the confidentiality of the data, should be reported to the Committee in writing.
6. The researcher will ensure that the research project adheres to any applicable national legislation, professional codes of conduct, institutional guidelines and scientific standards relevant to the specific field of study. Adherence to the following South African legislation is important, if applicable: Protection of Personal Information Act, no 4 of 2013; Children's act no 38 of 2005 and the National Health Act, no 61 of 2003.
7. Only de-identified research data may be used for secondary research purposes in future on condition that the research objectives are similar to those of the original research. Secondary use of identifiable human research data requires additional ethics clearance.
8. No field work activities may continue after the expiry date **2025/11/11**. Submission of a completed research ethics progress report will constitute an application for renewal of Ethics Research Committee approval.

*Note:*

*The reference number **2020/11/11/48780359/16/AM** should be clearly indicated on all forms of communication with the intended research participants, as well as with the Committee.*

Kind regards,



**Prof AT Motlhabane**  
**CHAIRPERSON: CEDU RERC**  
motlhat@unisa.ac.za



**Prof PM Sebata**  
**EXECUTIVE DEAN**  
Sebatpm@unisa.ac.za



University of South Africa  
Pretor Street, Muckleneuk Ridge, City of Tshwane  
PO Box 392 UNISA 0003 South Africa  
Telephone: +27 12 429 3111 Facsimile: +27 12 429 4150  
[www.unisa.ac.za](http://www.unisa.ac.za)

## Appendix K: Permission to carry out research in the MoPSE from Head Office

All communications should be addressed to  
The Secretary for Primary and Secondary  
Education  
Telephone: 794895/796211  
Telegraphic address: EDUCATION  
Fax: 794505



Reference: C/426/3 H/O  
Ministry of Primary and  
Secondary Education  
P.O. Box CY 121  
Causeway  
HARARE

02 March 2021

Mr Dhakwa Hapias  
Vainona High School  
P.O. Box BW 490  
Borrowdale  
Harare

**Re: PERMISSION TO CARRY OUT A PHD RESEARCH IN HARARE PROVINCE: HIGH GLEN DISTRICT SECONDARY SCHOOLS:**

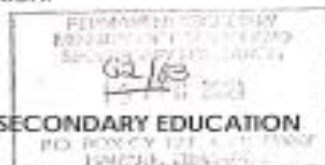
Reference is made to your application to collect data for a PHD research from the above-mentioned schools on the research title:

**"SECONDARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF RESULT-BASED MANAGEMENT: HIGH GLEN, HARARE"**

Permission is hereby granted. However, you are required to liaise with the Provincial Education Director Harare Province, who is responsible for the schools which you want to involve in your research. You should ensure that your research work does not disrupt the normal operations of the school. Where students are involved, parental consent is required.

You are also required to provide a copy of your final report to the Secretary for Primary and Secondary Education.

  
T. Mabelo (Mrs)  
SECRETARY FOR PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION



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Appendix L: Permission to carry out research in Harare schools

All communications should be addressed to  
 "The Provincial Education Director"  
 Telephone : 339334  
 E-mail : hararemetropolitansprovince@gmail.com

  
ZIMBABWE

Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education  
 Harare Provincial Education Office  
 P. O. Box CY 1343  
 Causeway  
 Zimbabwe

2019

MR DHAKWA HADIAS  
 VANONA HIGH SCHOOL  
 P. O. BOX BW 490  
 BORROWDALE, HARARE

RE: PERMISSION TO CARRY OUT RESEARCH IN HARARE METROPOLITAN PROVINCE: HIGH GLEN DISTRICT: ALL GOVERNMENT SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Reference is made to a letter dated ..... from the Secretary for Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education granting you permission to carry out research in Harare Metropolitan Province on the research title  
 SECONDARY SCHOOLS PRINCIPALS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF RESULT BASED MANAGEMENT: HIGH GLEN, HARARE

Please be advised that the Provincial Education Director grants you authority to carry out your research on the above topic. You are required to supply Provincial Office with a copy of your research findings.



FOR: PROVINCIAL EDUCATION DIRECTOR  
 HARARE METROPOLITAN PROVINCE



**Appendix M: Permission to carry out research in the Highlen School District Schools**

All communications should be addressed to  
 "The Provincial Education Director"

Telephone : 339534  
 E-mail : [education@provincial.gov.zw](mailto:education@provincial.gov.zw)

Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education  
 Harare Provincial Education Office  
 P. O. Box CY 1343  
 Causeway  
 Zimbabwe

ZIMBABWE

2019

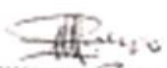
MR DHAUKWA HADIAS  
 VANONA HIGH SCHOOL  
 P.O BOX BN 490  
 BURLINGTON, HARARE

RE: PERMISSION TO CARRY OUT RESEARCH IN HARARE METROPOLITAN PROVINCE: HIGHLEN DISTRICT: ALL GOVERNMENT SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Reference is made to a letter dated \_\_\_\_\_ from the Secretary for Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education granting you permission to carry out research in Harare Metropolitan Province on the research title:

SECONDARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF RESULT BASED MANAGEMENT: HIGHLEN, HARARE

Please be advised that the Provincial Education Director grants you authority to carry out this research in the province of Harare in accordance with the Provincial Office with a copy of your research findings.



FOR PROVINCIAL EDUCATION OFFICE  
 HARARE METROPOLITAN PROVINCE

MINISTRY OF PRIMARY & SECONDARY EDUCATION  
 HIGHLEN NORTH DISTRICT  
 DISTRICT EDUCATION OFFICER  
 - 8 MAR 2021  
 P. O. BOX 140270 HARARE

MINI. OF PRY & SEC. EDUCATION  
 DISCIPLINE SECTION  
 HARARE PROVINCE  
 03 FEB 2021  
 P.O. BOX CY 1343 CAUSEWAY  
 HARARE TEL: 06-2971-7 TO 3745

Heads: Please  
 Kabasa J.  
 @-hasa

**Appendix N: Proof reading and language editing certificate**



## Appendix O: Similarity index report

**2** SECONDARY SCHOOL HEADS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF RESULTS-BASED MANAGEMENT: HIGHGLEN DISTRICT, HARARE

BY

HAPIAS DHAKWA

**1** Submitted in accordance with the requirements for the degree of

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## Appendix P: Turnitin digital receipt



### Digital Receipt

This receipt acknowledges that Turnitin received your paper. Below you will find the receipt information regarding your submission.

The first page of your submissions is displayed below.

Submission author: Hapias Dhakwa  
Assignment title: Revision 2  
Submission title: SECONDARY SCHOOL HEADS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE EFFECTIV...  
File name: VENESS\_OF\_RESULTS-BASED\_MANAGEMENT\_HIGHGLEN\_DIST...  
File size: 2.74M  
Page count: 291  
Word count: 90,220  
Character count: 512,095  
Submission date: 30-Dec-2022 05:46PM (UTC+0200)  
Submission ID: 1987495407

