THE IMPLEMENTATION OF HISTORY CURRICULUM REFORMS AT SECONDARY SCHOOL LEVEL IN THE MANICALAND PROVINCE OF ZIMBABWE

By

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submitted in accordance with the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in

EDUCATION (CURRICULUM STUDIES)

in the

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

at the

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA

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MAY 2024

DECLARATION

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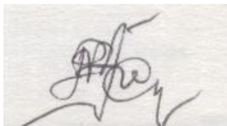
I, Ephraim Mashayamombe, declare that this thesis entitled, ***The implementation of the History curriculum reforms at secondary school level in the Manicaland province in Zimbabwe***, submitted in the fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Education, is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.



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DEDICATION

To my mother, Sarah Mutare (1936-), the beauty of motherly love, and in the memory of my father, Dickson, T. Mashayamombe (1936-2023), my mentor.

Special dedication to my lovely, one and only sweetheart, my life partner and spouse, Agatha, my son, Ephraim Jnr – Nashe, and my three daughters, Tinomudaishe, Adiwananashe and Rudairo. I denied them prime family time while I was busy with my doctoral studies. In as much as they wanted me to spend quality family time with them, they, nonetheless, supported and encouraged me towards the realisation of my 'noble dream.'

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In this doctoral study, I am indebted to a lot of individuals and institutions whose contribution to the success of this “noble dream” was invaluable. The list of the individuals and institutions who assisted me is long; hence, I cannot rule out the possibility of omitting the acknowledgment of some, although not by design. My sincere apology to those who may been omitted. As such, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to them by saying:

- Praise and give thanks to the Almighty Jehovah, the most Highest God, who granted me the unmerited favour to complete this doctoral study at a time when my country, Zimbabwe, was facing an economic meltdown. He granted me health, strength and the mental capacity to meet the minimum requirements to complete this doctoral study.
- To my promoter, Professor Geesje Van den Berg and co-supervisor, Professor Sonja Schoeman, I say, “Only God knows how much I am grateful for your unselfish and professional assistance throughout this academic journey”. Your easy-to-follow constructive and encouraging review comments, patience, motherly love and humbleness motivated me to soldier on. It was as a result of your resilience and professional guidance that this dream was realised.
- I am also indebted to Professor P.K. Dzvimbo for starting this academic journey with him as my mentor.
- I also want to thank Professor M. Chitiyo, who acted as the Language and Technical editor.
- I am also thankful to the University of South Africa’s Division of Student Funding (DSF) which awarded me a postgraduate bursary at some point during my doctoral studies.
- Special thanks also go to all other participants and individuals who made this research study a success.

ABSTRACT

The aim of this study was to establish the extent to which the mandatory study of the subject History was successfully implemented in some secondary schools in the Manicaland province of Zimbabwe. While this subject is no longer mandatory in the Zimbabwean school curriculum, it was deemed necessary to conduct this study because, just like a recurring pandemic, lessons picked out of this study are considered useful inferences to address future occurrences in this category. Interpretivism was adopted as the research paradigm of this qualitative study. A case study was used as a research type. The study involved curriculum experts, education officials, secondary school heads, and History teachers as participants. Interviews, focus group discussions and a document study were the data-gathering methods. Purposive and snowball sampling were used to identify the participants of the study. The thematic analysis method was applied to analyse and interpret research data. The study established two opposing views concerning the rationale for the mandatory study of school History, namely to benefit the learners as individuals and to benefit ZANU PF as a political party. The study also established that the use of a circular by the education ministry to disseminate the curriculum information did not necessarily guarantee the successful implementation of the reforms. For the period 2002 to 2016, no efforts had been made by the education ministry to monitor or evaluate the extent to which implementation of the reforms succeeded owing to a shortage of resources. The study established three submissions regarding the trends of the implementation of the History curriculum reforms in the Mutare and Mutasa district secondary schools, namely a complete curriculum implementation, a fractional curriculum implementation and a null curriculum implementation. Based on the findings, the study recommends the adoption of the curriculum consensus model, the matching of the curriculum reality codes when planning and designing a History curriculum, securing academic freedom for the History teachers, and that patriotism needs to be cultivated in learners through unforced and democratic History teaching and learning. The thesis is concluded by sign-posting areas that need further investigation.

OPSOMMING

Die doel van hierdie studie was om vas te stel tot watter mate die verpligte studie van die vak Geskiedenis suksesvol in sekondêre skole in die Manicaland-provinsie in Zimbabwe geïmplementeer is. Alhoewel die vak nie meer verpligtend in die Zimbabwiese skoolkurrikulum is nie, is dit nodig geag om die studie uit te voer omdat, net soos 'n herhalende pandemie, lesse wat uit hierdie studie geneem is, beskou word as nuttige gevolgtrekkings om toekomstige gebeure in hierdie kategorie te hanteer. Interpretivisme is aangeneem as die navorsingsparadigma van hierdie kwalitatiewe studie. 'n Gevallestudie is gebruik as 'n navorsingsvoorbeeld. Die deelnemers van die studie het bestaan uit kurrikulumkundiges, onderrigbeamptes, skoolhoofde in sekondêre skole, en Geskiedenis-onderwysers. Onderhoude, fokusgroepbesprekings en 'n dokumentstudie is as data-insamelingsmetodes aangewend. Doelbewuste en sneeubal-steekproefneming is gebruik om die deelnemers van die studie te identifiseer. Die tematiese ontledingsmetode is toegepas om die navorsingsdata te ontleed en te interpreteer. Die studie het vasgestel dat daar twee opponerende sienings is oor die beweegrede vir die verpligte skoolvak Geskiedenis, naamlik om die leerders as individue te bevoordeel en om ZANU PF as 'n politieke party te bevoordeel. In die studie is daar ook vasgestel dat die gebruik van 'n omsendbrief deur die onderwysdepartement om die kurrikulum-inligting te versprei nie noodwendig die suksesvolle implementering van die hervormings gewaarborg het nie. Van 2002 tot 2016 is daar, weens 'n tekort aan hulpbronne, geen pogings aangewend deur die onderwysdepartement om die mate waarin die hervormings suksesvol was te evalueer nie. Die studie het vasgestel dat daar drie voorleggings is wat die neigings van die implementering van die Geskiedenis-kurrikulumhervormings in die Mutare- en Mutasa-distrikte se sekondêre skole betref, naamlik 'n volledige kurrikulum-implementering, 'n gebroke implementering en 'n nul-kurrikulum. Gebaseer op die bevindings word die volgende aanbeveel: die aanneming van die kurrikulum-konsensusmodel, die paring van die kurrikulum-werklikheidskodes tydens die beplanning en ontwerp van 'n Geskiedenis-kurrikulum, om akademiese vryheid vir Geskiedenis-onderwysers te verseker, en dat patriotisme by leerders gekweek moet word deur ongedwonge en demokratiese Geskiedenis-onderrig en -leer. Die verhandeling is afgesluit deur aanwysingsareas wat verdere ondersoek benodig.

OKUCASHUNIWE

Inhloso yalolu cwaningo bekuwukuthola ukuthi kwaba yimpumelelo engakanani ukuqaliswa kokufunda okuphoqelekile kwesifundo sezoMlando kwezinye zezikole zamabanga amaphakathi e-*Manicaland* okuyisifundazwe esise-*Zimbabwe*. Nakuba lesi sifundo singasaphoqelekile kukharikhulamu yezikole zase-*Zimbabwe*, kodwa kubonakala kunesidingo sokuthi lwenziwe lolu cwaningo ngoba, lokhu kuyisimo esifana nobhubhane oluziphindayo, izinto esizifunda ngalolu cwaningo zibukeka ziwusizo olukhulu ekubhekaneni nezigameko ezingaphinda zenzeke esikhathini esizayo ngalesi simo. Lapha kusetshenziswe uhlelo i-*interpretivism* njengendlela yocwaningo oluzosebenza ukuhlola iqophelo kulesi senzo. Kulolu cwaningo kuxoxiswane nabantu ngokuhlukahlukana kwabo. Lolu cwaningo lubandakanya ababambiqhaza okungongoti bekharikhulamu, izikhulu zezemfundo, izinhloko zezikole emabangeni amaphakathi, kanye nothisha besifundo sezoMlando. Izindlela ezisetshenzisiwe zokuqoqa ulwazi kube yizinkulumongxoxo, ukuxoxisana namaqoqo athile kanye nokucwaningwa lwemibhalo. Lolu cwaningo lwenziwe ngokutonyulwa kwabantu abebehlosiwe kanye nalabo abakhethwe ngaphandle kokubhekwa ukuthi bangobani. Ukuhlaziywa kanye nokuhunyushwa kolwazi lwalolu cwaningo kwenziwe ngokuthi kusetshenziswe indlela yokuhlaziya ingqikithi. Ucwaningo luveze imibono emibili ephikisanayo mayelana nesizathu sokufunda okuphoqelekile kwezoMlando, okungukuthi ukusiza abafundi njengabantu ngabanye kanye nokuhlomulisa i-*ZANU PF* njenhlangano yezepolitiki. Ucwaningo luphinde lwaveza ukuthi ukusetshenziswa kwesekhula wumnyango wezemfundo ukuze usabalalise ulwazi lwekharikhulamu akubanga yinto eqinisekisa ukuqaliswa ngempumelelo kwalezi zinguquko. Kusukela ngo-2002 kuya ku-2016, akukho mizamo eyake yenziwa umnyango wezemfundo ukuze uqaphe noma uhlole ukuthi kube yimpumelelo yini ukuqaliswa kokusebenza kwezinguquko nakuba zinganele kahle izinsizakusebenza. Kulolu cwaningo kusetshenziswe izethulo ezintathu ezimayelana nendlela yokuqaliswa kokusebenza kwezinguquko zekharikhulamu yesifundo sezoMlando e-*Mutare* nase-*Mutasa* okuyizikole zesifunda zamabanga amaphakathi, nokuwukuqaliswa kwekharikhulamu ephelele, ingxenye yayo kanye nokuthi kungaqaliswa lutho ngayo. Ngokwemiphumela etholakele, ucwaningo luncoma ukuthi kusetshenziswe uhlelo lokuvumelana ngekharikhulamu, ukuhlanganiswa kwamakhodi ekharikhulamu uma kuhlelwa kuphinde kwakhiwa ikharikhulamu yesifundo sezoMlando, ukuqinisekisa inkululeko kothisha besifundo sezoMlando, kanye nokuthi intshisekelo ngezwe kumele igqugquzelwe kubafundi ngokungaphoqwa nangokuzikhethela ukufunda nokufundiswa isifundo sezoMlando. Ucwaningo luphothulwe ngokuthi kuthunyelwe izimpawu ezikhombisa izindawo ezidinga ukuphenywa ngokwengeziwe.

KEY TERMS

Curriculum, curriculum reforms, curriculum dissemination, curriculum implementation, curriculum evaluation, History, O-level History, curriculum consensus model.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS/ACRONYMS

A-level:	Advanced level
BMS:	Belt marking supervisor
CDU:	Curriculum Development Unit
MDC:	Movement for Democratic Change
MoESAC:	Ministry of Education, Sport, Arts and Culture
MoESC:	Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture
MoPSE:	Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education
NASS	National and Strategic Studies
NONEBUDI	No-negotiations-but-do-it
NYS	National Youth Service
O-level:	Ordinary level
ZANU PF:	Zimbabwe African National Union Patriotic Front
ZIMSEC:	Zimbabwe School Examination Council
ZJC:	Zimbabwe Junior Certificate

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 STUDY BACKGROUND

The education curriculum in general aims at creating a teaching and learning environment that either maintain or bring about the desired changes in learners and the society at large (Haquea & David, 2022:2; Mavhunga, 2006:441). The education system in colonial Zimbabwe (Rhodesia) was segregatory in nature so as to promote "… the colonial interests by preparing black Africans as labourers who would not challenge and compete with their European counterparts" (Matereke, 2012:89). It was the product of the white racist ideology. To elaborate, "… though education had to be made available to some Africans during the colonial era, it was not equal to that given to whites. In rural areas, access to education was very limited" (Matereke, 2012:89). As a result, a dual system of education existed; one for the then ruling Europeans and another for the ruled Africans (Mavhunga, 2006:443). For instance, at Ordinary level (O-level), there were two different History syllabi; namely Syllabus 2158 for white secondary schools, and Syllabus 2160 for African secondary schools (Chitate, 2005:241).

During this period, African education was designed so that Africans remained subjugated, controlled and exploited. According to Mungazi (as quoted in Mavhunga, 2006:445), the colonial school curriculum was set to develop the African children into "… hewers of wood and drawers of water for the colonial masters." In line with this view, the secondary school History curriculum was designed in such a way that it presented African civilisation as a result of European influence. By using that curriculum, which was European-centred, African History learners were taught about European heroes like Napoleon and Francis Drake, while African leaders such as Tshaka, Lobengula, Nehanda, Kaguvi and Queen Nzinga were presented as villains (Moyana & Sibanda, 2005:50).

Before the attainment of Zimbabwean independence in 1980, as mentioned in the first paragraph of this chapter, there were separate O-level History syllabi for whites and Africans. However, soon after independence, radical changes were made to the national curricula across all study areas. In regards to the secondary school History curriculum, radical changes dominated the curriculum reforms since the subject was mainly used to promote the interests of the colonial regime (Chitate, 2005:235).

The justification for this was that at independence, Zimbabwe found herself with an education system that needed "extensive surgery" to transform it into an education system that served the needs of the majority of the people. Moyo and Modiba (2011:139) pointed out that from independence onwards, the state of Zimbabwe "… sought to reform the inherited curricula, and History in particular, in order to promote a new sense of nationhood." It was against this background that, in his *Policy Statement of 1984*, the then Minister of Education, Sport, Arts and Culture, Dzingai Mutumbuka argued that: "Curriculum change is essential, not only in practical subjects but in all subjects ... Science and Mathematics, History … must all be brought to bear on solving the real problems faced by Zimbabweans" (Zvobgo, 1999:139). In awaiting the reforms in the secondary school History curriculum, the pre-1980 O-level History syllabi 2158 and 2160 remained in use in Zimbabwean secondary schools (Bentrovato & Chakawa, 2023:40).

As outlined in Syllabus 2158 entitled *World Affairs since 1919*, candidates sat for a one paper examination for the duration of one hour, and thirty minutes. Candidates were supposed to answer five questions, choosing at least one question from the General Problems section of the syllabus. This section included topics such as the First World War, the League of Nations, the Second World War, and the Cold War (University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate, 1997:4). The other questions were chosen from five Geographical sections such as Western Europe, the Americas, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and Eastern Europe, Africa and the Middle East, and Asia (University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate, 1997:5). The examination which tested descriptive and interpretation skills had a total of eleven questions; six from the General Problems section, and five from the Geographical section (University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate, 1997:4).

Syllabus 2160, which was entitled *History for Candidates in Central and Southern Africa* had two examination papers, and each paper had a duration of one and a half hours (University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate, 1997:6). Paper 1, also called the *African History* paper, had three sections. The three sections were Section A, which covered the History of Africa in the 19th and 20th centuries (excluding Central and Southern Africa), Section B, which covered the History of Central Africa (including the Congo) to the present day, and Section C, which covered the History of Southern Africa to the present day (University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate, 1997:7). Candidates were expected to answer three questions from at least two sections. Paper 2 of Syllabus 2160, also called the *Modern World History from 1870*, had at least sixteen questions set on major themes in modern world history, from which candidates were supposed to answer three questions (University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate, 1997:7).

Some of the major themes in modern world history on which questions were set were, The relations of the Great Powers 1870-1914, The relations of the Great Powers 1919-1939, The aftermath of the Second World War, Imperialism, The search for international co-operation, The United States of America, Germany, Italy, The United Kingdom, Western Europe since 1945, The Soviet Bloc and the Balkans, Problems of the Middle East since 1918, Japan in world affairs, and Latin America (University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate, 1997:7-8).

Syllabus 2160 has been used in the then Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) since the mid-1970s (Barnes, 2007:638). Moyo and Modiba (2013:5) also confirmed: "The country [Zimbabwe] inherited the Rhodesian history syllabus 2160 which was based on the United Kingdom's system of Ordinary Level Examinations, and which were set and marked by the Cambridge University Examinations Syndicate." Thus, from 1980 onwards, the pre-1980 History Syllabus 2160, which was originally designed for Africans only, was used until 1987 when the topic: the Political Economy of Zimbabwe was added to Syllabus 2160 (Barnes, 2007:635; Mapetere, Makaye & Muguti, 2012:100). The topic, the Political Economy of Zimbabwe's aim was to promote scientific socialism. According to Agbodza (2004:1), the concept of scientific socialism was developed to describe Karl Marx's theory of economic development, which "… seeks to answer the question, what is the source of a nation's wealth?" In this regard, it emphasises that nations have to put theories into practice to achieve socio-political and economic development.

In view of the above, the topic, the Political Economy of Zimbabwe, encouraged the "marrying" of theory with practice. The methodology and content of the topic, the Political Economy of Zimbabwe "… promoted group spirit and collective consciousness …" (Mapetere, Makaye & Muguti, 2012:100). The topic was also introduced to the learners to promote scientific socialism, which was part of the socialist ideology that the independent state of Zimbabwe followed from 1980 onwards as was set out in the Zimbabwe African National Union Patriotic Front (ZANU PF) party manifesto. Outlining its socialist education principles, Item number 4 of the ZANU PF party's 1980 Election Manifesto (as cited in Zvobgo, 1997:63) stipulated that: "… the education system would aim at providing equal opportunity for all and would be oriented towards national goals. The system would be geared towards creating skilled manpower for the various economic sectors."

As part of curriculum reform, the existence of the topic, the Political Economy of Zimbabwe was short-lived due to opposition from role-players such as churches and the lack of government support. As Mapetere, Makaye and Muguti (2012:100) observed, those who

opposed the topic, the Political Economy of Zimbabwe "… were led by the Roman Catholic Church, which felt that the syllabus had nothing to offer in terms of skills development, but only meant to indoctrinate students with anti-religious propaganda under the guise of Scientific Socialism." While Mavhunga, Moyo and Chinyani (2012:47) also agree with Mapetere, Makaye and Muguti (2012:100) that the Political Economy topic attracted serious criticism from the church. The authors further added that there was criticism from opposition parties: "The [church] perceived it as a socialist government's move towards restricting church activities in the country while [opposition parties] saw it as government's way of propagating the ruling ZANU PF party's propaganda through the school system." The criticism had a devastating impact on the implementation of secondary school History innovations. Mavhunga, Moyo and Chinyani (2012:47) confirmed: "Resultantly, the government prematurely terminated the curriculum innovation as the subject was dropped from the school curriculum around 1989 before the full cycle of implementation was realised." Therefore, the History Syllabus 2160, which contained the topic, the Political Economy of Zimbabwe, was dropped in 1990 following the announcement of its withdrawal in the Sunday Mail of 7 May 1989.

Following the demise of the O-level History Syllabus 2160 in 1990, it was replaced by the O-level History Syllabus 2166 in the same year. Moyo and Modiba (2013:5) declared: "The syllabus reform, 2166, [was] launched in 1990." This new curriculum, designed and developed at the beginning of 1984, was "heavily soaked" in the Marxist-Leninist ideology (Bentrovato & Chakawa, 2023:40). As the new post-colonial government, which had adopted the Marxist-Leninist ideological framework, strongly considered History teaching and learning in secondary schools as an important tool for the creation of political awareness (Chitate, 2005:235). The new History Syllabus 2166 comprised two papers, Papers 1 and 2. Paper 1 consisted of three source-based questions, and candidates were required to answer any two. According to the O-level Syllabuses: History 2166 (1990:2), learners were supposed to be able to recall, explain, analyse and empathise with the past by the end of the course. Paper 2 covered topics from both the History of International Affairs and the History of Central and Southern Africa. The paper consisted of twelve essay-type questions from three sections (A, B and C). Section A covered topics such as the Development of early societies in Central and Southern Africa, Industrialisation, and the World Crisis to 1945. Section B included topics such as the Colonisation of Africa and Colonialism, resistance, and independence in Zimbabwe, while Section C included the topics: the Rise and development of Socialism, World struggles for self-determination, and International cooperation and conflict since 1945 (O-level Syllabuses: History 2166, 1990:3). Candidates were required to answer four questions, one from each section, and one question chosen from any of the three sections (O-level

Syllabuses: History 2166, 1990:3).

In terms of the methodology, History Syllabus 2166 encouraged multiple approaches to History teaching, with an emphasis on a learner-centred approach to learning. To this end, teaching involved problem-posing, role-playing, discussions and writing exercises. Just like its predecessor (History Syllabus 2160), History Syllabus 2166 was abandoned because of opposition from role-players. The History Syllabus 2166, which omitted the History of the role of missionaries in Zimbabwe, was met with resistance from many church schools (Vengesai, 1996:10). In this regard, Chitate (2005:248) observed: "The Roman Catholic schools, in particular, openly expressed reservations on some aspects of the Syllabus content and methodology." Private schools were also reluctant to implement Syllabus 2166 as they were concerned about the content of the module, which had a heavy dosage of socialist codes, ideology and doctrine, something that undermined their [capitalist] economic views and practices (Vengesai, 1996:10).

Despite the criticism and resistance to the revision, adoption and implementation of the new curriculum, the National History Subject Panel, the group that designed and developed the new History Syllabus 2166, vigorously defended the new curriculum by arguing that Zimbabwe was operating in a socialist environment (Minutes of the National History Subject Panel held at the Teachers' Hostel, Harare, Mt Pleasant, 10 May 1989). At the time, the Zimbabwean government was trying to implement the ideology of socialism that was adopted soon after independence in 1980. For that reason, there was no way that the philosophy could be abandoned (Minutes of the National History Subject Panel held at the Teachers' Hostel, Harare, Mt Pleasant, 10 May 1989). Nevertheless, based on the research project conducted by Chitate (2005:242) in the Mashonaland East Province of Zimbabwe, there was a significant drop in the number of candidates who sat for the University of Cambridge Local Examinations in O-level History as compared to the O-level Geography for the period 1993 to 1997. It has also been suggested by scholars such as Chitate (2005:243-244) and Mapetere, Makaye and Muguti (2012:100) that the then new innovation also faced resistance because it was not user-friendly as the History teachers, besides facing inadequate teaching and learning resources, also lacked the pedagogical content knowledge and skills to implement the syllabus.

This situation was confirmed by Mr. Sir (pseudo name), a History teacher at a secondary school in the Kadoma district in the Mashonaland West Province of Zimbabwe, where the researcher was doing his O-level studies in 1991. He (Mr. Sir) made this confirmation when he was giving examination guidelines to his Form 4 History learners, who were going to sit for the first University of Cambridge examination set on the new History Syllabus 2166

(Researcher's personal experience as a member of the Form 4 class in 1991). Mr. Sir told the learners that Paper 1 of the History Syllabus 2166 had three sourced-based questions, where the candidates were expected to demonstrate comprehension, interpretation, evaluation and empathy skills. However, he added that he did not know how exactly the marks were awarded since no workshops were held to equip the O-level History teachers with the skills needed to examine the candidates' work based on the new syllabus.

Following the strong criticism and resistance from the role-players to the implementation of the History Syllabus 2166 since its inception in 1990, it was revised from the beginning of the year 1999 to 2000. According to Barnes (2007:647), there was another factor which led to the revision of the curriculum reform: "Syllabus 2166 was revised slightly in 1999-2000 as changes were made across the secondary school curriculum, mainly in response to the findings the [Nziramasanga] Presidential Commission which investigated the heavy academic bent of secondary education." The Nziramasanga Presidential Commission of Inquiry into Education (1999:350-351) recommended the offering of relevant education to secondary school learners. The Commission, for instance, singled out History as the most suitable subject to inculcate in the learners a sense of national heritage and identity (Nziramasanga, 1999:350-351; Magudu, 2012:181).

In 2001, the shortened revised version of the History Syllabus 2166 was released. The new version was code-named 2168. The History syllabus 2168 was released in 2001, the year the researcher joined the teaching profession as a secondary school History teacher. In 2002, the revised version of the History Syllabus 2168 was released as History Syllabus 2167. According to Barnes (2007:647), the release of the History Syllabus 2167 "… in 2002 … came as a surprise, because the revised 2166 Syllabus [History syllabus 2168] had only been operational for one year." The History Syllabus 2167 replaced syllabi 2166 and 2168, which were still on offer and had its first examination in November 2003 (Ordinary Level Syllabus: History 2167, 2001:3).

The new O-level History Syllabus 2167, which was operational in Zimbabwean secondary schools from 2002 to 2016, contained a "watered down" version of socialism (Bentrovato & Chakawa, 2023:40; Moyo & Modiba, 2013:7). The rise and development of socialism in Russia (1900-1964) was removed from the Syllabus. There were no compulsory sections contrary to the stipulations of Syllabus 2166. The History of missionaries in Zimbabwe returned to Syllabus 2167. History Syllabus 2167 contained Paper 1 and Paper 2. Paper 1, which covered the History of Southern Africa, consisted of twenty-two questions with one optional source-based question. Paper 2 covered the History of World Affairs with fifteen questions and no

source-based questions (Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture, 2001:4-5). However, since independence in 1980, the study of the subject History at secondary school level has been optional. Interestingly, following the introduction of the new History Syllabus 2167 in 2002, the then Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Education, Sport, Arts and Culture, through *Circular Number 3 of 2002*, made a directive in 2002 which mandated the compulsory study of the secondary school subject History up to the O-level (Bentrovato & Chakawa, 2023:40; Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture, 2002:5). The study of History as a compulsory subject was later cancelled in January 2017, a time when this research study had already commenced. This was done through *Circular Number 2 of 2017,* which reads as follows: "This circular cancels and replaces Secretary's Circular Number 3 of 2002" (The Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education, 2017:2). While the study of History ceased to be compulsory in 2017, Heritage Studies, a History-related subject (in terms of the aims, objectives and learning areas) was made compulsory (The Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education, 2017:2).

The problem that was investigated focused mainly on whether the compulsory study of the subject History was successfully implemented at secondary school level in the Mutare and Mutasa districts in Manicaland province for the period 2002 to 2016. Considering the fact that the previous O-level History syllabi (2160 and 2166) faced resistance from role-payers, has history repeated itself? How much government support was given to it to ensure the successful implementation of the curriculum reforms? To what extent did secondary school heads and History teachers contribute to the successful implementation of the curriculum reforms between 2002 and 2016? It was in the light of these unanswered questions that the study sought to establish whether the implementation of the O-level History curriculum reforms in Zimbabwe's secondary schools was a success, using the case of History teaching and learning in the Mutare and Mutasa districts of the Manicaland province.

While the mandatory study of the subject History was cancelled by the education ministry in 2017 through *Circular Number 2 of 2017* (The Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education, 2017:2), the researcher proceeded with the study focusing on the period 2002 to 2016. The researcher believed that, just like the COVID-19 pandemic which recurred many times, the mandatory study of the subject History may recur, hence re-exhibiting the problem. Given the above, the researcher was justified to continue with the study regardless of the fact that the subject was no longer mandatory. The findings and recommendations of the study could be used as helpful insights in similar circumstances. Financial constraints delayed the completion of this study in 2020. Hence, the researcher deferred it to 2023. The next section is an outline of how the study boundaries were drawn.

1.2 DELINEATIONS OF THE STUDY

In this study, delineations were those conditionalities which limited the scope of the study and defined its boundaries. Nenty (2009:24) used a question to define delineations: "How have [the researcher] narrowed the scope of the study?" For Hofstee (2009:87), delineations are very important in a research study as they explain to readers what the researcher was not responsible for and why. Hofstee (2009:87) further stressed that by stating clearly what falls inside and outside the thesis statement, the researcher avoids possible criticism of: "Why you didn't do x, y, or z?" In regards to the issue of delineations, Grix (as cited in Mack, 2010:6) also warned: "… that people who want to conduct clear, precise research and evaluate other's research need to understand the philosophical underpinnings that inform their choice of research questions, methodology, methods and intentions." Therefore, in this study, delineations were part of the researcher's control. In the delineations of the study, the researcher used a number of guiding principles as noted by Grix (as cited in Mack, 2010:6). Thus, specified themes were used for this purpose. The themes used in the delimitation of the study are the problem investigated, research questions and objectives, source(s) of research data, geographical setting and inquiry approach. These are elaborated below.

1.2.1 The problem investigated

The first guiding principle used in the delineations of the study was in a question form. The question was: What choice of the problem was to be investigated? There were other related research problems that the researcher could have settled for but left them out. To be specific, in the same year that secondary school History was made mandatory by the then Ministry of Education, Sport, Arts and Culture, the Teachers' Training Colleges and Polytechnic Colleges were also forced by the Ministry of Higher Education to introduce and teach a mandatory History-related course called, *National and Strategic Studies* (NASS), (Nyakudya, 2007:116). It was also worth investigating whether it was by mere coincidence that the study of school History and NASS were made mandatory at secondary school and tertiary levels respectively.

The researcher did not decide to take up any of the aforementioned research problems, despite being related to the problem that was finally chosen. The first stated research problem was not studied because the area of investigation was going to be too broad, and not easily manageable. It was also going to limit the in-depth study of the topic the researcher wanted to achieve. In addition, such a research problem needed a lot of funding that the researcher did

not have. The second research problem was also not adopted because it called for a quantitative approach to inquiry, and the researcher wanted to use the qualitative research approach. Investigating whether there was a correlation co-efficient between the introduction and mandatory study of NASS at the tertiary level and that of the school subject History at secondary level required a quantitative approach to inquiry.

In view of the aforementioned impeding factors, the researcher then decided to confine the research problem to the critical evaluation of the extent to which the O-level History curriculum reforms were successfully implemented in Zimbabwe's secondary schools, using the case of History teaching in the Manicaland Province of Zimbabwe between 2002 and 2016. The justification for confining the research problem to secondary school History was that the researcher was a practising O-level History teacher in a secondary school. He had personal experiences in the implementation of the History Syllabus 2167 at O-level.

1.2.2 Research questions and objectives

The choice of research questions and objectives were also used as delineating factors in this study. Simon (2011:159) acknowledged that the choice of the research questions and objectives can be adopted to define the boundaries for a study. To this end, the research questions of the study confined the study to the operationalisation of the O-level History curriculum reforms. The research objectives were drawn from the questions. The researcher could have extended the research questions to: How far did the O-level History learners in the Manicaland Province of Zimbabwe find their learning experiences useful in confronting the problems in their daily experiences? However, the above was not included to avoid a too broad focus for the study.

1.2.3 Source(s) of research data

While delineating the study to focus on the O-level History curriculum reforms, the researcher also focused on O-level History teachers, secondary school heads, education officials and curriculum experts as sources of data. The majority of those who participated in this study were O-level History teachers. The O-level History teachers dominated because they were the key role players in implementing the curriculum reforms under study. Therefore, the O-level History teachers were included in the study because, as participants, they were very suitable informants for the researcher to establish the extent to which the mandatory study of the school subject History was successfully implemented. The school heads were also

considered an important data source because they were the overseers of the implementation of the O-level History curriculum reforms.

In regards to the curriculum experts, the study was confined to members who were often, although on a contractual basis, hired by the Curriculum Development Unit (CDU) to assist in the O-level History curriculum development processes. The CDU is a department within the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (formerly the Ministry of Education, Sport, Arts and Culture) that "... is responsible for planning and developing curricula for the Zimbabwe school system" (Chinyani, 2013:58). In light of the above, the researcher did not include general curriculum experts, but History curriculum experts in the study. They were rich sources of data.

The delineation of the study also included education officials from the then Ministry of Education, Sport, Arts and Culture and the officials employed in the current Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education. The rationale for including former officials of the Ministry of Education Sport, Arts and Culture was that the mandatory study of the History subject at secondary school level was introduced and ordered to be implemented during their tenure of office. To this effect, these former education officials (or those still employed with the current Ministry of Education). Consequently, they were invaluable informants for the study's research questions. Refer to Section 1.4 for the research questions.

1.2.4 Geographical setting

The researcher also used the following question as a guiding tool in delineating the study: Which criteria should the researcher use to select the geographical setting for the study? While Zimbabwe has ten provinces (Mashonaland East, Mashonaland Central, Mashonaland West, Midlands, Masvingo, Matebeleland South, Matebeleland North, Manicaland, Harare and Bulawayo Provinces), the researcher selected the Manicaland Province for convenience sake. The researcher was working as a secondary school History teacher in the Manicaland province during the study.

Although the Manicaland Province of Zimbabwe was chosen for the study, it was impossible to conduct the study in the entire province, considering the financial and time considerations. The province has seven districts (Buhera, Chimanimani, Chipinge, Makoni, Mutare, Mutasa and Nyanga), and the study was delineated to focus on two of the districts, namely Mutasa and Mutare. This was necessary to make the study more manageable, reduce travelling costs during the data-gathering process, and produce a detailed, intensive and holistic research

report (Ary, Jacobs & Sorensen, 2010:454). A larger research area would have compromised the depth and quality of the study.

1.2.5 Inquiry approach

While the researcher acknowledged that there are three main research approaches, namely the quantitative, the qualitative and the mixed-methods approaches, the researcher delineated the study to the qualitative research approach. The justification for the choice was that the researcher wanted to conduct an in-depth study of the views or experiences of the education officers, school heads and History teachers with regard to the mandatory study of the subject History. Thus, the focus of the study was restricted on human views or experiences on a specified phenomenon from a natural setting. Besides, the researcher wanted to gather data in the form of words, and not numbers (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011:289). Having presented how the boundaries of the study were demarcated, the statement of the problem that was investigated is unveiled in the next section.

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

"… no new knowledge can be arrived at if there is no problem to be investigated" (Popper, as quoted in Hofstee, 2009:85)

The researcher named and discussed the problem of his study using the following questions: What exactly was the problem? Why was it a problem? What facets were there to it? The study of the subject History at O-level has been made compulsory in Zimbabwe since 2002 up to 2016, through the directive from the then Ministry of Education, Sport, Arts and Culture (Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture, 2002:5). Research studies such as those of Barnes (2007:635) and Mashayamombe (2006:90) indicated that some role-players were dissatisfied with the implementation of the above-mentioned curriculum reforms. For example, the study of Mashayamombe (2006:90) showed that the majority of O-level History learners at one secondary school in the Mashonaland West Province of Zimbabwe were not satisfied with the policy. In line with the ministerial directive, Barnes (2007:635) also established that some Zimbabwean History teachers, who reflected on the 2002 History Syllabus (Syllabus 2167), felt that the Zimbabweans "… were forced to be proud of the role played by the ruling [ZANU PF] party …" through the compulsory study of the school subject History. Paradoxically, at least two different O-level History Syllabi were removed from the Zimbabwean secondary school curricula between 1980 and 2001 as a result of severe pressure and resistance from

role-players (Chitate, 2005:141-142).

Given the above, the problem to be investigated in this study was centred on the fact that the success of curriculum reforms is not guaranteed as there are possibilities and limits to the successful implementation of any curriculum reforms (Maryam, 2016:67; Sargent 2011:17-18). Voogt, Pieters and Roblin (2019:6) revealed that many modern curriculum reforms resulted in disappointing outcomes. For Haque and David (2022:4), the role players at the implementation level "... may accept or resist [the] change …" Different and negative responses are common to the process of putting curriculum reforms into operation (Maryam, 2016:67; Omolo, Sika & Olel, 2019:100; Stern 2007:1; Sargent 2011:17-18). Some of the hindrances common to the successful implementation of curriculum reforms are discussed as sub-problems below.

1.3.1 Coercive approach to curriculum implementation

When disseminating the information for the compulsory study of the subject History in the Zimbabwean secondary schools, the then Ministry of Education, Sport, Arts and Culture used a directive or top-down approach. According to Matland (as cited in Liedl, 2011:7), the starting point for the top-down approach: "… is the authoritative decision; as the name implies, centrally located actors are seen as the most relevant to producing the desired effect." Carolus *et. al.*, (2018:282) elaborated that in a top-down approach, the central decision-making body issues out a policy and provides guidance in terms of how it is supposed to be implemented. It is further stated that: "The main actors are regarded to be the decision-makers whose responsibility is to formulate an efficient statute which suits to the kind of existing problem" (Liedl, 2011:7). In light of this approach, and to ensure that the intentions were clear and consistent, the then Zimbabwean Ministry of Education, Sport, Arts and Culture, through the provincial and district education offices, handed down to secondary schools the *Secretary's Circular Number 3 of 2002*, which directed the compulsory study of the subject History up to O-level.

This top-down approach used to dictate the implementation of the secondary school History curriculum reforms in Zimbabwe, is often generally questioned (Alsubaie, 2016:106). When referring to the case of Zimbabwe, Ndawi (1999:91) pointed out that policy circulars are often used to communicate curriculum reforms or changes to the teachers. He argued that teachers find it difficult to be part of the process from which they were initially excluded (Ndawi, 1999:91). Liedl (2011:7) also highlighted two problems associated with the top-down approach in the implementation of an innovation. First, the top-down approach omits the

discussion process with those at the lower ranks and regards the implementers as of a lower rank with no alternative solution to the problem under the spotlight. Second, the top-down approach favours the decision-makers as key actors in the implementation process, and does not take hid of the views of the staff that implements the innovations.

According to Stern (2007:1), “Educational research in various countries has shown that top-down measures like centralised reform measures of curricula and school organisation do not lead to educational change, but are either ignored or met with resistance.” Carolus et al., (2018:285) noted that the top-bottom approach lacks merit because it fails to consider the views of other important role players. The government of Zimbabwe seemed to have been aware that curriculum reforms and implementation have to be systematically done as stated: “Curriculum reforms are not designed and implemented haphazardly. Before reforms are implemented, base-line surveys are conducted to establish if there is a real need to implement reforms” (The Zimbabwe National Commission for UNESCO, and the Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture and the Ministry of Higher Education and Technology, 2001:22).

Surprisingly, in the case of Zimbabwe’s O-level History curriculum reforms, there is no evidence suggesting that the History teachers in the secondary schools received information justifying the mandatory study of the subject History, especially considering that the curriculum reforms were introduced at a time that the ZANU PF party was facing severe opposition from opposition political parties and other pressure groups (Barnes, 2007:649). Let alone the implementation of the compulsory study of the secondary school subject History up to O-level was at the time that the Zimbabwean teachers were harassed, tortured and/or killed for supporting the opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) party (News Day, 12 April, 2012; Media Monitoring Project Zimbabwe, 2009:8). Given this background, were there no possibilities that the Zimbabwean History teachers may have ignored, or resisted the implementation of the compulsory teaching and learning of the subject History? Such a question was to be answered through the researcher’s endeavour to establish the extent to which History was a mandatory subject at O-level. Peskova, Spurná and Knecht (2019:73) admitted that curriculum reform can be doomed if it lacks the teachers’ support, as they noted that curriculum initiatives can hardly be successful and effective if there are disconnections between educational policies and teachers’ practices. This brings forth the argument that teachers are key players in successfully implementing curriculum reforms (Haque & David, 2022:6; Peskova, Spurná & Knecht, 2019:73). In view of the coercive approach to curriculum implementation that the government of Zimbabwe used to implement the curriculum reforms in O-level History teaching, it was justifiable to establish in this study the extent to which History teachers have contributed to the successful implementation of the reforms from 2002 to 2016.

The problem statement under investigation is further illuminated in the following section.

1.3.2 Teachers as key-role players in curriculum implementation

In the curriculum enterprise, teachers play a pivotal role in the successful implementation of any curriculum change. In line with this assertion, teachers are agents of change (Stern, 2007:1). For Voogt, Pieters and Roblin (2019:6), teachers are key curriculum stakeholders whose involvement in curriculum design should not be ignored because they bridge the gap between the curriculum intentions and reality. This brings forth the argument that the bottom-up approach is equally important when considering the success of curriculum change. The bottom-up theorists acknowledged that the opinions of the implementers have to be considered in the process of curriculum change (Carolus *et al.*, 2018:285). The rationale for this is that if the implementers (the teachers) are involved from the start of the innovation, they receive and easily adapt themselves to the curriculum changes at implementation level as they feel connected to it. As such, Carolus *et al.*, (2018:285) asserted that the merits of the bottom-up approach are that it accommodates transparency and participatory process.

Acknowledging the importance of the bottom-top strategy in curriculum development and implementation, Fullan (as cited in Stern, 2007:1) argued that only when curriculum policy-makers place "… teachers at the centre as change-agents, curriculum reforms … have a good chance to be effective." The "veto powers" teachers have in the implementation process of the curriculum reforms are also confirmed by Peskova, Spurná and Knecht (2019:73) who opined that teachers may sabotage or ignore the implementation of the reforms if the latter is in conflict with their views. Clarifying why curriculum reforms often fail at implementation stage, Sargent (2011:18) said that: "… teachers feel that they have a great deal of autonomy to teach as they like, which may limit their ability to experiment freely with new [reforms]." In agreement, Mashayamombe (2006:27) asserted that the teachers "… hold the key …" to the classroom activities. It was in this context that Haque and David (2022:6) revealed that teachers are the main agents of curriculum implementation as they largely determine the success of curriculum implementation. The arguments showed that teachers are an important determinant of the successful implementation of any school curriculum. In contrast, the History Syllabus 2167 was fast-tracked and "… issued without going through a consultative development process with [the Zimbabwean secondary school] teachers and professional historians similar to that [Syllabus 2166] which was produced a decade earlier" (Barnes, 2007:648). Since the subject teachers, who are the main agents of curriculum change (Fullan, as cited in Stern, 2007:1; Voogt, Pieters & Roblin, 2019:6) were sidelined from the curriculum consultative development process, the contribution of secondary school heads and History teachers in Mutare and

Mutasa districts towards the successful implementation of the curriculum reforms had to be investigated.

Besides the powers vested in teachers as implementers of the curriculum, Sargent (2011:17-18) provided some of the hindrances that incapacitate school teachers from successfully implementing curriculum reforms. Sargent (2011:17) singled out preparing learners for examinations as one major problem. The argument is that teachers tend to concentrate more on teaching in preparation for national examinations and not the intentions of the reforms (that may include covering the prescribed content and using prescribed teaching approaches as well as ensuring that the aims/objectives of the reforms are achieved). In the case of Zimbabwe, teachers consider the learners' passing of the national examinations as the main goal for teaching and learning (Personal experience).

In its *Education Report*, the government of Zimbabwe also confirmed this problem as follows: "Some teachers teach for examinations and as a result fail to develop their learners' skills and attitudes that are necessary for livelihood" (The Zimbabwe National Commission for UNESCO, and the Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture and the Ministry of Higher Education and Technology, 2001:23). Shortage of instructional resources is another problem that hinders the smooth implementation of curriculum reforms by teachers (Sargent, 2011:17).

The researcher, who joined a secondary school in the Manicaland Province in 2008, witnessed that the study of the subject History was compulsory at the Zimbabwe Junior Certificate level (ZJC level), and that it only became compulsory at O-level in 2010 (Personal experience, 2010). It became compulsory to study History at O-level following the recommendation by the researcher soon after he was appointed as Head of the History department in January 2010. The researcher used the ministerial directive as the basis for his recommendations. All members of the History department at the time expressed ignorance of the compulsory study of the subject History up to O-level in Zimbabwe. The above scenario further justified the need to establish whether the mandatory 2002 O-level History curriculum reforms were successfully implemented.

1.3.3 Curriculum analysis

Curriculum theorists posited that curriculum analysis is imperative for the success of any curriculum implementation. According to Maravanyika (as cited in Mavhunga, Moyo and Chinyani, 2012:48), "Curriculum analysis is primarily concerned with analysing the curriculum

for its internal consistency … .” Maravanyika (as cited in Mavhunga, Moyo and Chinyani, 2012:48) goes on to give the rationale for curriculum analysis: "… the curriculum should be subjected to periodic assessment for relevance with the view to revising it and changing some elements in tandem with the dynamics of the socio-political milieu it ought to serve.”

Mavhunga (2006) agreed with Maravanyika in regard to the significance of subjecting an operational curriculum to some analysis. In its *Education Report*, the government of Zimbabwe generally acknowledged the importance of the evaluation of curriculum reforms:

> At the implementation stage, there is continuous annual monitoring and evaluation of the reforms … . It is desirable that a permanent body of experts be established outside the Ministries of Education to monitor and evaluate the design and implementation of curriculum reforms and to advise government timely of policy changes (The Zimbabwe National Commission for UNESCO, and the Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture and the Ministry of Higher Education and Technology, 2001:22).

In view of the above, curriculum analysis and evaluation in Zimbabwe is done by experts. Chitate (2005:241) observes: “Under normal conditions, a syllabus is reviewed after a trial period of five years.” For Mohanasundaram (2018:4) and Supriani, *et al.*, (2022:487), once a curriculum is made available to schools for implementation, it has to be monitored and evaluated from time to time to ensure that it remains relevant to the learners. Given the above position, what was done by the relevant ministry to ensure the successful mandatory O-level History teaching and learning? This question directed the problem of the study.

Given the above background information, and bearing in mind that the mandatory study of the subject History in Zimbabwean secondary schools was a ministerial directive, the problem was: How far had the curriculum reforms been successfully implemented in the secondary schools of the Manicaland Province? The researcher envisaged carrying out a study in this regard using the Mutare and Mutasa secondary schools as a case study.

Furthermore, considering that Syllabus 2167 was introduced following the defunct Syllabus 2166, which faced rejection n from various role-players, was this not going to produce another crisis of expectation? It was, therefore, necessary to determine if the mandatory study of the subject History guaranteed the successful implementation of these curriculum reforms. The researcher, who has been teaching the subject History at secondary school level since 2000, only became acquainted with the ministerial directive in 2006 when he was studying for a Master’s degree in Education (Curriculum and Arts) at the University of Zimbabwe. This

exposed the breadth of the research problem to him as noted by Oyedele (2010:80): "Many teachers … fail to implement the curriculum due to lack of knowledge." To this end, the role of History teachers as implementers of the compulsory study of the school subject History had to be established. Having presented the problem statement, the section that follows focuses on the research questions.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

It is agreeable that research questions chosen for a study depend on the interest of the researchers and the problems they confront (Ary, Jacobs & Sorensen, 2010:33). It is also acknowledged that the research questions for educational research are generally classified into two: the theoretical and practical questions. To employ Ary, Jacobs and Sorensen's (2010:33) differentiation of these two types of research questions, it is noted that the theoretical questions "… have to do with fundamental principles," while the latter are "… designed to solve immediate problems of the everyday situation." To elaborate, the theoretical questions are theoretical in orientation, and "… involves a type of a study in which researchers seek to discover generalizations about behaviour…" and/or when the study focuses on hypothesis-testing (Ary, Jacobs & Sorensen, 2010:33). In this regard, theoretical questions were not used in this study since the researcher neither wanted to test a hypothesis, nor to generalise the findings for the study.

In view of the above, the researcher used the practical type of research questions for the study. The rationale for using this type of research questions was elaborated by Ary, Jacobs and Sorensen (2010:34) as follows:

> [Practical questions] are direct and practical, aimed at solving specific problems that educators may encounter in everyday activities. These questions are relevant for educational research because they deal with the actual problems at the level of practice and lead to an improvement in the teaching-learning process.

Therefore, in the light of the above justification, and with the problem statement of the study as the backdrop, the main research question was: To what extent were the History curriculum reforms successfully implemented in the Mutare and Mutasa districts secondary schools of the Manicaland Province in Zimbabwe?

The following sub-questions were formulated to assist in answering the main question:

- What was the rationale for making the study of History compulsory at secondary school level?

- Which approach(es) of curriculum dissemination was/were adopted by the then Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture to ensure its successful implementation in Zimbabwean secondary schools?
- What role did the education officers, secondary school heads and History teachers play towards the successful implementation of the compulsory study of the subject History at secondary school level in the Mutare and Mutasa districts in Manicaland Province?
- How best could the intended outcomes of the reform and innovation programmes been achieved?

1.5 RESEARCH AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

At the outset of the study, it was important to indicate what was to be achieved with the study. The research aim and objectives were as follows:

1.5.1 Research aim

A research aim is a broad or general statement indicating the intended outcomes of research (James, sa:1). It is concerned with the overall goal, or end of the study. Therefore, the aim of the study was to determine the extent to which History curriculum reforms were successfully implemented at secondary school level in the Mutare and Mutasa districts in Manicaland Province.

1.5.2 Research objectives

Research objectives are specific statements for the intended study. According to Bloom's Taxonomy (as cited in James, sa:1), research objectives are "action verbs" which are clearly stated and measurable. In this regard, research objectives are individual specifications which provide more light on how the research aim was to be achieved.

As such, to achieve the research aim, the study was guided by the objectives stated below:

- To investigate the rationale for making the study of History compulsory at secondary level in the Manicaland Province in Zimbabwe.
- To analyse the approach(es) used to make History a compulsory secondary school subject in the Manicaland Province in Zimbabwe.

- To examine role of the education officers, secondary school heads and History teachers in ensuring the success of the compulsory study of the subject History at secondary school level in the Mutare and Mutasa districts in Manicaland Province.
- To develop a model, make suggestions and recommendations on how best the intended outcomes of the curriculum reforms could have been achieved in the Manicaland Province's secondary schools, and expose issues that need further research.

1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The study was worthwhile because the research findings would presumably and significantly influence the present-day curriculum theory in Zimbabwe, and potentially in other African and international countries. In view of the above, the researcher identified, and discussed the approaches and models to curriculum development, dissemination and implementation used by the then Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture to ensure the success of the mandatory study of the subject History beginning 2002. Considering it was more of an imposed reform on schools in Zimbabwe, the study has exposed the degree of its success and failure, which may generate a debate on curriculum theory and practice in Zimbabwe, and even beyond. The study was legitimate as it came up with possible theoretical and practical solutions on how best reforms of that nature should be disseminated to the schools and ensured their successful implementation.

In addition, the study presumably also offered practical value to the present-day History curriculum reforms in Zimbabwe. A hard copy of a brief outline of the research findings of the study was submitted to the Manicaland Provincial Education Office. This encouraged and challenged decision-makers in the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education in Manicaland, as well as other education stakeholders in the Province, to reflect and take some insights from the empirical study for future deliberations on History curriculum policy with regard to planning, information dissemination, implementation and evaluation. The brief outline of the research findings also exposed issues which emerged from the study that need further research. Accordingly, this challenged and provoked the education ministry to fund research projects on the identified grey areas in the report.

In terms of publications, two articles will be published in a well-established University of Zimbabwe's *Zimbabwe Journal of Educational Research* (ZJER) which is widely read in Zimbabwe. As such, the articles should encourage other researchers also to conduct similar

studies in Manicaland, and/or in other provinces of the country. This will influence the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education to evaluate or analyse the curriculum reforms' success. The study also added value to the concepts curriculum theory and practice which stakeholders can use for the provision of curriculum education in the region of Southern Africa and beyond.

1.7 RESEARCH PARADIGM AND METHODOLOGY

While it is acknowledged that positivism, critical theory and interpretivism are some of the main paradigms used in educational research, interpretivism was used as the paradigm for this study (*cf*. Chapter 4, Sections 4.1, 4.2 and 4.2.1). This paradigm influenced the adoption of the qualitative approach to the inquiry. In this regard, the case study was selected as the research type. While the study was carried out in secondary schools in the Mutare and Mutasa districts of the Manicaland Province, interviews, focus groups and document study were used as the instruments of data-gathering. The gathered data was organised, analysed and interpreted using the thematic analysis method, leading to the report writing. Issues of trustworthiness and research ethics were considered as well.

1.7.1 Interpretivism as the research paradigm

A research paradigm is a theoretical position that works as the foundation of a study. It entails the researcher’s epistemological and ontological assumptions (Yadav, 2022:681). In this study, interpretivism was adopted as the research paradigm. The interpretivist paradigm is premised on the axiom that knowledge is gained through social constructions of multiple realities (Rehman & Alharthi, 2016:55). In this regard, reality is subjective since it is a result of interpretations as obtained from informants. It was on this basis that the researcher selected interpretivism as the most suitable research paradigm for this study. The research paradigm is discussed in detail in Chapter 4, Sections 4.2 and 4.2.1.

1.7.2 Qualitative as the research approach

Having chosen interpretivism as the research paradigm, a qualitative research approach was chosen for the study. This approach was chosen because of its emphasis on attaining a deep understanding of issues or experiences under the study (Alnaim, 2023:769). As such, the above research approach was suitable for this study, given that the researcher wanted to establish participants’ experiences or views in regard to the compulsory study of secondary school History in Zimbabwe’s Manicaland Province between 2002 and 2016. The researcher

assumed that participants' experiences or views in regard to the extent to which the O-level History curriculum reforms were successfully implemented were different. This assumption made the adoption of the qualitative research approach for this study most suitable because of its assumption of multiple truths (Bleiker *et al.*, 2019:4). Refer to Chapter 4, Section 4.3 for more detail.

1.7.3 Case study as the research type

While a qualitative research approach was selected for this study, the case study was used as the research type. A case study refers to a deep study of a single entity with the aim to pronounce and explain a phenomenon of interest (Gustafsson, 2017:2). To this end, the researcher's interest focused on the implementation of the O-level History curriculum reforms, using the case of Zimbabwe's secondary schools in the Manicaland Province, in particular in the Mutare and Mutasa districts. While a holistic and in-depth study was achievable through such a case study, the former was also suitable for the study because it was neither expensive nor time-consuming. More detail about the case study is presented in detail in Chapter 4, Section 4.4.

1.7.4 Research methods

In this section, the methods used to identify the study samples, data-gathering strategies, data analysis processes, interpretation and report writing are given.

1.7.4.1 Study population and sample

The Manicaland Province of Zimbabwe has seven districts, and has four hundred and six secondary schools (Manicaland Regional Education Office, 2023:1). This was the study population. Since the Manicaland Province was geographically too vast for a holistic and in-depth study, the study focused on the secondary schools in two of the districts, namely Mutasa and Mutare. These two districts have one hundred and seventeen secondary schools (Manicaland Regional Education Office, 2023:1). Only forty-seven secondary schools were included in the study. This sample of the study became the actual data source, and was representative of the study population (Sukmawati, Salmia & Sudarmin, 2023:131). Out of the forty-seven secondary schools, twenty-five of them provided nine secondary school heads and sixteen O-level History teachers who participated in the individual interview sessions, while the remaining twenty-two secondary schools provided three school heads and nineteen

O-level History teachers who participated in the focus group discussions. Two curriculum experts and five education officials were also engaged as data sources. The sampling procedures are briefly explained below.

1.7.4.2 Sampling procedures

Sampling was used as a way of identifying research participants who could suitably answer the research questions (Mahlambi, 2020:114). Non-probability sampling was used as the sampling strategy. This sampling procedure was suitable because it was a fast and cheap strategy for gathering and analysing the data (Tutz, 2023:424). Two types of non-probability sampling strategies were used, namely purposive and snowball sampling. Purposive sampling was justified because the researcher purposively identified and involved participants who were most suitably qualified to answer the research questions (Obilor, 2023:1). To this end, O-level History teachers, school heads, education officials and curriculum experts were identified as participants of the study. A Snowball sampling procedure was also used to identify the research participants for this study. This was when research participants assisted in the identification of other rich sources of data (Obilor. 2023:4). Obilor (2023:4) elaborated that, upon the completion of the data-gathering process from the respondent(s), the researcher can ask for referrals who could be data sources too. Refer to Chapter 4, Section 4.5.2 for a detailed presentation of the sampling procedures.

1.7.4.3 Data-gathering methods

In this study, the researcher used three data-gathering methods, namely interviews, focus group discussions and document study. They were regarded most appropriate for the qualitative research approach chosen for this study (Bleiker *et al.*, 2019:6; Swain & King, 2022:1). The rationale for the use of the three different data-gathering methods was mainly for triangulation, or crystallisation of the gathered data (Morgan, 2022:65). With regard to the use of focus groups, three focus group discussions were held, one in Harare and the other two in Manicaland Province, specifically in the districts of Mutare and Mutasa. To complement the individual interviews and focus groups as data-gathering instruments, the researcher also used document study. In this regard, primary documents such as circulars that were promulgated by the education ministry and O-level History syllabi were studied. The ZIMSEC O-level results analysis, in particular History, English and Geography were also studied. The data gathered was organised, analysed and interpreted using the thematic analysis method, with the report writing largely taking a prose form. The data-gathering methods are discussed in detail in Chapter 4, Sections 4.5.3.1, 4.5.3.2 and 4.5.3.3.

1.7.4.4 Data analysis and interpretation

The researcher used thematic analysis when analysing and interpreting the research data. According to Braun and Clarke (2012:57), thematic analysis is when research data is systematically identified, organised and interpreted into patterns of meanings (themes). The researcher analysed and interpreted the data under the guidance of Braun and Clarke's (2012:60-69) six phase framework of thematic analysis, namely familiarisation with the gathered data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing potential themes, defining themes and report writing. Refer to Chapter 4, Section 4.5.4 for further detail on data analysis and interpretation.

1.8 ISSUES OF TRUSTWORTHINESS

Trustworthiness has to do with questioning whether the study's findings can be trusted (Korstjens & Moser, 2018:121). The integrity of the study's findings should not be questioned because the researcher had considered its credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability (Anney, 2014:276; Guba, 1981:80; Korstjens & Moser, 2018:121). Credibility concerns the truthfulness of the study findings, while transferability focuses on the degree to which the report findings could be applied or transferred to other contexts (Korstjens & Moser, 2018:12; Mandal, 2018:592). Dependability emphasises on whether the study findings are auditable, while confirmability emphasises that the former are not biased, but authentic and can be confirmed (Anney, 2014:278; Yadav, 2022:684). These four indicators of the trustworthiness of the study are discussed in detail in Chapter 4, Sections 4.6.1, 4.6.2, 4.6.3 and 4.6.4.

1.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The researcher abided by the ethical principles of research. Before the start of the data-gathering process, the researcher sought and obtained ethical clearance from UNISA's Ethical Clearance Committee (*cf.* Appendix B), which he used to obtain a permission letter from the Zimbabwean Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education to conduct the study (*cf.* Appendix D). The participants of the study's involvement in this study were voluntary, and they were informed of the purpose of the study. The dignity, privacy and the autonomy of the participants were respected. As such, the researcher used *pseudo* names for the participants and the specific locations where the focus group discussions were held to safeguard the participants and the sites' privacy respectively (Ary, Jacobs & Sorensen, 2010:592). An elaboration of the

ethical considerations of the study is given in Chapter 4, Section 4.7.

1.10 CLARIFICATION OF TERMS AND CONCEPTS IN THIS STUDY

In this study, the following terms and concepts shall mean as defined and explained below. These terms and concepts are as follows:

1.10.1 Curriculum, curriculum reform and implementation

In this study, and for delimiting purposes, the concept curriculum "… refers to an approved written plan, or guideline for teacher-pupil activities in, or outside the classroom situations. Whether it is a guide, proposal, or prescription, it should always have something to do with the purpose of teaching and learning" (Mashayamombe, 2006:25-26). In view of this working definition, the term shall be taken to mean, for example, the O-level History Syllabi, or *Secretary's Circular Number 3 of 2002* written by the then Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture, or both.

The concept curriculum reform shall carry a two-fold meaning in this study. To "reform" (as a verb) means to alter/improve, or change. When used as a noun, the word reform would mean the altered/improved, or changed version of the curriculum. Thus, in this study, curriculum reform refers to changing a curriculum, or the changed curriculum. As such, curriculum reform shall be taken to mean, for instance, official instruments/circulars disseminated to schools by the responsible authorities so that there would be some changes in the way teaching and learning were conducted in schools. An example of such an instrument is the *Secretary's Circular Number 3 of 2002*, issued by the then Zimbabwean Ministry of Education, Sport, Arts and Culture to direct the compulsory study of the subject History at secondary school level. Such a circular is considered a curriculum reform since it calls for some alterations/improvements, or changes in how the subject History should be taught. Besides, the concept curriculum reform can also mean the altered/improved, or the changed teaching guide like the History Syllabus 2167. In the case of the History Syllabus 2167, it was a curriculum reform, or an altered/changed curriculum since it was a revised version of the History Syllabus 2166 as earlier discussed in the background of the study.

In this study, curriculum implementation refers to when the teachers put the approved written plan, or guideline for teacher-pupil activities into reality with the actual learners. Thus, putting the curriculum into operation.

1.10.2 The concepts history (with a lower case "h") and History (with an upper case "H")

In view of the various contexts, the concept H(h)istory can be used, and for the benefit of the purpose of this thesis, the researcher used the word in two different ways to differentiate their meaning in this study. Therefore, in this study, the concept history (with a lower case) shall be taken to mean the actual events of the past. It refers to that which actually happened, about which little might be known. Emphasis is on what exactly happened, and not what is purported to have happened as recorded, or as said about such human past. The concept History (with an upper case) refers to the field of study, the academic discipline or subject. In the case of Zimbabwe, it refers to the school subject that emphasises the study of human past events. In this study, this school subject is often referred to as school History. This subject/field of study, for example in the case of Zimbabwe's secondary school History, covers pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial societies in Southern Africa as well as international events.

1.10.3 Ministry of Education, Sport, Arts and Culture

While Zimbabwe has two ministries of education, namely the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education and the Ministry of Higher Education and Technology, the former is referred to in this study. The former, which has been known by different names since 1980, is the Zimbabwean government ministry responsible for primary and secondary education (The Zimbabwe National Commission for UNESCO, The Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture and the Ministry of Higher Education and Technology, 2001:3). From 1980 onwards, it was called the Ministry of Education and Culture until the early 1990s when it became known as the Ministry of Education, Sport, Arts and Culture (MoESAC). From June 2013 to date (2023), the ministry's name has been changed to Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (MoPSE). In this study, the researcher also refers to it as the Education Ministry or Ministry of Education.

To manage primary and secondary education, the education ministry has two important departments/boards, namely the Curriculum Development Unit (CDU) and the Zimbabwe School Examination Council (ZIMSEC). The CDU plans and develops curricula for the Zimbabwean school system (Chinyani, 2013:15; Musarurwa & Chinhenga, 2011:173). This board works through subject panels drawn from teachers' representatives/organisations, college and university lecturers, and research experts (Chinyani, 2013:15). The CDU works closely with ZIMSEC, which is the national examination board, whose role it is to set and mark

terminal examinations for primary and secondary school candidates based on the curricula approved by the CDU (Musarurwa & Chinhenga, 2011:174).

Through circulars, the education ministry communicates with the CDU, the ZIMSEC, and other education stakeholders. The Permanent Secretary of the education ministry often signs the circulars. For instance, the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture signed the *Secretary's Circular Number 3 of 2002*, which directed the mandatory study of the subject History at the secondary school level (Ministry of Education, Sport, and Culture: 2002:5).

1.10.4 Zimbabwe African National Union Patriotic Front (ZANU PF)

The Zimbabwe African National Union Patriotic Front (ZANU PF) was the ruling political party in Zimbabwe from 1980 to 2008. From September 2009 to May 2013 it was not the sole ruling party since a unity government was established between ZANU PF and Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) to govern Zimbabwe. Again, ZANU PF became the ruling party from June 2013 to date (2023). The history of ZANU PF can be traced back to the time of the liberation struggle against British colonial rule.

1.10.5 Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe is a land-locked southern African country bordered by Mozambique in the East, Botswana in the West, Zambia in the North and South Africa in the South. Robert Mugabe led the country from independence in 1980 to 2017. From 2017 to 2023, the country has been under the presidency of Emmerson. D. Munangagwa. The country is divided into ten administrative provinces. Each province has an administrative city or capital. Table 1.1 below shows the provinces of Zimbabwe and their administrative cities.

Table 1.1: The provinces of Zimbabwe and their administrative cities

Number representing a province	Name of the province	Main city of the province
1	Bulawayo	Bulawayo
2	Harare	Harare
3	Manicaland	Mutare
4	Mashonaland Central	Bindura
5	Mashonaland East	Marondera

6	Mashonaland West	Chinhoyi
7	Masvingo	Masvingo
8	Matebeleland North	Lupane
9	Matebeleland South	Gwanda
10	Midlands	Gweru

Each provincial city has different government ministerial administrative offices at provincial level. For instance, provincial administrative offices for the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education, the Ministry of Home Affairs offices, the Ministry of Small and Medium Enterprise, and so forth.

1.10.6 The Manicaland Province of Zimbabwe

The Manicaland province is one of Zimbabwe's ten provinces. It is located in the Eastern side of Zimbabwe, and has part of its boundaries along the eastern border with Mozambique. The administrative town of the Manicaland province is Mutare. The Manicaland province has seven administrative districts, namely Buhera, Chimanimani, Chipinge, Makoni, Mutare, Mutasa and Nyanga. The province has a total of 406 secondary schools (Manicaland Provincial Education Office, 2023:1). The Table 1.2 below provides the names of the centres where the primary and secondary education administrative offices are located for each district. The total number of secondary schools for each district is also shown.

Table 1.2: The Manicaland district education administrative centres

Name of the district	District education administrative centre	Number of secondary schools
Buhera	Murambinda	73
Chimanimani	Chimanimani	27
Chipinge	Chipinge	65
Makoni	Rusape	90
Mutare	Mutare	75
Mutasa	Watsomba	42
Nyanga	Nyanga	34
Total number of secondary schools in the seven districts of Manicaland		**406**

Source: Manicaland Provincial Education Office (2023:1).

1.10.7 Zimbabwe's secondary education system

Zimbabwe's education system includes four levels. These are the pre-school, primary, secondary and tertiary education levels. The pre-school, primary and secondary education systems fall under the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (MoPSE). In the interest of time and delineation of this study, the researcher outlined the nature of the secondary education system only. The secondary school system contains three levels, namely the ZJC, O and A-levels. The MoPSE has set an official age required for admission to each of the three levels of secondary education. Table 1.3 below shows the official age when learners can be admitted into the Zimbabwean secondary education system.

Table 1.3: The admission age to the Zimbabwean secondary education system

LEVEL OF EDUCATION	AGE (YEARS)
ZJC level	13-14
O-level	15-16
A-level	17-18

Source: The Zimbabwe National Commission for UNESCO, and the Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture and the Ministry of Higher Education and Technology (2001:10).

It is important to highlight that while each level of education has an official entry age, secondary schools often admit learners into the secondary school system who are younger, or older than the official entry age. An elaboration of each of the education levels follows.

1.10.7.1 The Zimbabwe Junior Certificate Level (ZJC level)

This is the Zimbabwean education level that covers the first and second years of secondary education. The official entry age for this level is 13 years. The first year of secondary schooling is called Form One. The second year of secondary school education is known as Form Two, and the official entry age for this level is 14 years.

1.10.7.2 The Ordinary level (O-level)

This is the Zimbabwean education system that covers the third and fourth years of secondary school education. The official entry age for this level is 15 years. However, the Zimbabwean secondary schools admit O-level learners even below, or above the age of 15 years. The third year of secondary school is called Form Three, and the fourth year is Form Four.

1.10.7.3 The Advanced level (A-level)

This is the section of the Zimbabwean education system that covers the fifth and sixth years of secondary school education. Hence, it is the final cycle of the secondary school education system. The official entry age for this level is 17 years. However, the Zimbabwean secondary schools admit learners below, or above the age of 17 years. A learner is enrolled for the Form Five level if he/she has passed five O-level subjects. The fifth year of the secondary school level is called Form Five or the Lower Sixth Form, while the sixth year is Form Six or the Upper Sixth Form.

1.11 CHAPTER OVERVIEWS

This thesis is comprised of six chapters. In this subsection, the researcher provides an overview of each of the chapters. The purpose is to assist readers to have a clear understanding of the sections of the thesis as they unfold. The content of the respective chapters is as follows:

Chapter 1 is the introduction of the thesis, which begins by profiling the introduction and background of the study. After profiling the background of the study, the parameters which defined the boundaries of the study are outlined. It provides the reader with the research questions, aim and objectives that guided the focus of the study. The significance of the study is also given. The chapter further presents the research paradigm, approach and methods. Issues to do with trustworthiness of the study and ethical considerations for the study are also given. The chapter is concluded with an outline of chapter overviews.

Chapter 2 is a presentation of the conceptual framework of the study. It starts with the meaning and significance of a conceptual framework in a study, exposing the focal point of the latter, and then followed by different ways in which the concept curriculum has been defined, leading to the establishment of the working definition. After the establishment of the working definition, a review of the literature on curriculum development processes is provided. The focus is mainly on the various debates which have been raised by academics on curriculum reform, curriculum planning, design, development and evaluation. The models on curriculum planning, design, development, dissemination, implementation and evaluation are also discussed.

Chapter 3 reviews the four approaches that are available in understanding curriculum and theory and practice. It also presents the various positions given by academics on the nature of knowledge the school curriculum should transmit to learners. The chapter also focuses on the connectivity between politics and education. The researcher ends the chapter by reviewing studies carried out elsewhere and in Zimbabwe with regard to the place of the school subject History in the secondary school curricula. The review ranges from the classical justification of the inclusion of the subject in the school curricula up to the post-modernist argument that relegates the subject History to "sheer lies," among other grand narratives. In light of this, the chapter exposes the need to reconcile or have an understanding of the mandatory study of the subject History in Zimbabwe secondary schools from 2002 to 2016.

Chapter 4 deals with the research methodology that was adopted for the study. It reveals that interpretivism and qualitative were selected as the research paradigm and approach for the study in that order. The rationale for the adoption of the former and the latter are given as well. The chapter also states that a case study was chosen as the research type. The population and the sampling strategies are also discussed in detail. The chapter also identifies interviews, focus group discussions and a document study as the data-gathering methods for the study. The merits of these data-gathering methods are provided. The chapter also provides a detailed account of how the gathered data was organised, analysed and interpreted. It is concluded with issues to do with the trustworthiness of the study findings and the research ethics that were considered before, during and after the study.

Chapter 5 contains the findings of the study. It starts with the demographic information on the participants of the study. After the former, it focuses on the participants' perspectives in terms of the government of Zimbabwe's position of making the study of the subject History mandatory at secondary school level. The rationale for making the subject compulsory is critically evaluated. The approaches and models of curriculum reforms and implementation that were adopted by the then Ministry of Education, Sport, Arts and Culture to ensure the successful implementation of the reforms in the Zimbabwean secondary schools are presented too. In doing so, the researcher takes the opportunity to highlight the strengths and weaknesses of the approaches and models adopted and employed by the Ministry of Education in curriculum development and implementation process.

The chapter also reports the role of the education officers, secondary school heads and History teachers in the implementation of the History curriculum reforms in the secondary schools of the Manicaland Province, particularly in the Mutare and Mutasa districts. Challenges that were faced by the above-mentioned participants of the study during the period

of the study (2002 to 2016) are also highlighted. The chapter ends with the views of the participants in terms of how best the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education should have enhanced the successful implementation of the History curriculum reforms.

Chapter 6 provides the summary of the literature review and the findings of the study. A synthesis of the literature review and the empirical study is also provided in this chapter. Conclusion(s) of the research findings, being guided by the research questions are also provided. With regard to the main research question, it is concluded that the compulsory study of the subject History was, to a less extent, a success. The chapter also gives some recommendations, including the curriculum consensus model, a proposed curriculum development model that may assist to enhance a successful curriculum implementation. The chapter ends with suggestions for further research.

1.12 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter gave the introductory statement of this study. It started with the background information of the study, followed by the parameters that were used to mark the boundaries of the study. The problem statement and the research questions of the study were provided too. In addition, the aims, objectives and the significance of the study were given. The conceptual framework and a summarised version of the research methodology of the study were given as well. Also pointed out in this chapter were issues of trustworthiness of the study and the ethical considerations. The chapter also gave an outline of the definition of terms and concepts. It was concluded with the chapter overviews. The next chapter is a presentation of the conceptual framework and curriculum development processes.

CHAPTER 2

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

2.1 INTRODUCTON

While the previous chapter was an introductory statement of the study, this chapter is a presentation of the conceptual framework of the study. In this regard, the conceptual framework of the study is anchored on concepts and theories or models with regard to curriculum development processes. Given the above, the presentation of the conceptual framework of the study begins by sign-posting the various proposed definitions for the concept curriculum, leading to the construction of the working definitions for the concepts curriculum and curriculum reforms. Second, matters and issues concerning curriculum development processes, in particular pertaining to the meaning of the concepts curriculum planning, design and development are also outlined from different scholarly viewpoints. Third, the Tyler model, Taba model and Lawton model for curriculum development are further discussed. The reason for selecting these models is that they have greatly influenced curriculum development processes globally. Fourth, and last, Tyler's objective attainment model, Stufflebeam's context, input, process and product (CIPP) model and Bertalanff's systems model for curriculum evaluation are also discussed because their axioms are trending in curriculum evaluation global patterns. Tyler's curriculum development model, as discussed in later sections of this chapter, forms the nerve centre of the conceptual framework of this study. The definition of the concept conceptual framework and the focal point of the conceptual framework of this study are briefly given below.

2.2 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

A conceptual framework is an important underpinning of educational research. Varpio, et. al., (2020:990) opined a conceptual framework as an academic statement which outlines the state of known knowledge, normally through a literature review, exposing some gaps in one's understanding of a phenomenon and offers a guide on how such a phenomenon or problem may be investigated. According to Salamoo (2023:1), it serves as a tool that researchers employ to guide the processes of research by providing key ideas that underpin the study. She (Salomao, 2023:1) added that the conceptual framework facilitates in the identification of the research questions and clarification of the research methodology. In the context of curriculum issues, Taba (1962:420) defined conceptual framework as a way of organising

thinking with regard to all important matters concerning curriculum development. She further added that its purpose is that it works as a guide to curriculum research because it identifies elements of the curriculum, their relationship to each other and the organisational requirements or administrative conditions under which the curriculum has to be operated (Taba (1962:421). Given the above, in this study, a conceptual framework means a formal concept backed by empirical findings from the literature. While the conceptual framework of this study is discussed in the entire chapter, its focal point is briefly identified in the next paragraph, showing some relationships with this study, and hence, ultimately acting as a guide and motivator for this study.

As earlier mentioned in this chapter, Tyler's curriculum development model formed the main basis of the conceptual framework of the study. In his model, Tyler proposed four crucial stages of curriculum development process, namely establishing educational purposes, selection of learning experiences, organising learning experiences and determining whether the educational purposes have been attained (Tyler, 1949:1). More detail about the model is provided in Section 2.5.1 and Figure 2.2. Tyler emphasised that once a curriculum program is finalised, its implementation has to follow to assist learners to reach specified ends as stated in the educational objectives (Tyler, as cited in Marsh, 2009:30-31). Presumably, this leads to curriculum fidelity. Curriculum fidelity means implementing the curriculum as the developers intended (Cho, 1998:5). For Süer and Kinay (2022:191) and Thierry, Vincent and Norris (2022:93), curriculum fidelity refers to the dosage of adherence and closeness between the formal (developer's intention) and the program implemented, which is determined by the extent to which the curriculum is implemented in accordance to its original design.

While Tyler model's is much more centred on the administrator as the curriculum maker (Ruubel, 2013:4; Saracaloglua *et. al.*; 2010:2432; *cf.* Section 5.2.1), Pieters and Roblin (2019:6) and Süer and Kinay (2022:191) emphasised that the teacher is an important variable for curriculum fidelity because his/her attitude and behaviour determine the success of the implementation phase of the designed curriculum. Hence, the concepts or factors related to the successful implementation of any curriculum change form the basis of the conceptual framework for this study. This paved the way for the researcher to visualise the research problem (Salomao, 2023:1). Given the above, this study was carried out with the view to establish the extent to which the compulsory study of the subject History was successfully implemented at secondary school level in the Mutare and Mutasa districts in Manicaland. Additionally, the conceptual framework adopted for this study influenced the construction of the research questions for the study (*cf* Section 1.4). It also influenced the selection of the research paradigm, approach and methods for this study (*cf* Section 1.7 & Chapter 4). The

next section is, therefore, a brief discussion of the concepts curriculum and curriculum reform.

2.3 THE CONCEPTS CURRICULUM AND CURRICULUM REFORM

To start with, curriculum theorists do not have a unanimous definition of the term curriculum. The term curriculum was derived from the Latin word *currere,* which means to run a race (Olibie, 2014:40; Khan & Law, 2015:68; Offorma, 2014:17). Similarly, Namasasu (2012:18) says: "The word curriculum has its origin in the days of the Roman Empire when it was used to refer to a course covered during chariot races." In the Graeco world, where Greeks were known for their love for sports, the term was used to refer to the distance a runner had to cover from the starting to the finishing line (Supriani, *et al.*, 2022:486). In this regard, the general meaning of the term curriculum was taken to mean a course of study. Nkyabonaki (2013:110) exposed that educationists considered such a definition as narrow and weak. As a result, the term has been defined in many similar and different ways. Below are some of the similar and different definitions of the concept curriculum as set forward by some educationists.

According to Nevenglosky (2018:8), a curriculum is a complete program established for learners that includes their experience and knowledge prospects. It is a set of tools that are meant to achieve an educational goal or aim, and it ranges from planning and implementation to evaluation (Madondo, 2021:401; Supriani, *et al.*, 2022:485). For Dewey (as cited in Ruubel, 2013:10), it is a bridge between the learner and culture. Lawton (as quoted in Mashayamombe, 2006:25) viewed it as a selection from culture. In the same vein, Apple (1993:222) considers it as "… part of a selective tradition, someone's selection, and some group's vision of legitimate knowledge." For Nijhuis (2019:84), a curriculum is fitted in societal and political views. It has also been defined as: ''All the learning which is planned and guided by the school, whether it is carried out in groups or individually, inside or outside the school" (Kerr, as cited in Smith, 2000:1). All the experiences that learners are exposed to during their interaction at school (Tyler, as cited in Nkyabonaki, 2013:110). For Zvobgo (2007:53-54), it is "… the culmination of what society wants disseminated to its offsprings and is the expression of its aspirations. It defines the aims and objectives of a national system of education and is in fact a social, economic and political activity." Ndawi and Maravanyika (2011:69) regard the concept curriculum as: "The learning experiences as intended by planners, the learning experiences as received by teachers, the learning experiences as transmitted by teachers, and the learning experiences as experienced by the pupil." Young (2013:111) gives a reserved definition of the term as he puts it: "Curriculum refers to the knowledge that pupils are entitled to know, it does not include pupils' experiences."

In light of these varying definitions, in this study, the concept curriculum "… refers to an approved written plan or guideline for teacher-pupil activities in or outside the classroom situations. Whether it is a guide, proposal or prescription, it should always have something to do with the purpose of teaching and learning" (Mashayamombe, 2006:25-26). In view of this working definition, the term shall be also taken to specifically mean the O-level History Syllabi or Circular Number 2 of 2002 written by the then Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture, or both.

The concept curriculum reform carries a two-fold meaning in this study. To reform (as a verb) means to alter/improve, or change. The word reform, when used as a noun, would mean the altered/improved or changed version of the curriculum. For Marsh (2009:161), the concept "curriculum reform" refers "… to changes instituted from above." He goes on to elaborate on this when he says that only the government has the power to decide on reforms in education (Marsh, 2009:161). So, in this study, the concept curriculum reform refers to the changing of a curriculum or the changed curriculum. As such, curriculum reform shall be taken to mean, for instance, the official instruments or circulars disseminated to schools by the relevant government ministry so that there would be some changes in the way teaching and learning are conducted in the schools. An example of such an instrument is the Circular Number 3 of 2002 which was issued by the then Zimbabwean Ministry of Education, Sport, Arts and Culture to direct the compulsory study of the subject History at secondary school level. A circular such as the above is considered as curriculum reform since it calls for improvements or changes in the way the subject History should be taught. Besides, the concept curriculum reform can also mean the altered/improved/changed teaching guide, like the History Syllabus 2167 which was a revised version of the History Syllabus 2166 as discussed in the background section of the study (also see Chapter 1, Section 1.10.1).

2.4 CURRICULUM PLANNING, DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT

Curriculum scholars have defined and discussed the concepts curriculum planning, design and development differently, and without a unanimous agreement. For some, curriculum planning and design are part of curriculum development, while others regard them as separate concepts with different meanings (Alsubaie, 2016:107; Dogan and Altun, 2013:50; Kurasha and Chabaya, 2013:57; Ornstein & Hunkins, 2009:182). To start with, Giroux (as quoted in Chipeta, Mazile & Shumba, 2000:41) defined curriculum development as a practical and not theoretical process that, "… aims at designing a curriculum system to attain educational goals." In agreement, Kurasha and Chabaya (2013:57) defined it as the act of selecting and refining of the content which schools or learning institutions have to implement. For Alsubaie

(2016:107), it is the process of meeting the student's needs. It is a process of planning, designing and implementation of the curriculum (Dogan and Altun, 2013:50). Such a process results in the improvement of the student learning. Kurasha and Chabaya (2013:58) defined curriculum development as "… an improvement, change or modification on already existing educational programmes, as the curriculum is never static." In Zambia, curriculum development is an on-going process that is meant to transform learners and society in general so that they remain in tandem with the rapid global social and economic changes and development (Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational Training and Early Education, 2013:iii). To this end, curriculum development can be considered as the actual process of curriculum construction. According to the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (2012:6) and Nijhuis (2019:83), curriculum development can be explained as a process that includes curriculum shaping, curriculum writing, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and review.

Kurasha and Chabaya (2013:57) also acknowledged that curriculum development involves a number of stages, and some of them include: planning of the learning experiences based on the national policy, production of teaching and learning materials, trial of the instructional materials and implementation of the programme of instruction. The planning aspect during the curriculum development process involves putting in place subject panels or resource persons that plan and conduct needs assessment (Mohanasundaram, 2018:5). These committees would then formulate the curriculum aims, goals, objectives, content and design the curriculum materials (Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority, 2012:11-13; Mohanasundaram, 2018:5). The curriculum materials, which include teaching and learning aids, would be piloted-tested and evaluated and reviewed against the curriculum aims, goals or objectives (Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority, 2012:11-13). In the case of Australia, the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority Board would then monitor the implementation of the Australian curriculum to determine whether the curriculum aims, goals or objectives were achieved (Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority, 2010:14).

In view of the above, curriculum developers in Africa consider the concept of curriculum development as the process of constructing new or revising existing teaching and learning materials (Chipeta, Mazile & Shumba, 2000:41). Similarly, Urebvu (1999:9) argued that curriculum development is a process that involves devising teaching and learning materials, implementing them and developing human resources. In the same way, Ornstein and Levine (1993:539) noted that "… curriculum development is often limited to the publication of curriculum guides and books." Therefore, regarding this definition, the concept of curriculum

development emphasises curriculum construction that takes place to achieve educational aims. In contrast, Zais (as quoted in Chipeta, Mazile & Shumba, 2000:41) gives a different definition of the concept. For Zais (as quoted in Chipeta, Mazile & Shumba, 2000:41), the concept curriculum development means "… a pre-curriculum construction process which determines how curriculum construction would proceed … .", and such a process is guided by the following questions: Who will be involved in the curriculum construction? What procedures will be used in curriculum construction? What committees will be used in curriculum construction? How will these committees be organised?

In Zambia, curriculum development is considered "… a consultative and participatory process … ." that involves various role-players such as government officials, non-governmental organisations, civic societies, traditional leaders and university and college academics (Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational Training and Early Education, 2013:iii-iv). In view of who is involved in the curriculum development process, Kurasha and Chabaya (2013:63) posit that the government plays the central role. The same happens in Turkey (Dogan & Altun, 2013:51; Saracaloglua, *et al.*, 2010:2432). To emphasise Kurasha and Chabaya's (2013:63) position, there is nothing such as an apolitical curriculum, and mentioned Zimbabwe as an example where the state ideology directed the formulation of educational policies and curriculum development process. It has also been argued that it is the responsibility of outside experts or specialists to plan and design a curriculum, while the role of teachers is limited as they are classroom implementers (Dogan & Altun, 2013:50). Alsubaie (2016:106) contradicted the position that the state takes the central position in curriculum development process. In this case, it is argued that teachers should play the central role. Thus, for a curriculum development process to be a success and effective, "… the most important person, … the teacher …" who is the implementer of the curriculum has to be at the centre of curriculum development (Alsubaie, 2016:106). This forms the basis of a new approach to curriculum development and mapping, which argues that teachers should be at the centre of curriculum development because they are the primary and most effective practitioners in that field (Dogan & Altun, 2013:50-51; Handler, 2010:32). The approach reduces inconsistencies or gaps between the official curriculum and what happens on the ground. In Australia, the role-players such as the curriculum secretariat and writers, advisory panels and the subject panels put aside their conflict of interests in their participation in curriculum design and development (Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority, 2010:8)

However, be that as it may, Zais' definition of the concept curriculum development (as quoted in Chipeta, Mazile & Shumba, 2000:41) has been criticised as unfitting, but as that which suits the concept of curriculum planning. This follows Zais' position (as quoted in Chipeta, Mazile &

Shumba, 2000:41) that curriculum development as a decision-making process can be guided by the following questions: What is the nature of a good society? What content should students learn? What activities should the students engage in? How should we assess the merit of the objectives, content and learning activities?

Given the above questions, one may contradict and argue that it should rather guide curriculum planning. In this regard, curriculum planning refers to the pre-curriculum process that determines the nature and organisation of what learners would be exposed to before the actual curriculum development starts (Urebvu, 1999:9). Ornstein and Hunkins (2009:182) call it curriculum design. Curriculum design refers to the way in which curriculum components are positioned (Mohanasundaram, 2018:4). For Ornstein and Hunkins (2009:182), curriculum design has to do with "… thinking about a curriculum plan or shape, and the arrangements of its parts … ." Mohanasundaram (2018:4) and Ornstein and Hunkins (2009:182) agreed that curriculum design focused on the nature and arrangement of four basic parts: aims or objectives, content, learning experiences, and evaluation. Mitchell (2016:46) states that curriculum design focuses on what has to be learnt, how it has to be learnt and why it has to be learnt. In agreement, Urebvu (1999:9) says that curriculum design "… is concerned with the problem of making a choice of what should be the organisational basis or structural framework of the curriculum." To this end, Urebvu (1999:9) developed the following questions that guide the curriculum planning or design process: What should be taught? How will it be taught? To what segment of the population should it be taught? What should be the relationship between the various elements of the curriculum?

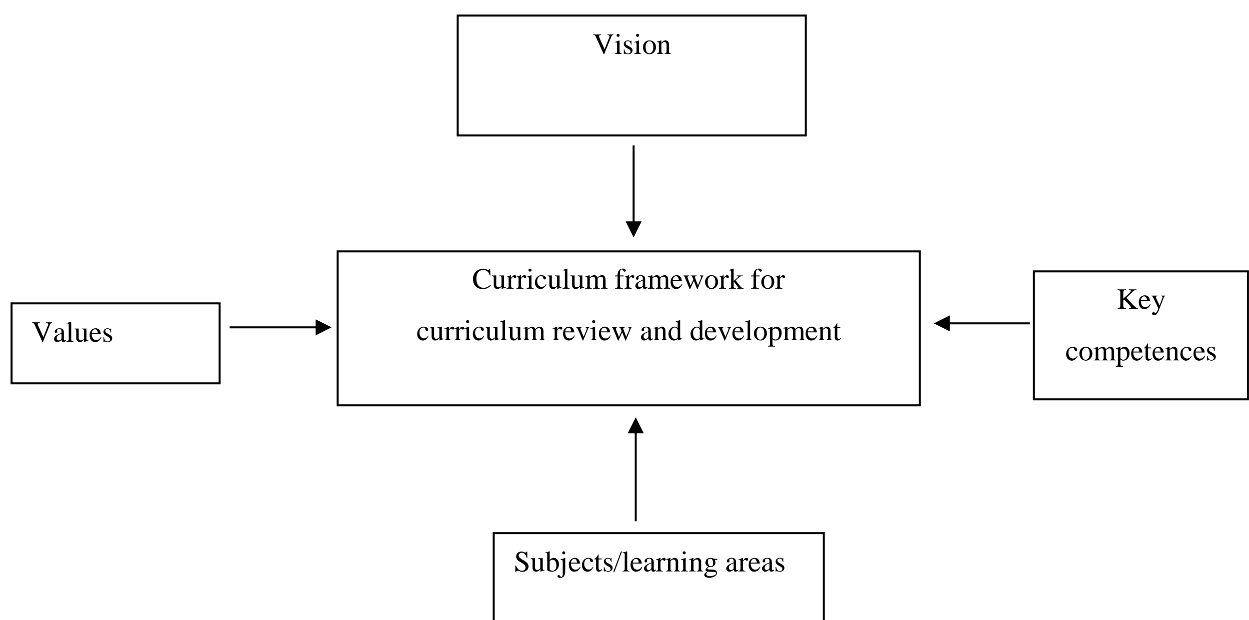
In this study, the researcher uses Voogt, Pieters and Roblin's (2019:6) definition of the concept curriculum design as the working definition. The authors (Voogt, Pieters and Roblin, 2019:6) posited that curriculum design is a subsect of curriculum development, that aims at closing the gap between curriculum intentions and implementation. To put it in other words, it focuses on how to ensure that the curriculum reforms work in practice (Voogt, Pieters and Roblin, 2019:6).

Beauchamp (as quoted in Chipeta, Mazile & Shumba, 2000:41) gives an encompassing definition of the concept curriculum development. While he avoids using the term curriculum development, but curriculum engineering; for him, the concept means the same. For Beauchamp (as quoted in Chipeta, Mazile & Shumba, 2000:42), the concept curriculum engineering refers to "… all the processes necessary to make a curriculum system functional in a school." This definition includes both the pre-curriculum construction and the curriculum construction processes. It is on this basis of including the pre-curriculum construction process

that this definition is criticised. The pre-curriculum construction process is considered as the planning stage for curriculum development since it is at this level that there is careful planning for some future programmes to be done. For Offorma (2014:79), curriculum development focuses on the preparation and arrangement of materials that facilitate curriculum implementation. In this regard, curriculum implementation is not considered as part of curriculum development.

While Zambia's Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational Training and Early Education (2013:iii & iv) regards curriculum development as a consultative and participatory process, an on-going exercise necessitated by the continuous global socio-economic changes, curriculum review is a critical phase/stage for the entire process. In this regard, the Zambian model of curriculum review and development is represented in the illustration in Figure 2.1 below.

Figure 2.1: The Zambian model for curriculum review and development



Source: Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational Training and Early Education (2013:xi).

In view of the above, there are four main aspects that influence curriculum review and development. There are pertinent questions that direct each of the four aspects (Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational Training and Early Education, 2013:viii-xi).

> Vision: Do we have a shared vision for the learners and their learning? Do we have qualified and motivated teaching staff? Do we have enough infrastructure and resources? Values: Have we identified and agreed on values we believe are important for the country? Key competences: What competences have been identified that have to be nurtured and developed in our learners? What

> necessary conditions have been developed that will assist in the development of the expected competences? Subjects/learning areas: Are all critical subjects/learning areas clearly defined? Are there mechanisms in place to verify whether our education system meets the needs and interests of learners?

According to the Zambian model for curriculum review and development, the afore mentioned questions are important as they will "… serve as a checklist in the curriculum review process in order to minimise waste of efforts and resources and sought optimal learning outcomes" (Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational Training and Early Education, 2013:xi).

The Malawi Institute of Education has a broad understanding of curriculum development. According to this Institute of Education (as cited in Chipeta, Mazile and Shumba, 2000:41), the concept of curriculum development constitutes a number of stages. First, there is a selection of subject panels (curriculum committees) which goes through continuous training. The curriculum committees would then engage in curriculum planning, formulation of the curriculum aims and objectives, content selection and determining the nature of instructional materials to be produced (Chipeta, Mazile & Shumba, 2000:41). The instructional material is then designed, printed, distributed to schools for implementation and then evaluated (Chipeta, Mazile & Shumba, 2000:41).

A close analysis of the curriculum development process which the Malawi Institute of Education has been using includes both the pre-curriculum construction and the curriculum construction stages. While the concept curriculum development has been viewed and defined differently, in this study, the concept refers to all the processes and stages that involve developing a curriculum, that is from curriculum planning level until it is ready for implementation at school level. Below is a discussion on models of curriculum development.

2.4 CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT MODELS

Having reviewed the different views and definitions of the concept curriculum development, this section set out the different models for curriculum development as proposed by different scholars. The use of models in curriculum development is critical since it promotes greater efficiency and productivity (Olivia, as cited in Lunenburg, 2011:1). To start with, a curriculum model refers to a format of curriculum design developed to realise educational goals (Abdusattorovna & Ajikulloevna, 2023:382). It is a pattern that serves as a guideline to action (Lunenburg, 2011:1). It can also be considered as a representation of something. To give

examples, there could be a model of a new executive car, a model of a three-wheel motor cycle, or a model of a smart phone. According to Mkandawire (2010:1), it "… is a simplified representation of [the] complex reality …" of the process of curriculum development, which enables us to understand the process better. In view of the afore-mentioned definitions, in this study, the concept curriculum development model shall mean a prescription, diagrammatic or flow-chart representation that guides a curriculum development process from start to finish.

Curriculum scholars have developed numerous curriculum development models. Some of the models which have been proposed are Beauchamp's managerial model, Hunkins' decision-making model, Johnson's model of the dynamics of curriculum and instruction, Kerr's product model, Lawton's cultural analysis model, the Malawi Institute of Education model, Stenhouse's process model, Taba's grassroots model, Tyler's objective model, and Wheeler's cyclical model (Abdusattorovna & Ajikulloevna, 2023:382; Lawton, 2012:5; Lunenburg, 2011:3; Offorma, 2014:82; Ornstein & Hunkins, 1998:199; Posner, 1995:13-19, Ruubel, 2013:3-6). The curriculum development models reviewed in this section are linked to the names of the scholars who propounded them. For the sake of time and space, only three models for curriculum development are reviewed. Additionally, these models for curriculum development were reviewed because they are still popular and used as standard references in curriculum construction even to this present day (Abdusattorovna & Ajikulloevna, 2023:381). Besides, their tenets are related to this study. These are Tyler's objective model, Taba's grassroots model and Lawton's cultural analysis model. To be specific, the review focuses mainly on the tenets of these curriculum development models and, to a lesser extent, on a critique of the same. An elaboration of the above follows.

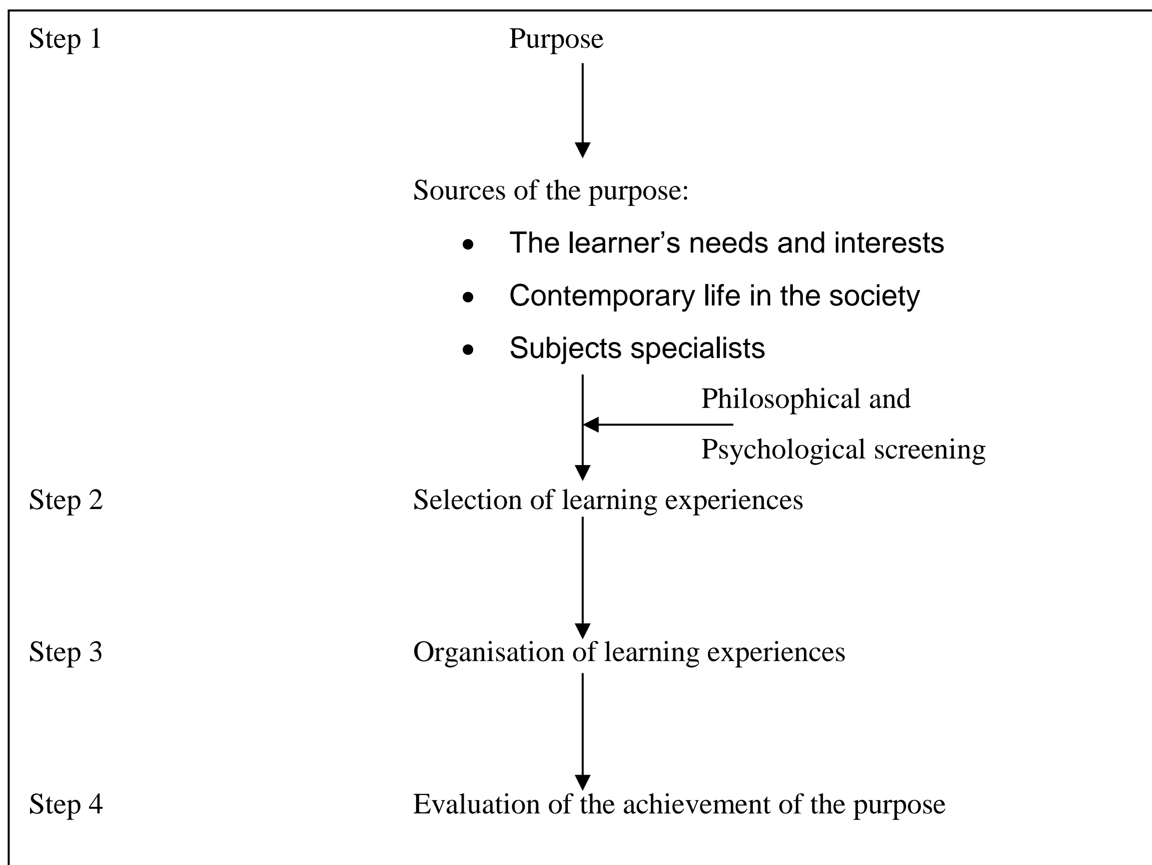
2.5.1 Tyler's objective or rationale model

This model for curriculum development is named after its designer, Ralph Tyler who was a professor of Curriculum Studies at the University of Chicago in the United States in 1949. The Tyler model is also called the objective or rationale model. This model is one of the earliest models in the curriculum development literature. According to Chen, Chen and Cheng (sa:4), Tyler's model considers curriculum as a way of attaining an educational objective. It is also important to review Tyler's classical model on curriculum development because it has frequently been used in the process of developing curriculum materials in Africa. Tyler (1949:1; Abdusattorovna & Ajikulloevna, 2023:383; Marsh, 2009: 30-31; Mitchell, 2016:49; Offorma, 2014:81; Ruubel, 2013:3), who propounded the objective model for curriculum development, proposed four crucial questions which curriculum designers have to consider and answer

when designing a national school curriculum. The four questions which curriculum designers have to answer are: What educational purposes should the school seek to attain? What educational experiences can be selected that are likely to be useful in attaining these purposes? How can the learning experiences be organised for effective instruction? How can it be determined whether the educational purposes have been attained? (Tyler, 1949:1).

For Tyler (1949:3), the above-mentioned questions, which are related to the selection of the learning objectives, experiences and the organising and evaluating of the latter, have to be considered in that order. A close analysis of these questions further suggests that there is a need for curriculum planners or developers to conceptualise the goals that their educational programs targeted to achieve (Tyler, as cited in Offorma, 2014:80). Tyler (1949:3) asserts that the development of curriculum goals or objectives is the first stage in curriculum development because it works as the central guide for all the other processes of the curriculum designer. The goals of education programmes, which become the basis of the content selection, teaching and learning activities, teaching materials and examinations, are influenced by a number of factors. Figure 2.2 below is a representation of the Tyler model.

Figure 2.2: A representation of Tyler's model for curriculum development



Source: Chipeta, Mazile and Shumba (2000:50)

Tyler (1949:4-5) was aware of the different schools of thought in regard to what determines the selection of the educational objectives. For instance, he is aware that the progressives emphasise that the selection of objectives should be based on the learners' interests and expectations (Tyler, 1949:4). On the other hand, the essentialists are concerned that the selection of the objectives be primarily based on the body of knowledge collected over a long period of time such as cultural heritage (Tyler, 1949:4-5). For him, sociologists would want objectives to be driven from the problems affecting contemporary society (Tyler, 1949:5). However, in view of the above-mentioned different and contradictory schools of thought, Tyler (1949:5) argued that there is no single source that can be adequately used as the basis for the formulation of educational objectives. Rather, Tyler (1949:5-32) advised that curriculum designers should factor in the learners, society and subject specialists' considerations when coming up with curriculum objectives. The argument is that these three, the learner, society and the subject specialists, are equally important sources when it comes to the selection of what educational purposes should the school curriculum attain. An elaboration of the four steps of Tyler's model is provided in the next subsections.

a) Aims, goals and objectives of the curriculum

Before discussing how Tyler (1949:3) explains the significance of establishing objectives when developing an educational curriculum, the basic difference between aims, goals and objectives has to be clarified. There is no unanimous position among many educationists in terms of the meaning of the concepts aims, goals and objectives (Posner, 1995:73). According to Wilson (2014:1), while the concepts (aims, goals and objectives) have different meanings, they are somehow confusing in terms of curriculum writing. As a result, there is a tendency by curriculum scholars and educationists in general to use these concepts interchangeably (Ornstein & Hunkins, 1998:269). However, in general terms, the difference in the meaning of these concepts lies on the basis of progression from general to specific instructional ideas (Wilson, 2014:1). According to Ornstein and Hunkins (1998:269), aims are "… general statements that provide both shape and direction for more specific actions designed to achieve some future product or behaviour." For Urebvu (1999:26) curriculum aims are "… statements that describe outcomes of life experiences based on some values, either consciously or unconsciously borrowed from philosophy." Unlike goals or objectives, Urebvu (1999:26) further asserts that aims do not relate directly to teaching and learning situations. It implies that educational aims are achieved when one has finished school education.

Offorma (2014:84) and Zais (as quoted in Urebvu, 1999:27-28) refer to curriculum goals as school outcomes and that they tend to be long-range in focus, as the targets are removed

from immediate classroom assessment. To this end, some educationists call them general objectives (Urebvu, 1999:28). Objectives are specified intended changes to be cultivated in the learner by the end of the lesson (Urebvu, 1999:28). In this regard, objectives have to be "… absolutely specific, measurable and unambiguous" (Urebvu, 1999:28).

Wilson (2014:1) provided broadly accepted or standardised definitions of the concepts aims, goals and objectives in the field of curriculum studies, and education in general. For Wilson (2014:1), aims are general statements that provide direction or intent to educational action and are not directly measurable, while goals are more specific than aims. According to Tyler (1949:6), objectives refer to "… the kinds of changes in behaviour that an educational institution seeks to bring about in its students." Objectives are usually specific statements of educational intention which delineate either general or specific outcomes. Refer to Chapter 1, Sections 1.5.1 and 1.5.2 for further detail on definitions of the concepts aim and objective.

A close analysis of the meaning of the concepts aims, goals and objectives revealed that they differ mainly in terms of their focus, ranging from general to specific. In addition, Ornstein and Hunkins (1998:274) remind educationists to avoid the erroneous and interchangeable use of the three concepts, but to know that aims are translated into goals, and goals into objectives. In spite of the different meanings of these concepts, Tyler (as quoted in Nkyabonaki, 2013:111) pointed out that to come up with curriculum purposes, curriculum constructors or developers must include the considerations of learners, society and subject specialists. These considerations or factors are discussed in detail below.

b) The learner considerations

Tyler (1949:6-16; and also as quoted in Nkyabonaki, 2013:112; Ornstein & Hunkins, 2009:185) pointed out that the learner's needs have to be considered by curriculum developers if they are to construct or develop a relevant curriculum. The argument is that the learner's needs and interests are an invaluable source of curriculum objectives. For example, the psychological or cognitive development of the learner has to guide curriculum developers in coming up with appropriate curriculum objectives. It is in line with this argument that Bruner (as cited in Ornstein & Hunkins, 2009:189) calls for a curriculum which is "… in a spiral fashion in increasing depth and breadth as pupils advance through the school program." In this regard, considering the learner's needs and interests, it would help curriculum developers to establish the necessary learning conditions under which it would be possible to achieve the intended goals or objectives. As such, it would be necessary for curriculum constructors or developers to conduct studies on the learners to identify their needs and interests (Tyler, 1949:10-13).

c) The societal considerations

Besides the learner's needs and interests influencing the selection of curriculum objectives, Tyler (1949:17) pointed out that the problems and needs of society have also to be considered by curriculum developers when formulating curriculum objectives. The point is that developing a curriculum with objectives based on societal problems and needs would be a necessity since the learner would end up being equipped with the appropriate knowledge and skills needed by him or her for effective interaction with his or her society (Tyler, 1949:17). It is in consideration of this context, that Lawton (as cited in Mashayamombe, 2006:25) defined curriculum as a selection from culture. Nijhuis (2019:86) opined that socio-cultural beliefs and values influence curriculum reform. Supporting the aspect of societal considerations as instrumental in the formulation of curriculum goals or objectives, Zvobgo (1997:63) and Chipeta, Mazile and Shumba (2000:50) reiterated that Zimbabwe's political ideology of socialism, Botswana's ideology of *Kagisano* (sense of community, characterized by peace and harmony) and Zambia's humanism had a direct impact on the curriculum goals and objectives of these Southern African countries. In addition to societal considerations in curriculum development, Tyler (1949:25) identified subject specialists' considerations as another vital factor, as clarified below.

d) The subject specialists' considerations

Another factor influencing curriculum goals or objectives is the inclusion of subject specialists among the curriculum developers (Tyler, 1949:25; and as quoted in Lunenburg, 2011:2; Nkyabonaki, 2013:112). The argument is that since the inclusion of subject specialists is a pre-requisite in curriculum development, it would be unavoidable to involve the subject specialists in providing goals or objectives which are subject specific. Tyler (1949:25) posited that most colleges' objectives, as well as schools and college textbooks, are normally written by subject specialists and contain their views. Evidence on the ground, for instance, in Tanzania, shows that many curricula are a result of subject experts' opinions (Nkyabonaki, 3013:112). Nkyabonaki (2013:112) justified the inclusion of subject specialists on the basis that they have wider attributes and knowledge to contribute to the education curriculum since the learners are not specialists like them.

e) Philosophical and psychological screening of curriculum aims, goals or objectives

The curriculum aims, goals or objectives derived from the three considerations discussed above would then pass through some kind of screening to ensure coherence and to remove

the non-applicable ones (Abdusattorovna & Ajikulloevna, 2023:385-386). Tyler, 1949:33). The justification for the screening of the objectives is on the basis that some of the objectives obtained from the three sources (the learners' needs, societal needs and subject specialists) would be "… inconsistent with others" (Tyler, 1949:33). According to Tyler (1949:34&37; and as cited in Lunenburg, 2011:2; Nkyabonaki, 2013:111; Ornstein & Hunkins, 2009:183), the curriculum goals or objectives would go through what is called philosophical and psychological screening. For Chen, Chen and Cheng (sa:8), the temporary general aims, goals, or objectives have to go through educational philosophy and psychology screening to remove irrelevance. Kurasha and Chabaya (2013:58) admitted that philosophy influences aims, goals or objectives for curriculum instruction. In the same vein, Ornstein and Hunkins (2009:181) and Tyler (1949:33) agreed that curriculum aims, goals or objectives have to be screened when they say that when designing a curriculum, philosophical and learning theories have to be considered to determine whether the designs are in tandem with the society's basic values and beliefs, as well as what and how the learners should learn. In this regard, the philosophy of education that relates to society would then define the appropriate curriculum aims, goals or objectives since the educational philosophy of society determines the expected good life for the learners (Offorma, 2014:79). Tyler (as quoted in Chipeta, Mazile & Shumba, 2000:51) further postulated that specific questions or statements which would be used to screen the curriculum goals or objectives should be guided on the basis of the following: the acceptance of every human being regardless of his/her gender, an opportunity for everyone's participation in the activities of their society and the promotion of a variety of types of personalities.

A close analysis of the basis of the philosophical screening shows that the curriculum aims, goals or objectives have to offer an opportunity to develop in the learner values of the good life in society. However, the values of a good life in society are attained only if the curriculum purposes have been screened well. Orr (as cited in Ornstein & Hunkins, 2009:181) sums up what he considered the four curriculum aims as perceived by educators and the general public as follows: to eliminate ignorance, to supply all knowledge needed to manage society and the earth, to increase human goodness through instilling wisdom and to enable students to be upwardly mobile and economically successful.

In addition to the philosophical screening of educational purposes, Tyler (1949:37) further pointed out that curriculum designers should also make use of the psychology of education. In this regard, curriculum aims, goals or objectives have to be determined by the age or the cognitive development of the learner (Bruner, as cited in Ornstein & Hunkins, 2009:189). According to Tyler (1949:38-39), the use of psychology in screening educational objectives helps in considering age levels or a range of grades so that the objectives match the cognitive

level of the learners. Besides, the psychology of learning also gives curriculum developers some idea about the length of time needed to achieve an objective (Tyler, 1949:38).

f) Selection of learning experiences

According to Tyler (1949:43-44), following the successful formulation and screening of curriculum goals or objectives is the selection of learning experiences. In this case, the learning experiences refer "… to the interaction between the student and her environment" (Tyler, as cited in Lunenburg, 2011:3). Tyler (1949:44) advises that the objectives should be stated in a desirable way or in a form that helps in the selection of learning experiences and in guiding teaching. For Tyler (as cited in Lunenburg, 2011:3), the learning experiences are punctuated by the student's interests, perceptions and previous experiences, hence it is not within the teacher's jurisdiction to select them. Nevertheless, the teacher can still control the learning experiences to achieve the expected outcomes. To this end, Tyler considers those in positions of higher authority such as curriculum/subject specialists, administrators, and leaders of society to take the role of curriculum makers rather than classroom teachers (Tyler, as cited in Handler, 2010:33; Ruubel, 2013:4). Therefore, the selection of learning experience level is a critical stage since the attainment of the curriculum goals or objectives will be determined by the learning experiences. The learning experiences, as Tyler (as cited in Chipeta, Mazile & Shumba, 2000:51) argues, should be carefully chosen so that they will be able to influence the learners to develop positive attitudes towards self and others and to develop skills useful for oneself and society.

g) Organisation of learning experiences

The third step in curriculum development has to do with the organisation of the learning experiences. According to Tyler (1950:46), this stage is critical because "… without the oraganisation, the learning experiences are isolated, isolated and haphazard. No matter how effective an individual learning experience may be, if it is not followed up in subsequent phases, it is not likely that significant changes will take place in the learner." At this stage, there is a methodical arrangement of experiences showing some relationship between what has been learnt in various fields (Tyler, as quoted in Posner, 1995:13-14). For Tyler (1950:47), organisation of learning experiences is not only an important stage of curriculum development, but is also a complex and problematic process. For this reason, he gives three questions that should be used as a guide to the process, thus:

> How can the learning experiences of the coming week and month best strengthen those of the current week and month in order to produce a maximum

> cumulative effect? How can the learning experiences of the current semester not only strengthen those of the previous semester but also to ensure that the students increasingly acquire a deeper and broader understanding of the field of study? How can the learning experiences in one subject/course be linked to those in the other subject/course so that proper and effective buttressing may be provided? (Tyler, 1950:47).

In view of the above, the learning experiences would be punctuated through the timetable to ensure sustainable teaching and learning. To this end, teachers, learners, subjects and classrooms can be organised through the timetable to ensure effective teaching and learning. The organisation of the learning experiences would result in the arrangement of the goals or objectives and concepts of the subject matter. The organised learning experiences should assist the learner to reach specified ends as stated in the previous objectives (Tyler, as cited in Marsh, 2009:30-31). In this regard, curriculum designers have to organise the subject concepts based on the curriculum aims, goals or objectives. As such, Tyler (as cited in Ornstein & Hunkins, 2009:185-190) has suggested the seven ways to be followed as the criteria to ensure the effective organisation of teaching and learning experiences. First, blending curriculum elements (horizontal organisation), thus combining history, sociology and anthropology content to produce a contemporary studies course. Second, the scope, thus the breadth and depth of the curriculum content. Third, continuity (vertical organisation), thus the continuance of the learning experiences across all classes. Fourth, the sequence, thus the progress and logical arrangement of the learning experiences across all classes. Fifth, the integration, thus the relationships of the experiences of various subjects in a particular class. Sixth, articulation, thus the vertical and horizontal interrelatedness or connectivity of the various curriculum aspects. Seventh, the balance, thus giving the proper weight or balancing each design aspect, for example having a balance in the psychology and philosophy of learning of each design.

h) Evaluation

The fourth and last step, according to Tyler's objective model for curriculum development, is evaluation. At this level, it has to be established whether the learning experiences as developed and organised have achieved or are achieving the actual set curriculum goals or objectives (Tyler, 1949:105). According to Tyler (1966:1; 1967:13), curriculum evaluation can mean assessing the progress of education with the purpose of providing "… the public with dependable information to help in the understanding of educational problems and needs and to guide in efforts to develop sound public policy regarding education." It can also mean the

act of matching the learning objectives stated in behavioural or measurable form with the achieved outcomes after the learning process (Tyler, as cited in Lunenburg, 2011:3). Therefore, evaluation becomes the standard or yardstick against which the curriculum program is judged or reviewed.

As a result of the merits of Tyler's objectives model for curriculum development, since its inception in 1949, the model is currently used in curriculum development globally (Chen, Chen & Cheng, sa:2-3; Dugan, 2009:1; Handler, 2010:33; Khan & Law, 2015:68; Ruubel, 2013:2). When analysing Tyler's objective model for curriculum development, Ruubel (2013:4) conclusively appreciated the approach as he commented that:

> [Tyler's] predetermined behavioral objectives serve as a driving force that controls the pedagogical and evaluative efforts that follow. Tyler asserts the development of objectives is necessarily the first step in curriculum planning because they are the most critical criteria for guiding all the other activities of the curriculum maker. This formulation happens before the curriculum maker can carry on all the further steps of curriculum planning. Tyler's rationale has been challenged, but it seems to have become stronger as a result. Indeed, its elegant simplicity is engaging.

The above quote affirms the point that Tyler's model for curriculum development is considered simple as it can easily be understood and engaged with (Marsh, 2009:31). It is in view of this advantage, that Chen, Chen and Cheng (sa:4) refers to Tyler's model as a simple and straight line curriculum developing model that entails objective, choice, organization, and evaluation. Besides its workability, Tyler's model for curriculum development is also appreciated for its four questions which have great appeal and are to be found most reasonable up to this day (Ornstein & Hunkins, 1998:198). To this end, the advantages that have made Tyler's model so popular are that it is driven by behavioural objectives and it is easy to engage and implement.

Despite the fact that Tyler's model is still widely used in curriculum development in the 21st Century, it has not been without criticism (Ruubel, 2013:2). Rather, this curriculum development model has been criticised on several grounds, namely that the evaluation of the curriculum takes places only at the final stage. It is in view of this weakness that Brunner (as cited in Chipeta, Mazile & Shumba, 2000:52) criticises it as bringing in evaluation at the end of the curriculum development process is like "… doing military intelligence after the war is over." It does not have a feedback mechanism to inform people how to correct errors (Huang & Yang, as cited in Chen, Chen & Cheng, sa:4). It considered the curriculum development

enterprise as static, yet it is a dynamic and continuously involving process (Kerr, as cited in Chipeta, Mazile & Shumba, 2000:52). The model has a behavioural orientation whose shortcomings are rooted in the execution. For instance, behavioural objectives are not applicable to all subjects (Huang & Yang, as cited in Chen, Chen & Cheng, sa:4). The model is also too simplistic and mechanical as it is presented in a linear form (Offorma, 2014:80; Mitchell, 2016:16; Ruubel, 2013:8). Offorma (2014:80), it fails to adequately show the inter-relatedness of the stages as each stage is considered in isolation, except for the one-way linkage. The model stems from the administrator's approach rather than the teacher's approach. Thus, the teacher who is aware of the students' interests and needs should develop the curriculum rather than the administrator (Handler, 2010:33; Ruubel, 2013:3-4). It has little attention in regards to students' participation (Mitchell, 2016:49). It lacks a procedure between evaluation and organisation (Chen, Chen & Cheng, sa:4). According to Pinar *et. al.,* (as cited in Ruubel, 2013:8), it diminishes curriculum to objectives or outcomes. It is too prescriptive and sequential (Lunenburg, 2011:1).

In view of the weaknesses of Tyler's curriculum development model, several curriculum scholars, such as Kerr, Lawton, Taba, Tannah and Tannah, and Wheeler took advantage of these shortcomings to come up with their own models for curriculum development (Chen, Chen & Cheng, sa:4-6; Ruubel, 2013:2). The researcher did not review all the afore-mentioned curriculum models, but only refer to those developed by Taba and Lawton, as they are widely used in curriculum devolpment today (Abdusattorovna & Ajikulloevna, 2023:381; Lestari & Widiastuty, 2023:111).

2.5.2 Taba's grassroots model

Heather Taba, who was an Estonian-born American curriculum specialist, promulgated her model for curriculum development, which contradicted the Tyler model (Abdusattorovna & Ajikulloevna, 2023:387). Taba's model, which is also known as the grassroots model, was based on the limitations of Tyler's objective or rational model (Abdusattorovna & Ajikulloevna, 2023:387; Onstein & Hunkins, 1998:199; Ruubel, 2013:4). Taba's model was basically derived from the shortcomings of Tyler's model, especially the issue that the Tyler model was much more centred on the administrator as the curriculum maker rather than the classroom teacher, who is aware of the learners' interests and needs, and at the same time is the implementer of the curriculum (Handler, 2010:33; Onstein & Hunkins, 1998:199; Ruubel, 2013:4; Saracaloglua *et. al.*; 2010:2432; Taba, 1962:9). Unlike Tyler, Taba argues that teachers should participate in the curriculum development process from the start since they do have the capacity to start from the specific educational purposes to the general, unlike the model

crafted by administrators (Onstein & Hunkins, 1998:199; Taba, 1962:9). Taba's (1962:12-13; Abdusattorovna & Ajikulloevna, 2023:387; Lestari & Widiastuty, 2023:111; Offorma, 2014:83; Onstein & Hunkins, 1998:199) seven stages of curriculum development are outlined below.

Stage 1: Diagnosis of needs: The teacher, who is the curriculum maker, should start by establishing the needs of the learners for whom the curriculum is planned. This stage is important as it determines the nature of the curriculum to be offered to the learners.

Stage 2: Formulation of objectives: The teacher would formulate the educational objectives after the identification of the learners' needs. The formulation of objectives has to be carefully done since they determine what important content is to be included in the curriculum and how it is going to be organised.

Stage 3: Selection of content: The teacher would then select the subject content or matter using the formulated objectives. Besides the use of formulated objectives, issues of validity and significance can also be used as the criteria for content selection.

Stage 4: Organisation of content: After the selection of content, the teacher would then organise the selected content or subject matter. In this regard, the teacher would consider sequence and continuity, the learners' levels of cognitive development, interests and their academic achievement.

Stage 5: Selection of learning experiences: The teacher would then select the instructional methods and/or approaches that would assist the learners to conceptualise the subject content or matter. The emphasis is on strategies of concept attainment.

Stage 6: Organisation of learning activities: Consequently, the teacher would organise the learning activities, for instance, sequencing them in relation to the selected subject content or matter.

Stage 7: Evaluation and means of evaluation: Finally, the teacher would state what objectives should have been attained, and how these objectives are to be evaluated. Taba (1962:13) gives a list of guiding questions at this stage:

> How should the quality of learning be evaluated to ensure that the ends of education are achieved? How does one make sure that there is consistency between the aims and the objectives and what is actually achieved by students? Does the curriculum organisation provide experiences which offer optimum opportunities for all varieties of learners to attain independent goals?

One major advantage of the Taba model is that it gives provision of marrying theory and practice since it requires situation analysis as the first stage of curriculum development (Offorma, 2014:83). Besides, this aspect is illustrated through the pilot test process as it limits

the gap between theory and practice. McNeil (2009:257) also identified another advantage of Taba's model, namely that it provides maximum participation from teachers since they are highly involved in curriculum development. In view of this advantage, Ruubel (2013:7) appreciates Taba's model as a democratic or bottom-up approach that promotes efficiency, especially on the implementation level. According to Taba (as cited in McNeil, 2009:257) such a curriculum would be accepted by teachers at the implementation stage since they were part of the curriculum development process. In short, they will regard the innovation as their creation.

Despite the above-mentioned strengths, Taba's model of curriculum development has been criticised on the basis of the following. First, it fails to adequately show the inter-relatedness of the stages as each stage is considered in isolation (Chipeta, Mazile & Shumba, 2000:54). Second, the model is also too simplistic (Wheeler, as cited in Chipeta, Mazile & Shumba, 2000:54). Third, evaluation should not come at the end (Wheeler, as cited in Chipeta, Mazile & Shumba, 2000:54). Fourth, the grassroots approach is non-effective since the teacher may not have adequate time to do the extensive evaluation exercise himself/herself (Zais, as cited in Ornstein & Hunkins, 1998:199). Fifth, teachers may lack the necessary expertise (Zais, as cited in Ornstein & Hunkins, 1998:199). Regardless of the limitations of Taba's model, the approach has remained influential in the curriculum planning and development processes even up to the 21st Century (Lestari & Widiastuty, 2023:111; Ruubel, 2013:1).

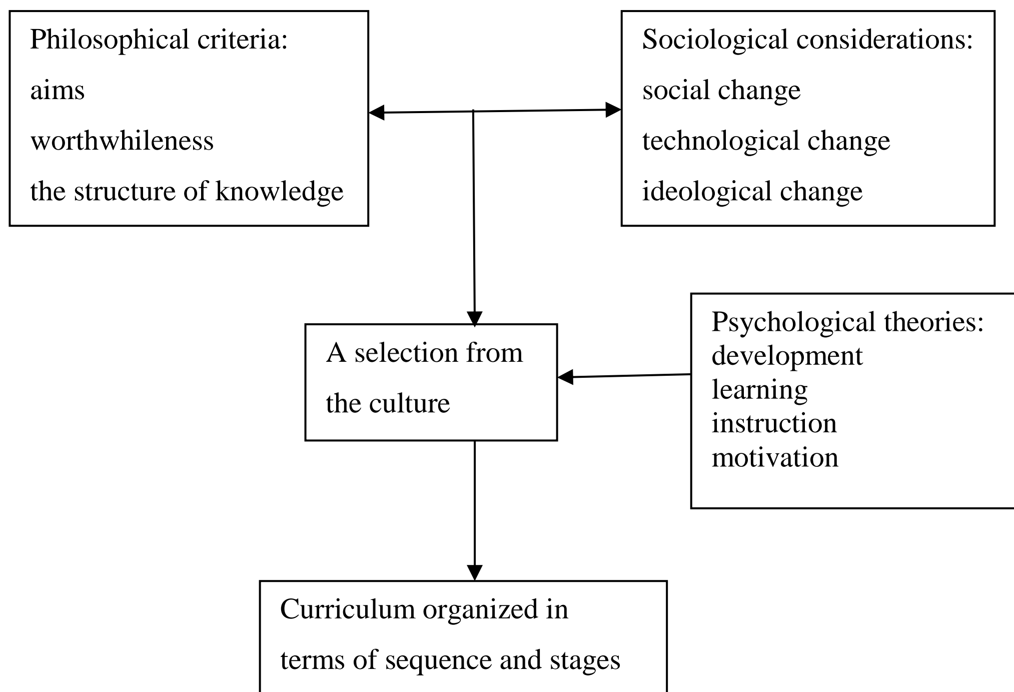
2.5.3 Lawton's cultural analysis model

Dennis Lawton was another curriculum scholar whose contribution to curriculum theory and practice emanated from the weaknesses of Tyler's objective model. For Lawton (1975:9), "Curriculum is a selection from the culture of society of aspects which are so valuable that their survival is not left to chance, but is entrusted to teachers for expert transmission to the young." Lawton's model for curriculum planning and development is generally known as the cultural analysis model (White, 1987:198). According to Lawton (as cited in White, 1987:198), when designing a new curriculum, the cultural analysis method has to be employed, and it involves the study of cultural variants (features common to any human society), the study of cultural variables (the specification of the common features in a particular society), and a classification of desirable educational aims for a given society based on established cultural variables.

In light of the above, Lawton came up with this model against the backdrop of what he considered as the limitations of the behavioural objectives models (Heartfelia, 2015:1). In this

regard, Lawton (as cited in Heartfelia, 2015:1) proposed that a sustainable curriculum design has to be planned based on "… the whole way of life of a society and the purpose of education is to make available to the next generation what we regard as the most important aspect of culture." At this juncture, the planning process would be premised on the selection done through cultural analysis. Lawton (1975:25) considered cultural analysis as the process that involves a selection from culture aspects to be included in the curriculum. The selection aspect from culture then implies the purposive inclusion of the important aspects of life, which are part of culture, into the curriculum for transmission to the next generation (Lawton, as cited in Taylor, 2012:1). In this regard, the transmission of the selected culture to the next generation is entrusted to qualified teachers at well-resourced schools (Lawton, as cited in Taylor, 2012:1). In view of Lawton's assertion (as quoted in Taylor, 2012:1), if any, the question was: What culture is being or sought to be transmitted through the compulsory study of the secondary school subject History at O-level in Zimbabwe? According to Lawton (1989:19), the following questions have to be asked in the process of cultural analysis: In what way is it developing? How do its members appear to want it to develop? What kinds of values and principles will be involved in deciding desired development and the means of achieving them? If the above questions are adequately answered, a relevant curriculum is bound to be developed. Lawton (2012:5) gives a five-stage model for curriculum development as illustrated in the flow chart below.

Figure 2.3: A representation of Lawton's cultural analysis model



Source: Lawton (2012:5).

In view of the above figure, Lawton (2012:5-6) proposed that the curriculum goals or objectives be selected from the philosophical and sociological foundations of society. Lawton (2012:5) then postulated that teachers must be involved in the selection of the philosophical goals of the curriculum since they have a clearer idea about what is worthwhile knowledge. He further argued that teachers still have to formulate educational goals from what is worthwhile from society, particularly its theoretical ideology (Lawton, 2012:6). To this end, philosophical and sociological questions must be asked. For example, the philosophical questions would be as follows: What are the aims or goals of education? What is worthwhile knowledge transmitted through education? Sociological questions would be: What kind of society do we have or want? (Chipeta, Mazile & Shumba, 2000:58). Upon answering these philosophical questions, curriculum planners have to come up with aims or goals that emphasise the nature and worthiness of educational knowledge (Lawton, 2012:5). Similarly, the sociological questions should lead to the sociological aims or goals that focus on technological and ideological change in society (Lawton, 2012:5).

According to Lawton (as cited in Urebvu, 1999:25), the selection from the culture is only attained when the philosophical and sociological questions are adequately answered. This ultimate selection from culture is achieved when teachers examine the relationship between what is worthwhile knowledge and societal values (Lawton, 2012:5-6). Therefore, based on the philosophical and sociological relevance of education, the curriculum planners would then identify elements from society and include them as curriculum content and experiences, sequentially built on what came before (Ornstein & Hunkins, 2009:186). In connection with the aspect of identifying elements from society to be included in the curriculum, Lawton (as cited in Urebvu, 1999:25) gives examples of elements such as values, beliefs, arts, crafts and literature that would be identified and developed philosophically and presented as subject content.

Following the successful formulation of curriculum goals as a selection from culture, Lawton (2012:6) postulated that these aims or goals have to go through psychological considerations. These curriculum goals have to be aligned with theories of educational psychology such as theories of human development, teaching and learning and motivation. Psychological questions would be asked to deal with how the subject content or matter is applicable to the pupils' stages of development (Lawton, 2012:6; Urebvu, 1999:25). This follows the argument that Piaget's stages of cognitive development and Bruner's spiral curriculum have to be considered if any meaningful teaching and learning is to take place (Bruner, as cited in Ornstein & Hunkins, 2009:189; Lawton, 2012:6; Piaget, as cited in Steele, 1983:15).

Based on theories of educational psychology, Lawton (as cited in Chipeta, Mazile & Shumba, 2000:58) contends that the effectiveness of the curriculum would be enhanced since it would be effectively organised in stages and sequences. Psychological questions and theories would assist in the selection and organisation of the content or matter of the curriculum in stages so that it can be sequentially built on what came before (Ornstein & Hunkins, 2009:186). It is at this stage that Lawton (as quoted in Urebvu, 1999:25) calls for the examination of the content that is organised in stages and sequences.

The most invaluable contribution that was made by Lawton to curriculum theory and practice "… was to demonstrate how wider cultural issues and political ideologies shape curriculum thinking" (Heartfelia, 2015.1). Nevertheless, Lawton's cultural analysis model is criticised on the basis of the following. First, the criteria used in the selection of culture to be transmitted to the next generation are questioned (White, 1987:199). Second, the culture transmitted to the next generation is a state-defined culture that promotes and perpetuates the distribution of the values, aspirations and political power of those in power (Taylor, 2012:1; White, 1987:199). Third, the sociological categorisation of the curriculum is incomplete (White, 1987:199). Fourth, and not least, Lawton's curriculum objectives "… are always described in terms of the acquisition of knowledge or experience … [and] … fails to accommodate the acquisition of dispositions e.g character traits like courage or tolerance or personal qualities like commitments to one's projects" (White, 1987:200).

In as much as Lawton's model faces criticism, the researcher appreciated his immense contribution to curriculum theory and practice throughout the world. Given this contribution, this study was motivated by the desire to establish whether cultural issues or ideological assertions or both had influenced the mandatory study of the secondary school subject History in Zimbabwe. The following section is an outline of the concepts curriculum implementation and evaluation.

2.6 CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION AND EVALUATION

Curriculum implementation is one of the complex matrixes in the curriculum enterprise. New curricula often miscarry due to the lack of serious planning and considerations during the curriculum development process (Ornstein & Hunkins, 1998:291). In this regard, it is generally assumed that once a new curriculum has been developed, its implementation is an easy-go process (Ornstein & Hunkins, 1998:291). Yet, it is not. According to research findings, numerous difficulties and contradictions have been noticed during the curricular implementation phases (Olibie, 2014:41; Sargent 2011:17-18; Stern 2007:1). Hargreaves and

Fink (2006:6) posited that curriculum change is easy to propose, but hard to implement, and extraordinarily hard to sustain. Similarly, Mitchell (2016:45) admitted when she noted that curriculum design and implementation is a change process that is "… hard to conceive and harder to implement." It is in view of the afore-mentioned paradox that Van den Akker (2010:178) argued that, "… curriculum changes belong to the hardest category." It is generally acknowledged that successful implementation of the curriculum rests on the careful execution of the entire curriculum development process (Ornstein & Hunkins, 1998:291). For a detailed literature review on the concept curriculum implementation, its meaning and processes in theory and practice, refer to Chapter 3, Section 3.2.3.1.

The concept curriculum evaluation has been discussed by curriculum theorists and educationists for many decades up to the present. To elaborate, there are diversified conceptions and approaches to the concept of curriculum evaluation. As the debate has raged on, the concept has remarkably changed particularly in its scope and focus (Woods, 1988:3). Initially, curriculum evaluation focused mainly on curriculum measurement, but has since broadened to include the making of value judgments on all aspects of the curriculum process, ranging from start to finish (Woods, 1988:3). In this regard, it was Tyler, who changed the idea of measurement into a concept he called evaluation (Dugan, 2009:1). Nevertheless, for Posner (1995:225), the meaning of the concept curriculum evaluation depends on the meaning one attaches to the concept curriculum. Thus, the concept curriculum evaluation means different things to different people, in as much as the concept curriculum also means different things to different people.

Traditionally, curriculum evaluation was a concept of curriculum assessment confined to the measuring of the achievement of a set of objectives (Hong, 2007:1). The concept concerns "… rendering value judgment to a set of experiences selected from educational purposes. It is a process that involves gathering information about the effectiveness of curricular and measurement … in terms of the levels of achievement of the pre-set objectives" (Naikumi, 2010:1). Madaus and Stufflebeam (quoted in Hong, 2007:1) call this the Tylerian view of curriculum evaluation. This follows the aspect that, Tyler (as cited in Urebvu, 1999:21), who was one of the main proponents of this approach to curriculum evaluation, conceived the concept as the process of determining the extent to which the educational objectives are actually achieved by the program of teaching and learning. In agreement, Urebvu (1999:63) simply defined it as "… the process of measuring the success of teaching in terms of pupils' learning." In this notion, the concept of curriculum evaluation is the process that emphasises the establishment of the degree to which the pre-set objectives are achieved by the end of the teaching and learning program (Mitchell, 2016:51). Thus, the point emphasised here is that

curriculum evaluation is an end process of curriculum development (Tyler, as quoted in Chen, Chen & Cheng, sa:4).

The concept of curriculum evaluation has since ceased to solely imply measuring the achievement of the pre-set educational objectives in terms of the implementation of curriculum and instruction. It is a systematic assessment of a curriculum activity (Neumann, Robson & Sloan, 2018:120). For Alkin (as cited in Urebvu, 1999:63), the concept of curriculum evaluation goes beyond measuring the success of teaching as "… it is a process of ascertaining the decision to be made, selecting related information, and collecting and analysing information in order to report summary data useful to decision makers in selecting alternatives." It is in this same line of thinking, that Farooq (2014:1) defines curriculum evaluation as the provision of information that should facilitate decision making at different levels of curriculum development. In agreement, Cronbach (cited in Hong, 2007:1) insisted that the curriculum evaluation process has to focus on gathering and reporting information that has to assist or guide decision making in curriculum development processes. In view of the notion that curriculum evaluation has to do with information gathering for decision makers, the concept is further taken to mean a continuous, and not an end process of curriculum development (Farooq, 2014:1; Haque & David, 2022:2).

In regards to the above, Farroq (2014:1) argued that curriculum evaluation and planning are complementary to each other to the extent that evaluation influences planning and *vice versa*. For Ornstein and Hunkins (1998:319), the meaning of the concept curriculum evaluation is twofold: "Evaluation is a necessary cluster of activities in which curriculum developers and implementers gather data to arrive at judgment about either individuals' experiencing the curriculum, which is considered assessment, or curriculum program in general which is considered evaluation." To this end, the concepts evaluation and assessment were concurrent activities. This notion is put forth by Madaus and Kellaghan (as cited in Ornstein & Hunkins, 1998:319) as they observed: "Assessment that focuses on gathering data to determine what people know or can accomplish feeds into the overall evaluation process and guides decisions regarding content topics, organisation of content, teaching methods … ." The focus in the following sections is on what, why and who conducts the evaluation?

2.6.1 What to evaluate?

According to Woods (1988:4), when it comes to curriculum evaluation, there is a need for consensus in terms of what to evaluate, and for what purpose. Farooq (2014:1), Naikumi

(2010:1), Ornstein and Hunkins (1998:319), Tyler (1967:13) and Tyler (1949:105) listed some of the issues of the curriculum that can be evaluated, namely the education program, content or subject matter, teaching and learning materials, teachers' personality characteristics and performance in terms of lesson delivery, pupils' performance as individuals or as a class in terms of the pre-set objectives and classrooms, schools or school systems.

In regards to the issue of evaluation, Van den Akker (2010:179) gives five levels that curriculum evaluation can focus on. First, comparative/international or *supra* level, thus the evaluation of the curriculum based on international agreements or debates in regards to the aims and quality of education. Second, state or *macro* level, thus the evaluation of the curriculum based on national syllabus aims, goals and objectives. Third, school or *meso* level, thus, the evaluation of the curriculum based on the school-based syllabus. Fourth, classroom or *micro* level, thus the evaluation of the textbooks and any other instructional materials. Fifth, and not least, individual/personal or *nano* level, thus the evaluation of the teacher competency. A close analysis of the above-stated levels on which curriculum evaluation can focus on suggests that evaluation can be conducted at a higher scale or *vice versa*.

According to Talmage (as quoted in Ornstein & Hunkins, 1998:322), curriculum evaluators have to ask or use five questions that guide evaluation. The five questions are: Is it a good and appropriate curriculum? What is the curriculum good for, and who is the audience? Is the new program better than the one being replaced? (An optional question). How can the "running" program or curriculum be improved for the better? What evidence has been gathered that makes the working program or curriculum to be retained, modified or discarded for a new program or curriculum? If a curriculum evaluator answers the above questions diligently, the evaluation report would be of meaning and value to the users of the report.

2.6.2 Why curriculum evaluation?

Following the diversified definitions and concepts of curriculum evaluation as previously outlined and what to evaluate respectively, the relevance of the process has to be given. Curriculum evaluation determines the extent to which pre-set educational objectives are achieved by the curriculum and instruction program (Mulawarman, 2021:968; Tuckman, as cited in Ornstein & Hunkins, 1998:322; Tyler, 1966:1). It is also important because it establishes the effectiveness of the teaching and learning materials (Farooq, 2014:1; Naikumi, 2010:1). Besides, it informes the public with trustworthy information that would help them in the understanding of educational difficulties and needs (Tyler, 1967:13; Tyler, 1966:1). Additionally, it contributes to the decision-makers' responsibilities to make informed decisions,

for instance to decide whether to accept or reject a curriculum program, and to ascertain the need for curriculum change or revision (Neumann, Robson & Sloan, 2018:120; Tyler, 1967:13). Curriculum evaluation also allowes curriculum developers and implementers to ascertain the functions of the operational curriculum (Naikumi, 2010:1), and to determine the quality, value, worthiness or meritocracy of the educational curriculum (Trochim, as cited in Hong, 2007:1; Worthen & Sanders, as cited in Ornstein & Hunkins, 1998:322).

2.6.3 Who is involved in curriculum evaluation?

Curriculum evaluation is a complex and involving process. For Apple (as cited in Urebvu, 1999:62; Posner, 1995:15), curriculum evaluation is not a neutral process, but a political one. Similarly, House (as cited in Urebvu, 1999:62) argued that curriculum evaluation is not an ultimate arbitrator that can be accepted as final judgment. Rather, it is always premised on biased origins, and centrally connected to the political process of the society. In line with the notion that curriculum evaluation is not a neutral process, there exists a debate on who is supposed to be involved in the process. Some role-players have been identified as teachers, students, school administrators, government officials, college and university lecturers, curriculum specialists, educational publishers, professional organisations and independent consultants (Ornstein & Hunkins, 1999:222-228; Urebvu, 1999:65; Woods, 1988:3).

In as much as Woods (1988:3) argues that teachers, who are the curriculum implementers, should be at the centre of curriculum evaluation, Hunkins (as quoted in Woods, 1988:3) suggests that teachers should not take on the role of curriculum evaluators. Hunkins (as cited in Woods, 1988:3) argued that teachers may not take on the role of curriculum evaluators because they have been the doer, the person who reflects on his/her own behaviour during the planning and implementation phases, observer of the students and the resources used during the implementation, and judge who receives and interprets the collected data and actor who acts upon and makes informed decisions based upon the collected data.

Additionally, Seiffert (in Woods, 1988:4) confirmed the argument that teachers should not take on the role of curriculum evaluators by pointing out that:

> … there are limitations to the amount and nature of the evaluative role that a teacher may take. First, a teacher's life is a busy one, arid time constraints will limit the amount of effort that most teachers may put into evaluation. Second, because a teacher is a teacher, and thus a significant person in the learning process, her role as evaluator will be limited.

To emphasise the point, those who are against the activity of teachers being curriculum evaluators are of the opinion that teachers have a lot to do as they implement the curriculum, and this is reason enough why they should not evaluate their work. By allowing teachers to become evaluators, their evaluation reports would be considered as biased, and not objective at all. In as much as teachers are an interested party in curriculum matters and issues, it is, however, generally accepted that they should also take on the role of curriculum evaluators, particularly working together with other major role-players such as school administrators, government officials, college and university lecturers and curriculum specialists (Woods, 1988:4).

2.6.4 Formative and summative evaluation

As suggested by Aziz, Mahmood and Rehman (2018:190) and Scriven (as cited in Mitchell, 2016:52) there are two main types of evaluation, namely formative and summative evaluations. Formative evaluation is conducted when the educational program or curriculum is still being developed, and it can be conducted at any stage or level during the development process (Aziz, Mahmood & Rehman, 2018:190; Mitchell, 2016:52; Urebvu:1999:72). For instance, the evaluation may be conducted during the selection of content, organisation of instructional materials or when the program or curriculum is at its piloting stage. The essence of this type of evaluation is to improve the project being developed so that a better end-product would be achieved (Ornstein & Hunkins, 1998:237; Urebvu, 1999:72).Evidence would be sought that could influence the revision and "perfection" of the developed program. Urebvu (1999:72) added that formative evaluation is also vital as it enhances summative evaluation which will result in worthwhile findings.

In view of the above, summative evaluation is conducted after the program or curriculum has been developed and implemented at school level (Aziz, Mahmood & Rehman, 2018:190; Scriven as cited in Mitchell, 2016:52; Ornstein & Hunkins, 1998:237; Urebvu, 1999:72). This form of evaluation provides the evaluator with an opportunity to give a final judgment in regards to the finished product (Aziz, Mahmood & Rehman, 2018:190; Urebvu, 1999:72). It is within this context that Ornstein and Hunkins, (1998:237) affirmed that summative evaluation seeks to establish a full picture of the quality of the produced curriculum. Summative evaluation assists the curriculum evaluator to conclude whether the curriculum will be implemented successfully in terms of the expected outcomes (Mitchell, 2016:52). Besides, this form of evaluation helps the evaluator to establish whether the program or curriculum has been fully implemented. As such, the evaluation enables the evaluator to recommend the retention, revision or discarding of the current curriculum for the new one (Aziz, Mahmood & Rehman,

2018:190; Urebvu, 1999:72). Therefore, in view of the invaluable contribution of summative evaluation to the curriculum process, this study sought to establish whether the Zimbabwean ministry in charge of secondary education has conducted any summative evaluation with regard to the implementation of the mandatory study of the secondary school subject History at O-level between the years 2002 and 2016. If any, what were the findings? It was this question that also steered the direction of the study.

2.6.5 Models for curriculum evaluation

There are several models which are used for any curriculum evaluation process. Although some were crafted not specifically for curriculum evaluation, they have been adopted and employed as suitable models for curriculum evaluation purposes. Some of these models are Bertalanff's systems model, Bradley's Effective model, David's process model, Eisner's connoisseurship model, Stake's countenance/responsive model, Striven's goal free model, Stufflebeam's context, input, process and product (CIPP) model, and Tyler's objective attainment model (Mitchell, 2016:52; Mizikaci, 2006:43; Singla & Gupta, sa:7-8; Stufflebeam, 2003:31-32; Woods, 1988:4-7; Zhang, *et al*., 2011:59). Because of their relevance to this study, the researcher reviewed Tyler's objective attainment model, Stufflebeam's CIPP model, and Bertalanffy's systems model.

2.6.5.1 Tyler's objective attainment model

The objective attainment model is one of the classical models for curriculum evaluation. It originated in 1942 because of Tyler's research (Zhang, Zeller, Griffith, Metcalf, Williams, Shea & Misulis, 2011:59). Due to his significant contribution to the field of testing, Tyler changed the idea of measurement into a concept he called evaluation (Dugan, 2009:1). To this end, Tyler (1949:105) defines curriculum evaluation as "… a process for finding how far the learning experiences as developed and organized are actually producing the desired results … ." The Tyler objective attainment model is, therefore, meant to establish the extent to which the pre-set educational goals or objectives of a program are achieved. According to Singla and Gupta (sa:7), the Tyler objective attainment model "… focuses on the formulation of goals through detailed analysis of feedback from students, society and subject matter."

In regards to the objective attainment model, Tyler (1949:110-120), and also (as cited in Posner, 1995:237) gives seven steps to be followed by the curriculum evaluator. The first three steps in their order are, identify the objectives of the educational program, clarify the objectives and clearly define the objectives in behavioural terms. The fourth step is to establish the

context or situations in which learners' achievement of objectives can be expressed or demonstrated. The fifth, sixth and seventh steps, respectively, are to design or select evaluation instruments to gather data or evidence about the learners' achievements of the objectives, collect performance data, and compare and contrast performance data with the behaviorally pre-set objectives to come up with summarised or appraised results. In agreement, Singla and Gupta (sa:10) advised that the curriculum evaluator has to investigate and determine answers to the following: whether the set objectives are worth achieving, whether the set objectives are achievable, whether the set objectives are clearly defined in line with the curriculum aims and goals, and whether the set objectives are achieved.

Tyler (1966:1; 1949:121-125) provides the values and uses of the results of evaluation as follows:

- can be used to incentivise learners to study since they will be aware that they will be tested,
- can be used by students and other interested parties to further their education, and also as a basis for scholarship awards,
- gives teachers an opportunity to reflect or self-evaluate their strengths and weaknesses at various levels of curriculum process,
- can be used "… to appraise the achievement of individual students" (Tyler, 1966:1),
- collected and examined data can assist in suggesting possible explanations or hypotheses about the reason for a particular pattern of change in behaviour amongst individual learners,
- can be used as a checking mechanism for individual or the whole class' learning difficulties with the objective of providing important information needed in preparation for the subsequent teaching and learning.
- ".. to appraise educational effectiveness of a curriculum or part of a curriculum, of instructional materials and procedures, and of administrative and organizational arrangements" (Tyler, 1966:1).
- it provides "… information about the success of the school to the school's clientele" (Tyler, 1949:125), and
- can be used for an assessment of "… educational progress of a larger population in order to provide the public with dependable information to help in the understanding of educational problems and needs and to guide efforts to develop a sound public policy regarding education" (Tyler, 1967:13;1966:1).

In the light of Tyler's (1966:1; 1949:120-125) views on values and uses of the results of

evaluation, Singla and Gupta (sa:10; Tyler) posited that if the curriculum evaluator establishes that the set objectives were successfully achieved, he or she may recommend that the curriculum has to continue. However, if the evaluator registers some reservations in terms of gaps in regards to the pre-set objectives, a curriculum review may be recommended (Singla & Gupta, sa:10). To this end, Tyler (1949:123) outlined the overall implication of curriculum evaluation on the curriculum development process in general. To this effect, he argued that due to curriculum evaluation, curriculum planning becomes

> … a continuous process and that as materials and procedures are developed, they are tried out, their results appraised, their inadequacies identified, suggested improvements indicated; there is re-planning, redevelopment and then reappraisal; and in this kind of continuing cycle, it is possible for the curriculum and instructional program to be continuously improved over the years. In this way, we may hope to have an increasingly more effective educational program rather than depending so much upon hit and miss judgment as a basis for curriculum development (Tyler, 1949:123).

However, the Tyler objective attainment model is mainly criticised for focusing on trivial and contrived tasks (Posner, 1995:239). Thus, the tests may not measure learners' capacity to use the acquired knowledge and skills (Posner, 1995:239). Next is a discussion on Stufflebeam's context, input, process, product model.

2.6.5.2 Stufflebeam's context, input, process, product (CIPP) model

The context, input, process, product (CIPP) model of curriculum evaluation was developed by D.L. Stuffelebeam in the late 1960s (Stufflebeam, 2003:31). The CIPP model for evaluation was developed as an alternative model to those which were oriented towards objective evaluation such as the Tylerian model (Stufflebeam, 2003:31). Zhang *et al.,* (2011:59) provided the major strengths of the CIPP model for evaluation in contrast to the Tylerian objective attainment model. Unlike Tyler's objective attainment model, which only seeks to check whether the set objectives are met, "… the CIPP evaluation model is designed to systematically guide both evaluators and stakeholders in posing relevant questions and conducting assessments at the beginning of a project, while it is in progress, and at its end" (Zhang *et al.*, 2011:59). In essence, the CIPP model was meant to assist in improving and achieving accountability in the United States school programs, particularly to improve teaching and learning in urban centres (Stufflebeam, 2003:31). This model is mainly premised on the notion that "… evaluation's most important purpose is not to prove, but to improve" (Stufflebeam, 2003:31). Accordingly, the point emphasised is that curriculum evaluation is not

for witch-hunting, but serves as a tool that enhances program performance for the betterment of the people being served.

According to Singla and Gupta (sa:8), Stufflebeam, (2003:31) and Stufflebeam (as cited in Mizikaci, 2006:42), the main concepts of the CIPP model are based on the evaluation of the context, input, process and product. The above concepts imply that the CIPP model constitutes four types of evaluation. The importance of the four types of evaluation is given by Stufflebeam (2003:31). First, context evaluation involves needs assessment, problems and opportunities within a defined environment. Second, input evaluation involves the assessment of operational strategies, work plans and budgets chosen for implementation. Third, process evaluation involves monitoring, documenting and assessing educational activities. Last, and not least, product evaluation involves identifying and assessing short-term, long-term, intended and unintended outcomes.

Stufflebeam (2003:31-32) further justifies the rationale for the evaluator to employ the four types of evaluation. Content evaluation helps to define and assess the educational goals, course of instruction, teacher evaluation system and counseling service. Input evaluation assists in planning and designing improvement efforts, developing alternative funding proposals and detailed action plans, and recording the alternative plans and their justification over others. Process evaluation helps to carry out adjustments and keep accountability records for the executed action plans. Product evaluation encourages maintaining of focus in terms of addressing the needs of the learners, or other beneficiaries, assessing and recording the success level in terms of the targeted needs, identifying the intended and unintended effects, and making informed decisions on whether to continue, terminate or improve. According to the CIPP model, the evaluation report should assist different groups such as school administrators, policy boards, teachers, students, parents, funding organisations, and society at large (Stufflebeam, 2003:32). To this end, Stufflebeam (2003:32) urges curriculum evaluators to come up with evaluation reports of high quality so that users can obtain valid and reliable information which forms the basis for good alternative improvement options.

However, the CIPP model is not without criticism. Hulbert (sa:6) pointed out that its main weakness is that it fails to acknowledge the complexity in some institutions in so far as decision-making process is concerned. Guba and Lincoln (as cited in Hulbert, sa:6) also noted that the model is difficult and expensive to implement. The model is further alleged to be unfair and undemocratic as it gives preference to the top management (Alkin, as cited in Hulbert, sa:6).

2.6.5.3 Bertalanffy's systems model

The systems model for evaluation was propounded by Ludwig von Bertalanffy in 1969 (Bertalanffy, 1969:30-36). Although his model is used in curriculum evaluation, it was originally developed from surveying the evolution of modern science (Bertalanffy, 1969:30). According to Mizikaci (2006:43), the above model, also known as the systems approach, is rooted in "… the assumption that there are universal principles of organisation, which hold true for all systems." To this end, when it comes to studying an entity or process, Bertalanffy (1969:31) argues that it is proper not to try and analyse it in parts or processes in isolation from the whole. For instance, a society should not be viewed "… as a sum of individuals as social atoms … [but should be considered] as a whole superordinated to its parts" (Bertalanffy, 1969:31). In this regard, the model is based on the basic principle theory that "… the whole is more than the sum of its parts, and the parts are dynamically interrelated and cannot be understood in isolation from the whole" (Mizikaci, 2006:43). Therefore, the systems model for curriculum evaluation emphasises a holistic curriculum evaluation.

In light of the above, the curriculum the teacher implements is a complete system in itself. Mizikaci (2006:43) and Singla and Gupta (sa:12) agreed that the systems approach regards the curriculum as a complete system with four major sub-systems which are goals, inputs from the environment, outputs to achieve the goals (process) and feedback from the environment in the form of output. Given the four major characteristics of the curriculum, the curriculum evaluator is expected to critically analyse the curriculum parts in view of the whole in order to come up with an evaluation report that urges the users of the report to continue, terminate or change the curriculum (Singla & Gupta, sa:12). The aspect emphasised is that the curriculum evaluator has to analyse and synthesise the different levels of the curriculum process, not as separate processes, but as a collection of processes whose interrelatedness makes the curriculum process an integrated one. To this end, the curriculum process as a complete or total system should have achievable and measurable objectives, and it has to be understood that the environment and the availability of instructional and human resources have a direct influence on the output of the curriculum (Mizikaci, 2006:44). Therefore, the evaluator has to conduct an evaluation of the curriculum system as a whole, and not its parts.

Bertalanffy's systems model of evaluation is, however, criticised on the grounds that it is somehow complicated in practice since the model itself was mooted out of a combination of three different approaches into one unitary model (Mizikaci, 2006:51). The model is also undermined on the basis that when implementing it, it does not accommodate partial implementation because of its complexity (Mizikaci, 2006:51). Additionally, for the model to be

successfully implemented, those involved in the curriculum evaluation process, should appropriately link institution's mission, aims, goals and objectives to avoid confusion (Mizikaci, 2006:51).

The reviewed concepts and models for curriculum evaluation formed the conceptual framework, and therefore the basis of this study when explaining the importance of curriculum evaluation, with special reference to the desire to establish the effort(s) used by the Zimbabwean ministry responsible for secondary school education related to the evaluation of the implementation of the History curriculum reforms.

2.7 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter presented the conceptual framework of the study, starting by defining and giving the purpose of a conceptual framework in a study. Tyler's model of curriculum development was indicated as what anchored the conceptual framework of the study. Also presented were various definitions for the concept curriculum as proposed by different scholars. Matters and issues to do with curriculum development processes, and in particular the concepts related to curriculum planning, design and development were also discussed. The different approaches to curriculum development and evaluation were discussed in this regard. To this end, the Tyler, Taba and Lawton models for curriculum development were outlined. Furthermore, literature on the concepts of curriculum implementation and evaluation was reviewed too. The chapter was concluded with a discussion on three models of curriculum evaluation, namely Tyler's objective attainment model, Stufflebeam's CIPP model and Bertalanffy's systems model. As the researcher presented the conceptual framework of the study, he also took the opportunity to expose the gaps that the study sought to close. The next chapter reviews the literature that focuses on curriculum theory and practice, politics and education.

CHAPTER 3

CURRICULUM THEORY AND PRACTICE, POLITICS AND EDUCATION

3.1 INTRODUCTON

This chapter reviews studies which dwell on the approaches to understanding curriculum theory and practice. In this regard, the literature review shows that there exists a gap between curriculum theory and practice; hence, justifying the need to establish the extent to which the mandatory study of secondary school History in Zimbabwe was successfully implemented between 2002 and 2016. This chapter also presents the view that politics and education are intertwined. The chapter concludes with an overview of the literature that focuses on the place and role of the subject History in the education system internationally and in Zimbabwe in particular. The chapter exposes the need to reconcile or to have an understanding of the mandatory study of the subject History in Zimbabwe secondary schools.

3.2 UNDERSTANDING CURRICULUM THEORY AND PRACTICE

Curriculum theorists have come up with different approaches to the understanding of curriculum theory and practice. This section briefly discusses four approaches to curriculum theory and practice. The four approaches are curriculum as a body of knowledge, curriculum as an attempt to achieve certain goals, curriculum as a process, and curriculum as praxis. (Abdusattorovna & Ajikulloevna, 2023:382; Smith, 2000:1). These approaches are discussed because they define and influence curriculum specialists' understanding of the concepts of curriculum theory and practice. An elaboration of each follows.

3.2.1 Curriculum as a body of knowledge

In regards to the first approach, curriculum as a body of knowledge refers to the knowledge that is enshrined in the school, district or national syllabi. A syllabus is a document designed and developed at national, provincial, district or school levels. It contains "… a series of headings, with some additional notes which set out the areas that may be examined" (Smith, 2000:1). To this end, Apple (1993:222) pointed out that the body of knowledge transmitted through the curriculum "… is always part of a selective tradition, someone's selection, some

group's vision of legitimate knowledge." Similarly, Lawton (as quoted in Mashayamombe, 2006:25) considers such knowledge as a selection from culture. As such, the History Syllabus 2167 as a body of knowledge from 'a selected culture' was supposed to be compulsorily implemented at secondary school level in Zimbabwe from 2002 to 2016. Given the notion that the body of knowledge as contained in the History Syllabus 2167 was supposed to be compulsorily transmitted to the learners, what was the rationale for the mandatory transmission of the former into the latter? This question had to be answered by the end of this study. In the next sections, the nature of school curriculum knowledge is discussed.

3.2.1.1 The nature of knowledge in the school curriculum

Voluminous studies have been published on the nature of knowledge transmitted through the government-approved curriculum and the beneficiaries of such knowledge. The debate on the topic has resulted in conflicting positions on whether the knowledge beneficiaries are the learners, the society at large, or the government of the day in particular (Gatawa, 1990:27; McNeil, 2009:23; Tyynela & Mey, 2012:272; Yilmaz, 2010:781; Young, 2013:110). In view of the above debate, this section of the chapter reviews the various studies that credit curriculum knowledge to the learner, society in general, or the government of the day in particular.

To start with, it is important to consider Tyler's (1949) classical work on curriculum design, planning and development (refer to Chapter 2, Section 2.5.1 for a detailed review of Tyler's (1949) work on curriculum development). Tyler (1949:1), who propounded the objective model of curriculum development, states four crucial questions that curriculum designers have to consider when designing a national school curriculum. The four questions (Tyler, 1949:1) that curriculum designers have to answer, were previously indicated in Chapter 2, Section 2.5.1. A close analysis of these questions suggested that there is knowledge that the curriculum has to transmit to the learners. While Tyler (1949:4-5) advised that curriculum designers consider the learners, society and subject specialists, there is no agreement among curriculum theorists on the question: Who are the supposed beneficiaries of the curriculum knowledge?

For the purpose of this study, and in particular, the kind of knowledge transmitted to learners through the school curriculum, the researcher decided to review the literature related to Tyler's (1949:1) first question: What educational purposes should the school seek to attain? Many debates occurred among academics in regards to the answer to this question. To put the argument clearer, it can be asked: Is it "… what the learners need to know, or what 'society' thinks should be taught, or what the subject specialists consider important to their academic discipline?" (Marsh, 2009:29). The researcher reviewed different positions propounded by

curriculum theorists regarding the nature and beneficiaries of the curriculum knowledge. To start with, the researcher briefly presents what school curriculum-based knowledge entails.

3.2.1.2 School curriculum-based knowledge

In the field of curriculum theory, debates are still raging in regard to curriculum questions such as: What kind of knowledge are learners entitled to get? Who defines the nature of the knowledge that learners are entitled to? Is it the learner, the society in general or the politicians in particular? The possible answers to these questions are outlined in this section.

Schools are generally known for accessing curriculum-based knowledge to learners. In this context, Young (2013:110) refers to it as a "… knowledge-based approach to curriculum." This is the knowledge that learners acquire through the discipline/subject specialization, and the teaching and learning process that empowers them to understand the world in terms of explicit circumstances (Young, 2013:110). According to Young (2013:112), the knowledge-based approach to curriculum has been rejected in England for practical and epistemological reasons.

The practical objections to the knowledge-based approach are based on the issue that any curriculum is not practical for all learners and teachers. In this regard, the knowledge approach to curriculum does not acknowledge teachers' difficulties in implementing the curriculum, given that learners have different needs or interests and capabilities (Young, 2013:112). The epistemological objections to the knowledge-based approach to curriculum are two-fold: firstly, postmodernist scholars such as Jacquis Derrida, Jean Lacan, Michel Foucault and Jacquis Baurillard dismiss school knowledge as imposed knowledge on the weak by those in power to perpetuate their ideological and special interests (Petherick, 2023:1; Tyynela & Mey, 2012:272; Yilmaz, 2010:780-781). Adding to the voice of the postmodernists, Moore and Muller (as quoted in Young, 2001:524) noted that there is no curriculum knowledge, but simply the power of selected individuals to affirm their experiences. This implies that the learners' interests, which can be sources of the knowledge, has no place. The other epistemological objection to the knowledge-based approach discussed by White, whom Young (2013:113) explained as the fact that the world of knowledge is continuously changing and that school subjects are quickly becoming outdated and irrelevant. In terms of this view, no past knowledge is relevant and deserves to be passed on to the next generation through the school curriculum.

3.2.1.3 Child-centred curriculum knowledge

There is a school of thought that argues for the selection of child-centred learning objectives, arguing that curriculum development should be grounded in children's needs (Gatawa, 1990:27; Suissa, 2023:228). The child-centred approach demands that curriculum developers must determine the needs of the learners first, before making or introducing curriculum reforms because the goals to be attained should be child-centred. McNeil (2009:23) emphasised that the school as an entity has to define the school curriculum according to what the learners experience in the school. Hence, the learners' interests determine curriculum knowledge, and they should decide what they want to learn in schools (McNeil, 2009:23; Suissa, 2023:228).

The notion that the interests of the learners should determine curriculum knowledge is not without criticism. For Gatawa (1990:27), curriculum design and development or reforms with child-centred objectives are unattainable because it is difficult to satisfy all learners' needs and interests. He gives the example that in a class of thirty learners, each might have different interests (Gatawa, 1990:27). Bobbitt (as cited in Kliebard, 2003:21), also criticised the curriculum knowledge based on the interests of the learners. Bobbitt (as quoted in Kliebard, 2003:21) argued that "Education is primarily for adult life, not for child life. Its fundamental responsibility is to prepare for the fifty years of adulthood, and not twenty years of childhood and youth." Accordingly, his argument is that curriculum knowledge has to prepare children for adult life. In this vein, Gatawa (1990:27) concluded that it is the adults, including curriculum designers, who have to decide what kind of knowledge the curriculum should transmit to the learners.

Young (2013:101) also agreed that curriculum development should not start with the learners, but with what the learners deserve, and it is the responsibility of adults (educators) to "hand over" to the younger generation the knowledge discovered by the earlier generations. Besides transmitting past knowledge, the curriculum also enables "… the next generation to build on that knowledge, and create new knowledge, for that is how societies progress and how individuals develop" (Young, 2013:101-102). Young (2013:107) also insisted that curriculum theory must not begin with the learners since "… a theory of knowledge …" is to analyse, and criticise an existing curriculum, and to come up with a new one.

Despite the criticism against the child-centred approach to curriculum knowledge, Dewey (as cited, in Kliebard, 2003:21) rejects the assertion that the knowledge transmitted through the school curriculum should prepare the children for adult life. For Dewey, educational knowledge is a process of experiencing life (Kliebard, 2003:21). Dewey's (as cited in Kliebard, 2003:21)

argument is that to assume that the knowledge acquired by the children through the school curriculum is to make them ready for a remote and unknown world, and regard them as candidates waiting to deliver (Kliebard, 2003:21). Dewey (also quoted, in Young, 2013:102) continues: “Only if learners are freed from constraints of endorsing the ‘sacred,’ and from what are felt to inherently exclusive traditions of the past, will the ‘natural’ potential [be] realized.” Therefore, it is not what adults preferred as worthwhile knowledge that forms the basis of curriculum objectives, but primarily the present interest and experiences of the learners (Dewey, as quoted in McNeil, 2009:354). Given the above discussion, the second approach to understanding curriculum and theory considers curriculum as a process of teaching and learning to achieve the desired outcomes, as detailed below.

3.2.2 Curriculum as a means to achieve certain goals

In the second approach, referred to curriculum as a product, the emphasis is on the set objectives, implementation, and the final output measured. Tyler’s (1949:1) four fundamental questions have to be considered if the curriculum has to achieve its intended aims in learners: “What educational purposes should the school seek to attain? What educational experiences can be provided that are likely to attain these purposes? How can these educational experiences be effectively organized? How can we determine whether these purposes are being achieved?” In view of Tyler’s (1949:1) fourth question, the researcher pondered whether the compulsory study of the subject History at O-level was for the Zimbabwean government to ensure that the “… educational purposes are attained.” This question relates to the issue of curriculum as a product.

To have a better understanding of the concept of curriculum to achieve certain goals, it is important to understand the concept of education as defined by Rizvi and Lingard (2010:71):

> Education is a deliberate, purposive activity directed at the achievement of a range of ends which could potentially include the development of knowledgeable individuals who are able to think rationally, the formation of a sustainable community, and realization of economic goals benefiting both individuals and their communities.

While some educationists argue that the school curriculum helps to produce knowledgeable and responsible citizens for society (Gatawa, 1990:27), some differ. For them, the school curriculum is an instrument to produce and promote political and economic dominance over the weak by the strong (Apple, 1993:222; Bowles and Gintis, as quoted in Zvobgo, 1997:3; Petherick, 2023:1). In terms of this extremist position, Apple (1993:222) argues that curriculum

knowledge largely determines the end product of the school curriculum. For him (Apple, 1993:222), the curriculum knowledge is what he calls the "… official knowledge … ." The "worthy" or "legitimate" knowledge is defined by the groups in power (1993:222). In this vein, Weene (2008:550) also views the curriculum as a vision and insists that "… it can be utilised as a way of envisioning new possibilities … ." Apple (1993:222) confirms that the curriculum is "… part of a selective tradition, someone's selection, and some group's vision of legitimate knowledge."

Debating on what the end product of the curriculum would be, Apple (1993:223) explained that in "… the complex relationships between economic and cultural capital, the role of the school [is] producing …. unequal relations of power." So, given the latter, those in power determine what has to be taught in the schools to promote their aspirations and intentions. In theory, the curriculum would "produce" the intended outcomes. Regarding this, state institutions often issue policy statements to enhance the means of producing the intended end product of the curriculum. In view of this, it was justified to establish whether the issuing of the policy, *Secretary's Circular Number 3 of 2002* was meant to maximise the potential the curriculum reforms had to achieve the intended goals.

Although the curriculum has to be viewed as the state's instrument to achieve certain goals, there is no guarantee that the curriculum can produce the intended outcomes (Ahmed & Maryam, 2016:74-75; Mbarushimana & Allida, 2017:4; Sargent, 2011:17-18; Stern, 2007:1). Clark (1988:176) confirmed that the learner is the eventual decider in terms of what he/she would do with the intended curriculum, thus influencing the official curriculum. Research findings also revealed that teachers sometimes do not fully implement the curriculum reforms as required, especially if they have some reservations about the reforms or are resourcefully not well supported (Alshammari, 2013:181; McNeil, 1990:217; Yan & He, 2012:1).

3.2.3 Curriculum as a process

The third approach to understanding curriculum theory and practice is curriculum as a process. The concept of curriculum as a process refers to what occurs in the classroom, referring to the interaction between the learners, teachers, and knowledge (Smith, 2000:1). This process is, according to Marsh (2009:92), known as curriculum implementation. The following section contains the outcomes of the review of literature on curriculum implementation.

3.2.3.1 Curriculum reforms, dissemination and implementation

In curriculum theory, the aspect of curriculum development forms an important theme. Curriculum development refers to the curriculum design translation into action (Mohanasundaram, 2018:5; Ndawi, 1999:77). For Ndawi (1999:77), curriculum design is the process that "… involves making a prescription of what the curriculum should be like with all the specifications that the developers have to follow … the curriculum designer produces a paper draft that the curriculum (builders) developers will follow." Ndawi (1999:77) further argues that curriculum development requires the following aspects: analysing the prevailing situation, specifying the aims and objectives, selecting, developing and trying materials, in-service teacher education where necessary, monitoring, evaluating and modifying the materials, and disseminating and implementing of the "final" product.

In line with the focus of the study, the researcher focused on the concept of curriculum dissemination and implementation as part of the curriculum development process. To use Ndawi's (1999:91) words: "… curriculum dissemination involves taking the curriculum to the users." One popular curriculum dissemination model is the centre-periphery model (Ndawi, 1999:91; Posner, 1995:212). The centre-periphery model advocates that the curriculum be designed and developed, or reformed at the top, and the implementers are then informed through circulars and/or meetings (Ndawi, 1999:91). The curriculum is centrally designed, and then taken to the users for implementation. This model of curriculum dissemination is based on the top-bottom approach. For McNeil (1990:222), the model follows the top-down strategy that entails issuing a decree and requiring the school teachers to implement the mandate. This model was also discussed in detail in the introductory chapter (*cf.* 1.3.1). In the case of the Zimbabwean education system, curriculum innovations are often disseminated to the classroom teachers through the use "… of policy circulars, education officers, head-teachers or senior teachers … ." (Ndawi, 1999:91). Given this, in this study, the philosophical approach(es) of curriculum development and innovation used by the then Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture in 2002 to disseminate the History innovations of a compulsory secondary school subject, the advantages and disadvantages included, had to be evaluated.

In terms of the concept curriculum implementation, curriculum theorists such as Fullan and Pomfret (as cited in Marsh, 2009:92), defined the concept as "… the actual use of a curriculum/syllabus, or what it consists of in practice." According to Ornstein and Hunkins (as cited in Marsh, 2009:92), curriculum implementation is when teachers implement the curriculum during formal learning situations. Similarly, Ndawi (1999:91) says: "Curriculum implementation occurs when the teachers use curriculum or innovation as their way of

operating." Similarly, Posner (1995:201) defines it as "… the process by which the official curricula are translated into operation curricular." McNeil (2009:5) gives the rationale for curriculum implementation as "… it provides each learner with the intrinsically rewarding experiences that contribute to personal liberation and development." In view of the above definitions, in this study, the concept curriculum implementation refers to the process where the teachers put the approved written plan or guidelines for teacher-learner activities into reality with the actual learners (Mashayamombe, 2006:26).

Research has shown that the implementation of the curriculum does not guarantee the attainment of educational purposes. Sargent (2011:7-8) noted that the lack of quality programmes to support teachers, and financial and environmental constraints are factors which hindered the successful implementation of new curriculum reforms in the Gansu Province of China. Stern (2007:1) also observed that: "Educational research in various countries has however shown that top-down measures like centralized reform measures of curricula and school organization do not lead to educational change, but are either ignored or met with resistance." Madondo (2021:402) revealed that the timing and purpose of curriculum change may hamper the effective implementation of the latter. Chitate (2005:241-145) showed that two O-level History syllabi were abandoned or altered at the implementation stage in Zimbabwe due to resistance or pressure from role-players. In his study at Ngezi High School in the Mashonaland West Province of Zimbabwe, which sought to determine the O-level History learners' attitude towards the compulsory study of History as a subject, Mashayamombe (2006:90) pointed out that most learners involved in the study did not agree with the compulsory study of the subject. One of the reasons, this crisis in the curriculum implementation processes encouraged the researcher to study the extent to which the subject History was compulsory in the secondary schools of the Manicaland Province.

Alshammari (2013:181), Madondo (2021:402-403), McNeil (1990:217) and Yan and He (2012:1) agreed with Sargent (2011:7-8) and Stern (2007:1), that there is a wide range of conditions that hinders successful curriculum implementation, especially when the centre-periphery model has been adopted for implementation. Some of the hindrances they noted are the lack of teaching resources in schools, the examination imperatives, the teachers' heavy teaching loads, a lack of time, and resistance to change from role-players, such as teachers, school heads, and/or parents. Hence, it is important to consider these conditions at the implementation stage of curriculum reforms (McNeil, 1990:217). McNeil (1990:218) and Voogt, Pieters and Roblin (2019:6) confirmed that curriculum developers at national levels are often challenged to have their curriculum adopted and implemented in schools. In agreement, Posner (1995:211) confirmed that the non-inclusion of teachers in the curriculum development

process is problematic because teachers have “pockets of veto.” Merry (2009:186) warns that teachers are not passive participants in the curriculum implementation process. In view of this notion, Voogt, Pieters and Roblin (2019:6) argued that involving teachers in curriculum design largely “… contributes to the effective and sustainable implementation of curriculum innovations.” Shilling (2013:20) also confirmed the above view:

> Research and practice show that there is a significant difference between the official, written curriculum developed by experts and the actual curriculum taught in the classroom because teachers, working autonomously, make different choices regarding curriculum and instruction based on their knowledge, experiences, and the realities of their classrooms.

Given the above, Shilling (2013:20) posits that it has been a common practice that teachers are excluded from active participation in the initial stages of curriculum development, but they should not be handed an already packaged reform to implement. In this regard, McNeil (1990:218) states: “The top-down planning generally fails because it does not generate the staff commitment for success and the planning does not take into account the special knowledge and suggestions of those who will be responsible for implementing the curriculum.” The History Syllabus 2167 was fast-tracked and “… issued without going through a consultative development process with [Zimbabwean secondary school] teachers and professional historians similar to that which was produced [Syllabus 2166] a decade earlier” (Barnes, 2007:648). Therefore, the researcher was interested in the role that was played by the secondary school History teachers in the Manicaland Province to ensure the successful implementation of the 2002 O-level History curriculum reforms.

The research findings of Alshammari (2013:182) confirm the limitations of the centre-periphery model as identified by McNeil (1990:218). In his research on the implementation of the new Science curriculum in Kuwait, Alshammari (2013:182) argued that the process was marred with problems, such as the lack of resources and that the teachers were not well acquainted with the new curriculum. The reasons for these problems were that the curriculum developers were officials from the Ministry of Education, who did not involve the Science teachers in the process, but provided them with what the Ministry of Education officials had worked on and approved for implementation (Alshammari, 2013:182).

Regarding the view that the exclusion of teachers in curriculum reforms results in the partial or non-implementation of the reforms, McNeil (1990:227) recommended staff development workshops to solve the problem. He argued that “… education is a labor-intensive field, which requires teachers … .” (McNeil, 1990:227). In agreement, Alshammari (2013:185) postulated

that in the event of a new curriculum, the Ministry of Education has to retrain teachers so as to align them with the new curriculum. It was, therefore, in the interest of this study to establish whether the then Zimbabwe Ministry of Education, Sport, Art and Culture held staff development forums for the History teachers to disseminate the information regarding the compulsory study of the secondary subject History.

Besides staff development, the success of curriculum implementation is also embedded in the role of the school head (Haquea & David, 2022:2). In his study of the duties of Ghanaian school heads in public schools, Esia-Donkoh (2014:64) acknowledges that school leaders are viewed as important pillars of education, and are also considered as the main agents that promote school effectiveness. For the researcher, part of a school's effectiveness is measured through the successful implementation of the school curriculum. In this regard, the school head's role is vital. McNeil (1990:228) made the following observation: "Teachers follow a new curriculum more closely when the principal plays an active role in the implementation; a new curriculum does not flourish when the principal remains in an office, [and] verbalizes support … ." With the above observation in mind, the researcher was interested in the role the secondary school heads in the Manicaland Province played in the implementation of the O-level History curriculum reforms. In the same vein, the researcher was interested in establishing the measures, if any, that were taken by the relevant ministry to check on the successful implementation of the reforms.

Another widely used model as a curriculum implementation approach is the Research, Development and Diffusion (RD and D) model. The RD and D model takes research or projects from an institution or state, and "… disseminates them as innovative packages of materials or products." (McNeil, 1990:223). The innovator then works with the school staff in addressing the problems that may arise during the first stages of the implementation process. One of the major challenges associated with this approach, is that teachers are viewed as somehow passive implementers whose aims are dissimilar to those of the curriculum developers (Posner, 1995:202). This implies that the teachers are expected to follow the dictates of the RD and D experts or facilitators. In this regard, this approach assumes that teachers would cooperate once the curriculum developers or experts present the advantages of the curriculum change to the teachers (Posner, 1995:202). However, this model is criticised on the basis that it ignores the fact that politicians may interfere with the implementation process of the reforms (McNeil, 1990:223). The fourth approach to understanding curriculum theory and practice is outlined in the next section.

3.2.4 Curriculum as praxis

The last approach in terms of how curriculum theory and practice can be understood is curriculum as praxis. The praxis model of curriculum theory and practice is a critical pedagogical approach that goes beyond the classroom experiences of both the teacher and learners. According to Grundy (as cited in Smith, 2000:1), curriculum as praxis is when the teacher and the learners use their learning experiences to address real life challenges. While it was worthwhile to ask: How far did the O-level History teachers and learners in the Manicaland Province of Zimbabwe find their learning experiences useful in confronting the problems in their daily experiences, this study did not include the issue as a focus area of the study because it was going to be too broad, yet the researcher wanted the latter to be manageable.

It can be concluded that three of the four approaches which can be utilised to understand curriculum theory and practice have been sufficiently reviewed. The three approaches are curriculum as a body of knowledge, curriculum as a product, and curriculum as a process. These approaches have influenced the direction of this study as the concepts were discussed in the literature review, and contributed in exposing the research gap that existed in this regard. Since curriculum changes or reforms are also influenced by politics (Madondo, 2021:403; McNeil, 2009:252; Nkyabonaki, 2013:109), next is a section that focuses on politics and education.

3.3 POLITICS AND EDUCATION

Curriculum enterprise is generally argued as a process that involves a lot of politics (Apple, 1993:222-223; Madondo, 2021:403; McNeil, 2009:252). With regard to this notion, Nkyabonaki (2013:109) has noted that the curriculum activity is engrossed with politics. According to Nkyabonaki (2013:109), the concept politics "… is generally used to refer to those activities that revolve around the decision-making organs of the state and involves the related concepts of power, authority, command and control." For political scientists, the concept is extended to involve any activity of human experiences, which includes power and authority (Nkyabonaki, 2013:109). Zvobgo (1997:2) gives the working definition for this study, as he defines politics as the skill of governing others. In regard to the concept education, the Merriam Webster Dictionary (sa) defined it as the information, skill, and understanding that one acquires from school or tertiary education. Freire (as quoted in Nkyabonaki, 2013:109) defined education as a device or scheme of trickery by the political class. Thus, education can be seen

as a trick tool used by political leaders to achieve their long-term goals. In regards to the concept education, the researcher employs Apple's (1993:222) definition as the working definition for this study. Apple (1993:222) considered education as a weapon used by those in political power to reproduce and alter authority and subservience in society.

It is in view of the above working definition that state politics influence the nature of education offered by any state. The notion is supported by Phillips and Hawthorne (sa:362) who noted that: "Curriculum design, development, and evaluation are, always have been, and always will be special cases of political behaviour." By political behaviour, Phillips and Hawthorne (sa:362) mean "… [political] activity directed toward influencing or controlling decisions …", about "… who should have access to what knowledge, how the knowledge is selected, organised, and presented … ." Madondo (2021:403) postulated that at times, politicians encouraged curriculum changes to drive their political agendas. This implies that political leaders have the power to determine the nature of education in a country, and who can access it.

Those in political power have a direct influence on the teaching process in schools since they have influence on curriculum decision making (Steller, sa:161). In this regard, Steller (sa:161) further argues that education policy-makers often "… respond more quickly, and with vigour to political demands than to true educational needs." In this vein, Nkyabonaki (2013:109) regarded politics as omnipotent in influencing curriculum affairs of any nation. He argued that politics influences the curriculum above other factors such as economics and sociocultural factors since it is the political domain that influences the curriculum "… through its power of public policy on education and training" (Nkyabonaki, 2013:113). To this effect, top politics, which include state politics and can be donor politics, influence curriculum development processes of any nation (Madondo, 2021:403; Nkyabonaki, 2013:109). In agreement, Zvobgo (1997:19) posited that it is the role of every state, regardless of its ideology, to deliver services to its citizens. Among many, the services are in the form of education, health and communications.

The political class uses education as a vehicle to dominate others (Bowles & Gintis, as cited in Zvobgo, 1994:3; Petherick, 2023:1; Zvobgo, 1997:19). Supporting this assertion, Nkyabonaki (2013:109) argues that the political echelon uses education to control and manipulate the masses. This argument can be sustained if one analyses the role of education in both colonial and post-colonial Africa. For instance, colonial education for Africans in Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) was designed and developed by the white colonial masters to promote political and economic dominance of the whites over the black Africans (Mavhunga, 2006:445). Phillips and Hawthorne (sa:362) also emphasised the dominant role played by

politicians in curriculum decision-making processes as noted: “It is a reality that [political leaders] have greater power than others in curriculum decision-making.” Therefore, the role of government in education is inevitable and is seen when politics directly influence curriculum development processes. In post-colonial Africa, as Zvobgo (1997:20) posits, political leaders view and use education as follows: the vehicle for political, economic and social liberation, the prime mover of [national] development and for the politician, the most important vehicle for effecting political and ideological control on the masses.

The above illustration supports the notion that politics determine the nature of education the states offer to its public. To this end, Zvobgo (1997:20) cited the three main political influences on education, namely:

- influence over policy, i.e what will be the guiding principle determining educational policy? What will be the aims of the national education system?
- influence over content and procedures of education, i.e what will be taught and assessed? How does content and procedures reflect on the policies and politics of the state?
- influence over the latitude of social and political action, i.e to what extent society is at large and people who inhabit and use schools are allowed to determine the curriculum and teaching strategies and methodologies?

While Zvobgo (1997:20) argues that the society at large is allowed to determine the curriculum, Phillips and Hawthorne (sa:364) disagree. The two argue that to say the community determines decision-making in education is a belief. Phillips and Hawthorne (sa:364) go on to say that even if teachers, curriculum planners and community members are directly involved in the policy formulation and decision-making in curriculum development, the fundamental issue that remains is: “Whose values are incorporated into the scenarios of schooling for youth in a given community?” This is when Lawton’s (as quoted in Nkyabonaki, 2013:109) question in regards to the selection of “… the most important aspects of culture for transmission …” to the school curriculum becomes relevant. He asked: “One of the crucial questions to put is the political question: who makes the selection?” (Lawton, as cited in Nkyabonaki, 2013:109). These scholars’ position is that at the end of the day, political influence dominates the entire curriculum design and development processes (Lawton, as cited in Nkyabonaki, 2013:109; Phillips and Hawthorne, sa:364; Nkyabonaki, 2013:113). This is no wonder why Phillips and Hawthorne (sa:364) observed that politics play a central role in influencing curriculum development processes in the United States of America. Phillips and Hawthorne’s (sa:364) argument is anchored on their findings in their research that sought to establish the role of

teachers in curriculum decision-making *vis-à-vis* political influence. The study, which included one hundred and seventy-five teachers and administrators in Northeast Ohio of the United States of America "… were asked whom they perceived as being involved, and to what extent in selecting and organising objectives [of the curriculum] … ." (Phillips & Hawthorne, sa:365). In this regard, Phillips and Hawthorne (sa:365) reported that the findings of the study showed that learners were not involved, teachers, individually or collectively, were involved in advising and deliberating but rarely in decision-making and parents, individually or collectively, were rarely involved, and when involved served in an advisory capacity only.

China urged for the integration or insertion of the Chinese political ideology during curriculum development processes (Zheng, Wang & Li, 2021:1-2). This implies that that learners, teachers and parents were not decision-makers in curriculum development processes. Therefore, in view of the reviewed literature, it can be generally concluded that politics plays a central role in curriculum development processes of any nation. With that in mind, it was encouraging to establish the role of politics in History education in the global world. This was justifiable because an understanding of how politics influenced History education internationally, could have offered some insights into the probable rationale for the mandatory study of the secondary school subject History in Zimbabwe since 2002. As such, the following section analyses the place and role of H(h)istory in the school curriculum globally and locally (Zimbabwe).

3.4 H(h)ISTORY AND THE CURRICULUM

To the best of the researcher's knowledge, not much research has been conducted to establish the government's position on the rationale for making the study of secondary school History mandatory at Ordinary level in Zimbabwe since 2002. Additionally, there has not been any study conducted by the then Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture since 2002 to establish whether these school History curriculum reforms were being implemented in the Zimbabwean secondary schools. Neither has the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education, as it is called since August 2013, sanctioned a research team to evaluate, and analyse the implementation of the History curriculum reforms. However, an abundance of literature exists on the place of the school subject History in the school curriculum, which was published internationally and in Zimbabwe in particular. Therefore, in this section, the related literature to these studies is reviewed and reported. The review focuses on the rationale for the inclusion of the school subject History in the curriculum. The review starts with a critique in terms of History teaching globally. Thereafter, the justification for the place of school History in the curriculum in general is reviewed, and the different perspectives on its role in the

Zimbabwean context are finally provided.

3.4.1 Critique of History as a subject in the curriculum

There exists an abundance of literature that critiques History teaching in secondary schools. Much of the criticism ranges from the relevance of the subject History in the school curriculum, the nature of historical knowledge and approaches to History teaching, to mention but a few as illustrated below. Nevertheless, since the days of Plato up to the present, the subject History enjoyed a lot of space and attention as a school subject worldwide (Mashayamombe, 2006:7). The criticism in terms of the relevance of the subject History can be traced back to the medieval period. Medieval and reformation scholars such as Augustine and John Calvin viewed historians and the subject History as irrelevant to their society (Twyman, 1997:6). For them, history was nothing but the unfolding of divine providence. These philosophers influenced Leopold Von Ranke, a German historian of the 19th Century. His understanding of universal history, Von Ranke, in the words of Twyman (1997:6) notes: "All events of history belong equally to God's plan and therefore each epoch must be considered on its own and not in relation to the present." This argument suggests that the past has no bearing on the present; hence, the subject History is irrelevant to present society. Research indicated that many students in Denmark, Germany and the Netherlands considered the subject History as largely irrelevant to their future lives (Van Straaten, Wilschut & Oostdam, 2016:480). This concurs with the findings of a comparative study conducted by Wilscut (2010:693) on History teaching in England, Germany and the Netherlands during the 19th and 20th Centuries, which shows that there were attempts to eliminate the subject from the curriculum on the allegations that it was unfit for the modern age. In contrast to such a position, in Zimbabwean secondary schools, the subject History was compulsory at O-level. The need to establish the rationale for making the study of the subject History mandatory was a motivational factor for this study.

Henry Ford has also dismissed History as garbage that has no use. During an interview with the *Chicago Times* in 1916, Ford (as cited in Fabian, 2013:78), was quoted saying: "History is more or less bunk. It's tradition. We don't want tradition. We want to live in the present and the only history that I worthy a tinker's damn is the history that we make today." Fabian's (2013:78) understanding of what Henry Ford implied is: "… traditions (his definition of history) can get into the way of progress." Nevertheless, as Fabian (2013:78) argues, numerous studies revealed that some societies hold onto traditions, even when in some cases such traditions are useless. According to Fabian (2013:78), the justification for that is: "In some cases, we hold onto [traditions] for fear of dishonouring our ancestors." In this view, the school subject History is considered useless.

It is worthwhile to point out that some modernist historians, just like the medieval and reformation philosophers, questioned the purported value and place of History in the curriculum. These historians emerged during the period of Enlightenment. Although they did not acknowledge the course of events in religious terms as medieval and reformation scholars, modernists regarded history as "something" that hold no clue to man's destiny but merely a record of his past (Twyman, 1997:2). For them, the present society has nothing to "borrow from the past." With such criticism in mind, it was necessary to establish the Zimbabwean education ministry's intentions for making the subject compulsory in public schools.

Postmodern historians such as Barthes and White joined the band of critics in terms of the epistemology of History as a discipline (Tyynela & Mey, 2012:270). The critical historians of the late 20th Century, who championed the philosophy of postmodernism, have confronted historical knowledge and challenged the value and place of the subject History in the school curriculum. In 2006, the then Australian Prime Minister acknowledged the threat posed by the postmodernists by saying that History and other humanities subjects have suffered to postmodernism which questions or repudiates the objectivity of grand narratives (Howard, 2006:1). This kind of thinking, advanced by French philosophers like Jacquis Derrida, Jean Lacan, Michel Foucault and Jacquis Baurillard, rejects knowledge and thought acquired from History, among other discourses (Yilmaz, 2010:780). The thinking is anchored on the notion that History is nothing but words played around with to form grand-narratives, which can be interpreted differently. This implies that the school subject History has no fixed meaning.

As Harvey (as quoted in Yilmaz, 2010:781) puts it: "Postmodernism expresses a skeptical, suspicious and questioning attitude toward the legacy of Enlightenment modernity; be it scientific rationality, universal truth claims, progress emancipation or human betterment." It rejects all authority in grand narratives through deconstruction (Tyynela & Mey, 2012:272). For Giroux (as quoted in Yilmaz, 2010:783), "… postmodernism expresses a questioning attitude towards modernism's claims to universal reason, objectivity, neutrality, superiority of science … ." From this perspective, "… language is not a translucent medium that allows the world to be viewed as it actually is (Collins, as cited in Yilmaz 2010:787). Similarly, Toews (as quoted in Yimaz, 2010:787) asserts that "… language is to be conceived as not something to be looked through, but something to be looked at … ."

More specifically, postmodernists question knowledge generated from the subject History. The argument is much more centred on the role of words or language which is used in the reconstruction of the past. The role of language in knowledge construction, as the

postmodernist school queried, "… views [historical] knowledge as a kind of story, a text, discourse in which words and images are put together in ways that seem pleasing, convincing, and useful to a powerful culture, or some powerful members of that culture" (Yimaz, 2010:783). What may stop one from wondering that the mandatory study of the subject History in Zimbabwean secondary schools is meant to propagate the interests of the powerful members of ZANU PF, and not necessarily of the nation? In light of this question, the researcher felt encouraged to expose the rationale for making the study of secondary school History compulsory at both ZJC and O-levels. Additionally, as postmodernists insist, knowledge or the truth is not fixed but something socially concocted which depends on the language used, and is relative to time.

Postmodernists deprived the discipline of history theory of the truth that historians claim to stand for. They question the notion of the objective truth in the subject History, basing their claim on the way historians try to know and reconstruct the past. For postmodernists, the historian's word (truth) does not correspond with the world truth (Yilmaz, 2010:785). Thus, the historian's word or presentation of the truth is not the world truth. In an effort to emphasise the relation between the historian's word or presentation of the truth and the world truth, Rorty (as cited in Yilmaz, 2010:785-786) made the following statement:

> We need to make a distinction between the claim that the world is out there and the claim that [the] truth is out there. To say that the world is out there, is to say, things in space and time are the effects of [natural] causes. The world is out there, but descriptions of the world are not. Only descriptions of the world can be true or false.

Therefore, with such an attack on the objective truth leveled against the discipline of History, the rationale for teaching History in secondary schools becomes a problem. First, and foremost, it has to be acknowledged that the field of History does not give room for historians to observe the past (Yilmaz, 2010:785). This contradicts the much celebrated German historian, Leopold Von Ranke's famous dictum that a historical account explains "… the past in terms of how it actually was" (Yilmaz, 2010:786). Elaborating on the fragility of the epistemology of History, while driving his argument from Lowental's book entitled *The Past is a Foreign Country,* Jenkins (1991:12-13) posits that the past was not an account but events or situations that are gone, and no account can check them. Such limitations of the epistemology History are made much more understandable as Jenkins (1991:12-13), whom Yilmaz (2010:786) also quoted, clarified:

> No matter how verifiable, how widely acceptable or checkable, History remains inevitably a personal construct, a manifestation of the historian's perspective

> as a narrator. Unlike direct memory, History relies on someone else's eyes and voices; we see through an interpreter who stands between past events and our readings of them ...

Resultantly, and bearing in mind the notion that there is a gap between the past and the subject History, it was very encouraging for the researcher to establish why the subject History was made mandatory in Zimbabwean secondary schools. This was justified considering the notion that the past and historiography are not a replica. Undoubtedly, the critique supports the legendary Valery's famous dismissal of the relevance of the school subject History when he said: "History is the most dangerous product evolved from the chemistry of the intellect. … It teaches precisely nothing …" (White, 1966:120). Similarly, Arnold (as cited in McCracken, 1974:68) relegated the subject History to a "… huge Mississippi of falsehood." While some scholars have criticised the necessity of History as a discipline of study, some historians have defended the place of History in the school curriculum as elaborated in the next section.

3.4.2 Defending the subject against postmodernism

Some of the advocates of the postmodernist ideas such as Barthes and White (as cited in Tynnela & Mey, 2012:270), question the study of school History with the claim that basically, there is no variance between imagined and historical narratives. Barthes (as cited in Tyynela & Mey, 2012:272) insisted that: "History appropriates narrative from fiction, where it was developed and cultivated. Therefore, narrative History is indistinguishable from narrative fiction." In regard to such an attack on the status of the subject History, the emphasis is "… on the role of the language and discourse in shaping [the] meaning and individual subjectivity" (Yilmaz, 2010:781). Despite the negative statements given against the discipline of History, many academics have defended it against the postmodernists' attack.

One established defender of the discipline of History is Dolezel. Dolezel (as quoted in Tyynela & Mey, 2012:270) made a significant effort in his work entitled, *Possible words of fiction and history: the postmodern stage,* to defend the study of the school subject History. As he rejects the postmodern challenge, and argues that although the subject History and fiction are premised on narratives, "… the narratives worlds projected by these two types of narratives do indeed differ not only in the origins and cultural functions but also their structural and semantic properties" (Dolezel, as quoted in Tyynela & Mey, 2012:271). In this regard, Dolezel's counter position against the postmodern challenge is that in the reconstruction of history, historians are guided by specific processes and approaches to the past, which are fundamentally different from the ethics that govern the construction of fiction narratives.

Therefore, based on Dolezel's (as quoted in Tyynela & Mey, 2012:271) assertion that indeed the subject History has some "cultural functions", it was necessary to establish whether it was the issue of the cultural functions that could have compelled Zimbabwe's education ministry to make the study of the subject History mandatory.

3.4.3 Implications of postmodernism on the subject in schools

Regardless of the postmodernist critique on the subject History, the global society in general, has ignored or rejected the attack on it and continued to include it in the school curriculum. Yilmaz (2010:789) admitted that postmodernism had some significant implications on the teaching and learning of the subject History in secondary schools, and institutions of higher learning. One of the implications was the emphasis on explaining the human past from multiple viewpoints, instead of a single one (Van Straaten, Wilschut & Oostdam, 2016:481; Yilmaz, 2010:789). This implies that History teachers have to equip learners with analysis skills so that they do not accept historical claims at face value. Be that as it may, the question is: How far the mandatory study of the subject History at secondary school level in the Mutare and Mutasa districts was a success? This question will be answered at the end of the study.

Thompson (as quoted in Yilmaz, 2010:789) also acknowledges that postmodernism has positively influenced the theory and practice of the discipline History as it calls for a close examination of historical discourse. In doing so, the reader would establish the voice and the views of those in power, and recognising the voices being silenced or ignored. With such an implication in mind, the researcher regarded it necessary to conduct the study with the intention to establish whether the mandatory study of History in Zimbabwean secondary schools was promoting the views of those in power, and what views might have been silenced or ignored. The need to come up with the answers to these questions urged the researcher to conduct the study.

Postmodernists have also urged History teachers and learners to be aware of the epistemology of History. To this end, they have to familiarise themselves with the nature of historical knowledge, namely that it is interpretative as it is based on the interpretation and inference of evidential remains of the past (Yilmaz, 2008:161). For Marwick (1985:54), "History has failed in its social function in that the 'memory' of the past it presented was 'less truthful' than it could have been." These two authors agree that historical knowledge is not the absolute truth, but subject to change if new evidence emerges or when new authorities impose their views. Resultantly, historical knowledge has been rendered subjective as it is not value-free from the historian in particular, and society's philosophical orientation in general.

3.4.4 The subject History in the school curriculum from an international perspective

Despite the criticism levelled against the subject History, it is part of the school curricula in many countries. The place of the subject in the school curriculum has remained indispensable. Research shows that the subject has remained in the national curricula of many countries or regions such as China, Japan, Australia, Germany, Britain, the Middle East, and the United States (Dror, 2001:29; Gil, 2009:1-2; Haynes, 2009:424; Sharp, 2012:405; Sneider, 2012:35). Therefore, in this part of the review of the related literature, the researcher reports some of the scholars who argued for the place of History in the school curriculum.

For a very long time, History teaching in Australian schools has been done with the aim of promoting patriotism (Haynes, 2009:424). According to the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (sa), the definition of the word patriotism refers to loving one's country. For Nyakudya (2007:120), patriotism is a concept that is derived from the Greek word [patris] meaning fatherland. He further elaborated that in the Greek times, the concept entailed "… a love for, loyalty to, one's country", that included "… attachment to the physical features of the homeland" (Nyakudya, 2007:120). When the ideas of democracy, socialism and communism emerged in the realm of political thought in the 18th Century, the concept of patriotism further developed to include notions of traditions, customs, pride and devotion in the history of the people's homeland (Nyakudya, 2007: 120). Nathanson (as quoted in the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 2009:1) also elaborated the meaning of the word patriotism by saying it involves the following aspects: special affection for one's own country, sense of personal identification with the country, special concern for the well-being of the country and willingness to sacrifice to promote the country's good.

Considering the above definition, the then Australian Prime Minister, John Howard, acknowledged that History teaching prepared the young to be responsible and patriotic citizens. Thus in one of his national addresses, he indicated that, "Part of preparing young Australians to be informed and active citizens is to teach them the central currents of our nation's development. The subject matter should include indigenous history as part of the whole national inheritance …" (Howard, 2006:1). He concluded his speech with a warning to other states which lack the courage to enforce the teaching of History in schools. He said youths are in danger of being disowned from their heritage if their community does not have the audacity and confidence to teach its history (Howard, 2006:1).

Haynes (2009:424) further posited that because of the current Australian national curriculum reforms in the teaching of Australian History, which fails to meet the tolerable educational practice, the cultivating of patriotic citizenship through school education has been encouraged. These curriculum reforms were a result of the Commonwealth Parliament that had in the first decade of the 21st Century agreed that the member states were supposed to concoct and control the implementation of the national curriculum for schools (Haynes, 2009:424). These member states had to confront and put an end to the tradition where the state and church as institutions were in charge of their separate school curricula. The need to promote personal and national identity is emphasised as the justification for the changing of the Australian History curriculum. However, this contradicts the promotion of literacy and numeracy as a way of how people achieve functional participation in society (Haynes, 2009:425).

In Australia, as stipulated by the Australian National Curriculum, History teaching is implemented in schools as a separate subject (Sharp, 2012:405). Some of the reasons given to justify the move are "… to recognize the importance of teaching historical skills as a distinct subject, and … to ensure that national narratives are taught in schools" in the interests of the prevailing political trends (Sharp, 2012:405). In her studies of History teaching in Australian primary schools, Sharp (2012:405) postulates that multiculturalism has significantly infiltrated the teaching of the subject. By means of her close analysis, she established that multiculturalism and the subject History have been merged. The implication has been considered negative by conservative academics who claim that: "… historical knowledge becomes silenced in the school curriculum, resulting in the vague and sometimes historically inaccurate information being presented to learners" (Sharp, 2012:405). To her, the content of the subject History is often inaccurate as it has been "… infiltrated by multiculturalism." In support, Melleuish (2013:34) elaborated that the teaching of Australian History in schools is being criticised for including outside (Asian) cultures rather than the European culture that has shaped Australian institutions.

Melleuish (2013:34) goes on to criticise the Australian national History curriculum for being excessively ideological. He further reveals that Australian learners tend to find the subject boring due to the nature of its content. Paradoxically, Howard (2006:1) defended the inclusion of multiculturalism in the Australian History curriculum as it would transform Australia from the bad and old tendencies of being xenophobic, racially prejudiced and monocultural to a noble and different Australia that was culturally diverse and tolerant. In India, a mandatory history curriculum was introduced by the government with the aim to instil a sense of patriotism among students (Sarkar, 2022:171). In light of the reviewed literature, it can be concluded that political leaders can sacrifice and distort historical knowledge at the expense of political interests. Be

it as it may, it was in view of this context that it was encouraging for the researcher to establish whether the mandatory study of the subject in Zimbabwean secondary schools was an issue of promoting political interests at the expense of historical knowledge that empowers learners to understand the world better.

In the United States of America (USA), there were rigorous efforts to reform History teaching in schools, especially in the 1960s and 1970s (Reisman, 2012:234). Through the Armherst History Project, early in 1963, the History curriculum emphasised the skill of analysing open-ended historical questions (Reisman, 2012:234). Even though, as Reisman (2012:234) notes, History teaching in American secondary schools by the late 1970s was dominated by lecture, rote-learning, and expository teaching methods. Nevertheless, even in the 21st Century, some studies carried out in the USA to establish learners' experiences in high school History classes showed that the subject was boring (Rosenzweig, as cited in Reisman, 2012:233-234). Some of the reasons given to account for it to be a boring subject were that History study is characterised by rote learning, memorisation and textbook learning.

Research has also shown that, despite their different approaches, History teaching in Japan and China promotes patriotism as one of the main goals. In Japan, history textbooks are used to promote national identity and patriotism (Sneider, 2013:35). Similarly, History teaching in the Chinese schools of the 21st Century consciously aims at encouraging a nationalist perception of their past (Sneider, 2013:35). Sneider (2013:35) further established that the national curriculum guidelines for many of the East Asian nations are set to instill a sense of national pride and identity as the function of History teaching.

A comparative study conducted by Wilschut (2010:693) on History teaching in England, Germany and the Netherlands in the 19th and 20th Centuries shows that attempts were made by politicians to remove the subject History from the school curriculum. For Wilschut (2010:693), the rationale to eliminate the subject was based on the allegation that the subject was unfit for the modern age of industralisation and technology. However, as further established by Wilschut (2010:694), the subject was later revived by politicians, especially towards the end of the 20th Century. Thus, "History entered the school curricula of European states with very specific purposes. Political education and ideology were predominant in almost every case" (Wilschut, 2010:694). In Wales, History teaching is meant to inculcate the Welsh identity among learners (Jones, 2009:331). Wilschut (2010:717-718) singled out England, Germany and the Netherlands as examples where governments have reinforced their grip on the school History curriculum from the late 20th Century through to the 21st Century. Against this background, it was justified why the researcher wanted to establish why

the government of Zimbabwe made the study of the subject compulsory at secondary school level in 2002.

The views of Gordon Brown, the then British Prime Minister (Brown, as cited in Hillis, 2010:142), confirm the afore-mentioned research findings. In his keynote address to the Fabian Society, Brown (as cited in Hillis, 2010:142) asserts that the school subject history plays a central role in the promotion of the British agenda. The former British Premier went on to say: It was said that British history h3ad to be given much more preference in the school curriculum as it would unite the British for a common cause (Brown, as cited, in Hillis, 2010:144).

In Scotland, as suggested by the study of Hillis (2010:141), the teaching of the subject History is marred by controversy due to ongoing curriculum reforms in primary and secondary schools. A curriculum for excellence, as the current curriculum reforms in Scotland are known,

> … gives head teachers increased powers to decide on the curriculum … . A curriculum for excellence provides an opportunity to review the teaching of history at all levels from primary through to upper secondary, with a further driver of change being on an increased emphasis on Scottish history (Hillis, 2010:141).

Debates over the status of the subject History in the school curriculum emanated because the above, curriculum for excellence, aims to give the school practitioners much more freedom to determine the curriculum (Hillis, 2010:143). Therefore, in light of the reviewed literature, it was justified for the researcher to establish the Zimbabwean government's rationale for abandoning the optional study of History at O-level in 2002.

Gil's (2009:1-2) research findings show that the teaching of the subject History, the Shoah in particular is compulsory in the Israeli school system. Shoah is a Hebrew word that can be translated to mean "calamity, catastrophe or holocaust." The Shoah in the Israeli school curriculum refers to: "… [the] Holocaust or Nazi genocide of the European Jews in the World War II" (Dctionary.com, sa). As Gil (2009:4) opined: "The Shoah is the only subject in the curriculum mandated by [the 1980 Compulsory Educational] law and a key part in the history curriculum." Thus, while the 1980 Compulsory State Educational Law requires Israeli children to go through at least ten years of compulsory education, these children are mandated to learn the Shoah in the schools (Law Library of Congress, 2015:1). In agreement, Dror (2001:31) writes that it was in 1980 that the Israeli parliament passed a resolution that made "… Holocaust studies a compulsory element of the secondary school curricula."

As Gil (2009:2) argued, the teaching and learning of the Shoah in Israeli schools, although important, has not been without problems as illustrated by the following: “The Shoah is an inseparable part of Israeli collective memory … . Much has been written on how to teach Shoah, but very little on the programs and textbooks.” In this quote, Gil (2009:2&4) lamented that even though a lot has been said on how to teach the Shoah, not much was done in textbook production, and specified the year 1981 as one of the years that faced shortages of appropriate textbooks, yet the Shoah was included in the matriculation examination for high school learners since 2002. Thus, the shortage of invaluable resources had been an impediment to the successful implementation of curriculum reforms in Israeli schools. In view of this scenario, if any, what could have hindered the successful implementation of curriculum reforms, in particular, the mandatory study of History in the Mutare and Mutasa districts secondary schools in the Manicaland province?

Furthermore, Gil (2009:1) posited that while the new Israeli educational policy emphasises that the learner of the Shoah has to attain knowledge, historical ideas and disciplinary skills, the curriculum implementers were emphasising different issues. Thus, “… with so much emphasis on passing the exam, the educators have little opportunity to teach the Shoah in depth” (Gil, 2009:2). It was in this context that when Rabbi Shai Piron was appointed the Minister of Education in 2013, he lobbied that inculcation of values ought to be given more preference in the school curriculum than passing a national examination (Wolff, 2014:1). In this regard, the Minister of Education argued that the teachers were giving prominence to assessment at the expense of the delivery of quality knowledge and values (Wolff, 2014:1). This claim is in line with Campell’s general comment on achievement tests (as cited in Wolff, 2014:2) when he noted that: “… when test scores become the goal of the teaching process, they both lose their value as indicators of educational status and distort the educational process in undesirable ways.” All this points to the fact that as implementers, teachers have the potential of narrowing the curriculum to one that can be largely examination-oriented. The above proves correct the general assertion that teachers have the “pocket of veto” when it comes to curriculum implementation (McNeil, 1990:218; Posner, 1995:211; Voogt, Pieters & Roblin, 2019:6). As such, it was justifiable to establish the extent to which the History teachers in the Zimbabwean secondary schools implemented the History curriculum reforms.

For a very long time, History teaching in schools was believed to have an invaluable contribution as it assisted in moulding patriotic citizens of countries. Lewis (1960:3) posits that History teaches learners to appreciate their country’s heritage. In Europe, children are taught the history of their country for them to love and have pride in it (Laughton, 1965:3; Steele,

1983:5). This classical justification for the place of History in the school curriculum also explains the presence of the Shoah in the Israeli school curriculum. Gil (2009:3) contends that from the 1950s and 1960s, History teaching in Israel was anchored on the Zionist narrative that emphasised Jewish history that promoted unity among the Jews in and outside of Israel. As Chilov, Salomon and Inbar (Sa:31) contended: "One of the major goals of Zionism was to do away with this split identity, and educate a person and a Jew as a unified entity." In the 1970s, the Shoah curriculum was changed to promote self-learning, but the nationalist intentions were preserved (Gil, 20009:3). As a result of the criticism from teachers and learners of the Shoah, the curriculum was revisited and changed in 1999. The criticism, as Gil (2009:4) puts it, was based mainly on the content outlined in the official textbooks.

In the meantime, it is important to note that the Shoah curriculum has been changed three times; the first one, 1948 to1977, which was known as the Zionist stage, the second one, 1977 to1999, which was termed the humanist approach, and the third one, from 1999 to present, which is called the democratic stage (Gil, 2009:3). In the Zionist stage, the teaching of the Shoah focused on the persecuted Jews in exile who necessitated the formation of the state of Israel. During this period, secondary school learners learnt about the Shoah from two main sources: *Holocaust martyrs* and *Heroes remembrance day* (Gil, 2009:4). These sources were viewed as having inaccurate and less detailed historical information. Dror (2001:30) claims that the Holocaust studies faced some resistance at the implementation level because they lacked balance.

During the humanist stage, the Israeli Minister of Education, and leader of the National Religious Party, Zevulon Hammer, demanded changes in the teaching of the Shoah. As Gil (2009:4) puts it: "In 1979, the [Minister of Education] issued a directive that no less than 30 school hours should be dedicated to the teaching of Shoah." Resultantly, the 1953 Compulsory Educational Law was amended in 1980 to instil a sense of patriotism and heroism among the Israeli children through the mandatory teaching of the Shoah. The Shoah topics that were mandatory and included were: "... anti-Semitism, Nazi Germany (1933-1939), the Nazi's war of annihilation against the Jewish people, the annihilation of the Jewish people, Jewish resistance, world reaction, and from Shoah to redemption" (Gil, 2009:4). Dror (2001:29) bemoans the teaching of the Holocaust in Israeli secondary schools from the 1960s and 1970s as controversial since it provoked deep emotions.

Salmons (2010:58) also attacked the mandatory study of the Holocaust in the Israeli secondary school History curriculum as it was based on what was already known. He points out that the objectives are inadequate as they are meant to elicit emotional responses. For

him, there is a serious risk of distorting the past by following the way the Holocaust is being taught in Israeli schools. As he further stresses, the teaching of the Holocaust "… leaves the young people open to manipulation and coercion from those who use the past to push their own social, political or other agendas" (Salmons, 2010:58). However, it was the nature of the content within the Shoah topics that evoked criticism from the teachers and learners alike that resulted in the change of the curriculum in 1999. Gil (2009:4) calls this the democratic stage.

According to the new Shoah curriculum, that was set for implementation in 2000, of the "… 85 history teaching hours to 11th or 12th graders", as recommended by the Ministry of Education, "… 45 should be assigned to the Shoah, Nazism, and WWII" (Gil, 2009:4). Thus, the teaching of the Shoah has been merged with general History. In 2000, it was agreed that the recent textbooks were supposed to be redesigned and republished. However, Gil (2009:4) observes that from 2000 up to 2009, the latter program was not implemented. This was because there were no textbooks to be used by the teachers to teach the obligatory Shoah. So, it was in a similar context that the researcher was prompted to analyse a sample of the topics in the Zimbabwean O-level History Syllabus, and determine whether there existed similarities and/or differences in terms of the mandatory study of History in Zimbabwe and Israel respectively.

While the teaching of the Shoah is still obligatory in Israel, the fundamental change in the new curriculum was rooted in its historical aims. Thus, the main goal was for the learners to attain knowledge, historical ideas and disciplinary skills, rather than to acquire values and ideas (Gil, 2009:4). Salmons (2010:58) further claimed that, while the study of the Holocaust was also mandatory "… in England's national curriculum for history", the justification for its place in the school curriculum is that it provides the "… learners with powerful ways of knowing the world." In a similar vein, it was necessary to establish the fundamental rationale for making the subject History mandatory in Zimbabwean secondary schools. Having reviewed the literature that focused on the status of the subject History internationally, the next section dwells on the perspectives on the status of the subject History in the context of the Zimbabwean situation from 1980 up to 2016.

3.4.5 Perspectives on the status of the subject History in the Zimbabwean education system since 1980 up to 2016

Not much research has been carried out with regard to the mandatory study of the secondary school subject History at O-level in Zimbabwe. To be specific, there is very little known about the government's justification for the mandatory study of History since 2002. No known study

has been conducted by the government through the relevant ministry to establish or evaluate the implementation of the 2002 O-level History curriculum reforms. However, there is a vast body of literature in regards to the assumed role of the subject History in the Zimbabwean education system in general. This section of the chapter reviews the research findings closely related to the study of the subject History or the general perspectives academics hold with regard to the place of the subject History in the Zimbabwean education system.

Researchers provided various perspectives on the role and place of History teaching in Zimbabwe; be it at secondary school or tertiary levels. Barnes (2007:633) studied the secondary school historiography from 1980 to 2002, and established that during this period, the History Syllabus was changed more than once. In addition, new History textbooks were also published (Barnes, 2007:637; Maposa & Wassermann, 2014:255; Ranger, 2005:12). For Barnes (2007:635) and Ranger (2004:12), each time the O-level History Syllabus was changed, the subject History had a specific purpose to fulfil. The first full-fledged nationalist O-level History Syllabus 2166 which was implemented in the early 1990s shunned racism during the Rhodesia era (1890-1979).

The History Syllabus 2166 was presented in a radical and racial polarised narrative, and contained "… powerful notions of both ethnic inclusion and racial exclusion" (Barnes, 2007:635). As such, Syllabus 2166 was used to instill in the Zimbabwean youth that the British colonists and their counterparts in the then Rhodesia were imperialists; whose oppressive rule marginalised and impoverished the indigenous Africans to the effect that they took up arms to liberate themselves. As one of the objectives of Syllabus 2166, the learners were supposed to empathise with the past. Hence, "… the much-heralded policy of national racial reconciliation after 1980 largely became, in practice, a passive set of 'live and let live' procedures rather than an active review" of the past (Barnes, 2007:635). As Zimbabwe had chosen a Marxist-Leninist ideology (Zvobgo, 1997:63), the History teaching, as was enshrined in Syllabus 2166 seemingly, promoted hostility rather than reconciliation between the Africans and the whites (Barnes, 2007:640, 650).

Barnes (2007:648) further argued that the new History Syllabus 2167 that was introduced in 2002 had also a role to play. Syllabus 2167, which was operational in schools up to 2016, and was a revised version of Syllabus 2166, was meant to promote a sense of patriotism among the youths of Zimbabwe (Barnes, 2007:649; Ranger, 2005:12; Maposa & Wassermann, 2014:255). Ranger (2004:215) exposed the rationale for the implementation of patriotic history in the Zimbabwean education system when he wrote: "Patriotic history is intended to proclaim the continuity of the Zimbabwean revolutionary tradition. It is an attempt to reach out to 'youth'

over the heads of their parents and teachers, all of whom are said to have forgotten or betrayed revolutionary values." Hence, Ranger's (2004:228) emphasis is on the role of History teaching in Zimbabwe, in view of the O-level History curriculum reforms introduced in the 21st Century, namely to instill in the youth the spirit of patriotism that is rooted in the war of liberation.

Bentrovato and Chakawa (2023:40) and Barnes (2007:649) agreed that the tendency to use school History to instil patriotism among the Zimbabwean youth from early 2000 onwards, was as a result of the major challenge that ZANU PF faced for national power from the MDC and other progressive and democratic pressure groups that emerged in the late 1990s. Many of the History teachers interviewed by Barnes (2007:648) in 2002, posited that political reasons were the main drivers for the development and introduction of the much more radical changes in Syllabus 2167. Barnes (2007:649) argued that it would be easier to understand why Syllabus 2167 was hastily introduced in 2002 if one reflects on it "… against … the fast-track land resettlement, a presidential election, new practices of rural violence and urban disorder." The Syllabus 2167, which largely ignores the development of analytical skills but promoted no debate and more rote learning, was meant to instill patriotism in the youth. This was the view of one History teacher interviewee as noted by Barnes (2007:649) in the findings of her study:

> It is difficult to escape the conclusion that the introduction of a new Syllabus was related to a desire on the part of the state to concentrate young minds on a more legitimizing narrative for the status quo and the ruling party, faced as it was with vigorous political opposition. It is thus highly suggestive that Syllabus 2167 was released just after the Zimbabwean government set up youth militia camps and began to teach a decidedly nonacademic, propagandistic 'patriotic history' to them.

The above notion is supported by one of the national examination questions which appeared in the O-level History 2167/1 examination paper of November 2006. Question 19 reads as follows:

19a. State any six reasons for the land reform programme in Zimbabwe. (6)

b. Describe the methods used to acquire and re-distribute land in Zimbabwe from the year 2000. (11)

c. Did the peasants benefit from this land reform programme? (8)

Maposa and Wassermann (2014:255) agree with Barnes (2007:649), that the introduction of the mandatory study of the subject History at the secondary school level has to be understood in the context of the political opposition faced by the ruling government as supported by the quote below:

> The context was the escalating political temperature as Mugabe's ruling Zimbabwe African National Union Patriotic Front (ZANU PF) party was facing stiff political opposition in the form of the newly formed Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) led by Morgan Tsvangirai. The rise in popularity of the MDC was interpreted by ZANU PF as a sign of a younger generation which had lost patriotism due to not studying the country's history, particularly on the struggle against colonisation (Maposa & Wassermann, 2014:255).

It has to be acknowledged that numerous research studies have suggested that History textbooks play a major role in the teaching and learning of the subject (Crawford, 2000:1; Crawford, 2003:1). Acknowledging the invaluable role of History textbooks in History teaching and learning, Maposa and Wassermann (2014:257) regard them as the main component in the contextualisation of the curriculum. In this regard, History textbooks are used to provide a disinfected national history, and such was the case with Nazi Germany and apartheid South Africa (Maposa & Wassermann, 2014:257). These History textbooks, as Aronowitz and Giroux (1991:215) argue, have pedagogical and political authority vested in them. It is in this conceptual context that Merry (2009:383-384) argues that history in school textbooks is constructed. The construction, which gives an account of what happened, involves a rigorous curriculum content selection based on the ideological interests of publishers or censors (Merry, 2009:383-384). Thus, some events about human past are either included or excluded from the textbooks. In this case, it can help to easily understand why government controlled institutions, for example, Zimbabwe's Curriculum Development Unit (CDU) had set guidelines for textbook publishers to follow when publishing textbooks to be used in Zimbabwean schools (Barnes, 2004:145).

In view of the fact that History textbooks carry pedagogical and political authority, key players in the production of the History textbooks are seen contesting, resulting into what Apple and Christian-Smith (1991:213) call textbook wars. This happens because the government, opposition political parties, pressure groups, publishers and many other interested parties may push for their views to be included in the school textbooks. In the case of Zimbabwe, where the production of school History textbooks is sanctioned and closely monitored by the CDU, Maposa and Wassermann (2014:255) question the nature and role of school History in Zimbabwe. To this end, they query the nature of the history that the learners are expected to know, the extent to which they should know it and what is expected of a graduate of school history in Zimbabwe (Maposa & Wassermann, 2014:255).

In the attempt to address the afore-mentioned problem, and also having admitted that

secondary school History in Zimbabwe has been made compulsory up to O-level since early 2000, Maposa and Wassermann (2014:259-265) analysed the History textbooks currently in use in the Zimbabwe secondary schools with the objective of establishing the purpose of school History in Zimbabwe. In their study, the two purposively selected three O-level History textbooks which are in use in the schools, namely Proctor, A. and Phimister, I. 1991. *People and Power Book 1*. Harare: Academic Books; Prew, M., Pape, J., Mutwira, R. and Barnes, T. 1993. *People Making History Book 4*. Harare: Zimbabwe Publishing House; and Mlambo, A. 1995. *Focus on History Book 4* (Maposa & Wassermann, 2014:259). Maposa and Wassermann (2014:259) observed that these were published in the 1990s, particularly for the History Syllabus 2166, and are still widely used in the secondary schools in the 21st Century for the teaching of History Syllabus 2167. In their research findings, Maposa and Wassermann (2014:254) posited that the analysed History textbooks promoted historical literacy in learners. For them, historical literacy refers to what "… [the] individual attains through studying History such as knowledge, conceptual understanding, historical method, historical consciousness and historical language" (Maposa & Wassermann, 2014:254). In this regard, they concluded that these History textbooks focused on historical knowledge, and ignored other aspects of historical literacy such as conceptual understanding, historical method and historical language.

In as much as there is an imbalance in the promotion of historical literacy through the use of History textbooks, Maposa and Wassermann (2014:267) demonstrated that the promotion of historical knowledge at the expense of other benchmarks was inevitable. This is in line with the Zimbabwean government's aim to promote historical literacy that is in tandem with patriotic history. As they concluded their findings, school history textbooks in Zimbabwe have been used to propagate the spirit of patriotism, which has been a basis of legitimasing ZANU PF rule since 1980 (Maposa & Wassermann, 2014:267).

Maposa and Wassermann (2014:267) further contend that the use of History textbooks as conveyor belts of patriotic history is even complemented by "… the mass political reorientation of teachers by the Zimbabwean government." Mavhunga, Moyo and Chinyani (2012:47) agreed as they pointed out that beginning 2002, National and Strategic Studies (NASS) was introduced. This was the mandatory study of a Zimbabwean History-related course that was introduced in teachers' colleges and polytechnics (Ranger, 2005:13). The important issue to highlight is that the notion of introducing NASS started with politicians (Nyakudya, 2007:118). The introduction of the NASS in tertiary institutions was meant to impart citizenship education to future teachers and among other youth groups (Magudu, 2012:181; Nyakudya, 2007:115). Mavhunga, Moyo and Chinyani (2012:53) admitted that passive citizenship education is often

related to patriotism as they noted that is indeed a convenient and capable tool to forge a sense of patriotism and national identity. To support the argument, the preamble of the NASS Syllabus states: “The aim of the subject is to foster patriotism and national pride, inculcate commitment to national development, promote harmony and national unity and develop an appreciation of the national heritage.” (Harare Polytechnic, 2003:1). In this regard, there is a tendency to follow Rousseau’s view that education has to be used to produce patriotic citizens (Mavhunga, Moyo & Chinyani, 2012:51). For Gould and Kolb (as quoted in Mavhunga, Moyo & Chinyani, 2012:49), a good citizen is one who owes allegiance to the ruler in return for protection.

With such attributes of a good citizen or patriot as stated above, the introduction of the NASS was premised on the notion that teachers and youth groups have to become patriots (Nyakudya, 2007:117). Hence, when it came to teaching learners, their lessons were sugar-coated with citizenship education or patriotic history. For Ranger (2005:14), the NASS was intended to teach learners how to distinguish and deal with sell-outs. With this in mind, it was important to establish whether the compulsory study of the subject History guaranteed the successful implementation of the reforms. A response to this question was unavoidable, especially in the context of the revelations made by Mavhunga, Moyo and Chinyani (2012:51) that: “… citizenship education has struggled to gain and maintain a foothold in the curricula of education systems of many nations, particularly so in Zimbabwe where some stakeholders have often voiced dissent whenever a form of it is introduced.”

Given the above statement, the NASS as the “installer” of citizenship education or patriotic history, has already attracted criticism from various role-players in and outside the education sector (Ranger, 2004:228; Ranger, 2005:8; Mapetere, Chinembiri & Makaye, 2012:1588; Nyakudya, 2007:116). Among the criticism leveled against the NASS was the timing of the introduction of the course. The introduction and the mandatory study of the NASS in the tertiary institutions of Zimbabwe coincided with the period when ZANU PF was losing popularity, and engaging in violence as a way of “forcing” people’s support as well as getting total control of the people’s minds (Ranger, 2004:228). It was within this context that some sections of the Zimbabwean society queried the introduction of NASS in Zimbabwean Teachers and Polytechnic Colleges (Nyakudya, 2007:118).

Mapetere, Chinembiri and Makaye (2012:1579) conducted a study on learners’ and lecturers’ perceptions of the teaching of the NASS course at some teachers’ training colleges in Zimbabwe. In their study, they established that while the NASS course was generally accepted by some participants in the study in terms of its importance in nation building and the shaping

of accountable citizens, the subject was nonetheless, viewed with distrust in some sections of the country where it was regarded as a tool for political expedience (Mapetere, Chinembiri & Makaye, 2012:1579). Mapetere, Chinembiri and Makaye (2012:1588) concluded their report by saying that often NASS lecturers were abusing the teaching of the subject to promote political ideologies, thus making the subject disreputable to many learners. Mavhunga, Moyo and Chinyani (2012:48) and Nyakudya (2007:116) also agreed that the NASS course is negatively perceived by some role-players as it is meant to hoodwink the minds of the Zimbabwean youth to support the ZANU PF government.

In her study which examined the challenges relating to the teaching of Citizenship Education through the school History Curriculum in Zimbabwe, Magudu (2012:179) summarised the root causes for the resistance from stakeholders to citizenship education. She remarked that resistance to citizenship education in Zimbabwe originated from the rationale for and the context in which it was taught as well as the citizenship education curriculum content (Magudu, 2012:179). In view of these research findings, it was necessary to establish the extent to which the compulsory study of the subject History was implemented as it was facing criticism (Barnes, 2007:645; Kriger, 2006:1165).

Academics such as Ranger (2004:220), Ranger (2005:8), Kriger (2006:1165) and Matereke (2012:84) argued that Zimbabwe is a case where history in general, and as a subject in particular, has been abused by the authorities in terms of the enculturation of citizenship or patriotism among the youth. To start with, Ranger (2004:215) explained how patriotic history was/is cultivated:

> Patriotic history is propagated at many levels; on television and in the state-controlled press; in youth militia camps; in new school History courses and textbooks; in books written by cabinet ministers; in speeches by Robert Mugabe and in philosophical eulogies and glosses of those speeches by Zimbabwe's media controller, Tafataona Mahoso.

In this regard, Ranger (2004:220) and Ranger (2005:7-8) noted that the kind of patriotism that is being propagated in the 21st Century is different from that which was propagated in the 1970s and the 1980s. In the 1970s and 1980s, patriotism called for national resistance to and emancipation from colonial oppression, and this nationalist patriotism was inclusive and non-racial (Ranger, 2005:7-8). In contrast to the patriotic history of the 20th Century, in her book *Texts and politics in Zimbabwe*, White (as cited in Ranger, 2004:220) points out that:

> … the 'patriotic history' of the early 21st Century is different from the ZANU-PF rhetoric of the early 1980s. It is wider in some ways since the mobilised war

> veterans now include the ZAPU combatants - ex-ZIPRA guerrillas and even ex-dissidents, who in the 1980s were being hunted down by the Fifth Brigade. Joshua Nkomo, who fled for his life in the 1980s, is regularly celebrated on ZTV today as 'Father Zimbabwe.'

In a more elaborated way, the 21st Century patriotic history, also known as "Mugabeism", as Ranger (2005:8) called it:

> emphasises the division of the nation not only into races but also into "patriots" and "sell-outs" among its African population. It proclaims the need for authoritarian government in order to repress and punish the "traitors," who are often depicted as very numerous – most of the urban population, and large sections within the rural.

For Kriger (2006:1151), the Zimbabwean history regarding the struggle for independence has been distorted by the ruling ZANU PF party so as to legitimise the violence that was perpetrated by the war veterans, and other support groups of the party on opposition political members, and during the violent "land grab" in the early 2000s. Barnes (2007:636) also concurred when she says: "… Mugabe and ZANU-PF re-invoked the historical legitimacy of regaining 'the land from the whites' – after 20 years of sluggish land redistribution and resettlement." Kriger (2006) argued that this was done under the label of patriotic history.

The origins of Zimbabwe's 21st Century patriotic history can be understood in the context of the words of the then ZANU PF Information and Publicity Secretary for Bulawayo, Comrade Sikhumbizo Ndiweni who was quoted in 2001 when he said: "The mistake the ruling party made was to allow colleges and universities to be turned into anti-Government mentality factories" (Ranger, 2004:218). He made the comment in recognition of the general opposition that the government of Zimbabwe faced from learners at tertiary level. In this regard, parents and teachers were seen as having failed to instill the spirit of loyalty in their children. In terms of the roots of Zimbabwe's 21st Century patriotic history, it was considered as a cure for the disappointments by tertiary institutions, teachers and parents to inculcate the revolutionary spirit among the youths (Ranger, 2004:228). It was also in the same context that the Zimbabwean youth were critical of the ZANU PF government that the Kenyan activist, Ngugi wa Mirii (as cited in Ranger, 2005:11) had this to say about Zimbabwe:

> Today the enemy from within is just as bad as the colonialists ... they are all in collusion to destroy our sovereignty and independence. I would hasten to ask the war vets to be more pro-active and more organised than they are if they are to overcome these challenges. Their strategies, methods and techniques of

> winning people on their side need to be revisited, especially because there are very many 'born-frees' who are predominantly influenced by Western culture and unfortunately our education system was not decolonised at the time of independence. As a result, all these young people have gone through an education that has failed to intellectually arm them into recognising who they are and what Zimbabwe is.

Matereke (2012:84) agreed that there has been a manipulation of the education system, in particular, History education by the government of Zimbabwe. He points out that the need for a patriotic citizenry in Zimbabwe has originated from the political philosophies' placement of 'patriotic history' to summon citizens' loyalty to the party-state. This conveys the notion that while patriotism or citizenship is noble, the ruling party in Zimbabwe, ZANU PF, has used History teaching in primary and secondary schools, and tertiary institutions to demand loyalty from the youth under the disguise of patriotic history (Kriger, 2006:1165; Matereke, 2012:84; Ranger, 2004:218). To this end, History teaching in Zimbabwe, as Matereke (2012:84) and Ranger (2004:218) postulate, especially in the 21st Century, has been used to produce ZANU PF patriots, and not Zimbabwean patriots. This argument is rooted in the notion that the knowledge being transmitted through the teaching of the NASS or school History is meant to produce a patriot who loves ZANU PF, and not necessarily the country, Zimbabwe. For instance, Ranger (2005:14) quoted two NASS examination questions to support the argument: "Which political party in Zimbabwe represents the interests of imperialists and how must it be viewed by Zimbabweans?" and "What title is used to refer to African leaders who try to serve the interests of imperialists and how do you view patriotism?"

In his view of how patriotic history was central to the ZANU PF campaign for the 2002 Presidential election, Ranger (2004:218) reports as follows:

> I spent four days watching Zimbabwe television which presented nothing but one 'historical' programme after another; the government press – the Herald and the Chronicle – ran innumerable historical articles ... . Television and newspapers insisted on an increasingly simple and monolithic history ... . Television constantly repeated documentaries about the guerrilla war and about colonial brutalities ... . The Herald and the Sunday Mail regularly carried articles on slavery, the partition, colonial exploitation and the liberation struggle.

Furthermore, Ranger (2004:224) pointed out that two ZANU PF ministerial historians, Aneas Chigwedere and Stan Mudendenge significantly contributed to the patriotic historiography of Zimbabwe. Chigwedere was the Minister of Education, Sport and Culture from 2001 to 2008.

It was during his tenure of office that the mandatory study of the secondary school subject History was proclaimed. Mudenge was the Minister of Higher Education for the period 2005 to 2012. It was during his time in office that the compulsory study of NASS was introduced in teachers' and polytechnic colleges. According to Ranger (2004:224), these two historians' writings encouraged the propagation of "resistance history." For instance, Chigwedere's (as cited in Ranger, 2004:224) dedication in one of his books published in 1998, entitled *The Roots of the Bantu*, he says: "If it be the will of the common ancestors of the Black African Community both at home base (Africa) and overseas, that ordained that I be their instrument for unraveling their history and culture in the interest of their progeny, I thank them for the energy, will-power and inspiration they infused into me." This dedication is very significant when reflecting on the issue of patriotic history in the Zimbabwean education system, especially because it was during Chigwedere's time in office as the minister of education that the subject History was made compulsory at the secondary school level.

Given the above, Kriger (2006:1165) argued that the propagation of patriotic history has been used to sustain and legitimize the ZANU PF government as she puts it: "… the 1990s patriotic histories and post-2000 official 'patriotic' history is the use [sic] of a version of the liberation past to justify selective entitlement to resources and power in the present." As such, the assertion that the subject History has been used in Zimbabwe to promote the longevity of the ZANU PF rule, and not national patriotism is also argued on the basis of the introduction, and establishment of the National Youth Service (NYS) in the year 2001 (Ranger, 2004:219). According to Matereke (2012:93), the National Youth Service was a programme that was meant to instill a sense of patriotism and national identity among some civil servants and unemployed youths. In this regard, it became a requisite for admission into tertiary education and civil service (Matereke, 2012:93). The move to introduce NYS in 2001 was taken following the serious challenge of ZANU PF's power by the MDC (Ranger, 2004:219). As such, the subject History was used on the one hand to disseminate patriotic history, with the admiration of Mugabe and the ZANU PF, and on the other hand, portraying the MDC as the charlatans of colonialism (Matereke, 2012:93).

The state-controlled Herald newspaper on 12 September 2015 reported that the government has re-branded the NYS programme. During the official re-launch of the re-branded NYS program at Dadaya Training Centre in Zvishavane on 10 September 2015, Christopher Mushowe, the former Minister of Youth, Indigenisation and Economic Empowerment was quoted as having said:

> We want the NYS subject introduced from as early as the ECD [Early Childhood Development]. We want our children to appreciate the national flag

> before going to grade one. They must understand the colours and what they mean for the country. If that is achieved, we will build our nation which has youths or a people that can stand for it, that can fight for it … . If this programme had been introduced in 1980, we wouldn't be having youths who are being used by Britain and her allies for regime change. Every Zimbabwean should be proud of his or her country no matter the current situation (Zimbabwe Situation, 2014:1).

In view of the above, the subject History is viewed with suspicion, and wholly as meant to protect and legitimise the ZANU PF rule (Barnes, 2007:649; Magudu, 2012:179; Matereke, 2012:93; Nyakudya, 2007:116).

While the above views point towards the inculcation of patriotism, the Table 3.1 below sums up the basic features of the two forms in which the concept of patriotism is expressed. This is based on Westheimer's (2006:607) patriotic attitudes.

Table 3.1: Westheimer's patriotic attitudes

Authoritarian (blind patriotism)	**Democratic (critical patriotism)**
Ideology • People believe their own country is superior to others • They believe that absolute devotion is essential for them. • They do not see the social inequalities and deficiencies in their country. • Conformist; opposition seen as dangerous and unstable	**Ideology** • People respect the opinions of any nation. • They question and criticise. • They openly express the deficiencies in the country. • They respect the opposition in their country.
Slogans • Right or wrong, it's my country. • Love it or leave it.	**Slogans** • To oppose; homeland is an element. • You have the right not to remain silent

Sources: Kaya (2022:105) and Westheimer (2006:607)

In view of the above comparison, blind patriotism is orchestrated by a dictatorial government,

while critical patriotism is alive under a democratic government. In the context of this study, Matereke (2012:97) concludes that the implementation of Zimbabwe's version of patriotic history as peddled through History teaching in secondary schools, NASS in the tertiary institutions, and NYS is not sustainable. This is in line with Merry's (2009:379) observation, "… that while an attachment to one's country is both natural and even partially justifiable, cultivating loyal patriotism in schools is untenable insofar as it conflicts with the legitimate aims of education." Merry (2009:379), who argued against the deliberate cultivation of loyal patriotism in schools, emphasises that legitimate education must ensure the development of epistemological competencies like developing critical thinking skills and knowing important truths, which result in learners being self-reliant. Retrogressively, loyal patriotism, as Merry (2009:379) calls it, promotes the following: a myopic understanding both of one's national history as well as its contemporary role in a globalized society, an unhealthy attitude of superiority relative to other cultures and polities and a coerced (rather than freely given) sense of attachment to one's homeland.

Although Waghid (2009:402) referred to this kind of patriotism as 'blind patriotism', he concurred with Merry (2009:379) that this kind of patriotism does not allow the state's position to be criticised. Waghid (2009:402) illustrated his argument on what 'blind patriotism' entails by giving examples from South Africa's past and present situations:

> … the majority of white South Africans [during the apartheid era] believed that questioning the apartheid state was 'unpatriotic' and that criticising the state for its racist policies was an act of betrayal. More recently, some members of the African National Congress (ANC) government felt that criticising the policies of the new democratic state was tantamount to expressing unpatriotic sentiments.

Hence, Waghid's (2009:402) argument is that "… patriotism is not inconsistent with criticism." Nyakudya (2007:115) also agrees and observes: "Patriotism is not defined by the whims of politicians ... True patriots always work towards the welfare of the country, be it in alliance, or at variance, with the leaders." Similarly, Mitchens asserted (as cited in Hitchens, 2001:138) that: "… whatever the high-sounding pretext may be, the worst crimes are still committed in the name of the old traditional rubbish: of loyalty to nation or order or leadership or tribe or faith." In view of Merry's (2009:379) traits of "loyal patriotism" or Waghid's (2009:402) "blind patriotism", one can draw some similarities with the way patriotism is inculcated and regarded in Zimbabwe in the 21st Century. The kind of patriotism propagated in the Zimbabwean education system is loyal patriotism or blind patriotism as Ranger (2004:218) asserted:

> There has arisen a new variety of historiography which I did not mention in my valedictory lecture. This goes under the name of 'patriotic history.' It is different

> from and narrower than the old nationalist historiography, which celebrated aspiration and modernisation as well as resistance. It resents the 'disloyal' questions raised by historians of nationalism. It regards as irrelevant any history that is not political. And it is explicitly antagonistic to academic historiography.

Merry (2009:379) preferred what he calls "critical patriotism" to be cultivated in schools rather than "loyal patriotism." He defined critical patriotism as that which upholds a love of fairness in terms of a country's much-admired ideals, and at the same time precisely gives room for opposition (Merry, 2009:392). In agreement, Nyakudya (2007:117) posited: "… patriotism should not be confused to mean uncritical allegiance to political leaders whose policies may not necessarily be in the national interest. Patriots speak out and act against any societal ills, irrespective of who is involved." In this regard, patriotic history has to be taught to the learners in a democratic system. This suggests that education has to be democratic to the extent that the environment allows learners to willingly and freely express their own intellectual capacity without reservations (Merry, 2009:390). This, therefore, would follow that patriotic history has to produce patriots who can reproach and do not try to find reason in sins (Douglass, as quoted in Merry, 2009:387).

The above scenario contradicts the way education is imparted in Zimbabwe as established by Ranger (2005:7) when he claimed that any attempt to offer education in Zimbabwe is often pressurised to teach what is known as *Mugabeism*. Phimister (2012:27) agreed when he noted that the central features of 'patriotic history' in Zimbabwe are restricted by allegiance to the ZANLA/ZANU political thinking. Therefore, a question arose for this study in view of Merry's (2009:394) conclusion that "… the deliberate promotion of loyal patriotism in schools [by] the State transgresses against the valid aims of education, [as it] engages in coercion, and discourages critical thinking and dissent …", and instead of "encourag[ing] critical patriotism in their public schools." What epistemological knowledge did the History curriculum reforms intended to transmit to learners *vis-à-vis* the cultivation of patriotism among the Zimbabwean youth? This question exposed the gap the study had to close.

History teaching is also used to show Zimbabwe's new notions about race and citizenship. As Barnes (2007:641) posited, school History is meant to show that the black people in Zimbabwe are the first-class citizens of the country, while the whites are second class citizens. This contradicts how the issue of race and citizen was enunciated by Robert Mugabe, the then Prime Minister of Zimbabwe in 1980, when declaring the national reconciliation between the blacks and the whites as follows:

> If yesterday you hated me, today you cannot avoid the love that binds you to

> me and me to you. The wrongs of the past must now stand forgiven and forgotten. It could never be a correct justification that because whites oppressed us yesterday when they had power, the blacks must oppress them today because they have power (Ganiel & Tarusarura, 2014:56).

Paradoxically, Mugabe is reported to have told school children on the eve of the independence celebrations in 2002: "The soil that we walk is ours – every grain is ours. The white man is here as a second citizen: you are number one. He is number two or three. That must be taught to our children" (Lamprecht, Sa). This, therefore, confirms Barnes's (2007:646) findings that school History has failed to promote reconciliation between black and white. Thus, in the study where she interviewed secondary school History teachers in Harare in 2002, the interviewees said History teaching had failed to promote reconciliation between the blacks and the whites, but if any, between the Shona and the Ndebele (Barnes, 2007:646).

Furthermore, in her analysis of how the issues of race and reconciliation have been presented in secondary school History teaching, Barnes (2007:641-644) examined four History textbooks. To name them: Proctor, A. and Phimister, I. 1991. *People and Power Book 1*. Harare: Academic Books; Prew, M., Pape, J., Mutwira, R. and Barnes, T. 1993. *People Making History Book 4*. Harare: Zimbabwe Publishing House; Mukanya, S. 1994. *Dynamics of History Book 3*. Harare: College Press, and Mlambo, A. 1995. *Focus on History Book 4*. Harare: College Press. In her final analysis of the afore-mentioned secondary school History textbooks, she concluded that the white settlers are presented as a people who faced intensified resistance from the Africans against the settler colonisation. Giving the examples that show the blacks versus the whites, Barnes (2007:641) quoted from Proctor and Phimister's *People and Power Book 1* (1991:220) as follows:

> Once Rhodes and the BSAC [British South Africa Company] knew that there was no [significant mineral wealth] in either Mashonaland or Matabeleland, they stole the people's wealth. In this period, the Ndebele and the Shona had their cattle seized, and were subjected to taxes and forced labour.

As cited in Barnes (2007:644), Proctor, who core-authored the *People and Power Book 1*, critiqued the History Syllabus 2166 and indicated that it had a heavy dosage of revolutionary narratives. Nevertheless, he acknowledged that the syllabus was also progressive in terms of its social goals that encouraged critical thinking as well as the ability to determine bias. These strengths of Syllabus 2166 were confirmed by the study carried out by Barnes (2007:645). In her study, which included eleven secondary History teachers of Harare, she solicited the teachers' views on Syllabus 2166, and reported as follows: "Six of the teachers felt that the

main strength of the Syllabus 2166 was its emphasis on the development of the skill of interpretation and analysis" (Barnes, 2007:645). In contrast, Syllabus 2167 lacks emphasis on the development of higher-order skills (Mapetere, Makaye & Muguti, 2012:103).

While all the secondary school History teachers in Barnes' (2007:645) study agreed that History teaching was the main source of historical knowledge for their learners, some believed that the learners' interest in the subject has tremendously decreased, especially since the beginning of the 21st Century. Barnes (2007:645) further noted that, the use of the subject History in schools as part of the Zimbabwean government's propaganda since the beginning of the early 2000s has made the subject History "boring." In this regard, one interviewed History teacher had this to say: "[Interest] has decreased because they have become bored by being bombarded with it from all angles, e.g. radio, newspapers TV, rallies, classroom and now it is a compulsory subject" (Barnes, 2007:645). Ranger (2004:215) and Maposa and Wassermann (2014:255) concurred that outside the classroom, learners are dosed with historical information through state-controlled structures such as the press, radio and television.

The study conducted by Mashayamombe (2006:91) gave thought provoking information in regards to the subject History in the Zimbabwe education system. The study was premised on establishing the O-level History learners' attitudes towards the compulsory study of the subject History. Out of the 155 learners who participated in the study, about 65% of the participants were not in favour of the policy of making History compulsory (Mashayamombe, 2006:91). The learners believed that the past had nothing meaningful to offer them, especially in the global village characterized by increasing changes in technology. Some of the learners felt it was a breach of their birthright to force them to study History, the subject they believed was not in any way going to contribute to the foundation of their future careers (Mashayamombe, 2006:92). In light of these findings, it was necessary to establish the government's justification for making the study of the subject History mandatory. This was necessary because the move outweighed learners' rights to choose what to study.

Additionally, some scholars claimed that the revision of the History Syllabus 2166 from 1999 to 2000, which led to the birth of the short-lived Syllabus 2168, then Syllabus 2167 in 2002 was in line with the recommendations made by the 1999 Nziramasanga Presidential Commission of Inquiry into Education (Barnes, 2007:647; Magudu, 2012:180). The Nziramasanga Presidential Commission of Inquiry into Education (hereafter the Nziranasanga Commission) was appointed and sanctioned by Robert Mugabe, the President of Zimbabwe early 1998 to identify the problems affecting the Zimbabwean education system (Magudu,

2012:180; Nziramasanga, 1999:xix). It was to inquire into and report on the fundamental alterations to the then operational curriculum at all levels so that education becomes a useful tool to produce a total human being, especially in light of the challenges of the 21st Century (Nziramasanga, 1999:349).

The Nziramasanga Commission released its *Zimbabwe Report of the Presidential Commission of Inquiry into Education and Training* in 1999 that recommended the offering of relevant education to learners (Nziramasanga, 1999:351-354). The Commission, for instance, pointed out that primary and secondary school graduates leave school with "incorrect" history and heritage of their country (Nziramasanga, 1999:351). The report singled out History as the most suitable subject to inculcate in learners a sense of national heritage and identity, citizenship and *unhu/ubuntu* (which means a human being in totality, morally upright and in the noblest sense). The Nziramasanga Commission (1999:354) further reported that as a result of the fast-changing global world, Zimbabwe like many other third world countries face the risk of having generations of youth who are not loyal to their own country, but to foreign influences. In this regard, the Commission recommended curriculum reforms which included the introduction of compulsory Citizenship Education at primary, secondary and tertiary education levels (Nziramasanga, 1999:354). In this view, the questions that also had to be answered in this study were: Why was the study of the subject History made mandatory at the secondary level? Could it be as a result of the implementation of the recommendations made by the Commission?

The role of the school subject History was also pronounced by the then President, Robert Mugabe, during the official handover ceremony from Germany of the soapstone bird (sculpture of the Zimbabwe bird) in 2004 that was held at Great Zimbabwe. Mugabe asserted that: "… he would personally ensure that a university named after the Great Zimbabwe Monument was established to offer subjects such as history, culture and archaeology because of the significance of the place to the history of the country" (Ranger, 2005:10).

3.5 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter began by discussing four approaches to understanding curriculum theory and practice, namely curriculum as a body of knowledge, curriculum as a way to achieve certain goals, curriculum as a process and curriculum as praxis. This was followed by a discussion on the central role played by politics in education. The chapter also dealt with the discussion on the place and role of the subject History in the school curriculum, which included the classical justification for and against the inclusion of the subject in the school curriculum. It

ends with an analysis of the studies carried out outside and in Zimbabwe with regard to the place and role of the school subject History in the education system. In the next chapter, the research paradigm and methodology of the study are discussed.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH PARADIGM AND METHODOLOGY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

As was briefly stated in Chapter 1 (*cf.* Sections 1.7 & 1.7.1), this chapter reviews the three main research paradigms that are used as the foundation of educational research, namely the positivist, critical theory and interpretivism. In doing so, the adoption of interpretivism as the research paradigm for this study is justified. The chapter further presents the research methodology and procedures employed in the study. The data-gathering methods, and the methods and efforts employed by the researcher to address the limitations of the data-gathering process are also included. Also included is an account of how the gathered data was organised, analysed and interpreted up to report writing. The chapter concludes with the issues of trustworthiness and ethical considerations.

4.2 RESEARCH PARADIGM

In all educational research, there are theoretical perspectives that underpin them. In accordance to the ethics of the research profession, Mack (2010:6) stressed the need for the researcher to establish a theoretical perspective before choosing the research topic. Some quantitative researchers in education (Bogdan & Biklen, 2009:33) restricted the word theory to a "… systematically stated and testable set of propositions about the world, … .", while some qualitative researchers prefer to use the word paradigm. Qualitative researchers such as Rehman and Alharthi (2016:51) define the term paradigm as a logical assumption, belief or view about one's understanding of the world reality. Yadav (2022:681) defined a research paradigm as "… the net that encompasses the researcher's epistemological, ontological and premises." For Kumatongo and Muzata (2021:17), the concept refers to a general viewpoint, while Kivunja & Kuyini (2017:26) put it as the researcher's worldview. Kumatongo and Muzata (2021:16) revealed that a researcher's understanding of the tenets of his/her research paradigm is vital as the latter forms the bedrock for effective research undertaking, since it determines the research methodology and methods to be adopted.

A research paradigm entails vital assumptions about ontology, epistemology, methodology and methods (Alharahsheh & Pius, 2020:40; Rehman & Alharthi, 2016:51-52). Rehman and

Alharthi (2016:51) observed that "… ontology and epistemology are to research what footings are to a house: they form the foundations of the whole edifice." Therefore, in view of the aforementioned components of the research paradigm, they are key to effective educational research undertaking. Kumatongo and Muzata (2021:17) and Mack (2010:5) agreed as they define ontology as one's perspective and understanding of reality and being. It focuses on what entails knowledge and assumptions about reality (Alharahsheh & Pius, 2020:40; Kumatongo & Muzata, 2021:17). Similarly, for Bogdan and Biklen (2009:33), ontology, which they also considered as theoretical orientation, refers to the way of viewing the world. As such, the establishment of a research paradigm for this study was necessary because any credible research is guided by a philosophical position (Alharahsheh & Pius, 2020:40).

The research paradigm of the study is also underpinned by the epistemological assumptions, which are informed by the ontological assumptions (Mack, 2010:6). For Alharahsheh and Pius (2020:40) and Mack (2010:5), epistemology is what one mean when he/she says he/she knows something. Johnson and Christensen (2012:12) defined it as, "… the study of knowledge, including its nature, how it is gained or generated, how it is warranted, and the standards that are used to judge its adequacy." The research paradigm of the study also influences the researcher's choice of methodology, and ultimately the methods used for the data collection (Mack, 2010:6).

In view of the outlined tenets and significance of the research paradigm, it is imperative to highlight that the researcher was aware of some of the main paradigms that are often used in educational research, namely positivism, critical theory and interpretivism. Interpretivism was adopted for this study ahead of the other two (*cf*. Sections 1.7 1.7.1). Positivism was not suitable for this study because it is anchored on the notion that there has to be a controlled group as part of the study sample, and that the study's findings have to be generalised (Alharahsheh and Pius, 2020:41; Creswell, 2012:20-2; Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017:30). The researcher did not want to involve a controlled group as part of the participants of the study, neither did he want to generalise the study findings. In addition, the criticism leveled against positivism, such as its claim for objectivity, also made the researcher not to adopt it because the study focused on human views and opinions (Kumatongo & Muzata, 2021:17-18; Mapetere, Makaya & Muguti, 2012:101). Given the above, objectivity was impossibly attainable, but subjectivity. Additionally, the researcher also did not choose the positivist paradigm because he did not want to test a hypothesis; a notion that forms the bedrock of positivism (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017:30; Rehman and Alharthi, 2016:52).

The critical theory paradigm was also not suitable for this study because it is rooted in the

assumption that knowledge and rules imposed on the commoners by those in power have to be viewed critically or questioned. For Pham (2018:4) and Rehman and Alharthi (2016:57), the critical theory, which is also called transformative paradigm or oriental theory, aims at empowering the disadvantaged in society so that they are given a voice against oppression. The researcher did not adopt critical theory for this study because the paradigm is rooted in the assumption that every human being has to be emancipated, yet it is also difficult to prove when society is emancipated (Mack, 2010:9; Pham ,2018:5). In addition, the critical theory was not selected because the researcher had no preconceived ideas, or political agenda before conducting the research project. Having decided not to select positivism or critical theory as the research paradigm, interpretivism was adopted for this study. In the following section, the researcher outlines the features of interpretivism, and later justifies why it was considered as the most suitable paradigm for this study.

4.2.1 Interpretivism

The criticism against positivism led to the birth of a different paradigm for educational research, namely interpretivism (Alharahsheh & Pius, 2020:42). It was in view of the merits of interpretivism that the researcher decided to use it as the research paradigm for this study. The interpretivist paradigm is also referred to as constructivism as it emphasises the individual's ability to construct meaning (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017:33). In this regard, the ontological assumption of the interpretivist paradigm is that the reality can be interpreted differently by different individuals (Kumatongo & Muzata, 2021:18; Pham, 2018:3).

The interpretivist paradigm is premised on the axiom that knowledge is gained through social constructions of multiple realities. As Rehman and Alharthi (2016:55) put it: "Interpretivists believe in socially constructed multiple realities." As such truth, reality or knowledge is socially constructed. The paradigm further acknowledges that knowledge is always determined by the close relationship between the researcher and what is being researched (Rowlands, 2005:81). This implies that the interpretation of the explored or phenomenon by the researcher is the key to knowledge. Such knowledge or the truth is subjective (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017:33; Rehman & Alharthi, 2016:55). The paradigm denies objective truth as it is based on the "… the way a person interprets what he or she has seen or experienced (Kumatongo & Muzata, 2021:19). It is in the light of this context that Rehman and Alharthi (2016:55) observed that interpretive researchers cannot accept the idea of objective reality being there because "… external reality cannot be directly accessible to observers without being contaminated by their worldviews, concepts, backgrounds, … ."

Alharahsheh and Pius (2020:42) and Mack (2010:8) summarised the ontological and epistemological assumptions of the interpretivist paradigm as follows:

Table 4.1: Interpretivist ontological and epistemological assumptions

Ontological Assumptions	Epistemological Assumptions
• Reality is indirectly constructed based on individual interpretation and is subjective • People interpret and make their own meaning of events. • Events are distinctive and cannot be generalised. • There are multiple perspectives on one incident. • Causation in social sciences is determined by interpreted meaning and symbols.	• Knowledge is gained through a strategy that respects the differences between people. • Knowledge is gained inductively to create a theory. • Knowledge arises from particular situations and is not reducible to simplistic interpretation. • Knowledge is gained through personal experience.

Sources: Alharahsheh and Pius (2020:42) and Mack (2010:8)

Table 4.1 above shows that in the case of interpretivism as a paradigm, reality is a social construction that can not be generalised because knowledge is gained through one's interpretation of the phenomenon at stake. This implies that since reality is a construction based on individual interpretation, the former is subjective. Given the above information, the researcher selected interpretivism as the most suitable research paradigm for this study. Since the study took a qualitative approach to inquiry; qualitative study is interpretive in nature. Bleiker *et al.*, (2019:4) and Hameed (2020:9) supported the point when they discussed the features of a qualitative study. Bleiker *et al.*, (2019:4) claimed that in qualitative research the truth is seen differently by different viewers because "… [the] truth is constructed in and by the mind from [different] psychological processes … ." In view of the assumption of multiple realities in qualitative research, interpretivism became a suitable research paradigm because the researcher wanted to understand the phenomenon under study from the participants's different view points. In this regard, objective reality was impossible, but subjective reality. Since subjective reality is a result of interpretations as obtained from informants, interpretivism was chosen for this study (Mapetere, Makaya & Muguti, 2012:101).

Additionally, the interpretivist paradigm was suitable for this study because the researcher

intended to generate a curriculum model grounded in the research findings. Hameed (2020:12) supported this justification as he claimed that qualitative researchers do not carry out a study to prove or disprove a claim held before entering a study, rather, the ideas or concepts are built following the analysis of the gathered data. Given the above declaration, the research findings related to the curriculum reforms, development and implementation in the Manicaland Province secondary schools were based on the researcher's interpretation and understanding of the interviewees' frame of reference, from which the curriculum consensus model was generated (cf. Section 6.7.1).

The researcher also chose the interpretivist paradigm because he did not want to generalise his findings (Hammeed, 2020:9), but confine them to the study population (Check & Schutt, 2012:95). Even though generalisation of the study findings was not part of the significance of the study, the researcher believed that inferences can be made from the interpretivist research findings. Having chosen interpretivism as the research paradigm for the study, the qualitative approach to inquiry was adopted. This approach was informed by the philosophical underpinnings of interpretivism. An elaboration of the afore-said approach follows.

4.3 QUALITATIVE RESEARCH APPROACH

A qualitative research approach generally aims at reaching a deep understanding of "… the formation of meaning of the phenomenon under study." (Alnaim, 2023:769). According to Nyawaranda and Shumba (2005:86), the approach focuses on an individual's own understanding of the world. For Ary, Jacobs and Sorensen (2010:29), it provides a researcher with an understanding of a phenomenon by focusing on a holistic picture of the latter using data gathered through interviews, observation(s) and a document study. As Gay, Mills and Airasian (2006:398) confirmed, qualitative approach to research emphases on gathering data so as "... to gain insights into a particular phenomenon of interest."

As such, the above research approach was suitable for this study, given that the researcher wanted to establish participants' views with regard to the compulsory study of secondary school History in Zimbabwe's Manicaland Province between 2002 and 2016. The emphasis was on the establishment of their perspectives with regard to the success of the implementation of the curriculum reforms from 2002 to 2016. Additionally, the approach was selected because it allowed the use of focus groups, interviews and document study as methods of data-gathering; the tools that the researcher used in his quest of having a holistic and in-depth understanding of the success of the compulsory study of the subject History in

Manicaland Province.

Hameed (2020:11-12) provided the foundational axioms of the qualitative research approach, which were also the basis for the adoption of this approach for this study. To start with, Hameed (2020:12) and Njie and Asimiran (2014:35) pointed out that qualitative research is conducted from a natural setting, which becomes the direct source of data, with the researcher as the key research instrument. This means that the approach is based on a "free-flowing," and not controlled environment. Hence, the events in the focus area of this study had to occur naturally, without any group or individual(s) being controlled (Hameed, 2020:12; Mack, 2010:6). Given the above, the study was rooted in the natural setting because the phenomenon under study was "free-flowing." Such an environment gave the researcher an opportunity to establish the extent to which the O-level History curriculum reforms were successfully implemented between 2002 and 2016 from the participants' perspectives.

Unlike in quantitative studies, humans are key data-gathering instruments in qualitative research (Hameed, 2020:12). Given the above axiom, the researcher was the key research instrument. He (the researcher) played a central role in regards to the meaning which was deduced from the research findings given that the latter were based on his interpretation (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011:7). The researcher travelled to various institutions in Manicaland Province to interview the research participants, among others, the education officers, school heads and secondary school History teachers. In a qualitative study, such as this one, the researcher was central to the study because he analysed and interpreted the gathered data from his own understanding, using the views and understanding of the participants.

Additionally, the researcher used the qualitative research approach because he wanted to gather and present research findings in a narrative form. This was in accordance to Creswell's (2012:16) view, that qualitative research is descriptive in nature. In presenting the research findings, the researcher provided the statements, or words of the participants to present their own views or understanding of the phenomena under the study. This was supported by Yadav (2022:684) when she stated that qualitative research findings contain direct quotations from the gathered data to substantiate the confirmability of the report. This assisted the researcher to present particular contexts and/or views of the world as envisaged by the participants in the study.

The researcher also decided on the qualitative research approach because of his view that the phenomenon he investigated was influenced by the participants' personal experiences, as declared by White (2005: 81), that qualitative research focuses on the understanding of social phenomena from the participants' points of view. To this end, being guided by the interpretivist paradigm, the researcher wanted to limit the study findings to the participants (Ary, Jacobs & Sorensen 2010:23; Check & Schutt, 2012:107). This notion was also supported by Yin (2011:98), who claimed that one common feature of a qualitative research approach was that the findings could not be generalised beyond the sample of the qualitative study. By selecting this approach for the study, the researcher focused on establishing the extent to which the O-level History curriculum reforms were successfully implemented, particularly in the Mutare and Mutasa districts. Thus, the researcher did not expect to establish a fixed meaning that could be generalised for the whole country, but a subjective meaning.

The nature of the problem of the study also made the qualitative research approach most suitable for the study. The problem required the researcher to determine whether the implementation of the History curriculum reforms was successful, and the latter required an in-depth investigation and understanding of the problem by the various role-players. This confirmed Alnaim's (2023:769) observation that in terms of qualitative research approach, the problem is explored to obtain a deep understanding of the phenomenon. While the qualitative research approach was adopted for this study, the case study was selected as the research type as articulated below.

4.4 CASE STUDY AS THE RESEARCH TYPE

While the researcher used the qualitative research approach to inquiry, he acknowledged that there are different types of qualitative research that can be conducted. Examples of the latter are anthropologies, ethnographies, biographies, phenomenologies and case studies (Creswell, 2012:20-22; Hameed, 2020:9; Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017:38; Kumatongo & Muzata, 2021:23-26). To this end, a case study was selected for this study. When defining the concept case study, Gustafsson (2017:2) and Kumatongo and Muzata (2021:26) concurred that it is an exhaustive study about a phenomenon, a unit, an institution, a person or a group of people. In this study, the concept case study refers to a deep study of a single entity with the aim to pronounce and explain a phenomenon of interest. The researcher's phenomenon of interest was to establish the extent to which the compulsory study of the subject History was successfully implemented in the Manicaland Province, in particular in the Mutare and Mutasa districts.

The researcher acknowledged that a case study exists in two forms or types, namely multiple and single case study (Gustafsson, 2017:3). The former was adopted for this study. In a multiple case study, the researcher studies multiple cases, while a single case study entails an in-depth study of a single entity or unit with the aim of having a deeper understanding of a phenomenon of interest (Gustafsson, 2017:3-4), Given the above two types of case study, the use of multiple case studies was suitable for this study because the researcher wanted to establish whether there were differences and/or similarities between the Mutare and Mutasa district secondary schools with regard to the implementation of the O-level History curriculum reforms (Gustafsson, 2017:3-4). All this was in the endevour to have an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon of interest, thus establishing the extent to which the compulsory study of the subject History was successfully implemented from 2002 to 2016.

Additionally, involving History teachers, school heads and education officers as participants of the study, made the use of the multiple case study justifiable because those participants had direct experiences towards the successful implementation of the O-level History curriculum reforms for the period under the study. This was supported by White (2005: 81) who pointed out that a typical qualitative research involves investigations into personal experiences. In addition, the fact that the problem investigated was a contemporary issue also made the case study justifiable. Njie and Asimiran (2014:36) supported the view as they pointed out that a case study focuses "... on real live scenarios." That being the normalcy, the case study was the suitable research type because the latter focused on the compulsory study of the subject History between 2002 and 2016, which was a contemporary phenomenon at the time of the study.

While a multiple case study can be expensive and time-consuming (Gustafsson, 2017:4), this was not much of an issue in this study because the researcher was awarded a bursary, which he used to fund the data-gathering processes, including transport fees and booking of venues for focus group discussions. Given the above, the use of multiple case study was sustainable and manageable. Having explained the multiple case study as the type of the research approach adopted for this study, the relevant research methods are discussed in the following section.

4.5 RESEARCH METHODS

This section provides an outline of the study population and the sampling procedures used

when selecting the participants of the study (*cf.* 1.7.4.1, 1.7.4.2, 1.7.4.3 & 1.7.4.4). It also presents a discussion on the strategies employed by the researcher during the data-gathering process. It ends with the processes of data analysis, interpretation and presentation.

4.5.1 Study population

The concept study population refers to group members who are possible rich sources of research data (Asiamah, Mensah & Oteng-Abiyie, 2017:16). For the researcher, the concept refers to a group of Manicaland province institutions such as secondary schools, district and provincial education institutions, which provided participants who assisted in giving answers to research questions. The Manicaland Province of Zimbabwe has seven districts, namely Buhera, Chimanimani, Chipinge, Makoni, Mutare, Mutasa and Nyanga. The province has four hundred and six secondary schools; hence, that was the study's population (Manicaland Regional Education Office, 2023:1). It is important to highlight that these secondary schools can be divided into four major categories, given what the school's Responsible Authority is. First, there are secondary schools which reside under the Local Council. In this study, these schools are also referred to as council secondary schools. Second, there are secondary schools which are directly controlled by the government of Zimbabwe. These schools are often referred to as government secondary schools. Third, there are schools which are controlled by the churches. These are known as mission schools. Fourth, and last, there are secondary schools controlled by individuals or private organisations. These schools are called private or trust schools. The majority of the secondary schools in the above four categories are in the rural areas of the Manicaland Province, while the rest are found in urban centres and peri-urban areas (about a 40 kilometres radius outside of the urban centres).

For Obilor (2023:1-2), the study population can be too wide or too large such that it would be ".. very difficult, or very expensive, or time-consuming to access the entire population, [hence] a portion of the population called a sample is used." Since the Manicaland Province was geographically too wide for a holistic and in-depth study, the study focused on the secondary schools in two of the districts, Mutasa and Mutare. The area has one hundred and seventeen secondary schools (Manicaland Regional Education Office, 2023:1). Due to limited financial resources, the researcher did not include all the secondary schools in the two districts identified for this study. Only forty-seven secondary schools were included in the study. This sample of the study became the actual data source, and was somehow a representative of the study population (Sukmawati, Salmia & Sudarmin, 2023:131)

Out of the forty-seven secondary schools, twenty-five of them provided nine secondary school heads and sixteen O-level History teachers who participated in the individual interview sessions, while the remaining twenty-two provided three school heads and nineteen O-level History teachers who participated in the focus group discussions. The number of History teachers was more than the secondary school heads because they were the implementers of the curriculum reforms. Hence, the assumption was that they were rich sources of data and more easily accessible than their supervisors. In this regard, the researcher deliberately chose potentially rich informants (Cohen, Manion & Morrison 2011:157). The sample size was also manageable and promoted an in-depth data analysis. Below is an outline of the sampling procedures that were employed by the researcher.

4.5.2 Sampling procedures

According to Oppong (2013:203), sampling is a process of choosing participants to take part in a research project with the aim of providing relevant information to answer a given research problem. In agreement, Mahlambi (2020:114) mentioned that sampling involves the selection of "… subjects who will serve as a data source to answer research questions and fulfil its objectives." It is the selection of a subsect of the study population, with specific desired attributes/units for the study (Obilor, 2023:2). For Mason (2002:121), sampling is necessary when a researcher does not want to count and analyse all issues or processes of the phenomena. In the light of Mason's (2002:121) and Obilor's (2023:1-2) assertions, it was impossible for the researcher to study the whole population linked to the research study. Therefore, the researcher made use of sampling to identify the most appropriate participants for the study.

The researcher was aware that there are two sampling strategies, namely probability and non-probability sampling (Mahlambi, 2020:114; Obilor, 2023:1-2; Tutz, 2023:424). The probability sampling strategy, which is also known as random sampling, is a strategy that is used in positivist quantitative research (Namasasu, 2012:101). Probability sampling randomly draws its sample from a wider population (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011:153). This type of sampling is normally used to eliminate biasness, and to generalise the findings (Mahlambi, 2020:114; Namasasu, 2012:101). Consequently, the probability sampling strategy was not adopted for the study because the researcher did not want to generalise the findings of the study. In addition, the data gathered through probability sampling has to be analysed through statistical tests and packages (Creswell, 2012:19; Tutz, 2023:424). Given the latter, the researcher adopted the non-probability sampling because he wanted to analyse and organise

the data as he gathered it. After all, the study was rooted in interpretivism, a philosophy that accepts a multiplicity of world views (Rehman & Alharthi, 2016:55). Non-probability sampling was also advantageous in the sense that it was a fast and cheap strategy when analysing data (Tutz, 2023:424). More about this sampling procedure is discussed in the next section.

4.5.2.1 Non-probability sampling

The non-probability sampling technique was used in identifying the sources of data. In doing so, the researcher used two types of non-probability sampling, thus purposive and snowball sampling. Purposive sampling was based on the judgment of the researcher, given that the sample was composed of elements that contained typical attributes (Obilor, 2023:1). To use Cohen, Manion and Morrison's (2011:156) words: "In purposive sampling … researchers hand-pick the cases to be included in the sample study on the basis of their judgment of their typicality or possession of the particular characteristics being sought." This implies that purposive sampling is the deliberate manner of choosing precise study units that will produce the maximum appropriate and abundant data for a research topic. With the above in mind, the sample of the study that the researcher purposively chose, and used in the study included officials from the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education, curriculum experts, secondary school heads, and History teachers (*cf.* Tables 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 5.5 and 5.6). Former education ministry officials were particularly those who were once employed by the education ministry as education inspectors at the time when the study of the subject History was made mandatory. The inclusion of a range of participants was purposive because it widened the range of the information and perspectives on the issues related to the compulsory study of the subject History from 2002 to 2016. In addition, when selecting the participants in this study, the emphasis was not on the number of participants, but on who were rich sources of data. This was in accordance with the axiom of the qualitative research approach that was adopted for this study (Cohen, Manion & Morrison 2011:157).

Curriculum experts were also included to enlarge the sample size of the education officials, and to include knowledgeable individuals in the study, who otherwise would have been left out (Cohen, Manion & Morrison 2011:157). In this regard, purposive sampling promoted an in-depth study of the phenomenon under investigation. This could not have been possible if the researcher had employed probability sampling which provides lesser breadth to the study (Cohen, Manion & Morrison 2011:156). A randomly selected sample could have been largely ignorant of the specific issues related to the research problem (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011:157).

In addition to purposive sampling, snowball sampling was also used to identify the research participants for this study. This was when research participants assisted in the identification of other rich sources of data (Obilor. 2023:4). Obilor (2023:4) elaborated that, upon the completion of the data-gathering process from the respondent(s), the researcher can ask for referrals who could be data sources too. The snowball sampling technique was, therefore, primarily used since the researcher wanted some of the participants, especially the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education officials to assist the latter in identifying or putting him in contact with other former education officials who were rich sources of data (Cohen, Manion & Morrison 2011:159). It was in the light of this vein that some of the education officials assisted the researcher to get in touch and interviewed some participants (both retired and incumbent education officials) who explained the rationale for the mandatory study of the subject History, and whether the government had put in place mechanisms to monitor the mandatory study of the latter. In the same way, some school heads, and/or those in an acting capacity assisted the researcher to identify knowledgeable and experienced History teachers. This was important because rich sources of data were accessed. Having discussed the sampling techniques used in the study, the data-gathering methods that were employed are discussed next.

4.5.3 Data-gathering methods

Yadav (2022:683) argued that “methodological pluralism” in data-gathering is a good criterion for qualitative research. The case study which was selected as the research type for this study allowed for the use of multiple sources of data to promote an in-depth and detailed study (Gustafsson, 2017:2). Given the above, in this study, the researcher used three data-gathering methods, namely interviews, focus group discussions and a document study. These methods were most appropriate for the qualitative research approach chosen for this study (Bleiker *et al.*, 2019:6; Swain & King, 2022:1). The rationale for the use of the three different data-gathering methods was mainly for the triangulation of the gathered data (Morgan, 2022:65). It also assisted the researcher to provide credible findings (Bowen, 2009:28). An elaboration of each of the above methods follows.

4.5.3.1 Interviews

Barrett and Twycross (2018:63) and Yin (2011:133) agreed that an interview entails social interaction between two persons, with one asking the questions, while the other provides the answers. For McGrath, Palmgren and Liljedahl (2019:1002), interviews are data-gathering instruments which are used to answer research questions. Cohen, Manion and Morrison

(2011:409) provided the general advantage of the interviews as that which allows the participants to discuss their understanding of the world from their perspective. As such, interviews were an appropriate data-gathering method, since the researcher wanted to gather insights from the participants' points of view (McGrath, Palmgren & Liljedahl, 2019:1002). To this end, the researcher asked follow-up questions to elicit the meaning of the participants' responses in view of the formulated research questions. The researcher regarded the interviews as an invaluable data-gathering tool since it mainly focused on the participants' emic perspectives about the phenomenon under the study.

Interviews were also viewed as most suitable for this study because of their advantage of ensuring a holistic and in-depth study. McGrath, Palmgren and Liljedahl (2019:1002) confirmed the importance of interviews as a data-gathering method as they noted that the interviewer cannot only obtain complete answers, but also answers for complex and deep issues. In this regard, interviews were the main data-gathering method given that the researcher had the opportunity to ask follow-up questions as a way of seeking clarification and getting complete answers. Additionally, the method assisted the researcher to understand different responses about complex and deep issues, such as why the government of Zimbabwe, through its education ministry made the study of school History compulsory in 2002, and not earlier.

There are several categories of interviews, namely, online chat, video calls, telephone, emails and face-to-face interviews (Barrett & Twycross, 2018:63; Saarijärvi & Bratt, 2021). The researcher opted for face-to-face interviews because network disruptions and fluctuations might have interrupted the interviewing process. Additionally, face-to-face interviews were regarded as more appropriate in terms of their fit for purpose, given that it was live and enabled the researcher to capture the participants' true perspectives, as they reinforced their views through the use of gestures.

Barrett and Twycross (2018:63), Bleiker *et al.,* (2019:6) and Namasasu (2011:106-107) identified some kinds of face-to-face interviews, namely informal conversational interviews, interview-guided approaches, standardised open-ended interviews and closed quantitative interviews. An informal conversational open-ended interview is when the questions are asked following a natural discussion (Swain & King, 2022:1). The interview-guided approach refers to an interview session which follows predetermined written questions, while standardised interviews focus on questions that are asked in a specified sequence (Namasasu, 2011:106-107; Yin, 2011:133). Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011:414) termed the above as structured interviews.

Having chosen the face-to-face interview approach, and in view of the various kinds of interviews described above, the researcher interchangeably used the three types of interviews, namely, the guided approach, standardised open-ended and informal conversational interviews. The three types of interviews were applied depending on who was being interviewed, and where the interviews were taking place. In cases where the interviews were held with education officials or secondary school heads and History teachers within their work environments, the guided approach and standardized open-ended interviews were applied. In the case of interviewing the education officials, the interview questions were given to the participants in advance. The questions were mainly open-ended (*cf.* Appendix J). These types of questions enabled the researchers to ask probing and follow-up questions, while the closed interview questions prompted the participants to give short and precise answers which saved time (Barrett & Twycross, 2018:63; Yin, 2011:133). Informal conversational interviews were used in cases where the researcher incidentally met O-level History teachers during educational seminars or sport activities. Informal conversational interviews were advantageous because there was easy communication since no much protocol was followed and they "… produce[d] more naturalistic data" (Swain & King, 2022:1). In addition, they did not involve any costs.

The researcher determined the sequence of asking the questions (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011:413). The advantage of the above was that it increased the comprehensiveness of the gathered data. In addition, the data-gathering process was logical, systematic and coherent, and was easy to follow during the data analysis and interpretation processes. In regards to the standardised open-ended and closed questions, the researcher used the exact words as per the order of the questions in the interview guide during the interview sessions. This reduced biasness in the findings because the various participants' responses to the same questions increased the comparability of the gathered data.

However, interviewing the officials from the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education was not easy. There were challenges despite the prior arrangements with the participants. For instance, some of the education officials were not available on the day of the interviews. The researcher then re-scheduled the interviews, which were successfully concluded. During the interview sessions, the researcher took notes and audio-taped the interviews, after permission was granted (Creswell, 2012:16).

The secondary school heads and History teachers were also interviewed, with the permission of the school administration (Refer to Appendix K for the interview guide used). There were

no instances that the researcher's requests to conduct the interviews were denied. Rather, the school heads, or those in the acting capacity, agreed to be interviewed and also assisted the researcher to identify and interview the O-level History teachers. With the permission of the participants, the researcher transcribed and audio-recorded the interviews to make sure that all the important information and issues were captured. Hence, the interviews conducted at the sampled schools were formal and structured. However, some of the interviews were not audio-taped because some of the participants were unwilling to approve it for reasons best known to themselves. Nevertheless, all the transcriptions of the notes were approved.

The researcher also used informal conversational interviews to gather data. According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011:413) and Swain and King (2022:1), during informal conversational interviews, questions are asked related to the context, and no questioning sequence is used. This form of interviewing was primarily used when the researcher incidentally met the History teachers during academic seminars or sports events. To elaborate, there were certain days that the secondary schools of the Mutasa, or Mutare districts assembled at the same venue for academic or sports events. To this end, some of the O-level History teachers from the two districts, who accompanied the learners to participate in the above activities were informally and successfully interviewed.

Swain and King (2022:3) outlined another advantage of informal conversational interviews:

> Sometimes, the person is unaware that an interview is taking place, least of all being interviewed. While interviewees might think they are making comments on, seemingly … ordinary issues, the researcher is focused on, and probing for, the elements … that answer their research questions.

The scenario described also took place when the researcher gathered data through informal conversational interviews. Although the researcher did not use the interview guide during the informal conversational interviews, he was aware that by asking different questions to different participants would result in the gathering of different data that would be difficult to organize, analyse and interpret (Namasasu, 2011:106). To this end, he tried his level best to ask the questions or address the issues as outlined in the interview guide (*cf.* Appendix K). This was done for these participants' answers to be comparable with those obtained during the formal interviews. All the informal interviews were not tape-recorded to avoid curiosity from the non-participants. After the conclusion of each interview, the researcher immediately compiled brief notes of the answers given during the interview.

While in some cases the participants gave long and winding responses, the researcher

allowed them to provide their opinions without any interruptions. The researcher also asked follow-up questions to bring the interviewees back to the thrust of the interview, if needed. The researcher also asked probing questions to solicit in-depth responses. Research data was also gathered through focus group discussions, and more detail is given in the following section.

4.5.3.2 Focus group discussions

Focus group discussions were also used to gather research data. According to Barrett and Twycross (2018:63) and Johnson and Christensen (2012:204), focus groups are a form of group interview in which a moderator/facilitator, working with a researcher, solicits some responses from a small group of participants about issues related to a research question. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011:436), added that the group would discuss a topic supplied by the researcher. With the afore-stated definitions in mind, in this study, a focus group discussion refers to when rich informants are grouped together and allowed to answer questions that are directed to them freely in their own words and opinions. However, in this study, the researcher did not engage a moderator because he wanted to be in total control of the focus group discussions.

The use of focus group discussions was justified in a number of ways. It was used as a way of saving time and money (Barrett & Twycross, 2018:63). The researcher gathered the data within an hour and a half, and at a low cost. Additionally, it produced in-depth and large amounts of data in a short space of time (Barrett & Twycross, 2018:63; Johnson & Christensen, 2012:205; Musadeh, 2012:64). Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011:436) added that a focus group discussion produces insights that might not have been obtained through a "straightforward" interview. Morgan (2022:65) and Musadeh (2012:64) contended that focus group discussions are also useful to triangulate data gathered through various methods.

However, the researcher was aware of the fact that one of the major weaknesses of focus group discussions was that some of the participants would dominate the discussion (Barrett & Twycross, 2018:63). With the above in mind, the researcher provided the participants with equal opportunities to participate. He also ensured that the discussion went on smoothly, while it remained focused on the key issues under discussion.

The researcher purposively recruited a variety of rich informants, such as curriculum experts, senior ZIMSEC O-level History examiners, some of whom were school heads and History teachers. These focus group participants provided adequate and rich data for the study. Three

focus group discussions were held, one at Centre A in Harare, and the other two at Centres B and C, in the Mutare and Mutasa districts respectively. Pseudo names were used for the venues since the researcher wanted to protect the privacy of the sites where the discussions were held (*cf*. Tables 5.4, 5.5 and 5.6 for more information concerning the focus group discussion venues and the participants).

Although there were no clear rules on how many focus groups were considered adequate for focus group research, the researcher used three focus group discussions (Musadeh, 2012:65). The three focus group discussions comprised of different members, and the focus was on the same issues (*cf*. Table 5.4; Appendix L for the discussion guide which was used to guide the focus group discussions). Three focus groups were exhaustive enough to assist the researcher to obtain an in-depth insight into the research topic. Musadeh (2012:65) recommended a minimum of three focus groups for any focus group research.

The focus group discussions were carefully planned, prepared and conducted in comfortable settings so that the participants could contribute to the discussions with no or very little reservations. The researcher wanted the participants to freely provide detailed information and deep insights related to the questions asked during the focus group discussions. The various stages and steps that were involved from the planning to the conducting stages of the focus group discussions are detailed in the subsections below.

i) Design and formulation of focus group questions

The researcher planned and formulated eight questions. While the Education Development Center (2005:2) recommended twelve questions as the maximum, and eight questions as the minimum for any focus group discussion, Johnson and Christensen (2012:205) recommended ten for a single session. The researcher came up with seven questions, given that the time frame for the discussion was around one and a half hours. In view of the time allocated to each of the focus group discussions, seven questions for each focus group discussion were adequate, considering that the researcher also had to ask follow-up questions which would inevitably “sprouted” during the discussion. When designing and formulating the focus group discussion questions, the researcher endeavoured to elicit responses that would address all research questions.

The questions were short and to the point. This helped the participants to comprehend the questions easily. Six of the questions were open-ended (Johnson & Christensen, 2012:205;

Musadeh, 2012:63). This assisted the researcher to ask probing and follow-up questions, while the participants had the opportunity to provide comprehensive responses. All the questions were thoroughly revised to avoid ambiguity, and to ensure that relevant data was gathered (Musadeh, 2012:64). The researcher used the same questions for all the three focus group discussions (*cf.* Appendix *L*).

ii) Recruitment and preparation of the participants

Before recruiting the participants for the focus group discussions, the researcher had the following question in mind, namely, How many participants were to be recruited for each of the focus group discussions? While Barrett and Twycross (2018:63) suggested that focus group participants should range from six to twelve, Musadeh (2012:65) opined that the participants should be between four to twelve. The researcher believed that the groups should not be too small or big. A too small group would not have generated rich and in-depth insights, and a too large group would have been too expensive in terms of the venue, catering and travel expenses and difficult to manage. Besides, the researcher had allocated one and a half hours for each of the focus group discussion sessions to complete the discussions on time and leaving enough time for the participants to travel back to their places of residence. Given the above, the researcher decided to involve eight participants in each of the three focus group discussions.

Three focus group discussions were held. The first focus group discussion was held at Centre A in Harare because the researcher involved History curriculum experts who were stationed in Harare as part of the participating team , and it consisted of eight participants. Two of the participants were school History curriculum experts. The researcher purposively selected the two curriculum experts as he considered their knowledge, experience and familiarity with the area under study as important. Six of the participants (from six different secondary schools in the Mutare and Mutasa secondary schools) were senior ZIMSEC O-level History examiners, who held important positions in the 2167/1 component (*cf.* Table 5.4). Three of them were secondary school heads, while the other three were senior History teachers. These six participants started their teaching careers before 2002, the year that the compulsory study of the subject History was introduced.

Two focus group discussions were held in the Manicaland province, namely, one in the Mutare district and the other in the Mutasa district at Centres B and C respectively. The venues were central to the participants, hence reducing travelling costs. Each of the focus group discussions comprised of eight participants, and all were O-level History teachers (*cf.* Table

5.4). All of the participants started their teaching careers prior to the period of the compulsory study of History. These participants were most suitable for inclusion in the study because they had many years of experience in O-level History teaching. While these teachers were ZIMSEC O-level History examiners and non-examiners, the researcher assumed that they had vast knowledge in terms of the extent to which the curriculum reforms were implemented. All the participants in the focus group discussions were recruited telephonically. The researcher contacted and briefed them of his intention to involve them in the study. They all agreed to participate, and were informed of the date, time and location of the focus group discussions.

iii) Conducting the focus group discussions

Three focus group discussions were respectively held at Centres A, B and C. The locations were accessible for the participants, and free from any disturbances and noises (Musadeh, 2012:66). The researcher did the introductions, and laid down the rules of the focus group discussions, before setting the agenda. He guided the flow of the focus group discussions and involved all participants in the latter, and never allowed a few individuals to dominate the discourse. He also had the responsibility to ask follow-up questions in regards to the identified points of interest (Johnson & Christensen, 2012:205). Meanwhile, the researcher also recorded the discussions with the permission of the participants. The researcher also took brief notes. In addition to the use of focus group discussions during data-collection, document study was used as a complementary tool. An elaboration of the latter follows.

4.5.3.3 Document study

Complementary research data was gathered through a document study. This is a research method that involves an analysis of pre-existing texts such as books, articles, newspapers and institutional reports (Morgan, 2022:64). It is the systematic way of analysing and/or evaluating documents with the objective of eliciting information, and providing answers to key research questions (Bowen, 2009:27). In this regard, primary documents, namely the policy circulars from the ministry responsible for primary and secondary education, the O-level History Syllabus 2167 and the secondary schools' ZIMSEC O-level History results analysis were analysed. These primary documents assisted the researcher to answer some of the research questions using primary evidence. The researcher studied the O-level History Syllabus 2167, with a special focus on its aims, objectives and the learning areas. It was necessary as the former assisted the researcher to establish the rationale for making History a mandatory subject.

The *Secretary's Circular Number 3 of 2002* was also studied, as it was the document that made the study of the subject History mandatory. The purpose was to determine the reasons for the mandatory study of the latter subject. The latter information was critical because it offered the researcher the opportunity to compare it with the data gathered through the individual interviews and focus group discussions respectively (Morgan, 2022:66). This enhanced the credibility and trustworthiness of the findings of the study. Besides, document analysis was advanatageous as it reduced prohibitive ethical considerations which were associated with other data-gathering methods (Morgan, 2022:64)

The results analysis from the schools, district and provincial levels were also studied. These were official analysis documents, based on ZIMSEC O-level results, showing the numbers of candidates who passed or failed each subject at district and provincial levels during specified years. This was important because it assisted the researcher to establish the number of learners who studied the subject History at O-level, and those who sat for the ZIMSEC O-level examinations at given times (*cf.* Tables 5.8, 5.9, 5.10, 5.11 & 5.12). The number of learners who studied English at the same level and who also wrote the ZIMSEC O-level English examinations, which was also a compulsory subject, was also established. This assisted the researcher to determine whether History as a subject was compulsorily studied.

Gaps that were identified during the individual interviews and focus group discussions were addressed by the data gathered from the document study. The use of a document study also reduced the risk of relying on a single source which could have compromised the credibility and trustworthiness of the study (Morgan, 2022:65). Additionally, it enhanced the triangulation of the data, which then promoted dependability of the study's findings (Bowen, 2017:28; Morgan, 2022:65). Another advantage of the document study was that it was not time-consuming to obtain given that the primary documents were available from the secondary schools, and the district and provincial education offices. The documents were factual and period-specific. The next section details how the research was handled from transcription to report writing.

4.5.4 Data analysis and interpretation

Thematic analysis is a family of methods, not a singular method—there is no "standardised TA" (Braun & Clarke, 2023:1)

While the researcher interchangeably used the concepts of data analysis and interpretation,

he was aware that there is a slight difference in their meaning. Data analysis normally refers to the organising or simplifying of the data into categories, patterns, units, themes or sub-themes, while data interpretation refers to the process of attaching meaning (Yin, 2011:176). The researcher acknowledged that there are different ways of analysisng and interpreting research data, namely narrative analysis, discourse analysis, content analysis and thematic analysis (Kara, 2023:187).

Given the above scenario, the researcher used thematic analysis when analysing and interpreting the research data. Majumdar (2022:604) posted that the thematic analysis method is often implemented by qualitative researchers when they use the available research data to answer research questions. Maguire and Delahunt (2017:3352) refer to it as a process where by the researcher identifies interesting patterns or themes based on qualitative data. According to Braun and Clarke (2012:57), thematic analysis is when research data is systematically identified, organised and interpreted into patterns of meanings (themes). These two scholars added that thematic analysis gives room for the researcher to make sense of shared meanings or experiences and "… identifying what is common to the way a topic is talked or written about and making sense of those commonalities" (Braun & Clarke, 2012:57).

Given the above, the researcher adopted the thematic analysis method in the analysis and interpretation of the research data because he wanted to answer the research questions through the identification of common answers based on the available data. Additionally, this method was chosen because of its flexibility *i.e* it is researcher friendly since it can be carried out in different ways (Braun & Clarke, 2012:58). The researcher analysed and interpreted the data under the guidance of Braun and Clarke's (2012:60-69) six steps or phase framework of thematic analysis, namely familiarisation with the gathered data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing potential themes, defining themes and report writing.

In view of the above guidelines, the researcher did not gather all research data, and then wait to analyse and interpret it at the end of the processes. Rather, he started the data analysis process soon after completing the first data-gathering session, and continued to analyse the data as he proceeded with the research. This approach was recommended by Ary, Jacobs and Sorensen (2010:481) when they pointed out that "… data analysis in qualitative research is often done concurrently or simultaneously with data collection … ." The approach reduced the burden and confusion associated with analysing voluminous qualitative data.

The first step was that the researcher familiarised himself with the gathered data through repeatedly reading the written notes and listening to the phone-recorded individual interviews

and focus group discussions (Ary, Jacobs & Sorensen, 2010:481; Braun & Clarke, 2012:60-61; Maguire & Delahunt, 2017:3352). This was done to comprehend the data comprehensively. Transcriptions of the individual interviews and focus group discussions were transcribed verbatim to maintain the etic views of the participants. He also familiarised himself with the data generated through document study. Such data was also transcribed.

Second, and after the researcher familiarised himself with the data, he then proceeded with the coding of the data to identify themes which formed the basis of the concepts or ideas that were developed from the raw data (Braun & Clarke, 2012:60-61; Maguire & Delahunt, 2017:3352). In this regard, the researcher had the conviction that while the concepts, code and theme are often used in qualitative data analysis, their meanings are not distinctively different. Braun and Clarke (2022:11) admitted when they remarked: "We use [the concept] code or theme because there is not always a clear distinction between codes and themes … ." Nevertheless, elsewhere the latter scholars tried to differentiate the meaning of the two concepts when they argued that it is from the coding process that a distinct entity emerges; an entity that ultimately contributes to theme establishment (Braun & Clarke, 2022:11).

To clarify the above, Braun and Clarke (2012:61) believed codes are the building blocks for themes, just like what bricks are to a wall of a house. Maguire and Delahunt (2017:3352) defined coding as a systematic process of sorting "… lots of data into small chunks of meaning." In view of the above two definitions (Braun & Clarke, 2012:61; Maguire & Delahunt, 2017:3352), it is the 'small bricks – small meanings' that are piled or grouped together to form the 'wall of a house – theme.' Therefore, in this study, the concept code and theme did not mean much difference, besides the fact that a code refers to a 'small meaning (something significant – theme)', while theme refers to 'more important meaning (something significant – theme)'. Thus, a code or theme refers to something significant or interesting.

Having provided the working definitions (code and theme) as illustrated above, it was during the coding process that themes were established. The themes were further divided into sub-themes. The coding process was mainly guided by the primary and secondary research questions which formed the basis for the identification of the themes or sub-themes under which the research data was coded. The coding process also assisted the researcher to organise and re-organise data to identify differences and similarities (Kumatongo & Muzata, 2021:26).

Following the establishment of themes and sub-themes due to the coding process, the themes were reviewed to make them more sensible, meaningful and directly answering the research

questions (Braun & Clarke, 2012:65; Maguire & Delahunt, 2017:3358). The process of reviewing the themes enhanced the quality of the study findings because the researcher had the opportunity to collate the entire data and establish whether it all added up to the established themes (Braun & Clarke, 2012:65). It was also through the reviewing of the potential themes that the researcher picked out certain overlapping themes (themes outside the research questions), which later influenced the identification of areas that needed further research (*cf.* Chapter 6, Section 6.8). As a result of refining the potential themes, which was in line with Braun and Clarke's (2012:65) fifth step of thematic analysis, the researcher came up with themes and subthemes that were descriptive in nature, a common feature of qualitative research presentations. The formulation of such themes or subthemes was also influenced by the research questions.

When it came to report writing, the researcher's main aim was to ensure that answers for the research questions were contained in the report. The report was largely presented in prose and simple English. Established themes were used as headings and subheadings, and they were logically and meaningfully connected throughout the report. The order of theme presentation was determined by the order of the research questions. The following section dwells on issues to do with the trustworthiness of the study findings.

4.6 ISSUES OF TRUSTWORTHINESS

The integrity of the study's findings may be questioned on the basis of whether they are representative of the participants' views, and not the researcher's biasness and prejudice. While quantitative researchers address the above by using the concepts of validity and reliability, qualitative researchers use the concept trustworthiness (Namasasu, 2012:110-112). Trustworthiness has to do with questioning whether the study's findings can be trusted (Korstjens & Moser, 2018:121). According to Anney (2014:275), the concept trustworthiness is used as a yardstick to evaluate the integrity of the findings of qualitative research. Guba (1981:79-80) advised that qualitative researchers have to answer four questions which evolve around the issue of trustworthiness. The researcher used Guba's (1981:79-80) four questions to address issues to do with trustworthiness of the study's findings. The questions were:

- How can one establish confidence in the 'truth' of the findings of a particular inquiry for the subjects (respondents) with which and the context in which the inquiry was carried? [It is concerned with the truth].

- How can one determine the degree to which the findings of a particular study may be applicable [to] other contexts, or with other subjects (respondents)? [It is concerned with applicability].
- How can one determine whether the findings of an inquiry would be consistently repeated if the inquiry were replicated with the same (or similar) subjects (respondents) in the same (or similar) context? [It is concerned with consistency].
- How can one establish the degree to which the findings of an inquiry are a function solely of subjects (respondents) and [the] conditions of the inquiry and not of the biases, motivations, interests [and] perspectives … of the inquirer? [It is concerned with neutrality].

The afore-mentioned questions led to the rise of qualitative terms or concepts, such as credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability, which are used as a criteria in determining the trustworthiness of the findings of qualitative research (Anney, 2014:276; Guba, 1981:80; Korstjens & Moser, 2018:121). In this study, the concepts credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability were used to ascertain the trustworthiness of the findings. An elaboration of the above is provided below.

4.6.1 Credibility

Credibility is concerned with the extent to which the findings of the study are the truth, or believable (Anney, 2014:276; Mandal, 2018:592). To enhance the credibility of the research findings, the researcher used three data-gathering strategies, namely interviews, focus group discussions and document study. This triangulation of research data, as Ary, Jacobs and Sorensen (2010:499) called it, offered the researcher the opportunity to compare and contrast the data gathered through the three different strategies. Credibility which is based on data triangulation involves the use of a number of different data-gathering strategies, followed by comparison of the gathered data. It was in view of the merit of this approach, that Mahlambi (2020:125) asserted that the use of numerous data-gathering strategies is generally better than one because it helps the researcher to reduce the biasness of the research findings and cross-examine the integrity of the responses of the participants.

As a way of member checking, the researcher briefly told the participants of the study how their viewpoints were understood by the interviewer prior to the conclusion of the interview sessions. This assisted the researcher in presenting the participants' viewpoints accurately (Ary, Jacobs & Sorensen, 2010:499; Johnson & Christensen, 2012:265; Mandal, 2018:592).

Additionally, the instruments used for the data-gathering were pilot-tested to ensure that they captured the information that they were intended to.

4.6.2 Transferability

The researcher subjected the outcomes of the study to the criteria of transferability. Anney (2014:272) and Korstjens and Moser (2018:121) acknowledged transferability as one of the criteria used in qualitative studies to confirm the trustworthiness of the study's findings. The concept transferability refers to the extent to which qualitative research findings "… can be transferred to other contexts with other respondents – it is the interpretive equivalent to generalisabity" (Anney, 2014: 277). For Gray (as cited in Mufanechiya, 2015:77), Mundal (2018:592) and Korstjens and Moser (2018:121), the concept is concerned with the degree to which the report findings could be applied to other contexts. While the researcher indicated in this chapter (*cf.* Section 4.3) that the findings will not be generalised, it was also indicated that insights obtained from this study would possibly encourage further research on the topic in other regions of the country, and even globally. This means that the transferability of the study's findings is possible. Korstjens and Moser (2018:121), who agreed with Bitsch (2005:85) and Munadal (2018:592), opined that researchers make the transferability of research findings possible through a detailed description of the study, and of the purposive sampling of the participants.

Li (as cited in Anney, 2014:278), elucidated that a thick description of the study, especially from start to finish, makes it easier for other researchers to re-engage with the study, or even with slight divergence. To this end, the researcher comprehensively described all the research processes, starting with the identification of the theoretical framework and research design that was adopted for the study, and how the participants were sampled, how the research data was gathered, analysed, interpreted and transcribed into the final narrative report. Resultantly, adequate information has been provided for other readers to apply the outcomes from this study to other settings (Mandal, 2018:592). Hence, the researcher demonstrated that the study's findings are transferable, or comparable to other secondary schools in other districts or provinces of Zimbabwe.

4.6.3 Dependability

Dependability was another aspect that was considered by the researcher to enhance the trustworthiness of the findings of the study. Shenton (2004:71) pointed out that dependability

in qualitative research is achieved through the use of data-gathering techniques that are complementary to each other. Focus group discussions and individual interview sessions were used to gather data from the participants, namely, the curriculum experts, school heads and History teachers. Open-ended questions were used to allow the participants to provide their own views as broadly as possible, and to provide the opportunities for follow-up questions (Yin, 2011:133). The document study was also used as a complementary data-gathering tool. A combination of the above-mentioned data-gathering methods made dependability achievable in this study because the use of overlapping data-gathering techniques made the triangulation of the gathered data possible and worthy (Morgan, 2022:65). This was also confirmed by Cohen *et. al.* (as cited in Anney, 2014:278), who pointed out that dependability can also be achieved through triangulation. According to Anney (2014:278), the dependability of the research findings is also achieved if the final report is auditable. The researcher accounted for how the research data was gathered and transcribed in the final report. Records of the research processes were kept for external auditing and cross-examining of the research findings. During the data analysis, interpretation and report-writing processes, the researcher coded and recoded the gathered data into themes and subthemes based on the verbatim responses of the participants. Hence, the responses given by the participants during the focus group discussions, or individual interviews were included in the research report to support the given interpretations and report-auditing.

Besides informing the participants how their views were captured upon the conclusion of the focus group discussions or individual interviews, dependability was further achieved by providing some of the participants, namely, the curriculum experts, education officials, school heads and History teachers the opportunity to evaluate and audit the findings, interpretations and suggestions of the study as presented in the final report. This was justified as the latter could confirm that their views were accurately and acceptably captured and presented, since all the interpretations and suggestions were supported by the data obtained from the participants of the study (Korstjens & Moser, 2018:121). According to Korstjens and Moser (2018:122), dependability is related to the checking of consistency. The two elaborated that, researchers have "… to check whether the analysis process is in line with the accepted standards for a particular design" (Korstjens & Moser, 2018:122). While the researcher adopted the case study as the research type, which was suitable for the use of the qualitative research approach, dependability was further enhanced, because the thematic analysis method was used as the approach for the data analysis and interpretation process. The use of the latter method as the data analysis and interpretation approach was compatible with the ethics of qualitative research (Ary, Jacobs & Sorensen, 2010:481).

4.6.4 Confirmability

The issue of confirmability in qualitative research is equivalent to the issue of objectivity in quantitative research (Mandal, 2018:592; Mufanechiya, 2015:77). For Shanton (2004:72), confirmability is achieved when the researcher presents the participants' experiences and views, and not his/her own biases. Neutrality is the central tenet in the presentation of the participants' experiences and viewpoints (Korstjens & Moser, 2018:122). The confirmability of the study's findings was important because it confirmed that the findings of the study were not artificially contrived, or concocted by the researcher, but formulated from the authentic gathered data (Anney, 2014:279; Korstjens & Moser, 2018:122). The researcher respected the concept of confirmability in this study. While it was indicated earlier in this report (see Chapter 4, Section 4.2.1), that the findings of the study would be subjective, the researcher avoided empathising with the participants' views in the final report. He presented the report from the participants' emic viewpoints of the phenomena under interrogation. For this reason, the researcher used the gathered views of the participants in their verbatim form to substantiate his analysis and interpretations. Mandal (2018:592) confirmed that confirmability is ensured when the researcher uses proper methods and processes during and after the research process, which was the case in this study. Given of the above, other researchers can confirm the findings of this study (Korstjens & Moser, 2018:121). Yadav (2022:684) adds: "The inclusion of quotes … enhances the confirmability of the [research] findings."

Reflexivity is another important way that the researcher used to achieve the confirmability of the research findings. Reflexivity emphasises the role played by the researcher in the entire study, and how his/her preconceived ideas may have affected the final research output (Gouldner, as cited in Palaganas, *et al.*, 2017:427; Korstjens & Moser, 2018:123). Finlay and Gough (2008:ix) agreed when they defined reflexivity as a thoughtful self-reflection of how the researcher's activities, personality and behaviour impacted the research process. As the key instrument in the study, the researcher opted for the qualitative research approach, because of the qualitative research skills he obtained during his Master of Education studies at the University of Zimbabwe between 2005 and 2006.

Anney (2014:279) added that, as a reflexive practice, a qualitative researcher has to keep a record of what transpired in the field, including his/her personal reflections regarding the study context. The researcher gathered research data without any preconceived ideas about the outcomes of the study. He (the researcher) even embarked on the field without a hypothesis for the study, as he argued that if any abstractions were to rise, they had to be grounded in the gathered data from the field (Ary, Jacobs & Sorensen, 2010:30; Creswell, 2012:21; Glaser

& Strauss, 1967:1). This was in line with Hameed's (2020:12) advice that qualitative researchers ".. enter into the field with an open heart and a seeking mind. They do not have a priori theory to prejudice their data collection." In this regard, data analysis and interpretation were not done to prove or disprove a hypothesis, but to establish themes or meanings grounded in the gathered data (Braun & Clarke, 2012:60-61; Maguire & Delahunt, 2017:3352). The researcher also avoided empathising with the participants' viewpoints, but considered them in their original context to avoid any bias. As a reflective practice, the researcher kept brief notes about the participants' views during both the focus group discussions and individual interview sessions. While the notes were not very detailed, they were complementary to the recorded interviews and discussions that the researcher also used for the transcription of the gathered data. The researcher did not gather all the research data at once, and then analyse and interpret it at the end of the research process, but after gathering some of the data, at some given point, he put aside time to familiarise himself with the data, and then organise and re-organise the data into categories and themes related to the study. This avoided the burden of deduction of the data for the writing of the report. However, in this study, there were certain ethical considerations that the researcher had to observe. Such considerations are detailed below.

4.7 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Since the study required much coordination, cooperation and interaction between the researcher and the participants at various levels, the researcher abided by the ethical principles to access data. From the onset, it was considered that the participants and institutions from which the data was gathered had rights which had to be respected and protected (Ary, Jacobs & Sorensen, 2010:580). This was in line with the standards of conducting educational research because there were ethical considerations to be taken care of before the researcher had access to research data.

Prior to the start of the data-gathering process, the researcher followed a number of steps. Firstly, he sought and obtained an ethical clearance letter from UNISA's Ethical Clearance Committee (*cf.* Appendix B), which he used to obtain a permission letter from the Zimbabwean Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education to conduct the study (*cf.* Appendix D). Following the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education's approval to conduct the study, the researcher notified the Manicaland Provincial Education Director of his intentions. The latter was responsible for overseeing the primary and secondary education system in the seven districts of the Manicaland Province. It was necessary for the researcher to seek permission

from the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education because the setting of the study was within the afore-mentioned ministry's control area.

After getting the approval from the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education to conduct the study (*cf.* Appendix D), the researcher used the permission letter to introduce himself to education officials at both provincial and district levels to secure their permission to involve them as participants in the study (*cf.* Appendix E). Furthermore, equipped with the clearance letter from UNISA's Ethical Clearance Committee (*cf.* Appendix B), and the letter of permission from the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education, the researcher approached the secondary school heads in the Mutare and Mutasa districts to ask for permission to conduct the interviews. In all cases, permission to conduct the interviews was verbally given. It was the secondary school heads, and sometimes their deputies, who introduced the researcher to the secondary school History teachers in their schools. In this regard, before gathering the data, the researcher also introduced himself to the interviewees, and emphasised that the activities were purely academic.

Furthermore, the authorisation letters were also used in the preparation for the focus group discussions (*cf.* Appendices B, D & E). For introductory and authentication purposes, the letters were circulated among the focus group discussion panelists. The permission letters were also used to seek access to the primary research documents from the various education role-players. In all of the data-gathering processes, the researcher informed the participants of the study, both at the beginning and at the end of the interviews, that the research purpose was purely academic, and that their participation was voluntary. They were also informed that they had the right to withdraw from participation in the study at any time that they felt doing so. To this end, they were also told that they had the rights to their own views, and the latter would only be disclosed with their permission (Ary, Jacobs & Sorensen, 2010:590). All the participants who were involved in formal interviews and focus group discussions signed consent forms (*cf.* Appendix G). The dignity, privacy and the autonomy of the participants were respected by taking special precaution in terms of the vulnerability of the participants. In this regard, the researcher used *pseudo* names for the participants and the specific locations to safeguard the participants and the sites' privacy (Ary, Jacobs & Sorensen, 2010:592, *cf.* Tables 5.4 & 5.6). The participants were also told that their experiences or views were what matter most, and that the researcher was willing to avail the findings of the study to them.

4.8 CHAPTER SUMMARY

In this chapter, it was pointed out that this study was rooted in interpretivism and qualitative as the research paradigm and approach respectively. The justifications for using such philosophical underpinnings were given too. The chapter also highlighted that a case study that involved secondary schools in the Mutare and Mutasa districts in the Manicaland Province was employed as the research type. To this end, it was shown that the curriculum experts, school heads, O-level History teachers and education officials were sampled as the research participants. Purposive and snowball sampling strategies were used in identifying the participants of the study. It was further indicated that while the research data was mainly gathered through the use of interviews and focus group discussions, a document study was used as complementary to the two mentioned data-gathering tools. The gathered data was analysed and interpreted using the thematic analysis method. This chapter has also presented how the research standards such as issues of trustworthiness, namely credibility, transferability, confirmability and dependability of the study were addressed. The chapter was concluded with a presentation on how the research ethics were considered. In the next chapter, a presentation of the findings of the study is provided.

CHAPTER 5

QUALITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter of the study, the analysis and interpretation of the gathered data related to the findings of the study are presented. Thematic data analysis was used as the approach to data presentation. Themes and sub-themes were used to organise and analyse the data. Some of the themes and sub-themes that were used were the approach to and the rationale for the compulsory study of the school subject History, the approach to the dissemination of the curriculum information in terms of the implementation of the O-level History curriculum, and the efforts by the then Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture to facilitate a successful curriculum implementation. The research data was gathered by means of focus group discussions, individual interviews and a document study. The first two data-gathering techniques were suitable and adequate to gather information related to human views and opinions. The participants were History teachers, school heads, former and current education inspectors and curriculum experts, and were considered to be rich sources of information. The third technique vitally complimented the first two because it provided a rich source from which primary evidence for the study was accessed.

The empirical study information is presented by clustering the specific opinions and views of the participants in the study; or first by presenting the information in its raw form (verbatim), followed by an interpretation. The participants' views and opinions are also time analysed and interpreted in comparison with the empirical findings from the document study. However, before getting into a detailed presentation and discussion of the empirical study, a brief background information on the participants in the study is provided below.

5.2 BRIEF BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE PARTICIPANTS IN THE STUDY

Besides the use of the document study, much of the information that was used to compile this chapter was gathered by means of individual interview sessions and focus group discussions. Three current education officials and two former education officials participated in the individual interviews. They worked as provincial and district secondary school education

inspectors during the period under study; three at provincial level and two at district level (*cf.* Table 5.1). In addition, twenty-five individual interviews were held with secondary school heads and History teachers (*cf.*Table 5.2). The participants in the individual interviews were sampled from twenty-five secondary schools in different geographical locations, but all from the Mutare and Mutasa districts in the Manicaland province. Some were from urban areas, while others were from either peri-urban or rural areas (*cf.*Table 5.2). The secondary schools were under the authority of either the rural district councils, churches, government or private sector. Table 5.3 provides more information.

Table 5.1: Individual interview participants: education officers

Participants	Number of district education officers who participated	Number of provincial education officers who participated	Total
Education Officers	2 incumbent education officers	3 education officers (1 incumbent and 2 retired)	5

Note: All participants had an opportunity to offer their services as education inspectors in Manicaland province at the time when the study of the subject History was made mandatory.

Table 5.2: Individual interview participants: school heads and History teachers

Participants	Number of school heads who participated	Number of History teachers who participated	Total
Education Officers	9	16	25

Note: Nine of the participants were school heads, while 16 were History teachers with a maximum of 35 years and a minimum of 17 years of experience.

Table 5.3: **Institutions, geographical locations and responsible authorities of the participants in individual interviews**

INSTITUTIONS	URBAN AREA	PERI-URBAN AREA	RURAL AREA	Total
Council secondary schools	0	1	12	13
Government secondary schools	2	0	0	2
Mission secondary schools	1	0	4	5
Private secondary schools	3	1	1	5
Total	**6**	**2**	**17**	**25**

Note: Nine of the participants were school heads, while 16 were History teachers with a maximum of 35 years, and a minimum of 17 years of experience.

Twenty-four participants participated in three separate focus group discussions. These involved curriculum experts, school heads and History teachers as participants (*cf*. Table 5.4). With the exception of the two curriculum experts, the school heads and History teachers who were involved in the focus group discussions came from twenty-two secondary schools that were in the Mutare and Mutasa districts. These twenty-two secondary schools were additional to the twenty-five secondary schools that provided school heads and History teachers who participated in individual interview sessions. As shown in Table 5.4, each of the three focus group discussions comprised of eight participants. The first focus group discussion was held in Harare with two curriculum experts and six senior ZIMSEC O-level History examiners. Of the six examiners, who were from six different secondary schools in Mutare and Mutasa districts, three were secondary school heads, and the other three were senior History teachers. The next two focus group discussions were held on separate days in the city of Mutare, in the Manicaland province. The first to be held comprised of O-level History teachers from the Mutare district only. The second focus group discussion was also for O-level History teachers only, although from the Mutasa district. All the History teachers who participated in the focus group discussions started their teaching careers in the period before the subject became compulsory. In both cases, four of them were ZIMSEC O-level History examiners, and four were not. Those who were not, were senior History teachers at their respective secondary schools. Table 5.5 shows the type of secondary schools from which the participants in the three focus group discussions came from.

Table 5.4: Focus group discussion venues and participants

Focus group discussion venue	Number of curriculum experts who participated	Number of school heads who participated	Number of History teachers who participated	Total
Venue A	2	3 (All were senior ZIMSEC O-level History examiners)	3 (All were senior ZIMSEC O-level History examiners)	8
Venue B	0	0	8 (4 were ZIMSEC O-level History examiners, while the other 4 were not)	8
Venue C	0	0	8 (4 were ZIMSEC O-level	8

			History examiners, while the other 4 were not)	
Total	**2**	**3**	**19**	**24**

Note: Of the two curriculum experts, one had 21 years of experience in the field while the other one had 18 years. Three of the participants were school heads, while 19 were History teachers with a maximum of 33 years, and a minimum of 17 years of experience.

Table 5.5: **Institutions, geographical locations and responsible authorities of the participants in focus group discussions**

INSTITUTIONS	URBAN AREA	PERI-URBAN AREA	RURAL AREA	Total
Council secondary schools	0	0	14	14
Government secondary schools	0	0	1	1
Mission secondary schools	0	0	4	4
Private secondary schools	3	0	0	3
Total	**3**	**0**	**19**	**22**

Note: Three of the participants were school heads, while 19 were History teachers with a maximum of 33 years, and a minimum of 17 years of experience.

As stated in Chapter 4, Section 4.6.4, to enhance the trustworthiness of the study findings, particularly its confirmability, the researcher quoted verbatim or cited participants' etic views and opinions to substantiate his analysis and interpretations of the gathered data. The level of History teaching or roles and years of experiences of the participants whose views and opinions are cited to buttress the themes or sub-themes generated from this study are summarised in Table 5.6 below.

Table 5.6: Participants information: Level of History teaching/roles and years of experiences

Participant Pseudonym	Level of History teaching or other roles	Years of experience
Curriculum expert 1	History education lecturer at a local university, curriculum consultant	18
Curriculum expert 2	Curriculum Studies lecturer at a local university, curriculum consultant	21
Interviewee A	Senior History teacher, senior ZIMSEC O-level History	18

	examiner	
Interviewee B	Senior History teacher, senior ZIMSEC O-level History examiner	17
Interviewee C	Senior History teacher, but not a ZIMSEC examiner	23
Interviewee D	Education officer, provincial education inspector	9
Interviewee E	Former education officer, former provincial education inspector	13
Interviewee F	Education officer, district education inspector	10
Interviewee G	Senior History teacher, but not a ZIMSEC examiner	22
Interviewee H	Senior History teacher, but not a ZIMSEC examiner	18
Interviewee I	School head, but not a ZIMSEC examiner	35
Interviewee J	Former education officer, former provincial education inspector	10
Interviewee K	Senior History teacher, but not a ZIMSEC examiner	25
Interviewee L	Senior History teacher, senior ZIMSEC O-level History examiner	29
Interviewee M	Senior History teacher, senior ZIMSEC O-level History examiner	24
Interviewee N	Senior History teacher, senior ZIMSEC O-level History examiner	27
Interviewee 0	School head, but not a ZIMSEC examiner	31
Interviewee P	Senior History teacher, but not a ZIMSEC examiner	23
Interviewee Q	Senior History teacher, but not a ZIMSEC examiner	26
Interviewee R	School head, but not a ZIMSEC examiner	28
Interviewee S	School head, but not a ZIMSEC examiner	27
Interviewee T	School head, but not a ZIMSEC examiner	30
Interviewee U	School head, but not a ZIMSEC examiner	29
Interviewee V	Education officer, district education inspector	11
Participant A1	School head, senior ZIMSEC O-level History examiner	31
Participant A2	Senior History teacher, senior ZIMSEC O-level History examiner	26
Participant A3	Senior History teacher, senior ZIMSEC O-level History examiner	22
Participant A4	Senior History teacher, senior ZIMSEC O-level History examiner	24
Participant A5	School head, senior ZIMSEC O-level History examiner	33

Participant B1	Senior History teacher, but not a ZIMSEC examiner	24
Participant B2	Senior History teacher, senior ZIMSEC O-level History examiner	19
Participant B3	Senior History teacher, senior ZIMSEC O-level History examiner	30
Participant B4	Senior History teacher, but not a ZIMSEC examiner	17
Participant B5	Senior History teacher, senior ZIMSEC O-level History examiner	18
Participant C1	Senior History teacher, but not a ZIMSEC examiner	21
Participant C2	Senior History teacher, but not a ZIMSEC examiner	18
Participant C3	Senior History teacher, senior ZIMSEC O-level History examiner	22
Participant C4	Senior History teacher, senior ZIMSEC O-level History examiner	19

Curriculum experts 1 and 2 – refer to curriculum experts who participated in focus group discussions held at venue A.

Interviewees A to V – refer to participants who were involved in individual interviews.

Participants A1 to A5 – refer to participants involved in focus group discussions held at venue A.

Participants B1 to B5 – refer to participants involved in focus group discussions held at venue B.

Participants C1 to C4 – refer to participants in focus group discussions held at venue C.

As mentioned earlier in the introduction of this chapter (*cf.* Section 5.1), themes and sub-themes were used to organise and analyse the research data. Table 5.7 below is a summary of the themes and sub-themes that emerged from the study.

Table 5.7 Summary of the themes and sub-themes that emerged from the study

Themes	**Sub-themes**
Approach to and rationale for the mandatory study of the subject history	• Rationale for the mandatory study of school History • Politicisation and inculcation of patriotism • Approach to curriculum information dissemination
	• Status of History in secondary schools –

Implementation of the O-level history curriculum in secondary schools	2002 to 2016 • Complete curriculum implementation • Fractional curriculum implementation • Null curriculum implementation
Efforts of the Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture to facilitate a successful curriculum implementation	
Participants' views on the facilitation of the implementation of the curriculum reforms by the Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture.	

An integrative data analysis and elaboration of each of the above mentioned themes and sub-themes is given below. However, before the elaboration of the above, the research aim and objectives are restated as follows: Aim – to determine the extent to which History curriculum reforms were successfully implemented at secondary school level in the Mutare and Mutasa districts in Manicaland Province. Objectives – to investigate the rationale for making the study of History compulsory at secondary level in the Manicaland Province in Zimbabwe, to analyse the approach(es) used to make History a compulsory secondary school subject in the Manicaland Province in Zimbabwe, to examine role of the education officers, secondary school heads and History teachers in ensuring the success of the compulsory study of the subject History at secondary school level in the Mutare and Mutasa districts in Manicaland Province and to develop a model, make suggestions and recommendations on how best the intended outcomes of the curriculum reforms could have been achieved in the Manicaland Province's secondary schools, and expose issues that need further research.

5.3 APPROACH TO AND RATIONALE FOR THE MANDATORY STUDY OF THE SUBJECT HISTORY

The views presented in this section were obtained through individual interviews and focus group discussions. Document study complemented the analysis of the gathered views. These are the views of the school heads and History teachers on the question of whether the compulsory study of History was 'a good thing', and what were their opinions on the mandatory study of the subject History. A good number of the participants (n=9) felt that the then Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture's approach to History a mandatory school subject was appropriate. For them, the mandatory study of the subject was meant to ensure that the new

O-level History Syllabus 2167 was fully implemented in all schools, given that the previous O-level History Syllabus 2166 was not implemented in every secondary school. In view of the above, one of the secondary school heads, Interviewee U, said that in terms of the previous O-level History Syllabus 2166, which was not offered in all schools, the government regarded the subject since then as important to propagate a sense of patriotism in secondary school learners. This confirmed Freire's (as quoted in Nkyabonaki, 2013:109) argument that education is a tool used by political leaders to achieve their long-term goals. However, the majority (n=19) of the participants, particularly the History teachers, felt that making History a core subject was inappropriate because they were neither consulted in this regard, nor was the rationale for the decision pedagogically sound. Alsubaie (2016:107) postulated that teachers are most likely to cooperate when they feel they "own" the official curriculum that they are mandated to implement. Similarly, Mbarushimana and Allida (2017:4) confirmed that when teachers are involved in curriculum change, they develop a feeling that, they are respected such that they will be committed to their work. This theme led to several sub-themes, which are discussed next.

5.3.1 Rationale for the mandatory study of school History

This discussion focuses on the first sub-theme that emerged from the first theme of the study (*cf.* Table 5.7). While only five education officials participated in the study, they were positive in terms of the decision to make History a mandatory school subject. Their views were supported by some of the sampled school heads (n=4) and History teachers (n=5). For all of them, the move was especially good for both learners and the state in general. They also believed that making History a compulsory subject was a justifiable and good decision. The specifics of the findings are provided first, followed by a discussion of the specific views of the participants.

The sentiments that the move to make History a compulsory subject was a good decision were solicited to respond to interview Question #2, namely whether making the subject History mandatory was a good decision. Interviewee J, a former education inspector, said that in his view, "… [the use of a circular was] the best way to ensure the compulsory study of the subject … considering that it is the role of government to determine what sort of [the type] education, and how it should be acquired by the learners." Interviewee I, a school head, confirmed the above view,

> Yes, making the teaching of History compulsory in secondary schools was a good thing as students were supposed to know their country's history in terms of where they came from, and where they are going, since historical knowledge

> shapes a people's future direction. However, the ministry was supposed to consult all stakeholders on the way forward rather than dictating issues of education. The various role-players were supposed to be consulted in order to have a sense of ownership of the curriculum change.

Interviewees A and F (a History teacher and an education inspector respectively) confirmed the above: "It was a good move because it encouraged learners to critically analyse events, thereby creating critical thinkers."; and added, "Making the study of History compulsory was a positive idea because it is a subject whose knowledge and skills are important in human life despite what kind of a job one intends to do in future." Interviewee U, a school head, and Interviewee B, a History teacher and ZIMSEC O-level History examiner, respectively asserted: "It helped the born-free [those children who were born after Zimbabwe got independence in 1980] to know the legacy of our fore-fathers that cannot be left unobserved."; and that making the study of History compulsory was meant "… to develop in students' attitudes of national identity, pride and counter-colonial propaganda and attitudes that projected Africans as inferior subjects."

Participant C3, a senior History teacher and ZIMSEC O-level History examiner, who participated in the focus group discussions at venue C, felt that the mandatory study of school History was a necessity that was going "… to impart and preserve knowledge of African national heroes, rather than Europeans heroes among students." Also responding to interview Question #2, was Interviewee G, a History teacher, and he added, "It was necessary because the subject fostered skills of analysis and making judgments from informed positions." Interviewee H, also a History teacher, added:

> Basically, the main reason for making History a compulsory subject was that the former Minister of Education wanted to implement without failure the recommendation of the 1999 Chidyausiku-led commission on education. The commission had recommended that [the] youths were priding in Western cultures, at the expense of our culture. The commission's report blamed our system of education for being irrelevant. So, the making of History a compulsory subject was meant to promote *unhu* (human dignity based on the African culture) among the Zimbabwean youths.

A close analysis of the above views of the participants showed that by directing all O-level learners to study the subject History would benefit the learners. The purpose was for the learners to acquire specialist knowledge and a confirmation of the sociological epistemology of the education system (Robertson, 2009:11). The mandatory study of the subject was also

supposed to improve the mental faculties of the O-level learners, as it would equip them with the relevant knowledge and skills that will make them to fit into in their society (Gatawa, 1990:27; Pillai, 2012:21). In view of the above sociological epistemology of education, it was in the interests of the learners to receive an education that would help them to understand and get along with all in society, and even in a global context (Aparna & Raakhee, 2011:3; Bobbitt, as quoted in Kliebard, 2003:21).

The participants argued that the compulsory study of History in secondary schools would benefit the learners as they could acquire a range of knowledge, from being aware of their local history to the promotion of national awareness and cognitive development. In this regard, to some extent, the role and place of school History in Zimbabwe, and in a global context are the same. In Israel, for example, the compulsory teaching of History is meant to promote unity among the Jews through the promotion of national consciousness (Gil, 2009:3). In Europe, History teaching is used as a tool for learners to love, and to be active citizens, who are proud of their countries (Kore & Agricic, 2007:351; Laughton, 1965:3; Steele, 1983:5). The acquisition of the above, would ensure the development of valuable societal practices. If learners were to fail to conform to societies' norms, ethos and values, they would be regarded as "misfits." The participants' views also revealed that the Zimbabwean education system prepared the learners for a better life in the wider world. This is in line with the sociological epistemology of education, namely to prepare learners for adult life (Bobbitt, as quoted in Kliebard, 2003:21).

The above notion that the mandatory study of History was also meant to benefit all learners, was confirmed by the information contained in the O-level History Syllabus 2167, used in the secondary schools during the period under study (2002-2016). The preamble of the syllabus indicated that, it "… intended to provide O-level students with the means by which they will develop an objective view of the world. It should help them to acquire an informed and critical understanding of social, economic and political issues facing them as builders of a developing nation" (Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture, 2001:2).

Given the above, the emphasis was on the notion of education being offered to the benefit of the learners. This was in line with scholars such as Massouleh and Jooneghani (2012:50), Haque and David (2022:5) and Peterson (2012:137) who insisted that when it comes to curriculum development and implementation, it has to be learner-centred. While it was not clear whether the learners in Zimbabwe were given the choice to decide what they would prefer to learn, the O-level History Syllabus 2167 suggested that the History curriculum was meant to assist learners in obtaining an objective view of the world (Ministry of Education,

Sport and Culture, 2001:2).

The school History teaching in the Mutasa and Mutare districts had a social role, namely to assist learners to obtain a better understanding of the world, and to help them to fit well into the Zimbabwean society. The sociological epistemology of the secondary school education was confirmed in the preamble of the syllabus document. It was stated that the acquired historical knowledge would help learners to make informed and critical decisions in regards to life issues that they would face during their life time (Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture, 2001:2). Therefore, in the light of the aim of the O-level History Syllabus 2167, History education was compulsory for the graduates to have an objective view of the world, and to fit well into the global society (Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture, 2001:2).

However, to suggest that the study of school History would assist learners to obtain an objective worldview (Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture, 2001:2) made the researcher to question whether historical knowledge automatically results in an objective view of the world. There has also been a debate on whether the objectivity of historical knowledge is attainable (Anbalakan, 2016:21; Phillips, 1996:32-33). While some academics argue for the attainability of objectivity in historical knowledge, many scholars have argued that absolute objective historical knowledge is not attainable, given that there is no given template of the past against which to verify the different interpretations (Becker and Beard, as cited in Anbalakan, 2016:23; Bevir, 1994:328, Carr, as cited in Kundra, 2017:1). It is largely on this pretext that the objectivity of historical knowledge is questioned.

When relating the concept of objectivity to historical knowledge, it means that the knowledge will be independent of the subject (Kew, 1997:63; Kundra, 2017:2). The official aim of the study of O-level History was to produce graduates who would have an objective world view (Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture, 2001:2). However, the acquisition of historical knowledge does not necessarily lead to an objective view of the world because historical knowledge is not "independent" of the knower (Jenkins, as cited in Kundra, 2017:4). The human past, which forms the basis of the school subject History, is not open, freely and readily accessible to everyone, resulting in an objective view of the world. Additionally, the human past, as the source of historical knowledge, cannot be re-lived, witnessed, or experienced by independent individuals to verify, or confirm the objectivity of their view of the world based on the past (Anbalakan, 2016:24). The latter is not possible as in scientific experiments, where a similar experiment could be repeated by different individuals at different times, and similar results would be obtained (Beard, as cited in Anbalakan, 2016:24; Heale & Twycross, 2015:66).

Rather, through the study of past events, the learners, as historical investigators, would discover or be exposed to different interpretations of the world. These discoveries or interpretations, which would be historical knowledge about the world, would not be "independent" of the knower. The moment knowledge is limited to the knower and not independent of the knower, the subject of a study (the past events), the knowledge becomes subjective (Becker, as cited in Anbalakan, 2016:23; Hexter, 1991:678). Therefore, regardless of the declaration in the syllabus' preamble that O-level History teaching will provide learners with the means to objectively understand the world would not be achievable because historical knowledge is subjective. As such, in this study, it is argued that the mandatory teaching of History was not going to produce learners with an objective view of the world, but rather with a better subjective understanding of the world (Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture, 2001:2). The latter is in accordance to Anbalakan (2016:21) and Phillips' (1996:39-40) affirmations that, objectivity is the ideal, but relativism, or perspectivism is the reality of historical knowledge. It was in line with the same argument that Novick (as cited in Hexter, 1991:676) opined that, "… historical objectivity is not an achievable, but a vacuous idea in principle."

Given the intended outcome to produce graduates who would have an objective view of the world, as per the preamble of the O-level History Syllabus 2167, the researcher agrees with Kundara (2017:4) that objectivity in historical knowledge is "… more of an entertainment …" than a field of study, such that an intended outcome was not possible to attain through History teaching alone. For the researcher, when a school curriculum is wrongly "manufactured", and "mistakenly" offered for implementation at school level to yield the unattainable, it could be called a "weird curriculum." A "weird curriculum", such as the O-level History Syllabus 2167, emanated from a poor curriculum planning and design stage. The desired outcomes of a school subject should be carefully formulated, since the curriculum aims, goals or objectives should be achievable (Tyler, 1949:105). The"weird curriculum" such as the O-level History Syllabus 2167, was not going to achieve the intended outcomes (to produce graduates who would have an objective view of the world) because there was a mismatch between theory and practice. The concept "mismatch between curriculum theory and practice" refers to the inconsistency between the formulated aims, or objectives, and what is actually achieved following the implementation of the curriculum (Taba, 1962:13). In a mismatch between curriculum theory and practice, the desired curriculum outcomes would be unattainable solely as a result of the theorisation of an aim, or goal that is impossible to achieve based on the inappropriate prescribed, or desired means of achieving the former (Lawton, 2012:5; Tyler, 1949:110-120).

According to Ornstein and Hunkins (2009:182), curriculum planners and policy-makers should plan and design curricula with clearly defined intended outcomes, and the prescribed modalities or steps to be followed to achieve the intended outcomes. Paradoxically, in practical terms, and with all favourable conditions being available to produce the intended outcomes, it would be impossible to achieve the outcomes because of the theoretical contradictions emanating from the planning stage. Hence, the teaching and learning of History were not going to produce graduates with an objective view of the world because objectivity based on historical knowledge was unattainable (Anbalakan, 2016:21; Kundra, 2017:4; Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture, 2001:2).

In light of the above, the O-level History curriculum's aim to promote objectivity was not going to be realised because of a mismatch between the theorisation of the aim and the means to achieve the intended outcome. This is known as the mismatch of the curriculum reality codes at the curriculum planning and design stages. It means that when curriculum planners and designers formulate curriculum aims, goals, and/or objectives which might not be achieved based on the proposed approaches, or methodologies, they could have disregarded the philosophical underpinnings of the intended outcomes, and the methodology to achieve the latter (Personal opinion). For example, as supported by the document analysis, the mismatch of the curriculum reality codes was exposed through the O-level History Syllabus 2167's statement that one of the reasons for the mandatory teaching of O-level History in the secondary schools was to ensure that learners develop an objective view of the world (Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture, 2001:2). The mismatch of the curriculum reality codes was evident in that History teaching was meant to provide learners with the means to have an objective view of the world; yet, it was not attainable because the study of school History does not yield objective, but subjective historical knowledge (Anbalakan, 2016:32; Kundra, 2017:4).

Some of the aims of teaching O-level History, that was compulsory from 2002 to 2016, that were pointed out by a few of the participants (n=6) in the study, were also confirmed by the outcomes of the document analysis. The aims of History teaching, as outlined in the O-level History Syllabus 2167 document, were to

- develop a national and international consciousness.
- develop an understanding of local, national and international historical events.
- acquire a broad understanding of the different and common experiences of the peoples of Africa and the world.

- understand the various stages in the development of societies, and the different forces which interact to produce change.
- understand how colonialism and resistance to it have influenced international relations.
- develop skills and appropriate tools of analysing historical events.
- develop simple skills to carry out research (Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture. 2001:2).

The above aims supported the justification given by the education officers, school heads and History teachers, as presented in Section 5.3.1, namely that the compulsory teaching of the subject History was meant to benefit the learners. A closer analysis of the given aims, substantiated the argument that a justified curriculum has to serve the interests of the learners (Nkyabonaki, 2013:112; Ornstein & Hunkins, 2009:185; Tyler, 1949:6-16). For instance, there was reference to the acknowledgment of the national and international societies, as well as skills development for the learners (Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture, 2001:2).

The aims as provided in the national school syllabus document for O-level History 2167 did not substantiate the position of the participants in this study in terms of the main reason for the compulsory study of the subject History. The majority of the participants in the study pointed out that the compulsory study of History was mainly introduced to promote patriotism among the Zimbabwean youth to counter the growing opposition against the ZANU PF government in the early 2000s (*cf.* 5.3.2, pp. 54-57). The two examples below are representative of the views as repeatedly expressed by most of the participants. Participant A2, a History teacher, at venue A opined that the decision was largely "… to politically orient them [the learners] so that as an upcoming electorate generation, they would vote for ZANU PF." Participant B3, a History teacher in venue B, concurred that the compulsory study of History was meant to instil the spirit of patriotism among the youth as tertiary students were also compelled to study a History-related course, entitled the *National and Strategic Studies*. Similar sentiments were also expressed during the individual interviews. The above views were in agreement with the findings of Maposa and Wassermann (2014:255) and Ranger (2004:215), who argued that since 1980, school History in Zimbabwe was used as a tool to promote a sense of patriotism among the youth.

The majority of the participants in this study elaborated that the subject was made compulsory because the ZANU PF government wanted to use History education as a tool to prolong its rule of the country. This argument seemed to be legitimate given that the mandatory study of the subject was introduced in 2002, during a period in which the ZANU PF government was

not only facing opposition from the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) party, but also from progressive and democratic pressure groups that emerged in the late 1990s, whose support base was mainly the urban population (Barnes, 2007:649; Maposa & Wassermann, 2014:255; Personal experience, 2008). Barnes (2007:649), Maposa and Wassermann (2014:255) and Ranger (2005:12) confirmed the tendency to use school History by the then Zimbabwean government to promote a sense of patriotism among young Zimbabweans from the early 2000 onwards.

Given the view of the participants in the study that the mandatory study of History was designed to prolong the ZANU PF government's rule, the teaching and learning of patriotic history was not necessarily in the interest of the Zimbabwean learners, but for the benefit of the afore-mentioned political party. The rationale for the mandatory study of O-level History was not in line with Taba's (1962:9) grassroots curriculum development model. Taba advocated for curriculum development that is related to the learners' needs and interests, rather than to those of the leaders of a country (Handler, 2010:33; Ruubel, 2013:4; Saracaloglua *et. al.*, 2010:2432; Taba, 1962:9). It was with the above notion in mind, that the majority of the participants in this study viewed the policy that made History a core subject in secondary schools as politicisation and inculcation of patriotism. The latter, which is the second sub-theme that emerged from the first theme, is discussed next.

5.3.2 Politicisation and inculcation of patriotism

The majority of the participants in the focus group discussions and individual interviews lamented the fact that History was made a core and compulsory subject in secondary schools in Zimbabwe. They viewed the move as the re-emergence of the old approach to History teaching and learning, where learners were "loaded" with historical information, without allowing them to personally process the so-called "facts" (Freeman, as cited in Mapetere, 2013:134). For them, politicising History, thus using the subject in schools for political expedience, was pedagogically unsound given Freire's (2005:71-72) argument that, when education is offered to the learners as "… compartmentalised static truths … ," it is no longer relevant because the learners will be the "… receivers of education deposited into them …", instead of re-eventing their lives through participatory education. The participants of the study basically viewed the mandatory study of the subject History as a means to ensure that the youth do not disregard and disrespect ZANU PF's role in history, but internalise the latter's "glory and history" without any criticism. This argument was largely raised by those History teachers who argued that the Zimbabwean government, through ZANU PF, wanted to force the youth to become sympathisers with the views of the ruling party and government.

Below are the views of some of the participants as obtained during the focus group discussions (Questions 2 and 3, *cf.* Appendix L) and the interviews with the education officials (Questions 3 and 4, *cf.* Appendix J) and secondary school heads/History teachers (Questions 2 and 3, *cf.* Appendix K). The latter solicited the participants' views on whether it was appropriate for the government to communicate the compulsory study of History through the use of a circular. Additionally, it was also intended to solicit the participants' understanding of the rationale for the mandatory study of the subject. The participants' views on the government's approach and rationale for the mandatory study of the subject History were as given below:

Participant B1, a History teacher, who participated during the focus group discussion at venue B, pointed out that, "Forcing pupils to learn History at secondary school level was the government's way of manipulating the students' understanding of the country's unfolding political events." Interviewee C, a History teacher, added that it was meant to promote the spirit of patriotism among the youth.

In one of the focus group discussions, Participant B2, a senior History teacher, who also participated at venue B, provided the rationale, but also queried the approach as:

> … to instil in learners a sense of pride and association with the past achievements of their country. However, forcing them to study that subject is not only undemocratic but tantamount to political indoctrination of the youth by the political leaders of the day, especially if you question why teachers were not consulted when the change was introduced.

In concurrence with the above opinions, Interviewee E, a former education inspector, reported that, "The change [making the study of History mandatory] was aimed at inculcating a sense of patriotism, and a sense of national pride." In one of the individual interviews, Interviewee K, a History teacher of the Mutasa district, also criticised the decision to make History compulsory as he felt that,

> While the government could have been desperately seeking to mould [a] patriotic youth, making the subject [History] compulsory was not a successful strategy because in my teaching experience, there were cases where some students resisted to take up the subject and we [teachers] did not force them.

Participant A2 at venue A, a History teacher and senior ZIMSEC O-level History examiner, who also participated in the focus group discussion, further explained that,

> Making History a core subject was more of a political move than educational. I mean, the reason for making History compulsory was to politically orient learners to vote for ZANU PF. In doing so, they were to be viewed as patriotic.

Participant B3 at venue B, another senior History teacher, participating in the focus group discussion explained that,

> The rationale was to instil … patriotism and … national pride in [the] learners. The timing was not a mere coincidence. Remember it was around the year 2000 that Teachers' and Polytechnic Colleges were forced to introduce and teach the compulsory *National and Strategic Studies* for the young to have an appreciation of the History of Zimbabwe's independence in the context of … ZCTU [Zimbabwe Congress of Workers' Union] and MDC [Movement for Democratic Change] against the ruling [ZANU PF] party.

Participant A1 at venue A, a school head and a senior ZIMSEC O-level History examiner, who also participated in one of the focus group discussions, had this to say:

> History is a good subject which was unfortunately taken by some politicians as a tool to push the ZANU PF agenda of indoctrinating the young with [a] propagandised history of the country. I think forcing *vana kuita* [children to study] History was not only unfair to the learners, but abuse of power by those in authority.

Interviewees N and L, two History teachers, explained their views respectively as follows:

> It was bad to rush into forcing us [History teachers] to teach the subject to all students, yet some don't like the subject. Personally, and many other teachers at our school, did not force them [the learners] to study the subject. How can we [History teachers] persuade them to like the subject, yet we don't even know why the subject was made compulsory? (Interviewee N).

Interviewee L then concurred, "There was a general dislike of making History a core subject among students at our school … . Forcing them to learn the subject did not completely succeed because some students did not take the subject."

Participants C1 and C2, two History teachers, who both participated in the focus group discussion held at venue C commented respectively that,

> The compulsory study of History as a school subject was very political, and some parents even knew this, and no wonder why they never bothered to support the change, but rather criticised it (Participant C1). The approach to make History a compulsory subject was totally wrong, especially without consulting the teachers. (Participant C2).

Finally, Curriculum expert 1, who participated in a focus group discussion at venue A, concluded that,

> The approach used by the Ministry of Education to make History a core subject [using a circular] was not anything new in the world. The use of a circular is … suitable when disseminating information about a change to a wide population not individually easily accessible, which was the case in our situation.

He (Curriculum expert 1) then continued:

> I am sure many of us in this house, all know that teachers were accused of being MDC [party] supporters. So, with regard to the bad political situation in the country, the approach used was not appealing to some. Even if the intentions were good for the nation of Zimbabwe, the script appeared dirty because of the environment under which it was introduced … .

Given the general sentiments of the participants in the study (*cf.* Section 5.3.2), it could be concluded that the approach to and the rationale for the mandatory study of the subject History was viewed with skepticism and distrust. It was observed that the government made History a core subject to "save" the political situation (Bentrovato & Chakawa, 2023:40; Nkyabonaki, 2013:109; Zvobgo, 1997:19). Before analysing and interpreting the approach that was used by the then education ministry to disseminate the O-level History curriculum reforms (*cf.* Chapter 5, Section 5.3.3), an analysis and interpretation of the political reasons for making History a core subject will be presented.

While different views were given for the mandatory study of History, the majority of the participants in the study were of the opinion that the rationale for the change was politically oriented. They pointed out (*cf.* Chapter 5, Section 5.3.2) that this was done to promote patriotism among the youth. Some emphasised that it was the sole reason for the mandatory study of History. According to the participants, the move was not meant to benefit the learners, but to give political "mileage" to the ruling ZANU PF government. For most of the participants, the compulsory study of the subject was supposed to produce patriotic young citizens in the service of the ZANU PF government. It was in this context, that Barnes (2007:635) posited that the role of school History in Zimbabwe was to compel learners to be proud of the role of the ruling party, prior to and after independence. Joseph (2015:14) warned that unrestricted political interference in curriculum design and development may threaten the worthiness of the education programme.

The compulsory study of O-level History in the secondary schools of the Manicaland province to promote the political expedience of the ZANU PF party, was vividly explained by a seasoned

History teacher, Participant B3 at venue B:

> ZANU PF panicked after the government lost the 1999 referendum [the opinion poll for the new constitution], and things became worse when the MDC [party] successfully challenged the ruling party in 2000 during the House of Assembly elections. I think, for ZANU PF, the youth who formed the main support base of the opposition party, had to be "captured" and indoctrinated through the compulsory study of History.

The above was confirmed by the majority of the participants in both the focus group discussions and the individual interviews. This questioned the concept of the "new history" in the postcolonial Zimbabwe curriculum, which in practice must be an alternative to the concept of the "old history." The two contradictory concepts to History teaching are like the "head and tail" of the History teaching approaches. The concept "new history" started in Britain in the 1960s, and did not view past events as sacred facts that have to be "deposited" in the learners who were seen as empty vessels (Steele as cited in Mapetere, 2013:134). The History teaching and learning in the secondary schools in the Mutare and Mutasa districts in the Manicaland province was also not learner-centred. The learners were expected to "memorise and applause" the Zimbabwean liberation wars, and many other revolutionary activities. It also became synonymous with the concept of the "old history", that regarded the learners as "empty vessels" to be filled with historical facts (Steele as cited in Mapetere, 2013:134). Mapetere, Makaye and Muguti (2012:100) also criticised the O-level History Syllabus 2167 as focusing on "… factual regurgitation."

Scholars such as Muyiwa (2015:40) and Nkyabonaki (2013:109) also demonstrated that education could be used by a state to "reproduce", or sustain the latter as state politics influence the curriculum development processes of any nation. In India, the government made patriotic history mandatory to students so as to inculcate fierce anger among the youth against the supposed enemies of the nation (Sarkar, 2022:171). Nkyabonaki (2013:109) confirmed that the top political leadership often used the education system to control and manipulate the masses. According to the majority of the participants in this study, the compulsory study of school History in the Mutasa and Mutare districts largely benefited the ZANU PF government through the manipulation of the learners' minds to support the government at the expense of the learners' own and individual interests and critical choices.

The above answer confirmed the notion that politics and education are inseparable (Joseph, 2015:14; Zvobgo, 1997:19). Joseph (2015:15) pointed out that what is taught in educational institutions is often influenced by political aspirations and needs. Bowels and Gindis (2002:2)

confirmed that education is used by the state to perpetuate the *status quo* in society. In their study of the evolution of primary and secondary education in the United States, they established that the education system was meant not to produce a democratic society, but to reproduce and maintain the stratified society (Bowles & Gentis, 2002:2). For them, pedagogy was designed in a way where "… the interests of the owners … tended to predominate, but were rarely challenged" (Bowles & Gentis, 2002:2). Kurasha and Chibaya (2013:55) admitted that upon attaining independence in 1980, the Zimbabwe government changed the framework of its education system to align it with their interests of the prevailing socio-economic and political status. Given the above, the compulsory study of History in the Mutare and Mutasa districts was meant to instil the spirit of patriotism in the youth to serve the interests of the ZANU PF party ultimately. In this regard, O-level History was used to maintain the *status quo* by exposing the youth to "patriotic history" that would facilitate the alignment of the learners' political views to those of the ZANU PF party's ideology and aspirations. This relates to Onslow's (2011:5) argument that the use and abuse of school History was one of the factors that contributed to ZANU PF to retain power between 2000 and 2005.

Secondary school graduates were expected to praise and defend the ZANU PF political party and its leadership. To be patriotic was synonymous with supporting the ZANU PF government's policies and practices. According to Onslow (2011:5), during the early 21st Century, school History in Zimbabwe was used to generate support for the ZANU PF party and undermine the opposition. As such, the concept of patriotism was synonymous with support for ZANU PF philosophies, and failure to abide by the above was considered as unpatriotic. Given this notion, the concept of "patriotism", as defined from a ZANU PF perspective, was undemocratic. ZANU PF's view of patriotism is clearly articulated in the preamble of its constitution, namely

> Whereas we the people of Zimbabwe acknowledge the role played by the Zimbabwe Revolutionary War Fighters of the Second Chimurenga and those who died whilst fighting the colonial enemy and those that are still alive and the fact that they will forever be the custodians of the Zimbabwean revolution and the bedrock upon which the ZANU PF Party will continue building itself from … . (Zimbabwe African National Union Patriotic Front, sa:4).

Given these words, being critical and in opposition to the policies and practices of ZANU PF, which is considered to be the custodian of the Zimbabwean revolution, is tantamount to being unpatriotic. For Onslow (2011:5), the Zimbabwean national heroes were "created", while colonial ones were "destroyed" through History teaching and learning to legitimise Mugabe's rule. It was in the light of this background, that the O-level History curriculum and its implementation in the Mutare and Mutasa districts of the Manicaland province was in

accordance with the views of both Bowels and Gentis (2002:2) and Joseph (2015:15), that education is often used to maintain the political *status quo*.

While the concept "patriotism" is generally considered to refer to the love of one's country, for the participants in this study, the ZANU PF party's concept of "patriotism" was similar to what is called "blind patriotism" (Kaya, 2022:105). Nyakudya, 2007:120). The concept "blind patriotism" is expressed when citizens praise, and do not criticise state policies regardless of the latter being criticised, locally and globally (Kaya, 2022:105). Waghid (2009:402) illustrated this form of patriotism by using the example of apartheid in South Africa, where the white population was compelled to support the government's racist policies, and by being critical to the apartheid policies they were considered to be unpatriotic. In the same way, the compulsory teaching of History in Zimbabwe was meant to produce young "patriotic" citizens who were not critical, but supportive of the ZANU PF government, despite of it being condemned by various national and international role-players. Those who supported the government were regarded as patriots, and those who were critical of it were considered as sell-outs (Ranger, 2005:8). This was nothing less than "forced patriotism" (Mashayamombe, 2008 [Personal experience]).

For the participants in the study, what was considered as patriotism by ZANU PF, was what Merry (2009:379) called "loyal patriotism." He pointed out that schools are generally used by a country's statesmen to cultivate "loyal patriotism." That is, where the learners are expected to be loyal and supportive of the policies of the government of the day (Merry, 2009:379). For Koppang (as cited in Fitzmaurice, 2018:64), the school curriculum is often used by governments to coerce and manipulate citizens to think and act in accordance to its ideology, and "… to uphold and support the contrived image of itself [government] as well as that of the nation it seeks to portray." Given the above, the adherence of the citizens to what government dictates will often be due to fear of victimisation. In this thesis, it is also viewed as 'forced patriotism.' This form of patriotism does not allow criticism or condemnation of the leadership and/or the government, but aims to "reproduce" the *status quo* – be it positive or negative. This type of patriotism, in the Zimbabwean context, is what Ranger (2005:7) called *Mugabeism*. It does not meet the criteria of the concept of patriotism that is commonly cultivated in learners through the school curriculum. The latter, in this thesis, is known as "unforced patriotism", and is cultivated through unforced democratic educational means. The development of learners' love for their country normally occurs through democratic teaching and learning strategies, and a willing conceptualisation of the country's norms and values. This is what Kaya (2022:105) called "constructive patriotism", while Merry (2009:392) termed it "critical patriotism", thus where a citizen's love for his or her country can be expressed by

criticising the policies of the political leadership when the latter is not in the national interest.

In view of the above discussion, the mandatory study of History at O-level was politically motivated. It was meant to benefit the ZANU PF party, and not its future citizens. The youth were to be loyal to the ideology and aspirations of the party. The researcher called it "forced patriotism", and is pedagogically unsound and propaganda. This agreed with Fitzmaurice's (2018:63) observation that propaganda is the dissemination of an ideology or political philosophy of "… a dominant political power through [a] school curriculum and practice." She (Fitzmaurice, 2018:64) went on to say that, propaganda is often permeated through formal education "… to achieve conformity and adherence …" to the political ideology of those in power. For Hobbs and McGee (2014:59-60), teachers, among other role-players in education, are often used by governments to propagate propaganda in the youth. The next section is a discussion on the third and last sub-theme that emerged from the first theme of the study. It focuses on the approach that was used by the education ministry to disseminate curriculum information with regard to the mandatory study of the subject History.

5.3.3 Approach to curriculum information dissemination

The approach used to disseminate the History curriculum in the secondary schools of the Mutare and Mutasa districts in the Manicaland province is discussed in this section. The focus is on the advantages and disadvantages of the former. In this study, the concept "curriculum information dissemination" refers to the process of making the information related to curriculum change in schools reaches its targeted audience (Diker, 2010:4; Halberta & MacPhailb, 2010:25; Hazen, Wu & Sankar, 2012:384; Ndawi, 1999:91). Given the afore-mentioned definition, the *Secretary's Circular Number 3 of 2002* was used by the then Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture to inform secondary schools and other important role-players of the mandatory study of the subject History from Forms 1 to 4 from 2002 onwards (Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture, 2002:5). According to The Business Communication (sa:1), the concept "circular" refers to a letter issued to a large group of people to announce an important message. The information that was gathered from all the History teachers, school heads, and education officials who participated in this study revealed that the circular was the sole instrument used to disseminate the information related to the O-level History curriculum reforms. According to the participants, no meetings or any other means were used to assist with the information dissemination process. The use of circulars (directives) is common practice in the Zimbabwean education system (Mutepfa, Mpofu & Chataika, 2007:243; Ndawi, 1999:91, Sylod & Mpofu, 2016:35).

The then Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture used the centre-periphery model of curriculum dissemination to propagate the information of the O-level History curriculum reforms to the secondary schools (Emesini, Ogah & Eze, 2013:42; Ndawi, 1999:91; Posner, 1995:212). According to this model, a curriculum is designed and developed, or reformed at the top, and the users are then informed of the changes that need to be implemented at the grassroots level by means of circulars and/or meetings (Emesini, Ogah & Eze, 2013:42; Ndawi, 1999:91). Hence, a top-bottom approach was used in Zimbabwe. The majority of the History teachers who participated in the focus group discussions and individual interviews considered the approach as inappropriate. The reasons that the participants provided will be presented towards the end of this section.

The approach used by the education ministry for the information dissemination process can be described as a no-negotiations-but-do-it (NONEBUDI) approach. The latter was a guarantee that the prescribed change would be executed. This was based on the views of some of the participants in the study, who revealed that the (previous) O-level History Syllabus 2166 was not implemented in all secondary schools. For them, the above NONEBUDI approach was to ensure that the new O-level History Syllabus 2167 was successfully implemented in every secondary school. Given this information, Emesini, Ogah and Eze (2013:42) postulated that the use of a centre-periphery model of curriculum dissemination guarantees that the curriculum would be implemented based on the condition that adequate "energy" and resources are rendered by the decision-makers. The recipients of the directive were expected to accept, adopt and implement the prescribed curriculum changes within the stipulated timeframe, without any resistance (Liedl, 2011:7). The moment the recipients would question the content of the directive, it would be viewed as insubordination, and they would be warned, charged or even dismissed from their positions (Zimbabwe Public Service Commission, 2000:61). The advantage of the approach was that there is the assumption that the directive would be implemented successfully (Emesini, Ogah & Eze, 2013:42).

Given the advantage of the above approach, the questions that the lower officials would have asked could be, "How is it supposed to be done, or when is it supposed to be done?" These kinds of questions reveal their humbleness, willingness and zeal to implement the task that was expected. The intended task would be executed successfully to avoid any backslash (Zimbabwe Public Service Commission, 2000:61). In this approach, there was no room for negotiations.

The NONEBUDI approach is an appropriate strategy to be used by any institution or

organisation that endeavours to see an important task successfully implemented without asking any questions. The education ministerial circular that directed the mandatory study of History as a secondary school subject in 2002 should be understood within the above context. It was implemented at secondary school level in the same year (2002) that it was promulgated. Querying the rationale for the promulgation of the policy was viewed as insubordination, that could result in disciplinary measures (Zimbabwe Public Service Commission, 2000:61). One former provincial education officer, Interviewee E, who was an education inspector during the time of the promulgation of the circular (2002), argued that the use of the circular was the best way for the then Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture to inform the schools about the curriculum changes. In his own words, Interviewee E confirmed: "The use of the circular was the best tool available to the Ministry of Education to inform all the secondary schools of the change that had to be urgently implemented".

Hence, the above arguments confirmed that the use of the circular was appropriate to inform all the secondary schools in Zimbabwe of the curriculum change. In an individual interview held at the Mutasa district education office, Interviewee F, a district education inspector, added that, "… the decision to use the circular to pass the message [to the schools concerning the History curriculum changes] was the most appropriate way to communicate the message to hundreds of secondary schools in the country [Zimbabwe] because it was cheap and fast." The advantage of the use of the circular letter was to transmit or announce important information to a large audience at the same time (The Business Communication, sa:1). Given the fact that there were a total of four hundred and six secondary schools in the Manicaland Province (Manicaland Provincial Education Office, 2023:1), the use of the circular letter was most suitable to convey the message of the compulsory study of History to such a huge population. The use of the circular letter was also cost-effective and time-efficient since it was sent to a large group of people, instead of a few individuals (The Business Communication, sa:1). The words of the former provincial education inspector, Interviewee E, and the district education inspector, Interviewee F, confirmed that the mandatory study of History as a secondary school subject was a directive of the education ministry to all secondary schools to implement the History curriculum reforms immediately. This was in line with Kusumaningrum and Triwiyanto's (2015:41) argument that when a curriculum is centrally designed, most often a decree or enforcement is issued to the school teachers to implement the mandate immediately.

The use of the NONEBUDI approach had more advantages for those in power. It was based on the assumption that no time would be wasted with the implementation of the intended task, since there were no opportunities for discussions, or the solicitation of the views of the

prospective implementers (Isidiho & Sabran, 2016:268). The approach was rooted in a dictatorial assumption that the task would be executed straight away as the subordinates did not have any opportunity to query the government directive, but to immediately obey, adopt and implement the task (Isidiho & Sabran, 2016:268). According to Isidiho and Sabran (2016:268), the top-down approach could be linked to the analogy of the capitalist and proletariats, where the latter "laboured" as delegated by the former. In the case of Zimbabwe's education ministry, the assumption could have been that the Manicaland secondary schools were going to teach History as a compulsory subject, without questioning the rationale for the decision. This was confirmed by one of the former Manicaland provincial education officers, Interviewee E, who revealed that it was justifiable for the education ministry to use the circular "… to inform all the secondary schools of the change that had to be urgently implemented."

A Curriculum Studies expert, Curriculum expert 1 at venue A, and Participant B3, a seasoned History teacher at venue B, indicated during a focus group discussion, that the approach used by the education ministry was advantageous for the latter. This was because there were to be no delays in its implementation in the Manicaland secondary schools, as there was no room for consultations that could have delayed the implementation process. A regulation by the Zimbabwe Public Service Commission decreed that failure by the secondary school teachers to perform their duty as "… properly assigned, or failure to obey lawful instruction, including circulars …" was considered an act of misconduct (Zimbabwe Public Service Commission, 2000:61). Another advantage of the NONEBUDI approach was that it was most appropriate to fast-track the swift implementation of the curriculum innovations, and to quickly implement changes, especially when the curriculum innovations were long overdue (Ranger, 2004:215). The approach was also vital to rescue the ZANU PF government's revolutionary legacy that was "forgotten", disregarded, or "threatened" (Onslow, 2011:5; Ranger, 2004:215). The latter was confirmed by Interviewee E, a former provincial education officer, and Interviewee F, a district education inspector, who pointed out that History was hastily made compulsory in the early 2000s to protect the ZANU PF government, which was increasingly losing support from the youth in the country. The same sentiments were also expressed by some of the school heads and History teachers who participated in the study. For instance, Participant A1, a school head and senior ZIMSEC O-level History Examiner said, "It was a desperate decision by the ZANU PF government to save a desperate political situation … in the country … the MDC [party's] landslide win in the 2000 parliamentary elections."

Studies by Barnes (2007:649), Bentrovato and Chakawa (2023:40), Onslow (2011:5-6) and Ranger (2004:228) substantiate the above findings. They argued that around early 2000, school History in Zimbabwe was given a special function in secondary schools, namely to instil

a sense of patriotism among the youth because of the major challenges to ZANU PF's rule by the MDC and other opposing parties. The ZANU PF members felt that their party was losing political support amongst the youth, and it was within the same context that the *Secretary's Circular Number 3 of 2002* was urgently promulgated. This was confirmed by a school head, Participant A1, who revealed that the introduction of the mandatory study of History was ZANU PF's desperate ploy "… to save a desperate situation …" based on the opposition it faced from the MDC party and other pressure groups.

One of the major weaknesses of the NONEBUDI approach was the assumption that the success of the directive was guaranteed. There was a general expectation that since the History curriculum reforms emanated from the central government, it was going to be adopted and implemented without resistance, (Emesini, Ogah & Eze, 2013:42; Liedl, 2011:7), but there was no guarantee that the intended task would be practically executed. According to Emesini, Ogah and Eze (2013:42), the top-down approach is often successful when the decision-makers use adequate resources and energy to support the implementation of the curriculum change. However, the curriculum implementation matrix was so complex that there was no guarantee that the intended History curriculum changes could be immediately implemented (Mavhungu & and Mavhungu, 2018:1; Mutch, 2012:7). The NONEBUDI approach is rooted in a dictatorial assumption that the task would be executed since it is a decision from the centre of power, which is somehow misleading as it could be resisted by the curriculum users (Isidiho & Sabranm 2016:268). In this study, it was revealed that the implementation of the curriculum changes was resisted by some of the curriculum users in the Mutare and Mutasa districts of the Manicaland province. This notion was confirmed by the interviews and discussions with the school heads and History teachers who participated in the study (*cf.* Chapter 5, Section 5.4). As such, the implementation of the O-level History curriculum reforms, which is the second theme (*cf.* Table 5.7) that emerged from this study is discussed and analysed in the next section.

5.4 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE O-LEVEL HISTORY CURRICULUM IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

With regard to the implementation of the History curriculum reforms of 2002, the responses of some of the participants in this study, the school heads and History teachers, revealed the limitations and possibilities of the compulsory study of History in the secondary schools in the Mutare and Mutasa districts of the Manicaland province. Given the latter, the NONEBUDI approach that was adopted for the curriculum information dissemination process did not

necessarily result in the successful implementation of the curriculum reforms in the districts and the secondary schools. This was confirmed by Alshammari (2013:181), Dekedza and Kufakunesu (2017:11-12) and Yan and He (2012:1), who argued that the success of any curriculum implementation in the classroom is unpredictable. Supriani, *et al.*, (2022:487) further elaborated on the above position when they argued that teachers respond to curriculum reforms differently: "… they ignore, hold, adopt or adjust the official curriculum." This study also established that the implementation of the History curriculum reforms in the Mutare and Mutasa districts at secondary school level was often met with challenges. The latter are presented in detail in the paragraphs to follow.

The above-mentioned challenges were largely obtained through the school heads and History teachers' responses to the two interview and focus group discussion questions, namely whether the study of History was compulsory for the O-level learners in their respective schools, and what measures were taken to ensure the successful implementation of the reforms? A sample of the participants' verbatim responses is provided below to illustrate their opinions, namely that it was difficult to persuade the learners to study History as a compulsory subject.

Participant C1, a History teacher, revealed during the focus group discussion at venue C, that, "Not all learners studied History as was required by the ministry ... . We could not compel them to study the subject because they didn't like it, just like any other subjects that they did not like." Interviewee S, a school head from the Mutasa district, confirmed during an individual interview that,

> At my school History was compulsory at ZJC, but was optional at O-level, as was the case with other subjects such as Art, Geography, Religious Studies and Music. As a school, we encouraged students to take up History as a compulsory subject. Of course, at Form 3 all students studied the subject but many of them dropped it at Form 4 … . It was not possible to force them to register to sit for [the] History exams at Form 4 because they cited financial problems.

Interviewee G, another History teacher from the Mutasa district, during an informal interview, also stated that,

> In many cases, some O-level pupils avoided studying History irrespective of the fact that it was a core subject … . By the way, our school being a rural secondary school, many of the students' guardians are poor peasant farmers, who struggle to raise school fees for their children. So, some students stopped studying History as a subject because they did not have enough money to

> register many subjects for the O-level ZIMSEC examinations.

During a focus group discussion, a History teacher, Participant A3 at venue A, also argued that,

> Some students did not like the subject, and as teachers, we couldn't coerce them ... . Probably the government should have enlightened teachers about the reason for making History compulsory, and then maybe we were going to assist students to like the subject.

Interviewee Q, a History teacher from the Mutare district, also confirmed that it was difficult to encourage the learners: "We tried to persuade … all the students to study the subject, but this did not help much, because some [of the] students did not like the subject. We did not "push" them to take the subject … ." During a focus group discussion, Participant C4, a History teacher at venue C, also noted that,

> History as a subject was not fashionable among many students … . Very few students took the subject at O-level. In fact, the majority of the students at our school favoured science and commercial subjects. Generally, arts subjects for example History, Shona and RS [Religious Studies] are shunned by the students.

Many of the participants also confirmed that History was not a compulsory subject at their schools. Interviewee O, a school head from the Mutasa district, concluded that,

> Since 2002 until the introduction of the new curriculum [2017], the study of History was not compulsory at our school. History as a field of study was naturally "dying" because very few students had an interest in the field … . Many learners were interested in subjects which offered them career opportunities, either in the field of sciences or commercials. After all, our school is more inclined to the sciences.

Participant B4, a senior History teacher from venue B, also confirmed that at their school, "… History was not a compulsory subject. In fact, fast learners were, and are still given the opportunity to do, either sciences or commercials, while slow learners were, and are still forced to study less challenging subjects like History and BK [Bible Knowledge] ... ."

Interviewees H and T, a History teacher and a school head respectively, both from the Mutasa district revealed that,

> Our school curriculum was so wide, and offering History as a core subject implied that some important subjects had to be dropped to accommodate the new changes … [and it] was not in the best interest of the students to make

> History a compulsory subject because many of them did not have the zeal to study the subject … . (Interviewee H); This school is a private school, we do Cambridge [teaching based on syllabi produced by the University of Cambridge, Local Examinations Syndicate], and the ZIMSEC [curriculum] is optional … we were not affected by the Secretary of Education's circular because we are a private school (Interviewee T).

Additionally, Interviewee K, a History teacher and Interviewee S, a school head, during the individual interviews, respectively confirmed that: "In most cases, learners who never wanted to study O-level History did not attend the History lessons, even though History teachers encouraged them to study the subject (Interviewee K)."; and, "It was compulsory to study History at my school. Learners usually dropped the subject at Form 4, normally due to financial issues … (Interviewee S)."

While some participants in this study argued that the mandatory study of the school subject History was a welcome decision, the majority confessed that the subject was not compulsory at their respective schools. In some cases, reasons for the learners' disinterest in the subject were provided. One of the reasons was the issue of financial constraints. Between 2002 and 2016, many learners in both the Mutare and Mutatsa districts terminated their study of the subject History at O-level because of financial difficulties, especially in cases where the learners were studying multiple subjects. This coincided with the time that Zimbabwe was facing major economic challenges which resulted in hyper-inflation and high living costs, including among others, the rise of education, food and medical costs (Kanyenze, Chitambara & Tyson, 2017:3). As pointed out by Interviewees O and S, both school heads in the Mutasa district, parents in the rural areas could not afford to pay examination fees for too many subjects. This was also echoed by Participant B4, a History teacher at a rural secondary school in the Mutare district, during a focus group discussion held at venue B. He said: "Although learners were free to choose the subjects to study …, the economic situation [hyper-inflation in Zimbabwe] forced them to study an average of eight subjects, which their guardians were capable of paying for the purpose of registering for the [ZIMSEC O-level] examinations." Hence, parents' economic status was one of the factors that impeded the compulsory study of History as an O-level subject at some of the secondary schools in the Mutare and Mutasa districts.

The above findings confirmed the results of research projects that were carried out globally. In Nigeria, learners often discontinue their primary, secondary and tertiary education due to a lack of funding (Amzat, 2010:59). According to Baker (2016:19), in the absence of adequate funding, learners normally have access to poor quality of education. In Australia, the

government faced the challenge of ensuring that all learners obtained high quality education, regardless of accessing the former at the least or well-resourced schools (Geoff & Masters, 2016:10). For them (Geoff & Masters, 2016:10), there existed disparities in Australian schools, and the former included the schools and the parents' socio-economic status. Bowles and Gentis (2002:1) argued that in the United States of America, the parents' economic status determines whether their children obtain good education opportunities. The parents' economic status was singled out as a major determinant of access to a good education. For them, rich parents have an economic advantage over disadvantaged households, as they could guarantee their children's access to the best education (Bowles & Gentis, 2002:1).

As was the case in the above countries, the poor economic status of parents in Zimbabwe also hampered the successful implementation of the O-level History curriculum reforms in the Mutare and Mutasa districts of the Manicaland province. Hamunyela (2008:86) also pointed out that in Namibia, parents are involved in workshops, where they are familiarised with the school philosophy and specific subject curricular to enhance their active involvement in the education system. Sargent (2011:7-8), in a study carried out in the Gansu Province of China, concurred that financial constraints are one of the factors that inhibited the successful implementation of curriculum reforms. Omolo, Sika and Olel (2019:100) revealed that the problem of learners dropping out of secondary school in Kenya due to a lack of funding was drastically reduced by 2013. This happened following the government's introduction of a free-tuition policy and the development fund, facilities that availed funding for secondary school learners.

The scenario was different in Japan. In a study carried out by Machebe, Ezegbe and Onuoha (2017:1614), it was pointed out that it was not the parental income level that determined the learners' academic performance, but their (parents) engagement in their children's learning activities. According to Yamamoto, Holloway and Suzuki (2016:31), parental engagement refers to the scenario when parents are directly, or indirectly involved in their children's learning experiences, namely assisting them with homework, and attending conferences that involve both teachers and parents. Contrary, this study established that the parents' poor economic status hindered the successful implementation of the O-level History curriculum reforms in the Mutare and Mutasa districts of the Manicaland province.

Another factor that deterred the successful implementation of the O-level History curriculum reforms from 2002 to 2016 was the role of the parents in their children's choice of subjects to study. The issue of parental involvement as key decision-makers in the subject choices of their children was confirmed during the information-gathering sessions of this study. Some of the

History teachers confessed that many of the parents were against the idea of History becoming a compulsory subject. Parents often urged the teachers not to force their children to study History. Participant C1, a History teacher at venue C, confirmed during a focus group discussion the views of Interviewee L. Interviewee L, also a History teacher, disclosed that some of the parents justified their argument on the basis that they felt that it was a political decision, and that it was not to the benefit of their children. They also did not see the value of school History in a technologically driven society. A study carried out by Ahmed and Maryam (2016:67) revealed that Pakistani parents discouraged their children from studying social sciences, but encouraged the study of the natural sciences. The sole reason given was that the parents felt that hard sciences formed a better and worthwhile foundation for the future career plans of their children (Ahmed & Maryam, 2016:67). According to Nyamwembe, Ondigi and Kiio (2013:20), parental influence also has an impact on the learners' attitudes towards the subjects that they prefer to study. This confirmed Alsubaie's (2016:107) conclusion that for parents not to resist a curriculum on behalf of their children, the curriculum "… must be deemed educationally valid … ." This suggests that parents support the education choices of their children if they feel that it is worthwhile and relevant (Hamunyela, 2008:86). Durisic and Bunijevac (2017:140-141) and Yamamoto, Holloway and Suzuki (2016:31) gave different forms of parental support that parents contribute to their children's education, which included assisting them with homework, taking them to community libraries and museums, and attending all school activities. Also highlighting the importance of parental support for the success of learners' education, Durisic and Bunijevac (2017:140) added that parents should have a positive attitude towards their children's education, and should provide a home environment that is safe and conducive for them to continue with their learning while at home.

Nine of the History teachers who participated in the individual interviews pointed out that many of the learners in their schools did not study the subject History during the period 2002 to 2016. The reason was that the subject was not applicable to their future career plans. They revealed that the majority of the learners preferred to study Science and Business Studies. Mashayamombe (2007:92) confirmed that a significant number of learners who participated in a 2007 study focussing on the learners' attitudes towards the compulsory study of History at O-level revealed that History has fewer practical benefits in the 21st Century as compared to Science and Commercial subjects. For example, one Form 4 History learner expressed her feelings vividly during an individual interview as follows: "We are in the computer age, and I want to earn a living through computers because computer knowledge is on demand these days"; while another participant, also a Form 4 History learner, added that, "It's not good to force me to do History, a subject which is not on the market now. I have all my heart in commercials because I want to be an Accountant" (Mashaymombe, 2007:92).

The study findings highlighted above are similar to what was found in Kenya and Pakistan. A study carried out in Kenya that sought to establish History learners' attitudes towards the study of the school subject History also showed that the majority of the learners held a negative attitude towards the subject (Nyamwembe, Ondigi & Kiio (2013:17). In a similar study carried out in Pakistan, Ahmed and Maryam (2016:67) established that secondary school learners also held a negative attitude towards social sciences. Rather, they preferred to study the natural sciences to engage in more lucrative future careers. They also reported that Pakistani parents motivated their children to study the hard sciences because those who studied them "… can get attractive and high-paying job[s] …" as compared to those who studied social sciences. Hence, as was revealed in the studies of Ahmed and Maryam (2016:67), Nyamwembe, Ondigi and Kiio (2013:17) and Van Straaten, Wilschut and Oostdam (2016:480), the learners' negative perceptions and attitudes towards the subject History, particularly in terms of its commercial value hampered the implementation of the History curriculum reforms of 2002 in the Mutare and Mutasa secondary schools. In the next sub-sections, the research findings regarding the extent to which the O-level History curriculum reforms of 2002 were implemented in the Mutare and Mutasa secondary schools in the Manicaland province are presented.

5.4.1 Status of History in secondary schools – 2002 to 2016

The findings presented in this section, which are guided by the sub-themes that emanated from the second theme of this study, focus on whether the subject History was indeed studied as a core subject at O-level as per the *Secretary of Education's Circular Number 3 of 2002* (Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture, 2002:5). The researcher established three different positions and justifications in terms of the demands of the circular related to the implementation of the reforms. The circular directed that the teaching of History from Forms 1 to 4 had to be compulsory. However, for this study, the focus was only on the teaching of the subject in a sample of secondary schools in the Mutare and Mutasa districts of the Manicaland province. While none of the sampled secondary schools adopted and implemented the directive in 2002, some of the schools successfully adopted and started with the implementation of the curriculum reforms in 2003. Many of the schools adopted the curriculum reforms, and implemented them over a period of time. However, most of them were confronted with learners and parents who had reservations about the status of History as a core subject. There were also cases where some of the secondary schools never implemented the curriculum reforms at all. An elaboration of each follows.

While the focus of the study was on secondary schools under the administration of the rural district councils, the churches, the government and private authorities, the findings related to each of the above categories will not be presented separately. The reason for the decision will be to maintain the privacy and anonymity of the participants and their schools (Ary, Jacobs & Sorensen, 2010:592). The secondary schools used in this study were located in urban, peri-urban and rural areas.

The responses of some of the participants are presented in the paragraphs to follow. Their own words are used. The responses were from the school heads and History teachers to the key question, namely, Was the subject History indeed compulsory for all O-level learners at your school from 2002 to 2016? The participants' responses to the follow-up questions are also included. Below is a sample of the responses of some of the participants. During an individual interview, Interviewee I, a school head, responded as follows: "Yes, it was compulsory at our school … since it was an instruction from the [former] minister." Another school head in the Mutasa district, Interviewee R, said: "Teachers and students at my school embraced the compulsory study of history because the ZIMSEC examination papers offered wide choices, enabling them to concentrate on certain options." Interviewee B, a History teacher from the Mutasa district, confirmed: "It was made compulsory from 2005 up to 2016, … and as History teachers we felt relieved that history was commanding an important place in the school curriculum, and we felt our job[s] [were] secured." The above-stated History teacher concluded that the compulsory study of History had some benefits.

For three other History teachers who were individually interviewed, their experiences with the compulsory study of the subject were as follows: Interviewee P, a History teacher from the Mutare district, commented that,

> It [History] was not enforced from the beginning [2002] but became compulsory from 2010 onwards when the issue of holiday school was widespread in the country. … each teacher was paid proportionally to the number of students he/she taught during the holiday school … as History teachers, and for the monetary gains, we fruitfully persuaded our headmaster who was reluctant to have History as a compulsory subject at the school.

Interviewee H, another History teacher from the Mutasa district, had a different response. The teacher explained: "At our school, it was not a compulsory subject until January 2009, [that was] after the issue was raised by one History teacher who had just joined the school as a new teacher in 2008.

Interviewee M, also a History teacher, immediately expressed some reservations:

> The school made the subject compulsory, but pupils were not interested in the subject [History] as they viewed it as useless in their future plans. In most cases, learners only registered the subject at O-level because at our school the policy was that all learners were supposed to learn History … but they did not attend [the] lessons, which resulted in a high failure rate for the subject.

Participant A4, a seasoned History teacher, expressed his view during a focus group discussion at venue A as follows:

> From Form 1 up to Form 3, no learner was allowed to drop any subject, but when it came to registering for the ZIMSEC examinations at Form 4, the school was left with no option other than to allow learners to choose what they wanted, whether to register the History subject or drop it, and stop attending History lessons.

In terms of the success of the implementation of the O-level History curriculum reforms of 2002 in the Mutare and Mutasa districts, the researcher used the data gathered from twenty-five out of the sampled forty-seven secondary schools. The reason was the researcher wanted to promote an in-depth analysis of the gathered data in his endeavor to answer the main research question (*cf.* Chapter 1, Section 1.4). As a result of rigorous data analysis and interpretation to answer the key research question, the following was established. First, there were secondary schools, although very few (n=3), where the reforms were fully implemented. This was a complete curriculum implementation. Second, there were secondary schools (n=14) where the reforms were partially implemented. This was a partial curriculum implementation. Lastly, there were secondary schools (n=8) where the school authorities did not adhere to the ministerial policy at all. This was a null curriculum implementation. The above demonstrates the different degrees to which the O-level History curriculum reforms were implemented in the Mutasa and Mutare secondary schools. A brief discussion of each of the implementation levels, hinged on three sub-themes that emanated from the second theme of this study follows.

5.4.1.1 Complete curriculum implementation

The researcher developed the concept complete curriculum implementation to refer to cases where the secondary schools successfully implemented the compulsory study of the subject History as early as 2003. Out of the twenty-five (n=25) sampled secondary schools, only three (n=3) were able to achieve the complete curriculum implementation successfully. Besides, the information obtained through the individual interviews, the document analysis also substantiated the above. Refer to Tables 5.8, 5.9 and 5.10 of this chapter for an analysis of

the successful implementation of the curriculum in the Mutare and Mutasa districts. It includes a presentation of the total number of candidates who wrote the O-level ZIMSEC examinations after two years of study. The researcher was also interested to establish whether the candidates who wrote the History examinations also sat for the English Language examination. The reason was that both were core subjects (Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture, 2002:5). The comparative analysis was juxtaposed to the number of candidates who sat for the optional Geography examination (Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture, 2002:5; Nyamwembe, Ondigi & Kiio, 2013:18). The comparative document analysis verified the claims of a few of the individuals who claimed that History was studied as a compulsorily subject at their respective schools because of the government directive. Supporting information is provided in Tables 5.8, 5.9 and 5.10 below.

Table 5.8: Total number of candidates who sat for the O-level ZIMSEC examinations at Secondary school A for three subjects for the period 2003 to 2016

NAME OF SCHOOL	YEARS													
Secondary school A	**2003**	**2004**	**2005**	**2006**	**2007**	**2008**	**2009**	**2010**	**2011**	**2012**	**2013**	**2014**	**2015**	**2016**
Total number of candidates who wrote English Language	-	159	135	-	190	203	143	140	190	158	174	201	188	182
Total number of candidates who wrote History	-	158	135	-	190	200	143	140	190	156	173	201	187	182
Total number of candidates who wrote Geography	-	150	135	-	189	153	130	137	184	146	169	201	184	182

Total number of candidates who wrote English Language over a period of 12 years (n=2 063).

Total number of candidates who wrote History over a period of 12 years (n=2 055).

Total number of candidates who wrote Geography over a period of 12 years (n=1 960).

Source: Statistics of O-level results collected at a secondary school as pseudo-named A. Dash (-) represents unavailability of information.

Table 5.9: Total number of candidates who sat for the O-level ZIMSEC examinations at Secondary school B for three subjects for the period 2003 to 2016

NAME OF SCHOOL	YEARS													
Secondary school B	**2003**	**2004**	**2005**	**2006**	**2007**	**2008**	**2009**	**2010**	**2011**	**2012**	**2013**	**2014**	**2015**	**2016**
Total number of candidates who wrote English Language	96	89	-	94	-	-	102	98	90	86	-	105	92	97
Total number of candidates who wrote History	95	86	-	94	-	-	101	97	90	86	-	104	92	97
Total number of candidates who wrote Geography	96	80	-	90	-	-	102	93	90	85	-	105	92	93

Total number of candidates who wrote English Language over a period of 10 years (n=949).

Total number of candidates who wrote History over a period of 10 years (n=942).

Total number of candidates who wrote English Geography over a period of 10 years (n=926).

Source: Statistics of O-level results collected at a secondary school as pseudo-named B. Dash (-) represents unavailability of information.

Table 5.10: Total number of candidates who sat for the O-level ZIMSEC examinations at Secondary school C for three subjects for the period 2003 to 2016

NAME OF SCHOOL	YEARS													
Secondary school C	**2003**	**2004**	**2005**	**2006**	**2007**	**2008**	**2009**	**2010**	**2011**	**2012**	**2013**	**2014**	**2015**	**2016**
Total number of candidates who wrote English Language	-	-	133	124	120	-	140	132	128	135	121	138	142	145
Total number of candidates who wrote History	-	-	128	124	119	-	138	130	128	130	118	138	142	140
Total number of candidates who wrote Geography	-	-	130	120	117	-	133	128	128	133	118	138	142	144

Total number of candidates who wrote English Language over a period of 11 years (n=1 458).

Total number of candidates who wrote History over a period of 11 years (n=1 435).

Total number of candidates who wrote Geography over a period of 11 years (n= 1 303).

Source: Statistics of O-level results collected at a secondary school as pseudo-named C. Dash (-) represents unavailability of information.

Tables 5.8, 5.9 and 5.10 were compiled to determine whether History as a subject was studied by the same number of students who studied English Language, as both were compulsory subjects. A comparison with Geography, an elective subject, was also necessary. The information as presented in Tables 5.8, 5.9 and 5.10 (*cf*. 5.4.1.1) revealed that at the three secondary schools involved in this study, the O-level History curriculum reforms achieved what it was set out to do, namely that History was indeed studied as a compulsory subject for the period 2003 to 2016. Based on the statistics in Tables 5.8, 5.9 and 5.10, the number of candidates who sat for the History examination was only slightly less than those who sat for the subject English Language, although both were core subjects. The number of learners who studied the optional subject Geography was lower than that of the two core subjects (History and English). The next section gives an account for the successful implementation of the History curriculum reforms by a few (n=3) secondary schools in the Manicaland province.

a) Factors related to successful curriculum implementation

Based on the information from the interviews, in the secondary schools that fully implemented the curriculum reforms was close cooperation among the key role-players (school heads, History teachers and learners) in terms of the curriculum implementation process. Three factors that contributed largely to the successful implementation of the O-level History curriculum reforms were the positive roles played by the school administration and the History teachers respectively, and the learners' willingness to study the subject. An elaboration of each follows.

i) School heads

While the *Secretary's Circular Number 3 of 2002* directed the compulsory study of the subject History, the school administration played a significant role in the successful implementation of the reforms. In all three of the secondary schools, as presented in Tables 5.8, 5.9 and 5.10 (*cf*. Section 5.4.1.1), the school heads indicated that they told both the History teachers and the learners that the government, through a ministerial policy circular, had decreed the mandatory study of History as a secondary school subject. The participants reported that the school heads provided the History teachers with copies of the ministerial circular. The History teachers then encouraged the learners to adhere to the ministerial initiative, and the learners complied. This was confirmed by the words of one of the school heads from the Mutare district, Interviewee I, who revealed: "It was our policy that all students from Forms 1 to 4 learnt History, and it was the duty of both the school

administration and the History teachers [to oversee] that all ZJC and O-level students studied the subject … and the majority [of learners] complied.” In support of this, a school head from another secondary school in the Mutasa district, Interviewee R, whose secondary school also successfully implemented the reforms revealed: “… I gave each History teacher a copy of the circular, and told them that as a school, we were going to implement the order [to teach History as a core subject] … .” Interviewee A, a History teacher from the third secondary school confirmed: “Our headmaster [school head] gave us the circular as a way to prove [to us] and convince us that History had to be studied by all the students … .” The quotations above confirmed the important role played by the Mutare and Mutasa secondary school heads. As instructional leaders, they tactically engaged the History teachers and learners that resulted in the successful implementation of the curriculum reforms ((Haquea & David, 2022:2; Kobola, 2007:94; Manaseh, 2016:34; October, 2009:26). Ndiritu, Mbugua and Ndiritu (2019:44) argued that without proper school leadership skills related to learners, parents, teachers and the community in general, the school performance would be dismal. The trio scholars went on to say that the school head’s role is multi-faceted, such that the school’s effective performance is largely based on the administrative knowledge and skills of the school head (Ndiritu, Mbugua & Ndiritu, 2019:44). They (Ndiritu, Mbugua & Ndiritu, 2019:44) concluded that it is upon the school heads’ shoulders to successfully motivate and bring confidence in learners, parents and teachers so that the latter positively participate to achieve the ultimate goal of the education system. Squires (2015:54) also acknowledged that heads of schools are at the centre of the link between government-mandated curriculum reforms and their successful implementation. She (Squires, 2015:148) observed that school heads should be knowledgeable and skilled in such a way that they can cultivate a culture of willingness and progressiveness among the learners and teachers to accept continued improvements and developments for the advancement of educational purposes.

The successful implementation of the curriculum reforms, to some extent, had to be credited to the school heads who complied with the instructions of the education ministry. Kobola (2007:92-93) investigated the role of South Africa’s school principals in the implementation of the new education policies since 1994. The South African school principals encouraged their teachers during staff meetings to have a positive attitude towards the curriculum changes (Kobola, 2007:92-93). In the same vein, Squires (2015:64) acknowledged that a successful head teacher should be aware that teacher collaboration is an important element in the achievement of curriculum reforms as mandated by governments. Ndiritu, Mbugua and Ndiritu (2019:44) confirmed the above argument. Similarly, the school administrations of the three sampled

secondary schools in the districts of Mutare and Mutasa in the Manicaland province encouraged the History teachers to implement the curriculum reforms successfully. For instance, during an individual interview, one of the school heads of the Mutasa district, Interviewee I, concurred that, "… it was through the numerous meetings that I held with my History teaching staff that they [History teachers] changed their mind-set[s] and embraced the compulsory teaching of History … ." Another school head, Interviewee R, also pointed out that, "… it was not easy to convince the History teachers at my school, but after three or four meetings, we later agreed to implement the change, after all we had nothing to lose … ." Interviewee A, a History teacher from the Mutare district, also confirmed that at his school, the "… headmaster [school head] insisted [that the school had to adhere to the ministerial directive], we decided to teach History as a compulsory subject." Given the above, the school heads were the curriculum enforcers, who advised and/or directed the teachers to implement the curriculum innovation (Kobola, 2007:93). As curriculum enforcers, the power to enforce a curriculum implementation was vested in them by virtue of them holding an administrative post. According to Mason (as cited in Kobola, 2007:93), the role of a school head as an instructional leader is to monitor, supervise and ensure that the teaching and learning takes place in line with the curriculum policy statements and other official policy documentation. The above is achieved when the teachers, as curriculum implementers share the vision and goals of the "guide-lined" curriculum (Squires, 2015:65). She (Squires, 2015:65) added that the teachers' collaboration in curriculum implementation is a sign-post of effective school leadership.

The school heads' power was also rooted in the *Secretary's Circular Number 3 of 2002* that directed the compulsory teaching of History in all secondary schools. It empowered the school heads to manage the implementation of the compulsory study of History successfully (Ministry of Education, Sport, Arts and Culture, 2002:2; Zimbabwe Public Service Commission, 2000:61). They displayed strong instructional leadership as they urged the History teachers to teach the subject to all learners (McEwan, as cited in Manaseh, 2016:34; October, 2009:26). They also encouraged the learners to study History as a core subject. With good work ethics, such as hard work, dedication and cooperation, the curriculum enforcers did not face any resistance from the major role-players, namely the History teachers and learners. As confirmed by Galabawa and Nikundiwe (as cited in Manaseh, 2016:34), "… instructional leadership instilled the spirit of hard-work in [the] students and dedication on the part of [the] teachers." In agreement with the above view, Ndiritu, Mbugua and Ndiritu (2019:44) confirmed that, as an element of quality school leadership skill, the school head should be able to successfully motivate and bring confidence in

the learners to contribute positively towards the school's academic achievements. According to Squires' (2015:168) research findings, the school leaders were aware that the building of trustworthiness and collaborative attitudes with the teachers was fundamental for the successful implementation of standards-based curriculum changes. Similarly, the school heads were the key agency in the successful implementation of the curriculum reforms in the three sampled secondary schools in the Mutare and Mutasa districts.

ii) History teachers

The second factor that contributed to the successful implementation of the curriculum reforms at the three sampled schools was the History teachers' co-operative participation. The teachers were the curriculum implementers. A curriculum implementer is the person who operationalises the curriculum within the classroom context (Priestley & Drew, 2016:4). According to Galabawa and Nikindiwe (as cited in Manaseh, 2016:34), teachers in Uganda are often dedicated to their teaching and learning responsibilities. In contrast to the above, the World Bank (as cited in Manaseh, 2016:34) reported that in the curriculum implementation process, Tanzanian teachers do not spend a lot of time implementing the curriculum in the classrooms. They will be "… either away or in the staffroom" (Sumra & Rajan, as cited in Manaseh, 2016:34). In the Zimbabwean context, particularly in the sampled three secondary schools in the Mutare and Mutasa of the Manicaland province, the History teachers were at the centre of the curriculum implementation process as they played both roles as curriculum implementers and enforcers. As curriculum implementers, they taught the subject to most of the O-level learners from 2003 to 2016. They also played the role of curriculum enforcers by urging the O-level learners to consider studying History as a core subject. Fullan (1991:117), Mbarushimana and Allida (2017:4) and Priestley and Drew (2016:4) confirmed the above notion, as they concurred that teachers are a critical determinant for successful curriculum implementation.

iii) Learners

A third factor that led to the successful implementation of the O-level History curriculum reforms in the three secondary schools was the willingness of the learners to study History as a core subject. The learners' willingness to study History played a critical role in the implementation process. They influenced the implementation cycle positively. For example, during a formal interview, Interviewee R, a secondary school head from the Mutasa district confirmed: "…

students at my [his] school embraced the compulsory study of history … .” Interviewee I, also a school head from another secondary school in the Mutare district, said that in terms of the “call” for the compulsory study of History, “… the majority [of the learners] complied.” Interviewee A, a History teacher, from the third secondary school, reiterated that most of the learners at his school responded positively and studied History. The learners’ willingness should not be underestimated. This was affirmed by Tyler (1975:28) and Nyamwembe, Ondigi and Kiio (2013:17-18) who asserted that when learners view a school activity as interesting and purposefully designed for their needs and interests, they energetically participate in the activity. The above argument solidifies the critical role that learners play regarding the successful implementation of the curriculum reforms in the Manicaland province.

However, the curriculum consumption stage was not an automatic stage. The curriculum consumption stage refers to the level at which the learners accepted and studied the subject History. Tyler (1975:28) postulated that learners “… are actively engaged in learning [activities] …” that they perceive as interesting and useful to them; if not, they either limit or withdraw their involvement. Rudduck and Flutter (as cited in Jagersma, 2010:7) argued that, “If they [learners] do not feel connected to the curriculum or objectives of a course, they … become their own barrier to learning through disruptive practice.” In the context of Rudduck and Flutter (as cited in Jagersma, 2010:7) and Tyler’s (1975:28) claims, there were often instances when learners were not willing to “consume” the curriculum in the Manicaland sampled schools. For instance, during a focus group discussion, Participant C4, a History teacher at venue C, revealed that, “History as a subject was [also] not fashionable among many students … few students took the subject at O-level … the majority of the students at our school favoured science and [the] commercial subjects.” Similarly, Interviewee Q, also a History teacher, revealed that the learners at his school had reservations: “We tried to persuade … all the students to study the subject, but this did not help much because some students did not like the subject.” Another History teacher, Participant A3 at venue A, also confirmed that, “Some students did not like the subject, and as teachers, we couldn’t coerce them ... .” In Pakistan’s city of Sargodha, learners reported that they had little or no knowledge about Social Studies because their teachers did not motivate them to get involved (Ahmed & Maryam, 2016:74-75). This was further confirmed by Mbarushimana and Allida (2017:4) and Priestley and Drew’s (2016:10) assertion that teachers have the autonomy to implement or not to implement a curriculum. Given the fact that the teacher can choose to, or not to implement a given curriculum, the study findings revealed that there were secondary schools where the reforms were partially implemented. An elaboration of the latter is detailed in the next

sub-section.

5.4.1.2 Fractional curriculum implementation

Besides the three secondary schools that successfully implemented the O-level History curriculum reforms, an additional fourteen secondary schools also got involved in the implementation of the reforms. However, based on the findings of the study, the implementation was partially successful. In this study, the researcher refers to the latter as fractional curriculum implementation. In the context of this study, the curriculum reforms were "consumed" by a good number of O-level History learners from the fourteen sampled secondary schools. In all of the fourteen secondary schools, learners often studied History at Form 3 level, but some of them did not register for the ZIMSEC examinations at Form 4 level as the examination registrations were often closed before the end of March. From April onwards, some of the learners who did not register for the ZIMSEC examinations that were to be written at the end of October, stopped to attend the lessons anymore. While the participants in the study did not provide specific numbers in terms of the learners who terminated their study of History at Form 4, a critical interpretation of the participants' remarks indicated that it was a significant number (see paragraphs below).

Interviewee S, a school head from the Mutasa district, confirmed the above scenario at his school when he said that, "… at Form 3 all students studied the subject but many of them dropped it at Form 4 … . It was not possible to force them to register to sit for the History exams at Form 4 because they [then] cited financial problems." Another school head, Interviewee O, confirmed the fact that not all learners were involved in the study of the subject History anymore: "It was normally towards the end of the O-level study, in particular at Form 4 that, quite a number of our History learners, stopped learning History because they may not have registered … for the November examinations." Participant A4, a History teacher, who participated during one of the focus group discussions at venue A, confirmed the fractional implementation of the curriculum at his school:

> From Form 1 up to Form 3, no learner was allowed to drop any subject, but when it comes to registering for the ZIMSEC examinations at Form 4, the school was left with no option other than to leave learners to choose what they wanted, whether to register the History subject or drop it, and stop attending History lessons.

Interviewee M was a History teacher at another secondary school in the Mutare district, and he noted that some of the History learners registered for the national examinations, but did not attend the History lessons. He (Interviewee M) revealed that, "In most cases, some of the learners only

registered the subject at O-level because at our school the policy was that all learners were supposed to learn History." The History teacher (Interviewee M) further remarked that, "… they [some learners] did not attend [the] lessons, which resulted in a high failure rate in the subject." According to Pudaruth *et al.,* (2013:9) and Noh *et al.,* (2016:46), there is a correlation between lesson attendance and the academic performance of learners. Resultantly, the University of Malaysia adopted an attendance policy to boost students' academic performance. Jones (as cited in Noh *et al.,* 2016:46) agreed with the above as he pointed out that absence from lectures causes low academic performance. While it is agreeable that class attendance significantly contributes to academic performance, Noh *et al.,* (2016:45) further highlighted that it is not the case in all instances. In this study, the subject History was initially studied by all, or the majority of the learners during the first (at Form 3 level) of the two years of the O-level study.

The rationale for the learners' study of History, as with the other subjects, was to have an experience of the subject so as to consider if it was relevant for their future career plans (Interviewee O; Participant C1; Participant C4). It was in this context, that some of the learners did not register for the History examination in Form 4, the second and last level of the O-level course. Hence, a fractional curriculum implementation of the reforms occurred. As indicated elsewhere in this report (*cf.* Sections 5.4.1.1 & 5.4.1.1), that in regards to the implementation of the History curriculum reforms, there existed a gap between curriculum theory and practice. Thus, when it came to the compulsory study of the subject History as per the education ministerial requirement, practically not all learners in the Mutare and Mutasa districts studied it (Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture, 2002:5). Ngussa and Makewa (2014:23) agreed with Nyamwembe, Ondigi and Kiio (2013:17-18) in their assertion that, learners often resist, or reject any form of curriculum that is not in their own interests. According to Ahmed and Maryam (2016:74-75), learners are committed to study school subjects on the condition that they will provide job opportunities.

In all fourteen of the secondary schools, where the fractional implementation of the curriculum reforms occurred, the History teachers deliberately avoided the teaching of some of the History topics because of their fear of political victimisation by the ZANU PF loyalists. Fourteen of the sixteen History teachers who participated in the focus group discussions held at venues B and C, confirmed that they purposively avoided certain History topics because they were afraid of being victimised by the ZANU PF supporters. When concluding the focus group discussion at venue C, Participant C4, a History teacher, revealed:

> … many [History] teachers, as I did, avoided teaching sensitive History topics, for example *Democracy and Human Rights*, *Post-independence political instability in Zimbabwe,* e.g the *Gukurahundi,* and the *Causes, course and effects of the Land Reform* because of fear of being misquoted, and misconstrued as MDC supporters … .

Similar sentiments were expressed by another History teacher, Participant A5 and by Interviewee O, a school head, who both lamented the History teachers' lack of "political freedom after academic freedom." The fractional implementation of the curriculum reforms was one of the results of the "deficiency" in terms of academic freedom. According to Ansah (2015:175), the concept academic freedom refers to the professional autonomy that a teacher enjoys to teach learners the truth without fear, or any restrictions. Moran (as cited in Stenger, 3013:1) defined academic freedom as when a teacher, or lecturer is at liberty to teach what he/she believes to be the truth, even if it appears to be untrue to others. For Oseija (2016:1), academic freedom is the teaching and learning, and the search for new information that is independent from the state's interference and manipulation. Participant A5 revealed that the History teachers at his school avoided certain topics in the O-level History Syllabus 2167; topics that they deemed were of utmost importance to the Mugabe regime (Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture, 2001:2). Interviewee K, a History teacher, confessed that in 2007, one of his learners asked him the following question: Why was Zimbabwe under economic sanctions? He (Interviewee K) then responded as follows:

> I preferred to advise [the] students not to ask questions from topics we had not learnt in the class, since it was going to confuse [the] other students. But the truth of the matter was [that] I was afraid to engage [with] the students into a discussion that would have resulted in portraying a despotic picture of the Mugabe rule because I was going to endanger my life … . In actual fact, I never attempted to teach any of the controversial topics from the O-level History Syllabus [2167].

It was due to similar reasons, such as the above that the researcher, who was an O and A-level History teacher from 2000 to 2016, never attempted to teach History topics, such as *Human Rights and Democracy*, *Political developments in post-independence Zimbabwe,* and *Land Reform* at O-level (Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture, 2001:2; Zimbabwe School Examination Council, 2003:13). Due to fear of being victimised by ZANU PF loyalists, the researcher was most comfortable with the teaching of topics that were largely related to

Zimbabwe's pre-colonial and colonial history (Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture, 2001:2; Zimbabwe School Examination Council, 2003:13). Given the above, history has it that Socrates was killed because he was accused of "intoxicating" the youth with his ideas; Galileo (1564-1642) was jailed "… for advocating the Copernican view of the solar system"; and Descartes (1596-1650) censored his writing as a way to avoid facing the same consequences (Ansah, 2015:173). It was in the context of the lack of academic freedom for Zimbabwean History teachers, that Interviewee O, a school head at a secondary school in the Mutasa district, recommended that the government should "… protect [History] teachers and allow them [to have] academic freedom on [*sic*] teaching sensitive topics, e.g *Land Reform*." Therefore, the fear of being victims of political violence and intimidation also contributed to the fractional curriculum implementation of the curriculum reforms (Ansah, 2015:173).

When highlighting some of the challenges often faced by educators, Oseija (2016:4-5) pointed out that competent educators are often intimidated, or their contracts are terminated because of presenting contrary views to that of their peers or employers. Stenger (2013:1) revealed the limits of academic freedom when he pointed out that academics should not confuse the concept of academic freedom with that of freedom of speech. For him (Stenger (2013:1), academic freedom entails "… academic responsibility and scholarly integrity." In the same vein, Fong (as cited in Stenger, 2013:1) revealed that academics are not at liberty to "… teach whatever they want, but are obligated to present the best knowledge of the day on their particular subject." Nevertheless, it was noted that the lack of academic freedom among the History teachers in the Mutare and Mutasa districts was a huge liability to the progression of educational knowledge, critical thinking and the making of sound judgments (Oseija, 2016:4).

There were also scenarios where some of the learners, regardless of having been encouraged to study History as a core subject, were not willing to study the subject in the way they did with English Language. During an informal interview, Interviewee L, a History teacher from the Mutare district, reported that the subject English Language was "… more popular with learners than History …", because the former was an international language. This was also confirmed by Participant C3, a History teacher at venue C, who claimed that English Language was highly rated by the learners because of being the official language of professionals in Zimbabwe, and globally (Roux, 2014:45). Pennycook (as cited in Roux, 2014:45), confirmed that English, as an international language "… has become a formidable 'gatekeeper' …" in the global employment and work environments, where the demand for an aptitude in English is part of individuals'

employment opportunities. According to Yano (2015:27), English is used as the official language for intranational and international communication among many non-native speakers. For Dewi (2012:2), globalisation has made English a "… global *lingua franca*."

Fractional curriculum implementation also occurred when the subject History was not included in the curriculum as a core subject from 2002 onwards. The scenario was elaborated by some of the History teachers. One of the History teachers who came from the Mutasa district, who was individually interviewed, Interviewee H, for example, said, "At our school, it was not a compulsory subject until January 2009 after the issue was raised by one History teacher … . It was then that our headmaster agreed to have History as a compulsory subject …"; while another History teacher from the Mutare district, Interviewee P, confirmed that, "It [History] was not enforced from the beginning [2002] but became compulsory from 2010 onwards … ." Hence, they claimed that while the subject was not compulsory from the beginning, it was not the case in the last six to seven years (2010-2016). The above scenario substantiates the claim by numerous scholars, as pointed out earlier, that the curriculum enforcers and implementers (school heads and teachers) "hold the key" to the successful implementation of all standards-based curriculum reforms (Kobola, 2007:92-93; Mbarushimana & Allida, 2017:4; Priestley & Drew, 2016:4; Squires, 2015:168). Also refer to Section 5.4.11, as earlier shown in this chapter.

One of the reasons for the fractional implementation of the curriculum related to the above scenario was that some of the school heads were not even aware of the curriculum reforms of 2002. One History teacher, Participant B3 at venue B, claimed that their school head did not know about the ministerial circular. This argument was also supported by one of the district education inspectors, Interviewee F of the Mutasa district, who said that, "… it is possible that some schools may have received the circular late, or not at all." According to Reddy, Sa:1, one of the disadvantages of using a circular letter when announcing an important message to a group of people is that some people might not receive the information. Given the above, some of the secondary school heads were unaware of the curriculum reforms.

Another reason for the fractional curriculum implementation of the reforms was the little or no commitment of the curriculum enforcers. In some of the secondary schools, such as the schools where Interviewee H and Participant C2 were History teachers, both reported that the school heads and History teachers at their respective schools did not encourage the learners to study History as a core subject. Interviewee H reported that the school head at his school was reluctant

to implement the curriculum reforms, and he encouraged learners to specialise in sciences. According to them, arts subjects, such as History was an elective for the slow learners. The above scenario proved the claim by many curriculum theorists that those who are associated with the direct implementation of the school curriculum have the freedom to, or not to do as required by the education policy document (Fullan, 1991:117; Mbarushimana & Allida 2017:4; Posner, 1995:211; Priestley & Drew, 2016:10; Rajan, as cited in Manaseh, 2016:34). Given the above, the curriculum enforcers, implementers and “consumers” were inhibiting factors to the successful implementation of the curriculum reforms.

From 2009 onwards, a shift from the non-implementation of the curriculum reforms to the implementation of the reforms occurred. Some of the History teachers who were individually interviewed, such as Interviewees I and M, both from the Mutare district, indicated that some school heads implemented History as a core subject at their schools after they had been requested by the History teachers, who were aware of the ministerial circular. Hence, the implementation of the curriculum was promoted by a bottom-top approach as History teachers, such as Interviewees K and P of the Mutasa and Mutare districts respectively, who urged their school heads to consider and manage the compulsory teaching of the subject. At the above-mentioned schools, the school heads seized to be “traditional school heads”, who effectively managed school teachers to implement the curriculum reforms (Botha, 2004:239). Instead, Interviewees K and P’s school heads were willing to “buy-in” to the information received from the teachers at the lower ranks (October, 2009:22). Kotter (as cited in Squires, 2015:26), argued that effective school leaders listen and critically consider the input provided by their subordinates. Although school leadership greatly impacts on the school culture, as pointed out by Leithwood and McAdie (as cited in Sterrett, Parker & Mitzner, 2018:4), the culture of the compulsory study of the subject History at some of the schools in the Mutare and Mutasa districts were influenced by the subject teachers. This confirmed Balyer, Karata and Alci’s (2015:1340) argument that collective and collaborative efforts between the school head and teachers normally enhances the successful realisation of the reforms’ intended outcomes.

While the History teachers urged the school heads to embrace the ministerial policy, their motivation for this was largely for monetary gain. The latter undermined the integrity of the teachers who are required to be honest, sincere and dependable (Nayak & Ingawale, sa:3). During the individual interviews, History teachers such as Participant B5, Interviewees I, M and O, revealed that during the school holidays, the teachers who prepared learners for the ZIMSEC

examinations were remunerated according to the total number of candidates that they assisted. The government of Zimbabwe, through the ministry responsible for secondary education, issued *Circular Letter Number 5 of 2009* that gave the school authorities permission to use ten percent of the collected school levies to pay incentives to the teachers (Shoko, Manyumwa, Muguwe & Taruvinga, 2011:162). The more candidates the History teacher assisted, the more money he/she was paid. Hence, by teaching the classes, some of the History teachers wanted to earn more money during the school holidays. They wanted to assist the maximum number of candidates during the school holidays; and to achieve this, they urged the school heads to adhere to the ministerial regulation regarding the teaching of History at O-level. Cassar and Meier (2018:215) argued that, what is considered as work is when time and effort endured is exchanged with money. Without or with limited incentives, they (Cassar & Meier, 2018:215) argued that workers are often unwilling to work. While there was the argument that, academics are motivated to work, not by monetary compensation, but by the need to contribute to knowledge, the desire for money was the push factor for some of the History teachers' decision to promote the compulsory teaching and learning of History at their respective schools (Cassar & Meier, 2018:215; Nkansah, 2016:30; Tumaini, 2015:18-19).

However, one of the rural school heads in the Mutasa district, Interviewee R, offered History as a core subject at his school because of the fear of political victimisation. This was also confirmed by one rural secondary school History teacher in the Mutare district, Interviewee Q, who confessed during one of the individual interviews, that the teaching of History was made compulsory at his school after some of the teachers expressed their concern about the school's failure to implement the ministerial decree, given the political situation in the country in 2008 and 2009. Interviewee Q, from the Mutare district, was concerned that the failure to offer the subject as was required would have put the school's reputation in jeopardy, because "… not implementing government policy would appear to be resisting government policy." The teachers indicated that the latter was likely to be considered as siding with the MDC party, the rival party of the government of the day (2008/2009). The newspaper, *The Zimbabwean* (2009:1) reported in 2009 that the Progressive Teachers Union of Zimbabwe (PTUZ), one of the biggest teacher unions in Zimbabwe, through its Secretary General, Mr. R. Majongwe, complained about the thousands of its members who were victimised for supporting the MDC. A report by the Research and Advocacy Unit (2012:7-9) confirmed that Zimbabwean teachers who were suspected of being MDC supporters were victims of violence and intimidation at the hands of ZANU PF loyalists between 2000 and 2011. Given that some of the teachers were regarded as MDC supporters by the ZANU

PF party, many of the rural secondary school heads implemented the compulsory study of History to avoid any political victimisation. For teachers to be committed and deliver quality education, they should be liberated from any political interference (Siyum & Gebremedhin, 2015:224). According to Hess (2014:260), teachers often do not include those topics that they believe to be controversial in their teaching schedules. A study carried out by Siyum and Gebremedhin (2015:223) at one secondary school in Ethiopia, revealed that some teachers were victimised and intimidated by the school head and education officials for not being members of the ruling party. They (Siyum & Gebremedhin, 2015:223) further revealed that the teachers who supported the ruling party were prioritised in receiving benefits such as promotions and proper handling of their documents for transfers to other schools. While the curriculum reforms were partially implemented in some Mutare and Mutasa secondary schools as highlighted in this section, there were scenarios where the curriculum reforms were never implemented. An elaboration of the latter follows in the next sub-theme.

5.4.1.3 Null curriculum implementation

Eight of the twenty-five secondary schools that were sampled for this study did not adhere to the ministerial directive. The researcher coined the concept null curriculum implementation to mean cases where secondary schools did not adhere to the ministerial directive to teach History as a mandatory subject. The information that was gathered during the individual interviews revealed that the study of the subject History was optional from 2002 to 2016. The document analysis also confirmed the above findings, particularly, the analysis of the O-level ZIMSEC examination results. Although the researcher was not able to access the analysis of the O-level ZIMSEC examination results from 2003 to 2007, the results that were analysed and interpreted were those from 2008 and 2016. The latter showed that there were far more learners who enrolled for the subject English Language, than for History. Although both were compulsory subjects, History was not studied as a core subject. The assumption was that the number of O-level candidates who studied the two subjects would be equal, or only a slight difference. In contrast, the O-level candidates who sat for the Geography examinations, an elective, were in often cases, more than those who sat for the History examination.

In view of the above findings, there was a clear indication that the subject History was not studied as prescribed by the Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture. The interview information depicted that the sampled secondary schools (n=8) did not follow the ministerial policy for a number of

reasons. There was no attempt by the curriculum enforcers, the school heads, to ensure that the subject History was studied by all learners in the respective schools. There existed a wilful breach of the Zimbabwe Public Service regulation, *Statutory 1 of 2000*, which stipulated that failure by civil servants to do a lawfully assigned work properly was a chargeable act of misconduct (Zimbabwe Public Service Commission, 2000:61). Interviewee Q and Participant C1, who were both History teachers, indicated that at their respective secondary schools, the subject choice was left to the learners. Interviewee T and Participant B4 confirmed that it was not their responsibility to decide which subjects the learners had to study. It was indicated that the learners who enrolled for the O-level course, did their subject choice in consultation with their parents. The schools preferred to co-operate with the parents, instead of adhering to the ministerial decree of 2002. Manaseh (2016:34) admitted that, "… maximum cooperation between parents and administrators … eventually paved [the] way for better [school] discipline, effective [school] management … ." While it was a ministerial directive that all the learners were supposed to study the subject History, the school heads and History teachers disregarded the authoritative and undemocratic educational leadership style of the government, and adopted a *laissez-faire* approach that offered learners the freedom to make their own subject choices (Drobot & Rosu, 2012:1).

The information gathered from the document analysis also confirmed that History was not a compulsory O-level subject at some of the secondary schools of the Mutasa and Mutare districts. A comparison of the number of O-level candidates who wrote the examinations for English Language (a core subject), History (also a core subject) and Geography (an elective subject) as administered by ZIMSEC during the period 2010 to 2016 was done. It was based on the analysis of the O-level examination results obtained from the Mutare and Mutasa district education offices. The analysis of the O-level results for the period 2003 to 2009 were inaccessible. For the sake of protecting the privacy of the districts (Ary, Jacobs & Sorensen, 2010:592; Surmiak, 2018:6), the researcher used pseudo names when referring to the afore-mentioned districts as illustrated in Tables 5.11 and 5.12 below. Tables 5.11 and 5.12 contain the total number of candidates who wrote the O-level ZIMSEC examinations from 2010 to 2016 for the specified subjects.

Table 5.11: Total number of candidates who wrote O-level ZIMSEC examinations for three specified subjects in District A from 2010 to 2016

NAME OF DISTRICT	YEARS						
District A: Total of 35 secondary schools (between 2010 and 2014) and increased to 40 secondary schools in 2015	**2010**	**2011**	**2012**	**2013**	**2014**	**2015**	**2016**
Total number of candidates who wrote English Language	3029	2942	3092	2937	3084	3059	Not available
Total number of candidates who wrote History	2147	2046	2257	2100	2341	2186	Not available
Total number of candidates who wrote Geography	2694	2569	2799	2575	2752	2598	Not available

Total number of candidates who wrote English Language in 6 years (n=18 143).

Total number of candidates who wrote History in 6 years (n=13 077).

Total number of candidates who wrote Geography in 6 years (n=15 987).

Source: O-level results analysis from District education office A

Table 5.12: Total number of candidates who wrote O-level ZIMSEC examinations for three specified subjects in District B from 2010 to 2016

NAME OF DISTRICT	YEARS						
District B: Total of 69 secondary schools	**2010**	**2011**	**2012**	**2013**	**2014**	**2015**	**2016**
Total number of candidates who wrote English Language	Not available	Not available	Not available	4773	Not available	4976	4651
Total number of candidates who wrote History	Not available	Not available	Not available	3553	Not available	3762	3570
Total number of candidates who wrote Geography	Not available	Not available	Not available	4292	Not available	4211	3719

Total number of candidates who wrote English Language in 3 years (n=14 400).
Total number of candidates who wrote History in 6 years (n=10 885).
Total number of candidates who wrote Geography in 6 years (n=12 222).

Source: O-level results analysis from District education office B.

The information provided in Tables 5.11 and 5.12 above showed that the compulsory study of History in the Mutasa and Mutare districts was not successfully implemented. The number of candidates (n=23 962) who sat for the O-level History ZIMSEC examinations in both districts was not the same (n=35 543) as those who sat for the English Language examinations, even though both were compulsory subjects. The mandatory study of the subject History at O-level in the eight secondary schools in the Mutare and Mutasa districts was not a popular arrangement given that the total number of candidates who sat for the History examination during any of the specified years was far less than those who wrote the elective Geography examination. In the two districts, Geography (n=28 209) had a higher number of enrolled candidates than History (n=23 962).

An overall assessment of the role of the secondary school heads and History teachers in the

implementation of the O-level History curriculum reforms in the twenty-five secondary schools in the Mutare and Mutasa districts was confirmed by Mbarushimana and Allida's (2017:4) argument that, "… the success of a curriculum depends on the teacher." Fullan's (1991:117) research findings also confirmed the above notion, as he pointed out that, teachers are a major determinant in the successful curriculum implementation. He (Fullan, 1991:117) argued that, "Educational change depends on what teachers do and think – it's as simple and complex as that." In agreement, Mbarushimana and Allida (2017:4) noted that teachers decide what to, and/or not to implement in a particular class. It was in this context, that Priestley and Drew (2016:10) and Supriani, *et al.*, (2022:487) declared that teachers are a pivotal agency of change in any curriculum development process. This means that it is as a result of the teachers' contributions that the implementation of a curriculum could be either successful or not. With the scholarly *mantra* that teachers have the "veto power" of any curriculum implementation, the study findings confirmed the notion that teachers hold the key to the successful implementation of any curriculum transformation since it is them who could, or could not implement the curriculum (Mbarushimana & Allida, 2017:4; Posner, 1995:211; Priestley & Drew, 2016:10; Siyum & Gebremedhin, 2015:224; Voogt, Pieters & Roblin, 2019:6).

Given the above, some of the learners in the Mutare and Mutasa districts were indeed the key to the successful implementation of the curriculum reforms because they could either decide to, or not to "consume" the curriculum. The learners involved in this study contributed to the latter with, or without the approval of their parents. In the context of this study, the argument that learners cannot decide for themselves what they want to learn was proved false (Young, 2013:101). The O-level learners, who were between 15 and 16 years of age were mature enough to decide whether they wanted to study History. Some of the History teachers who participated in the study, such as Interviewees H and M, and Participant C4 indicated that some of the O-level History learners were reluctant to study History because the historical knowledge obtained would not benefit them in their future careers. This confirmed McNeil's (2009:23) claim that it is often vital that the learners themselves should decide what subjects they want to study. He (McNeil, 2009:23) and Ngussa and Makewa (2014:23) reiterated that learners' personal interests have to determine the curriculum knowledge. Long (as cited in Nyamwembe, Ondigi & Kiio, 2013:20) advised that teachers should also establish the interests of the learners before lesson planning and presentation. As argued by Massouleh and Jooneghani (2012:50), the latter will then assist in the construction of the learners' perception of the world.

The above findings are comparable to the findings of a study, which was carried out in Kenya, focusing on learners' attitudes towards the school subject History. The majority of the learners were not interested in the subject (Nyamwembe, Ondigi & Kiio, 2013:20). Besides the fact that it [History] was considered as "… a dull subject …", Nyamwembe, Ondigi and Kiio (2013:20) added that, the subject History was unpopular with learners because the emphasis was on the science subjects. According to Ahmed and Maryam (2016:74), most learners preferred hard sciences, rather than social sciences because the chances of getting employment are much higher, with excellent salaries than the latter. So, overall, it was reported that there was curriculum infidelity because the compulsory study of the subject History at O-level was not a success (Nevenglosky, 2018:8). Having discussed and analysed the status of school History in the Mutare and Mutasa districts during the period 2002 to 2016, the next section dwells on the third theme (*cf*. Table 5.7) that emerged from the analysis of the gathered data for this study.

5.5 EFFORTS OF THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, SPORT AND CULTURE TO FACILITATE A SUCCESSFUL CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION

The third theme which emanated from this study focuses on the efforts that were made by the education ministry to ensure the successful implementation of the O-level History curriculum reforms. In 2002, the then Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture issued the *Secretary's Circular Number 3 of 2002* to inform secondary schools that the teaching of History was compulsory from that year onwards. All the education officials (incumbent and retired), school heads and History teachers who participated in the study revealed that there were no known efforts by the ministry to ensure the successful implementation of the circular. The education officials also did not employ any efforts to oversee or measure the extent to which the subject History was compulsory in the Mutare and Mutasa districts of the Manicaland province (Interviewees E and J).

The information gathered from the twenty-five sampled secondary schools also contained no evidence of official visits from the education officials. This was confirmed by the incumbent and retired education officials who were involved in the study. They noted that there was no supervision at district and/or provincial levels to ensure a successful implementation of the O-level History curriculum reforms of 2002 (Interviewees D, E, F and J). Interviewee F, a district education inspector, indicated during an individual interview at the Mutasa district education office, that there were also no education officials who were specifically responsible for the supervision of the compulsory study of History at secondary school level. He (Interviewee F, a

district education inspector) revealed that "… financial constraints faced by [the Zimbabwean] government made it difficult [for it] to appoint specific subject inspectors." Interviewee J, a former provincial education inspector, also supported this, and said, "The ministry did not have enough resources, both human and financial. The ideal situation was that all subjects were supposed to have specific subject inspectors at provincial level."

Due to the shortage of both financial and human resources, Interviewees F and J confirmed that the education ministry appointed education inspectors for the supervision of general study areas such as the Practical and Humanities subjects, of which History was part of the latter. Information gathered at both provincial and district levels revealed that there was only one provincial education inspector for the Humanities subjects, who was stationed at the Manicaland provincial education office. When the education inspectors conducted supervision visits to History classes, at both district and/or provincial education levels, it was not for the monitoring of the implementation of the History curriculum reforms of 2002, but for the supervision of lesson delivery and record-keeping in History teaching and learning (Interviewees D, E and J; Personal experience in 2008 and 2014).

The fact that there were no known visits by the officials of the then Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture to determine the degree to which History was offered as a core subject in the secondary schools of the Mutare and Mutasa districts was confirmed by all the school heads and History teachers who participated in the study. The participants revealed that the supervision conducted by the education inspectors was general in nature and similar to those carried out in the other subjects. During individual interviews, some of the History teachers and school heads (Interviewees N and P, two History teachers; Interviewees O and T, two school heads) respectively, were questioned whether the education officials held consultations, or review meetings with the History teachers with regard to the implementation of the O-level History curriculum reforms between 2002 and 2016. They had this to say: "Only routine supervisions focusing on History lesson observations were carried out by some officials from the Mutasa district Education office, and less often by provincial officers" (Interviewee O, a school head in the Mutasa district). Another school head, Interviewee T, also working in the Mutasa district, added that,

> When visited by the education inspectors, they were not concerned with the compulsory study of History, but to observe lessons, to see if pupils were given relevant and adequate work to do, to see if the pupils' exercise books were marked, and to see other records of progress. In the case of [the] supervision of the Head

of Department, the inspectors were much concerned about the department's record keeping.

Interviewee P, a History teacher, who worked in the Mutare district, confirmed: "As far as I know, there were no [education] officials who came to our school to check and ensure that History was compulsory." Another History teacher from the Mutare district, Interviewee N, also reported: "I think there were never consultative meetings arranged [with education officials] in our [Mutare] district to encourage the compulsory teaching of History as was required by the ministry."

Based on the above information, the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education neither monitored nor evaluated the compulsory implementation of the History curriculum reforms in the Mutare and Mutasa districts of the Manicaland province for the period 2002 to 2016. Curriculum scholars such as Chitate (2005:241), Hong (2007:1) and Mitchell (2016:51) advised that it is a custom to review a new curriculum after a trial period of five years to determine the extent of the success of the implementation process, and the attainment of the intended outcomes. The findings should then be reported to the public, and also used to determine whether the curriculum had to be maintained, revised, or discontinued (Naikumi, 2010:1; Tyler, 1966:1; Tyler, 1967:13). Kashora (2015:21) also concurred with the above argument, when she pointed out that curriculum evaluation is a necessity since it is used to measure the success of any instructional schedule for accountability and reformation's sake. While Afsahi (2016:5) agreed with the above scholars, he added that curriculum evaluation also certified the learners' competencies as well as revealing the cost of the curriculum delivery.

Given the above, there was no review, or evaluation of the teaching and learning of History as a compulsory subject in the Mutare and Mutasa districts. The information gathered from all the participants in this study, except for the two curriculum experts, showed that the government's efforts to facilitate the curriculum implementation started and ended with the ministerial circular. One and a half decades have passed since the curriculum reforms were implemented in the secondary schools of the Mutasa and Mutare districts, but the education ministry responsible for secondary education never attempted to supervise or check the degree to which History was taught as a compulsory subject. Olulobe and Major (2014:92) observed that educational supervision "… is the most important determinant of teachers' productivities and teachers' educational performance." Abubakar (2015:2) added that supervision is not only vital to ensure that the standards set by the Ministry of Education are achieved, but also to determine whether the intended national outcomes are also met. According to Patel (2016:205), educational

supervision is beneficial to policy-makers because they get informed of the operations on the ground.

Apenteng's (2012:28) statement that, "Today's [education] supervisor is often perceived as a manager of meaningful change … ." did not apply to the Zimbabwean context, particularly in the Mutare and Mutasa districts of the Manicaland province. The education officials who participated in the study identified two reasons for the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education's (the then Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture) failure to monitor and evaluate the extent to which the History curriculum reforms were successfully implemented. One factor was the shortage of qualified and experienced human resources. The majority of the school inspectors were former primary school teachers, and were not knowledgeable about the secondary school curriculum in terms of theory and practice (Interviewees F, J and V). While Kigwilu and Akala (2017:369) acknowledged that the lack of physical resources negatively affected the curriculum implementation process, the findings of the study revealed that human resource shortages also negatively impacted on curriculum monitoring and evaluation. There existed a shortage of education inspectors who were qualified secondary school teachers.

From 2002 to 2016, there were no specifically trained secondary school subject inspectors neither, at the Mutare, nor the Mutasa district education offices (Interviewees D and F). The same was the case with the Manicaland provincial education office (Interviewee D). At provincial level, there was one appointed education inspector for all the Humanities subjects (Interviewee D). The provincial education inspector was responsible for the supervision of three subjects, namely History, Geography and Religious Studies. No inspector was specifically appointed for the school subject History (Interviewee D).

Financial constraints was another factor that incapacitated the education ministry to supervise the implementation of the *Secretary's Circular Number 3 of 2002*. Provincial education inspectors who participated in the study concurred that there were no subject-specific inspectors available for the secondary school level because of financial problems (Interviewees E and J). The issue of financial resources is a major hindrance against successful curriculum implementation globally (Kigwilu & Akala, 2017:371; Sargent, 2011:7-8). Unlike at primary school level, where there was a limited number of subjects, many secondary school subjects were taught, and it was impossible to employ subject-specific inspectors for all of them (Interviewees D and V). There were only appointed education inspectors for the supervision of the teaching and learning of general

subjects such as the Commercials, Languages, Humanities and Vocational subjects because the appointment of the latter was much cheaper (Interviewees D and E). Interviewee V, a district education inspector, who worked at the Mutare district education office, confirmed the situation. He (Interviewee V, a district education inspector) indicated that the, "… financial incapacitation due to the hyperinflation in the country made it impossible for the government to appoint enough education inspectors for [public] schools." Omolo, Sika and Olel (2019:104) revealed that many learners dropped out of school in Kenya between 2009 and 2013 as a result of the lack of school fees. This disregarded Machebe, Ezegbe and Onuoha's (2017:1614) argument that the parents' level of income was not a major determinant of learners' academic performance, as compared to parental engagement in the latter's learning activities.

Apart from the shortage of human and financial resources, there were no attempts by the education ministry to determine whether the History curriculum reforms in the Mutare and Mutasa secondary schools were successfully implemented as per the *Secretary's Circular Number 3 of 2002*. The absence of any form of supervision, or consultations with the school heads and/or History teachers regarding the teaching of History as a core subject also resulted in many queries related to the accountability of the curriculum policy-makers to monitor and evaluate the implementation of O-level History as a core subject. According to Chitate (2005:241), Mavhunga (2006:144) and Mavhunga, Moyo and Chinyani (2012:48), any curriculum implementation has to be periodically monitored and evaluated to remain effective and relevant. The latter was supported by the two curriculum specialists who participated in the focus group discussion in Harare. According to the Curriculum expert 2,

> … if it is true that in a period of more than ten years, the Ministry of Education did not make a follow-up to see whether the official curriculum was correctly effected in the schools, then some of the top government officials, particularly from the Department of Policy and Research [in the then Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture] slept on duty because at least the operational curriculum was supposed to have been reviewed at some point.

Curriculum expert 1, who was part of the same focus group discussion, pointed out that, "… the curriculum implementation cycle is incomplete without curriculum review and evaluation." Hence, the two curriculum experts agreed that once a curriculum change or innovation was in the hands of the implementers, the next step was for the government to make a follow-up and assess its relevance, suitability, practicality, and the difficulties that teachers might have been facing during the implementation process. The fact that the curriculum reforms were introduced for

implementation, and no monitoring and/or evaluation was done in the Mutare and Mutasa districts of the Manicaland province, was unpedagogical and a waste of scarce state resources (Chingos & Blagg, 2017:3). Last, but not least, is the discussion on the fourth theme that emerged from the analysis the research data for this study. An elaboration of the latter follows.

5.6 PARTICIPANTS' VIEWS ON THE FACILITATION OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CURRICULUM REFORMS BY THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, SPORT AND CULTURE

This section contains the opinions of some of the participants in the study, especially the secondary school heads and History teachers, regarding how best the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (the then Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture) could have facilitated the successful implementation of the O-level History curriculum reforms. Some of the suggestions given were that the government, through the relevant ministry, should have involved a large number of History teachers in the O-level History curriculum changes prior to the implementation stage. They should also have guaranteed the safety of the History teachers, especially against political victimisation. Curriculum analysis and evaluation should have been done periodically, following the implementation phase of the new History curriculum.

The above information was established during the focus group discussions and/or individual interviews, when the participants were questioned: "In your view, what should have been done by the ministry responsible for secondary school education to ensure the successful implementation of the History curriculum reforms?" The majority of the participants provided the above-listed views (refer to the introduction of Section 5.6). However, a small number of the participants, two of the education inspectors specifically, argued that there existed no better options for the education ministry to ensure the successful implementation of the reforms. Some of their views are presented below. A provincial education inspector, Interviewee D, believed that the ministry responsible for secondary education did not have better options. He (Interviewee D, a provincial education inspector) expressed his view as follows:

> Naturally, teachers always resist [curriculum] change, but later on, they accept it if they are forced. So, what the [then] Ministry of Education [Sport and Culture] did, that is, imposing the compulsory study of History was necessary, and good for the nation, to avoid unnecessary delays in the implementation of the important curriculum changes …

Provincial education inspector, Interviewee D, argued that the Zimbabwean government's attitude towards the teachers was that the former had a tendency of resisting curriculum change, which often resulted in delaying the achievement of the intended teaching and learning outcomes. For Altinyelken (2013:110), the concept "teachers' resistance" refers to the scenario when teachers retain the existing curriculum because the intended changes would have been unwelcome and unnecessary. The use of a decree, or a circular by the ministry responsible for secondary education, although it was undemocratic, was a necessary approach for disseminating and implementing the O-level History curriculum reforms (Ndawi, 1999:91). Teachers' resistance, as was with the case of some of the curriculum enforcers and implementers in the Mutare and Mutasa districts of the Manicaland province, often occur when the former are not given the opportunity to understand and appreciate the rationale for the curriculum change (Altinyelken, 2013:110; Zimmerman, 2006:239). Snyder (2017:1) added that veteran teachers often resist educational changes to protect their social and political nostalgia, as well as the cognitive rewards. Altinyelken (2013:110) pointed out that, at times, there are positive reasons for teachers to resist curriculum change, especially, if they are concerned that the educational changes may negatively impact on the learners' academic success.

Interviewee F, a district education inspector, added that the government was not fully prepared for the changes: "The [then] Ministry [of Education Sport and Culture] could have ascertained the successful implementation of the reforms if it had enough finances and qualified personnel to supervise the implementation of the reforms … ." Similarly, during a formal individual interview, a retired provincial education inspector, Interviewee D, concluded that,

> Our ministry [of Education Sport and Culture] should have made sure that there was adequate human capital and a correct financial budget to cater for the expenses needed as salaries and allowances for education supervisors to assist in ensuring that the subject [History] was compulsory rather than just rushing into implementing the [curriculum] changes without sufficient resources.

All of the above education inspectors argued that from the time of the implementation of the curriculum in 2002, the government should have budgeted to appoint and support subject-based inspectors to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the curriculum reforms. Globally, it is acknowledged that physical, human and financial resources are critical determinants of educational accomplishments (Kigwilu & Akala 2017:369; Sargent, 2011:7-8). Lizer (2013:20) noted that for a curriculum change to be successfully implemented, there has to be consistent

monitoring and giving support to the teachers and learners on the implementation of the innovation by people who are "… more qualified." According to Green *et al.,* (as cited in Lizer, 2013:21), well-designed curricula have often failed to attain the desired changes because of ignoring implementation factors such as the resources needed for its success. This implies that inadequate, or the absence of critical resources often compromise the end product.

Besides the availing of enough financial resources to sustain the supervision of the classroom activities, the participants also argued that financing historical trips and academic competitions could have made learners more interested in the subject. Interviewee O, a school head, recommended that the government should have financed [educational] trips to historical sites "… to create interest in the subject … [and] conducting staff-development workshops and refresher courses to complement the efforts of the schools." With regard to the advantages of field trips as a teaching method, scholars such as Mahgoub and Alawad (2014:46) argued that, learners "… benefit both psychologically and physiologically …" when they spend time learning in a natural setting outside of the school premises. According to Kennedy (2015:7), field trips, or place-based learning are more beneficial to learners than classroom learning because learners have the opportunity to see and experience learning, which is more motivating and exciting. For Greene, Kisida and Bowen (2014:79), it enhances critical thinking skills, although learners from poor families may not afford to participate in experiences such as the above.

There also existed a popular view that the government should have marketed the programme to all role-players, including the teachers and learners. Interviewee V, a school head, had this to say: "I think, the government should have explained to the learners the importance of History in … society. This alone could have made the pupils to appreciate the compulsory study of the subject." One of the school heads, Interviewee R, concluded that, "May be an association, mainly comprised of teachers, could have been formed to educate the nation on the benefits of teaching History as a compulsory subject before the change was implemented." Finally, two History teachers added, respectively, that "… the ministry was supposed to consult all stakeholders on the way forward rather than dictating issues of education. The various role-players were supposed to be consulted in the curriculum renewal process … to have a sense of ownership of the curriculum change.", and "… the government could have "sold" the idea [of the compulsory study of History] to us [teachers] and may be to parents as well, and then perhaps we were going to help and urge the students to like the subject" (Interviewees I and N).

The education ministry should also not have ignored the valuable role of the various role-players in History education, such as the History teachers, learners and parents. The afore-mentioned participants added that the Zimbabwe government's consultations with all major role-players could have minimised the resistance to the implementation of the curriculum reforms. Zimmerman (2006:240) argued that people resist change because they naturally perceive the world differently. Mutch (2012:1) defended teachers who resisted curriculum change based on policies that are not "… well researched, carefully planned, or subject to rigorous stakeholder consultation." The responses of the participants confirmed Posner's (1995:211) notion that, "[History] teachers [should] implement a curriculum which they assisted to develop." The notion of empowering teachers through participation in curriculum development process has been more effective in promoting a successful implementation stage (Alsubaie, 2016:107; Ankrum, 2016:153).

Interviewee O and Participant A5 added another issue, namely that, the government has to secure the protection of the History teachers, especially when they have to teach History topics that are politically sensitive. During an individual interview, a school head, Interviewee O, recommended that, "… government should … protect [History] teachers and allowed them [to have] academic freedom when teaching sensitive topics e.g, "*Land Reform*." During the focus group discussion at venue A, Participant A5 added the following remarks:

> To achieve the aims and goals of anything, there has to be adequate financial support. The learners had to be exposed to the realities of life. Trips to historical sites in and outside the country had to be supported by the government for learners to develop [an] interest in the subject [History]. Debates and essay writing competitions had to be sponsored by the ministry [responsible for secondary education] … . The politician[s] had to be removed from the matrix of the subject [History].

Another History teacher, Participant C4, concluded the focus group discussion held at venue C by revealing that, he did not teach certain History topics to avoid political victimisation. He explained:

> Since many [History] teachers, as I did, avoided teaching sensitive History topics such as *Democracy and Human Rights*, *Post-independence political instability in Zimbabwe* such as *Gukurahundi* in the 1980s and the *Causes, course and effects of the Land Reform* because of fear of being misquoted, and misconstrued as MDC supporters, the government had to be very clear and unwavering on condemning

> politicians who meddle in the teaching of the subject. If [the] teachers feel safe and protected, no topics would be "sacred" and avoided.

Based on the above, there was an appeal by the participants in the study that the government had to protect teachers of History from political victimisation. They felt that the absence of academic freedom was a cause for concern, and that the learners were deprived of studying important concepts because the History topics to be taught were deliberately limited for security reasons. The above confirmed the merit of academic freedom in any context. According to the American Association of University Professors (as cited in Ansah, 2015:174), the benefit of academic freedom is to protect educationists from being victimised for their teachings, or writings from those "… in positions of power and authority." In agreement with the above view, Osieja (2016:1) pointed out that academic freedom warrants that the teaching, learning and the search for new information be independent from state interference and manipulation. She (Osieja, 2016:1) added that the main aim of teaching and learning should be the telling of and search for the truth and not indoctrination. Siyum and Gebremedhin (2015:223) also argued that, while the strength of any state's education system is anchored on "… the quality and commitment of its teachers …", the government is also obligated to provide the enabling environment, which is conducive for autonomous and academic freedom for the teachers.

5.7 CHAPTER SUMMARY

It was indicated in this chapter that the majority of the participants in the study were school heads and History teachers from secondary schools sampled from the Mutare and Mutasa districts. A few were incumbent and retired education officials, and curriculum experts. While some participants welcomed the decision to make History a core subject, the majority condemned the decision. Few members of the participants viewed the decision as a benefit for the learners to develop analysis skills and to promote a national awareness of history. However, it was reported that the majority of the participants considered it as a political move meant to sustain the ZANU PF rule through patriotic History teaching. With regard to the mandatory teaching of the subject History, and out of a sample of twenty-five secondary schools, it was shown that three of the sampled secondary schools successfully implemented the O-level History curriculum reforms. Fourteen of the secondary schools partially implemented the reforms. Eight of the sampled secondary schools did not comply with the ministerial directive of 2002 at all. The reasons for total compliance, partial compliance and non-compliance were given.

The chapter also indicated that, besides the use of the circular to disseminate and direct secondary schools to implement the History curriculum reforms, the education ministry did not monitor and/or evaluate the extent to which the O-level History curriculum reforms were implemented in the Mutasa and Mutare districts of the Manicaland province. The reasons for this were identified as the shortage of financial and human resources. The views of the participants in terms of how best the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education could have enhanced the successful implementation of the History curriculum reforms were given as well.

CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter presented the analysis and interpretation of the research data that was gathered through individual interviews, focus group discussions and document study. It was guided by the themes and sub-themes that emerged from the data analysis and interpretation. This chapter summarises the reviewed literature and the research findings of this study based on the research questions and objectives. The chapter also exposes some of the limitations the researcher encountered during the study. The chapter concludes with recommendations based on the findings of the study and the areas that require further research. This chapter starts with a summary of the reviewed literature as enunciated in the next section.

6.2 SUMMARY OF LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review for this study covered two chapters, namely Chapter 2, which focused on the conceptual framework and Chapter 3 which focused on curriculum theory and practice. Additionally, Chapter 3 also focused on politics and education.

Chapter 2 started by giving the meaning of the concept conceptual framework of the study, its importance and reviewing the various proposed definitions for the concept curriculum, and came up with the working definitions for the concepts curriculum and curriculum reforms (*cf*. Section 2.3). Different definitions for the concept curriculum as given by scholars such as Apple (1993:222), Dewey, as cited in Ruubel (2013:10), Kerr, as cited in Smith (2000:1), Nevenglosky (2018:8), Supriani, *et al.*, (2022:485) and Tyler, as cited in Nkyabonaki (2013:110) were presented. The working definition for the concept curriculum was given as an approved written plan or guideline for teacher-pupil activities in or outside the classroom situations.

This was followed by the reviewing of literature related to matters and issues with regard to the curriculum development processes. The focus pertained to the meaning of the concepts curriculum planning, design and development were outlined from different scholarly viewpoints

(*cf.* Section 2.4). While there are numerous curriculum development models, three models which are popularly used internationally today were reviewed. The three models were Tyler's objective model, Taba's grassroots model and Lawton's cultural analysis model (*cf.* Sections 2.5.1, 2.5.2 & 2.5.3).

Issues to do with curriculum implementation were also part of the literature review in Chapter 2, particularly the fact that there are several factors that inhibit or influence the successful implementation of a curriculum (Olibie, 2014:41; Sargent, 2011:17-18; Stern 2007:1). Additionally, also reviewed in Chapter 2 were the definition and significance of the concept curriculum evaluation (Farroq, 2014:1; Haque & David, 2022:2; Mulawarman, 2021:968; Mitchell, 2016:51; Ornstein & Hunkins, 1998:319; Tyler, 1966:1). Literature on two form of curriculum evaluation, namely formative and summative were reviewed too (Mitchell, 2016:52; Ornstein & Hunkins, 1998:237; Urebvu:1999:72). Chapter 2 was concluded following the reviewing of literature related to three models of curriculum evaluation, which are used in many countries globally. The three models of curriculum evaluation whose related literature were reviewed are Tyler's objective attainment model, Stufflebeam's CIPP model, and Bertalanffy's systems model (Bertalanffy, 1969:30-36; Mizikaci, 2006:43; Singla & Gupta, sa:12; Stufflebeam, 2003:31-32; Tyler, 1949:110-120; Zhang *et al,* 2011:59).

Chapter 3 presented reviewed literature on curriculum theory and practice. It also presented scholarly literature on politics and education. With regard to curriculum theory and practice, four approaches to understanding the latter, namely curriculum as a body of knowledge, curriculum as an attempt to achieve certain goals, curriculum as a process and curriculum as praxis were discussed (Abdusattorovna & Ajikulloevna, 2023:382; Smith, 2000:1). The nature of school knowledge in the curriculum was presented as well. It was presented that the nature of knowledge in the school knowledge can be understood as school based-curriculum knowledge or child-centred curriculum knowledge (Gatawa, 1990:27; Suissa, 2023:228; Young 2013:110),

Chapter 3 also revealed that curriculum enterprise generally involves politics (Apple, 1993:222-223; Madondo, 2021:403; McNeil, 2009:252). In this regard, it was presented that politics and education are intertwined because those in political power have a direct influence on the nature of school curriculum (Bowles & Gentis, 2002:2; Kurasha & Chibaya, 2013:55; Petherick, 2023:1; Steller, sa:161; Zheng, Wang & Li, 2021:1-2; Zvobgo, 1994:3). A critique of History as a field of study was presented (Twyman, 1997:6; Van Straaten, Wilschut & Oostdam, 2016:480; Wilscut

2010:693). Also discussed was the role and place of the subject History in the school curriculum globally. In this regard, literature focusing on China, Japan, Australia, Germany, Britain, the Middle East, and the United States were reviewed (Dror, 2001:29; Gil, 2009:1-2; Haynes, 2009:424; Sharp, 2012:405; Sneider, 2012:35). Chapter 3 was concluded with a presentation of perspectives on role and place of the subject History in the Zimbabwean education system (Barnes, 2007:649; Magudu, 2012:179; Matereke, 2012:93; Nyakudya, 2007:116; Ranger, 2005:12; Maposa and Wassermann, 2014:259-265). Next is the summary of the study findings.

6.3 SUMMARY OF THE EMPIRICAL STUDY

This section is a summarised presentation of the empirical research of the study. The main focus of this study was to establish the extent of the success of mandatory study of school History in Zimbabwe's Manicaland province from 2002 to 2016, in particular the Mutare and Mutasa districts. To answer the problem under investigation, the researcher employed interpretivism and qualitative as the research paradigm and approach respectively (*cf*. Sections 4.2.1 & 4.3). The qualitative approach was embedded with a case study as the research method (*cf*. Section 4.4). Purposive and snowbow sampling strategies were used to identify the sources of data (*cf*. Section 4.5.2.1), while individual interviews, focus group discussions and document study were used as the data-gathering instruments (*cf*. Sections 4.5.3.1, 4.5.3.2 & 4.5.3.3). The gathered data was analysed and interpreted using a thematic analysis approach (*cf*. Section 4.5.4). Issues to do with trustworthiness and ethical considerations were adhered to during and after data-gathering processes (*cf*. Sections 4.6 & 4.7).

Several themes and sub-themes emerged from the analysed data that was gathered through individual interviews, focus group discussions and document study. Key themes that emerged were: an approach to and rationale for the mandatory study of the subject history, implementation of the O-level history curriculum in secondary schools, efforts of the Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture to facilitate a successful curriculum implementation and participants' views on how the Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture should have facilitated the implementation of the curriculum (*cf*. Table 5.7).

6.3.1 The rationale for making the study of History compulsory at secondary school level

Based on the study findings (*cf*. Section 5.3.1), the researcher concluded that, although it was not confirmed by the majority of the participants in this study, the participants perceived that the compulsory study of the subject History was primarily meant to benefit the learners, as it promoted national awareness of history, as well as assisting them to develop analytical and judgmental skills. These skills are primarily of value for individual citizens to make informed choices (Aparna & Raakhee, 2011:3; Pillai, 2012:21). Besides the view that it assisted learners in understanding the history of their country, it also facilitated the same function in terms of the international community. Hence, to assist in the understanding of biased international history, such as the colonial history of propaganda and attitudes that showed Africans as inferior subjects (Interviewee B). In this regard, it was meant to create patriotic Zimbabwean citizens, i.e. the original function of the study of school History. Hence, the purpose for the compulsory study of school History was for the learners to acquire life-long knowledge, and a sense of love for their country (*cf*. Section 5.3.1). In view of the above, the compulsory study of the subject History was a welcome move (*cf*. Section 5.3.1).

However, it was revealed that some of the participants, especially, the majority of the History teachers, held a totally different and opposing view to that of the above participants. For them, the rationale for making the study of History compulsory was rather a political move by ZANU PF to sustain itself in power by extending its electorate base, bearing in mind that the former was facing a severe challenge from the MDC party, and other pressure groups (Barnes, 2007:649; Maposa & Wassermann, 2014:255; Personal experience; *cf*. Section 5.3.2).

6.3.2 Approach(es) of curriculum dissemination adopted by the then Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture to ensure the successful implementation of the O-level History curriculum reforms in Zimbabwean secondary schools

In this report, it was acknowledged that the use of the circular, *Secretary's Circular Number 3 of 2002* by the then Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture was an approach to ensure the successful implementation of the History curriculum reforms. Both the retired and current education officers confirmed and justified the use of the circular as a means to disseminate curriculum reforms (*cf*. Section 5.3.2).

6.3.3 Role of the education officers, secondary school heads and History teachers to ensure a successful implementation of the reforms in the secondary schools of the Manicaland Province

Based on the information gathered from the above participants in the study, namely the education officials (incumbent and retired), school heads and History teachers, it was revealed that there were no known efforts by the education ministry to ensure the successful implementation of the *Secretary's Circular Number 3 of 2002* (*cf.* Section 5.5). The justifications for such poor showing were also reported during the interviews. The justifications were given as financial constraints faced by the Zimbabwean government (*cf.* Section 5.5).

As an attempt to determine the role played by the secondary school heads and History teachers to ensure the successful implementation of the reforms, varied responses were provided by the participants. Some responses showed that there were school heads (n=3) who complied with the instructions of the education ministry, namely to teach History as a compulsory subject, and that both the History teachers and learners co-operated (*cf.* Section 5.4.1.1). Some responses also revealed that there were cases where some schools (n=14) implemented the curriculum reforms at a later stage (*cf.* Section 5.4.1.2), while others (n=8) never implemented the curriculum at all (*cf.* Section 5.4.1.3). It was also established that the learners were important role-players in the successful implementation of the curriculum reforms given their willingness to study the subject. However, some were unwilling to study the subject given their parents' influence and/or financial constraints (*cf.* Sections 5.4.1.2 & 5.4.1.3). In view of the above information from the participants in the study, some secondary schools successfully implemented the curriculum reforms as a result of the commitment of the school heads, History teachers and learners to the success of the reforms, while other schools partially, or never, implemented the curriculum reforms due to reservations on the part of some of the enforcers, implementers and "consumers" of the curriculum.

6.3.4 Achieving the intended curriculum reform outcomes

A small number of the participants (n=2), specifically the education inspectors, argued that there was no better option than the use of a circular letter for the then Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture to ensure the successful implementation of the reforms. The use of a circular letter to direct the compulsory study of the subject History was the best option available, since teachers

have the tendency to resist changes in the teaching and learning of any subject (Altinyelken, 2013:110; Snyder, 2017:1; *cf*. Section 5.5). However, the majority of the participants, mainly the school heads and History teachers, felt that the implementation of the reforms could have been much more successful had the Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture conducted some workshops or refresher courses, in which the various role-players were informed about the rationale for the compulsory study of the subject History (*cf*. Section 5.6). It was further suggested by them that the government should have set aside financial resources to support the subject-based education inspectors to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the curriculum reforms. Additionally, History teachers should be protected from political victimisation, and feel free to teach any historical concept regardless of its sensitivity.

6.4 SYNTHESIS OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

This section of the presentation focuses on the synthesis of the research findings based on the literature that was reviewed in chapters 2 and 3. It is also based on the study findings as discussed in Chapter 5. The synthesis of the research findings emphasises on the similarities and contradictions between the literature review and the empirical study. It is summarised in Table 5.13 below.

Table 5.13: Similarities and contradictions between literature review and the empirical study

Similarities between the literature review and the research findings	**Contradictions between the literature review and the research findings**
Barnes (2007:649), Maposa and Wassermann (2014:255), Onslow (2011:5) and Ranger (2004:215) argued that, in Zimbabwe, history education was abused and used as a tool to prolong ZANU PF's stay in power by producing graduates who were uncritical patriots, and who support the ZANU PF rule. The same was deduced from the responses that were given by the participants of the study during the individual interviews and focus	Given Emesini, Ogah and Eze (2013:42), and Isidiho and Sabran's (2016:268) argument that the centre-periphery model (no-negotiations-but-do-it) is mostly suitable to fast-track the implementation of overdue curriculum change(s), as was the case in the Zimbabwean context (*cf*. Section 5.3.3), in this study, the approach to use a circular to mandate secondary schools to teach History as a compulsory subject did not work as it was

group discussions (*cf* Sections 3.4.5, 5.3.1 & 5.3.2).	largely ignored in the Mutare and Mutasa secondary schools. (*cf*. Sections 5.4.1.2 & 5.4.13).
Curriculum specialists claimed that the successful implementation of any curriculum is not guaranteed and predictable because it can be resisted or ignored by key role-players (Ahmed & Maryam, 2016:67; Alsubaie, 2016:107; Altinyelken, 2013:110; Mbarushimana & Allida, 2017:4; Peskova, Spurná & Knecht, 2019:73). Similarly, the study findings showed that out of the twenty-five secondary schools that were involved in the study, eight totally ignored and did not implement the curriculum changes, fourteen partially implemented the curriculum reforms while, while only three successfully implemented the reforms. (*cf*. Sections 5.4.1.1, 5.4.1.2 & 5.4.13).	While Tyler (1949:5-32) argued that government administrators or curriculum designers/planners have the unilateral duty of designing and developing the curriculum, and then handing it over to the schools for implementation, this study established that school heads, teachers, parents and learners are equally vital role players who are supposed to fully participate in curriculum development processes to enhance the successful implantation on the later at school level (*cf*. Sections 5.4.1.1).
Scholars such as Merry (2009:186), Posner (1995:211), Shilling (2013:20) and Voogt, Pieters and Roblin (2019:6) warned that teachers are not passive participants, but have “pockets of veto” with regard to effective, sustainable and successful implementation of a curriculum innovation or change. This concurred with the findings of this study which showed that it was within the Mutare and Mutasa History teachers’ willingness to or not to implement and enforce learners to take the subject History as a ‘must’ (*cf*. Sections 5.4.1.2 & 5.4.13).	While Taba’s (1962:9) grassroots model for curriculum development calls for the teachers, and not government administrators, to be at the centre of curriculum development, this study found that the latter are equally important in the said process (*cf*. Sections 5.4.1.1 & 5.4.1.2). Given the curriculum consensus model that emerged from the empirical study, it emphasises the unanimity participation of the key role-players, from top to bottom, in terms of all the curriculum development processes resulting in the curriculum implementation stage (cf. Figure 6.1).

Stern (2007:1) observed that educational reforms which are dictated by top government officials for implementation such as centralised reform measures of curricular do not automatically lead to educational change, but can be ignored or met with resistance. Similarly, the study findings showed that the directive by Zimbabwe's education ministry, through a ministerial circular, to have the mandatory study of the subject History was, to a great extent, ignored *(cf.* Sections 5.4.1.2 & 5.4.13).	Taba's (1962:9) emphasised on the teachers' participation in the curriculum development process from the start to the end to enhance successful curriculum implementation. She does not accord learners and parents an equal position and opportunity in the curriculum development processes. Yet as was established in this study, parents and learners played an equally important role in the overall unsuccessful implementation of the O-level History curriculum reforms in the Manicaland province (*cf.* Section 5.4.1.2).
Financial constraints have been cited as one of the factors that inhibited the successful implementation of curriculum reforms (Omolo, Sika & Olel, 2019:100; Sargent, 2011:7-8), This was also confirmed in this study. Thus, some learners dropped History from the list of the subjects they were studying due to lack of funds. Similarly, the education ministry did not monitor and evaluate the mandatory teaching of the subject History because of lack of funds to fund the event *(cf.* Section 5.4.1.2)	The use of circulars by government officials to disseminate curriculum information to schools is advantageous because the recipients of the directive are expected to accept, adopt and implement the prescribed curriculum changes within the stipulated timeframe, without any resistance (Liedl, 2011:7; Emesini, Ogah & Eze (2013:42). Nevertheless, the findings of this study showed that the reforms were, to a great extent, ignored even though the education ministry used a circular as an approach to curriculum information dissemination. (*cf.* Sections 5.4.1.2 & 5.4.13).

Sources: Chapters 2, 3 and 5

6.5 CONCLUSION(S)

In this section, a summary of the conclusions of the research findings will be provided. It can be concluded that the study was set to answer the main research question and four sub-research questions (*cf.* Section 1.4). As such, the conclusions for this study will be presented as answers pertaining to the set research questions. Answers for the sub-research questions will be presented first, and those for the main research question will be given at the end.

The first sub-research question was, **What was the rationale for making the study of History compulsory at secondary school level?** Regarding the first question, two opposing views regarding the rationale for the compulsory study of the subject History in Zimbabwe's secondary schools were established. A number of the participants argued that it was intended to benefit the learners (*cf.* Sections 5.3 & 5.3.1). For them, the Zimbabwean government wanted the learners to acquire the necessary knowledge to keep the current Zimbabwean society intact, for the learners to be proud of their country and to be aware of how the country relates to the rest of the world (*cf.* Sections 5.3 & 5.3.1). However, the majority of the participants in the study held a different view. They largely felt that the compulsory study of History as a secondary school subject was not to their benefit, but rather to sustain ZANU PF's rule by means of enforcing a sense of patriotism among the youth (*cf.* Section 5.3.2).

The second sub-research question was, **Which approach(es) of curriculum dissemination was/were adopted by the then Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture to ensure its successful implementation in Zimbabwean secondary schools?** Given the above research question, it was established that the then Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture used a top-down approach to disseminate information about the O-level History curriculum reforms. For this purpose, a circular letter was used. Some of the participants viewed the use of the circular letter as of great advantage to the then Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture as it was an inexpensive way to reach a large audience in a short period (*cf.* Section 5.3.3).

The third sub-research question was, **What role did the education officers, the secondary school heads, and History teachers play in the successful implementation of the reforms in the secondary schools of the Manicaland Province?** Regarding the roles played by the education officials, the study revealed that the education officials did not evaluate or monitor the implementation of the curriculum reforms given the shortage of human and financial resources. In schools where the reforms were implemented, the school heads played the role of instructional leaders who enforced the implementation of the reforms, although not all of them (*cf.* Section 5.4.1.1). Similarly, while the History teachers implemented the curriculum reforms and persuaded the learners to "consume" the curriculum, not all of them did that (*cf.* Sections 5.4.1.2 & 5.4.1.3). Therefore, in terms of the degree to which the reforms were implemented, in this study, the limits and possibilities of the History curriculum implementation process in the Mutare and Mutasa

districts of the Manicaland province were exposed.

The fourth and final sub-research question was, **How best could the intended outcomes of the reform and innovation programmes been achieved?** While a few of the participants (n=2), particularly the education officials, felt that there was nothing more that the then Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture could have done, besides directing the compulsory study of History by using the circular letter, the majority of the participants suggested that the education officials were supposed to conduct workshops to inform the school heads and History teachers of the rationale for the compulsory study of the school subject History. It was also argued that financial resources were supposed to be set aside for the monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the reforms. The participants suggested that the relevant ministry was supposed to protect the History teachers from victimisation when they were involved in the teaching of politically-sensitive topics critical of ZANU PF (*cf.* Section 5.6).

The application of the researcher's curriculum model, which is outlined below, could be used to enhance the successful implementation of curriculum changes. The latter is known as the curriculum consensus model. Presenting this model is a unique contribution this study is making. The model is based on the information gathered during this study. The curriculum consensus model is an improved and more appropriate model than the centre-periphery model that was adopted and used by the then Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture for the dissemination and implementation of the History curriculum reforms of 2002.

The centre-periphery model entails that a curriculum has to be designed, developed, or reformed at the top, and the implementers are then informed of the new, or reformed curriculum through circulars and/or meetings (*cf.* Section 3.2.3.1). This means that the model is based on the top-bottom approach, where top decision-makers issue a decree, and the school teachers are required to implement the new, or reformed curriculum. In the case of the Zimbabwean education system, Ndawi (199:91) confirmed that curriculum innovations are often disseminated to the classroom teachers for implementation through the use of policy circulars. This was the case in 2002 when the then Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture disseminated the O-level History curriculum reforms for implementation through the use of a policy circular, namely the *Secretary's Circular Number 3 of 2002* (Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture, 2002:5; Personal experience, 2002). The approach used by the government of Zimbabwe to disseminate and implement the History curriculum reforms of 2002 seemed to be similar to that of Tyler's (*cf.*

Section 2.5.1) classical curriculum development model. This model implies that government administrators have the unilateral duty of designing and developing the curriculum, and then handing it over to the schools for implementation (Tyler, 1949:5-32). Given Emesini, Ogah and Eze (2013:42), and Isidiho and Sabran's (2016:268) argument that the centre-periphery model is mostly suitable to fast-track the implementation of an overdue curriculum change(s), as was the case in the Zimbabwean context (*cf*. Chapter 5, Sections 5.4.1.2 & 5.4.1.3), it has some short comings. As was the case with Zimbabwe, the centre-periphery model, which the researcher referred to as the No-negotiations-but-do-it (NONEBUDI) approach, was rooted in a "dictatorial" assumption that the task would be executed straight away, and that the subordinates will not be granted any opportunity to query a directive of the government, but to immediately obey, adopt and implement the task (Isidiho & Sabran, 2016:268). However, to a great extent, the directive was resisted at the implementation stage by many school heads, History teachers, learners and parents in the Manicaland province (*cf*. Chapter 5, Sections 5.4.1.2 & 5.4.1.3).

Given the findings of the study, it was concluded that the use of the centre-periphery or NONEBUDI model by the then Ministry of Education, Art and Culture for curriculum dissemination and implementation was not only inappropriate, but also wasteful in terms of the state resources, despite of the fact that the government wanted to fast-track the implementation of the long overdue and important curriculum changes to a large number of schools in the shortest possible time. The latter model was largely unsuccessful to compel all learners in the Manicaland Province to study History as a school subject. This confirmed that the successful implementation of any curriculum is not guaranteed and predictable because it can be resisted by key role-players (Ahmed & Maryam, 2016:67; Alsubaie, 2016:107; Altinyelken, 2013:110; Mbarushimana & Allida, 2017:4; Zimmerman, 2006:240). Given the problems associated with the approach to curriculum dissemination and implementation used by the then Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture in 2002, the findings of this study also showed that the key role-players, such as the school heads and History teachers resisted the curriculum changes because they were not informed about the rationale for the changes (see Chapter 5, Section 5.6). The NONEBUDI approach ignored Taba's grassroots curriculum development model, that advocated for curriculum developments that are in the learners' needs and interests, rather than those of the leaders of the country (Handler, 2010:33; Ruubel, 2013:4; Saracaloglua *et. al.*, 2010:2432; Taba, 1962:9). The discussion above, exposed the gaps of the NONEBUDI approach to curriculum dissemination and implementation, and serves as a confirmation of the importance of consensus among the key role-players in the education sector when it comes to the successful implementation of curriculum reforms. The

above notion forms the basis of the curriculum consensus model that can be used to enhance the implementation of History curriculum reforms. Unlike the centre-periphery, or the NONEBUT approach, that "advocates" for the notion that curriculum decisions should solely originate from the top decision-makers, and then be cascaded to the schools for implementation, the curriculum consensus model emphasises the unanimity of the role-players in terms of all the curriculum processes resulting in the curriculum implementation stage (Emesini, Ogah & Eze, 2013:42).

While the curriculum consensus model gives prominence to the participation of the key role-players at grassroots level, it involves more role-players at grassroots level than Taba's (1962:9) grassroots (bottom-up) model of curriculum design and development (*cf.* Section 2.5.2). Taba's grassroots model advocated for the democratisation of the curriculum design and development process to enhance the successful implementation of the latter (Taba, 1969:9). The grassroots model calls for the involvement of teachers at the curriculum development levels, and unlike Tyler's centre-periphery model that focused more on the administrator as the curriculum maker, than the classroom teacher, who is aware of the learners' interests and needs, and who is the implementer of the curriculum (Handler, 2010:33; Ruubel, 2013:4; Tyler, 1949:5-32).

The researcher approved the advantages of Taba's grassroots model since it advocated for the central involvement of the teachers (implementers of the curriculum) at all key levels of curriculum design and development to promote the successful implementation of the latter (Onstein & Hunkins, 1998:199; Saracaloglua *et. al.*, 2010:2432; Taba, 1962:9). In her (Taba's) view, teachers are supposed to take the centre stage in all key curriculum development processes because they are the ones who implement the curriculum, and who are much more aware of the needs and interests of the learners than any of the other role-players in the education sector (Handler, 2010:33; Onstein & Hunkins, 1998:199; Ruubel, 2013:4; Saracaloglua *et. al.*, 2010:2432; Taba, 1962:9).

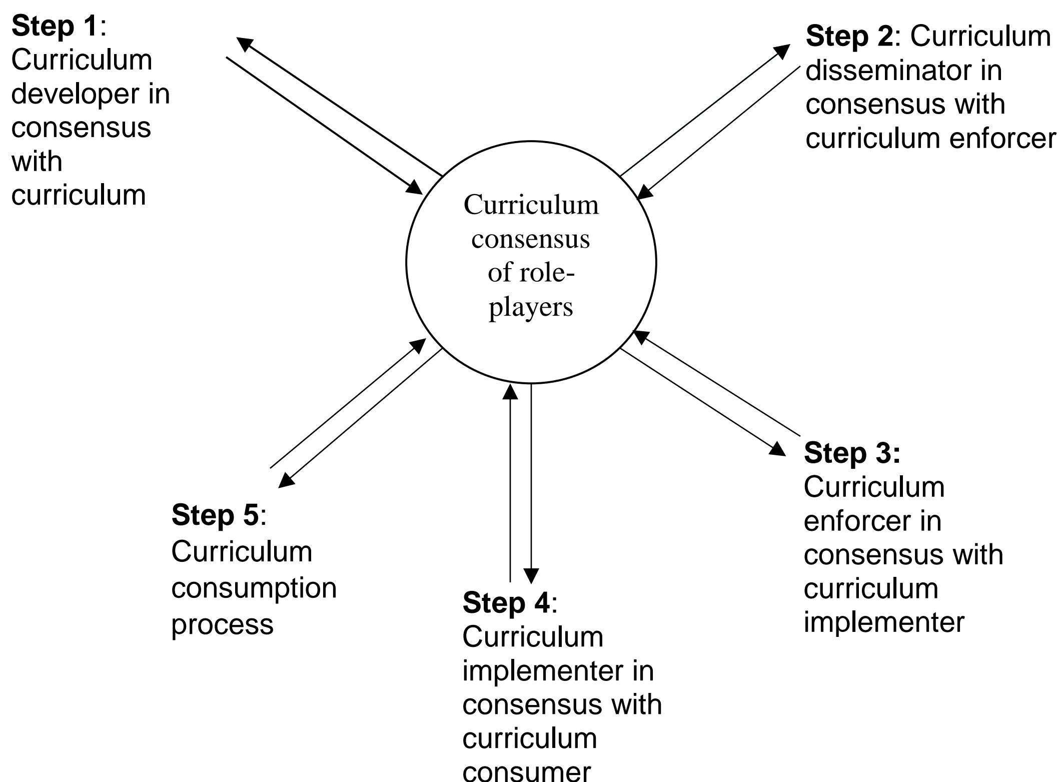
However, based on the information generated from this study, the researcher identified some limitations in Taba's (1962:9) grassroots model. It emphasised the teachers' participation in the curriculum development process from the start to the end. The basis of her (Taba's) argument is that, since the teachers are the implementers of the curriculum, they know the needs and interests of the learners better, and have the capacity to start from the specific educational purposes, and then progress to the general (Saracaloglua *et. al.*, 2010:2432; Taba, 1962:9). The latter is unlike the model designed for teachers by the administrators (Ornstein & Hunkins, 1998:199; Ruubel,

2013:4; Saracaloglua *et. al.*, 2010:2432). This position does not accord learners and parents an equal position and opportunity in the curriculum development processes to enhance a successful curriculum implementation. In Taba's grassroots model, learners and parents are not the key role-players, yet, in this study, they played a major role in the overall unsuccessful implementation of the O-level History curriculum reforms in the Manicaland province from 2002 to 2016 (Mitchell, 2016:49; Offorma, 2014:83; Onstein & Hunkins, 1998:199; Taba, 1962:12-13; also refer to Chapter 5, Section 5.4.1.2 for the role of the learners and their parents towards the unsuccessful implementation of the History curriculum reforms in the Manicaland province).

Given the above, the curriculum consensus model is largely an improvement of both Tyler's (1949:1-32) classical and Taba's (1962:12-13) grassroots models. While Taba (1962:12-13) viewed teachers as key role-players in the curriculum development process towards a successful implementation of curriculum reforms, she ignored the direct roles of the learners and parents in the process. The researcher argues that the latter are equally important grassroots stake-holders, whose participation in the curriculum development process should be considered as of great importance. Unlike Taba's (1962:12-13) grassroots model, that dismissed Tyler's (1949:1-32) classical model in terms of the role of top decision-makers in the curriculum development process, and relegated them given their lack of non-specialist subject knowledge, the researcher acknowledges the significant role of the top administrators in the curriculum design and development processes towards the promotion of a successful curriculum implementation. Overall, the researcher argues that there is a need to understand how to realise sustainable implementation of curriculum reforms (Voogt, Pieters and Roblin, 2019:6).

Given the above, the curriculum consensus model emphasises the unanimity of the key role-players, from top to bottom, in terms of all the curriculum development processes resulting in the curriculum implementation stage. In this model, all the preparatory processes, prior to the curriculum implementation stage, had to be based on a mutual agreement. Hence, role-players, such as the school heads, History teachers, learners and their parents' considerations are equally important for the successful implementation of curriculum changes. The model is diagrammatically represented in five steps shown below.

Figure 6.1: **A curriculum consensus model to enhance the implementation of History curriculum reforms**



Source: Own design

With the diagramme in mind, in the next paragraphs, an elaboration of the five steps of the curriculum consensus model is provided.

Step 1: The curriculum developer plans, designs and develops the curriculum. The concept curriculum developer refers to a subject specialist, or a curriculum theory specialist or both, who can plan, design and develop curriculum guides and materials. Within the Zimbabwean context, the role of the curriculum developer was fulfilled by the Curriculum Development Unit (CDU). This was done in agreement with the office of the Permanent Secretary in the then Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture, who took the role of the curriculum disseminator by way of compiling a circular, that was sent to all schools and other key role-players for the implementation of the compulsory study of the school subject History. The concept curriculum disseminator shall

mean the one who transmits information on curriculum reforms to the implementers, and the other key role-players. Given this scenario, the CDU and the then Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture were involved in the curriculum development processes until the curriculum information dissemination phase, without wide consultations and consensus with the other key role-players such as the school heads, History teachers, learners and their parents in terms of the rationale for the compulsory study of the subject History (*cf.* Chapter 5, Section 5.5). Given the above, the CDU and the then Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture was supposed to have widely consulted, negotiated and agreed with the other key role-players before promulgating the mandatory study of the school subject History.

Step 2: In this step, the curriculum disseminator communicates the agreed curriculum reforms or changes to the schools for implementation. Amongst other key role-players, the curriculum disseminator communicates the curriculum change, or reforms to the curriculum enforcers. The curriculum enforcer refers to the person who enforces the implementation of the curriculum changes. The school heads, being the curriculum enforcers, will adopt and enforce the implementation of the curriculum change, or reforms, because they own it (Alsubaie, 2016:107; Mbarushimana & Allida, 2017:4). Within the Zimbabwean context, it was the office of the then Secretary for the Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture that compiled and distributed the circular to inform the secondary schools of the History curriculum changes. Neither the curriculum enforcers, nor the History teachers, learners and their parents were informed of the reason(s) for the mandatory study of History as a school subject.

Step 3: The curriculum enforcer (school heads), the one who enforces the implementation of the curriculum changes, should have a common understanding of the origins of and rationale for the curriculum changes, as they were involved in the critical processes of contriving the curriculum. Given the above, the curriculum enforcer will succeed in the enforcement of the curriculum implementation. The curriculum implementer, who are the subject teachers, will cooperate with the curriculum enforcer because they feel "ownership" for the official curriculum that they are mandated to implement (Alsubaie, 2016:107; Voogt, Pieters & Roblin, 2019:6). In the Zimbabwean context of the Manicaland province, it was the school heads, who in a top-down manner, "ordered" the History teachers to implement the curriculum changes, without both the former and the latter role-players being familiar with the reason(s) for decreeing the compulsory study of the subject school History, since it was just a top-down directive from the decision-makers.

Step 4: The curriculum implementer**,** who are the History teachers, use or operationalise the curriculum in the classroom context. Prior to the operationalisation of the curriculum, the curriculum implementer is supposed to inform, or remind the curriculum consumers of the purpose of the curriculum changes. In the context of this study, the curriculum consumers were the learners, who were supposed to be familiar with the origins and purpose of the curriculum reforms. According to Suzuki (2016:31), learners will then not resist the implementation, because they (learners) and their parents will have been informed or consulted, and involved prior to the implementation stage of the curriculum reforms. In the Zimbabwean context of the Manicaland province, it was the subject History teachers who were forced to implement the curriculum changes, and without any consensus with the "consumers" of the curriculum. The curriculum enforcer (government) used the *Secretary's Circular Number 3 of 2002* to enforce the "consumption" of the curriculum, without any consensus with the teachers and/or the learners.

Step 5: The curriculum consumption refers to the implementation processes related to the curriculum change. It is when the learners acquire the intended educational knowledge, i.e. the learners "consume" the curriculum, following consensus with the curriculum implementers. In the Zimbabwean context of the Manicaland province, it was the learners who "consumed" the curriculum. However, not the majority of them (cf. Sections, 5.4.1.2 & 5.4.1.3, Tables 5.11 & 5.12). Despite of the fact that the curriculum consumption was done in terms of the epistemic aims of the educational knowledge as enshrined in the curriculum, there was little cooperation from the grassroots key role-players of the Manicaland province, namely the learners (Robertson, 2009:11). They were not consulted during the curriculum development cycle.

Given the above curriculum consensus model, all the preparatory processes prior to the curriculum implementation phase had to be done on a unanimous basis. All role-players are viewed as equally important for the successful implementation of the curriculum innovations. The tendency not to consult the curriculum enforcers, implementers and "consumers" in the curriculum policy and planning process has to be discouraged as the afore-said role-players are a critical and essential component of any successful curriculum implementation process (Tyler, 1949:1). Hence, the Zimbabwean Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education has to desist the traditional approach to curriculum development; using a hierarchical and top-down approach, where schools are provided with a top-down designed curriculum to implement without all the major role-players' input (Onstein & Hunkins, 1998:199; Taba, 1962:9). Despite of the fact that the school heads,

History teachers and learners were at the bottom of the decision-making process, they should have been consulted, and some consensus be established between the "working partners" for the curriculum changes to be acceptable to all role-players (Jagersma, 2010:6).

The consensus stage also comprises of a top-down and bottom-up flow of mutual agreement. This implies that the key role-players from both the top and grassroots levels have to work together in agreement (refer to the curriculum consensus model flow chart in Figure 6.1). Any government's failure to take note of the steps of the curriculum consensus model in the preparation of the curriculum implementation stage will result in a fractional or null curriculum implementation process (Tyler, 1975:28). In this regard, History curriculum policy-makers should avoid applying the "panic approach" to curriculum implementation. The concept "panic approach" to curriculum implementation refers to the fast-tracking of a curriculum for implementation, without consulting and agreeing with the grassroots key role-players, such as the curriculum enforcers, implementers and "consumers." Snyder (2017:2) warned that initiating curriculum change, or reform objectives, without considering and involving the change agents results in an unsuccessful curriculum implementation. Priestley and Drew (2016:1) argued that there exists a gap between purpose and practice in curriculum implementation globally because teachers are not autonomous in the curriculum development processes. Squires (2015:23) added that school principals are a vital link for any successful curriculum implementation at school level because they enforce and supervise the implementation of the curriculum change. Hence, they lead in the implementation of the change. Given the above, it is suggested that all important role-players should understand and confirm the rationale for the curriculum changes. This section is concluded by way of summarising the answers with regard to the main research question.

The main research question was, **To what extent were the History curriculum reforms successfully implemented in the secondary schools of the Manicaland Province in Zimbabwe?** Three trends or scenarios of curriculum implementation were identified, namely complete, fractional and null curriculum implementations (*cf.* Sections 5.4.1.1, 5.4.1.2 & 5.4.1.3). A complete curriculum implementation was a situation where the secondary schools successfully implemented the compulsory study of the subject History (*cf.* Section 5.4.1.1). The latter occurred as early as 2003. Of the twenty-five secondary schools sampled for this study, three of them successfully implemented the reforms. Co-operation and positive co-ordination occurred among the school heads, History teachers, and learners resulted in the successful curriculum implementation. Fractional curriculum implementation was where the secondary schools were

partially successful in the implementation of the compulsory study of History as a school subject (*cf.* Section 5.4.1.2). Fourteen of the sampled secondary schools partially implemented the reforms because of little or no commitment on the part of the curriculum enforcers and implementers. The History teachers feared political victimisation if they were involved in the teaching of politically-sensitive topics and concepts. Additionally, the unwillingness of the learners to "consume" the curriculum was also a problem. A null curriculum implementation refers to a scenario where the secondary schools never implemented the curriculum reforms (*cf.* Section 5.4.1.3). Eight of the secondary schools did not implement the reforms at all, given the non-commitment of the curriculum enforcers and implementers. Given the latter scenario, some of the curriculum enforcers and implementers who participated in this study argued that their institutions were private secondary schools. Hence, they were not bound by the dictates of the *Secretary's Circular Number 3 of 2002*, which directed the compulsory study of History as a school subject. The learners' career aspirations and their parents' influence also contributed to the scenario of null curriculum implementation. Given the above conclusions of the study, this inquiry was not without some limitations as elaborated below.

6.6 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study had a set of limitations that could not be left unmentioned. In this regard, limitations of the study refer to the "… potential weaknesses, or problems with the study identified [by] the researcher" (Cresswell, 2005:198). While the delineations partly limited the scope of the research, some of the limitations were not a result of deliberate delineations by the researcher, but were restrictions to the researcher's ability to investigate the thesis statement (Hofstee, 2009:87). In the next section, outlined initially are the limitations that resulted from the delineation factors, and it finally ends with those limitations which were independent of the delineations.

6.6.1 Limitations as a result of the delineations

In regards to the limitations as a result of the delineations of the study, were the following:

a) Research paradigm

The researcher chose the interpretivist paradigm and qualitative research approach for his inquiry. To this effect, one of the axioms of interpretivism and qualitative research is that the findings of

the study cannot be generalised to represent the study population (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011:294; Hammeed, 2020:9). Given the above, the conclusions of this study cannot be generalised to represent the state of the situation in Zimbabwe's secondary schools in general, and in particular, the extent to which the compulsory study of the subject History was successfully implemented in the country.

d) Data collection and analysis

As the study was qualitative in nature, the approach called for an in-depth, detailed and holistic study of a phenomenon (Ary, Jacobs & Sorensen, 2010:29; Ellis & Levy, 2009:327). Such an approach demanded a critical examination of, among others, the implementation of the secondary school History curriculum reforms at O-level in considerable depth. Voluminous records of the research data were gathered in a period of approximately four months in the Mutare and Mutasa districts of Manicaland Province. Accordingly, data-gathering and analysis were time-consuming and tedious.

6.6.2 Limitations as a result of the restrictions to the researcher's research challenges

There were a number of limitations to the study that were not a result of the deliberate delineations. These limitations were beyond the researcher's control and mitigated his ability to investigate the research problem comprehensively.

a) Lack of financial resources

The major impediment to the study was the lack of financial resources. Accommodation, food, travelling and scheduling appointments with the appropriate people to be interviewed, amongst many other things, needed a sound financial standing. The researcher did not have a sound financial situation to facilitate a thorough study in the two districts under study. The researcher was a Zimbabwean citizen, whose country's economy was in a crisis at the time of the study. Due to financial limitations, the researcher had to defer this study in 2020, and only to resume the study in 2023. While the researcher did not have a good financial background, he sought external funding from the University of South Africa to meet the basic financial needs for the study to be successfully concluded. During this period the researcher's supervisor had retired, and a new

supervisor had to be appointed, which contributed to further delays.

b) Inexperience in qualitative research methodology

Another limitation of the study was that the researcher did not have much experience in qualitative research methodology. In view of this, the researcher had to apply the knowledge he obtained during the *Research method and statistics in education* course he studied in 2006 for his Master's degree in Education at the University of Zimbabwe. In addition, he applied the little experience and skills he acquired when he conducted a three-month qualitative research project as part of an assessment module for the above degree program.

c) Unpreparedness of interviewees

Since all participants in the research project were volunteers, some of the O-level History teachers and secondary school administrators in the Mutasa and Mutare districts, who had accompanied their learners either to academic seminars or sporting events were unprepared to participate in individual and group interviews. Amongst some of the cited reasons for their unwillingness to participate were that they were preoccupied with the management of their academic or sporting teams.

d) Time management

Another problem with the study was the time limit. The researcher was employed by the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education as a teacher. During the study, he was the History teacher at one secondary school. As such, his services were required by his employer continuously, while he was also involved in the study. To this end, at one time, the researcher successfully applied for a vacation leave to have ample time to collect data and information for the study.

f) Reservations of interviewees

The researcher further anticipated that some of the interviewees may not have responded whole-heartedly for different reasons. In some cases, the participants preferred to say little, without much elaboration, even when there was room to do so. In other cases, the participants asked the interviewer to put alternative questions to them without answering the preceding ones. To

minimise this limitation, the researcher assured the interviewees that the information captured from the interviews was purely for academic purposes. The researcher normally did this before, during and after each interview session. Additionally, to prove that the study was solely academic in nature, the researcher produced clearance letters from both UNISA's Ethical Clearance Committee (*cf*. Appendix B) and the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education before the commencement of any interview session.

g) Focus groups as data-gathering method

The focus group as data-gathering method had one major limitation. Since the focus groups were small, there were possibilities that some participants did not feel comfortable to respond in a forum where participants did not know each other. The researcher explained that the purpose of the focus groups was purely academic and appealed to the participants to respond wholeheartedly. He also asked the participants to introduce themselves and sign the attendance register that was provided, although voluntarily. This also helped the participants to relax before the start of the discussions. In addition, the researcher also circulated the researcher's letters of approval from the UNISA's Ethical Clearance Committee *(cf*. Appendix B) and the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education as proof to convince the participants that the discussion was academic-oriented.

h) Accessibility to key primary documents

While the researcher used the outcome of the document study to complement the data collection, it was not always easy to get access to primary sources. The major challenge related to the use of the documents was access to certain important primary documents. For instance, the education officials were not allowed to provide the researcher with the minutes of the meetings during which the compulsory study of O-level History was recommended. Such primary documents were considered by education officials as confidential and could not just be handed over to the researcher. This was in line with the country's information laws (Official Secrets Act [Chapter 11:09], sa:1). The Act incriminates government employees who release government information to individuals without their employer's permission. There were also certain primary documents which detailed learners' enrolment that the researcher failed to have access to because they were not available at the Mutare and Mutasa district education offices (*cf*. Tables 5.11 & 5.12). Nevertheless, the same education officials made the document analysis a success because they

assisted the researcher to have access to important primary documents, such as the ministerial circular that directed the mandatory study of the subject History, student enrolments at both district and provincial levels, and the ZIMSEC O-level results analysis for the same levels.

6.7 RECOMMENDATIONS

According to Essay UK (Sa:1), recommendations are statements based on the findings of the study, namely suggestions on what has to be immediately done to improve the situation in relation to the research problem. According to the Bournemouth University Research Blog (2011:1), recommendations should not be broad and generic, but directly and specifically linked to the research problem. It was further revealed that recommendations should be related to what was previously discussed in the report (Bournemouth University Research Blog, 2011:1). Given the latter, this section provides suggestions to address the investigated problem.

As indicated in Sections 4.2.1 and 4.3, the research findings of the study were confined to the population of the empirical study. Although the generalisation of the recommendations and conclusion(s) of the study may be presumptuous and not acceptable to all role-players, the researcher was aware of the fact that insights generated from it inevitably would encourage general inferences within the scope of the study, and may also encourage further research on the topic in the other provinces of Zimbabwe, or even globally (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011:264). Given the above argument, the implications of the findings of this study are presented below as proposed recommendations or suggestions, which may be used to improve curriculum theory and practice in History education, especially the enhancement of the successful implementation of the History curriculum reforms.

6.7.1 Recommendation to the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education

The government of Zimbabwe's current Ministry of Secondary and Primary Education may cooperate with the Manicaland provincial teachers' representative organisations to liaise and lobby for the crafting of statutes which could be used to legally protect History teachers in Zimbabwe from political victimisation. These statutes may provide and guarantee teachers' academic freedom by providing the Zimbabwean judiciary system with a legal framework that would issue deterrent sentences for perpetrators of political violence and intimidation against History teachers.

Furthermore, given that the use of the top-down (no-negotiations-but-do-it) approach did not guarantee the successful curriculum implementation, it is also suggested that when future History curriculum changes are to be introduced to schools for implementation, the education ministry has to adopt a supervisory role to monitor, analyse and evaluate the implementation of the reforms to obtain feedback. This is recommended because the higher authorities, who initiated the curriculum reforms have to establish whether the intended outcomes were achieved given the prevailing circumstances on the ground. This may provide the government officials with an opportunity to alter, or re-visit the reforms to achieve the intended outcomes.

6.7.2 Recommendation to policy-makers in the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education

When History education was used to promote patriotism amongst the youth, the education ministry may not have implemented the "forced patriotism" approach because the change agents resisted a "forced" curriculum. For the researcher, forced patriotism is a form of patriotism that does not allow criticism, or condemnation of the leadership and/or government of the day, and aims to "reproduce" the *status quo*, be it good or bad. It is recommended that "unforced patriotism", which provides opportunities to criticise the policies of the political leadership if they are not in the national interest, should be cultivated in the learners through unforced and democratic History teaching and learning. Therefore, the development of learners' love for their country should be through free-will.

6.7.3 Recommendation to curriculum planners and designers in the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education

The adoption and application of the researcher's curriculum consensus model could be used to enhance the successful implementation of future History curriculum changes or even related subjects. The model, which is based on the information gathered during this study, should be applied during the planning and designing processes of History curriculum reforms because it enhances the successful implementation of the latter. The curriculum consensus model is an improved and more appropriate model than the centre-periphery model that was adopted and used by the then Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture for the dissemination and implementation of the History curriculum reforms of 2002 (*cf.* Section 5.3.3). The model is

premised on the notion that all important role-players such as the curriculum planners and designers, curriculum enforcers, curriculum implementers and curriculum consumers should understand and confirm the rationale for the curriculum changes.

Additionally, with reference to the O-level History curriculum planning and design phase in Zimbabwe, the curriculum policy-makers and designers should endeavour to find a match between theory and practice, especially matching the curriculum reality codes. The curriculum reality codes, which refer to the desired outcomes (aims or goals of the curriculum unit) and the desired learning experiences (the methodologies or teaching approaches) are the means to achieve the former, but they have to be compatible. Failure to obtain a correct match of the curriculum reality codes at the curriculum planning and design stage, will make it impossible to achieve the envisioned outcomes. The researcher refers to the latter as the mismatch of the curriculum reality codes. The failure to match the curriculum reality codes will result in the formulation of what the researcher calls a "weird curriculum." The concept "weird curriculum" refers to a school curriculum that is wrongly "manufactured", and "mistakenly" offered for implementation at school level to yield the unattainable.

6.8 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

Given the above-mentioned recommendations of this study, the following problem areas were identified, and may need to be revisited through research projects. An investigation may be carried out to establish the extent to which the mandatory study of History was successful in any other Province of Zimbabwe. These findings may then be compared with the findings of this study, and may result in broader insights related to the activities of curriculum planning and implementation at national level. In addition, a study may be conducted to establish the approach(es) that may be considered to empower History learners to be active role-players in the curriculum development process to enhance effective curriculum "consumption."

6.9 SUMMARY/CONCLUSION

Looking back, it can be summarised and concluded that this qualitative study was anchored on interpretivism as the research paradigm, with the case study as the research type. It was largely guided by Tyler's model for curriculum development as the conceptual framework. The critical review of related studies carried out in Zimbabwe and beyond, which further exposed the research

gap, was largely influenced by the conceptual framework. The study, whose main research question sought the extent to which History was a compulsory subject at O-level in Manicaland Province, found out that there was an overall curriculum infidelity. Thus, to a great extent, the History curriculum reforms were not implemented as was required by the education ministry. In this regard, the study established that the school heads, History teachers, learners and parents played a significant role towards curriculum infidelity. Given such findings, the researcher discouraged an abrupt or panic approach when it comes to information dissemination of History curriculum reforms with the intention to see the latter being implemented at school level because it can be resisted. As such, the additional impact of this research was revealed through the proposed curriculum consensus model, a model that can be used in assisting Zimbabwe's education ministry's top officers, including curriculum planners and developers or globally in enhancing curriculum fidelity. The model which was generated from the gathered research data emphasised on a mutual understanding amongst all key players in the education sector before releasing History curriculum reforms for implementation at the grassroots level. The synthesis of the study findings that was done, which emphasised on the similarities and differences between the reviewed literature and the empirical study, showed that while teachers are important grassroots key players towards the success of curriculum fidelity or implementation, also equally important grassroots players are the school heads, learners and their parents.

6.10 REFLECTIVE SUMMARY

My interest in Curriculum Studies, in particular Curriculum Theory and Practice, started after I enrolled for an M. Ed (Curriculum and Arts) degree at the University of Zimbabwe in Zimbabwe in 2005. One of our lecturers, during different learning sessions, repeatedly emphasised to our class (which exclusively comprised of school teachers): "You [teachers] are key-holders to any successful curriculum implementation." As a qualified and practicing secondary school History teacher, I became keen to establish, through observation, whether such an assertion 'holds any water.' Having completed my M. Ed degree in 2006, I was provoked to learn more about curriculum issues given the background that Zimbabwe's Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture, through its Permanent Secretary, promulgated several circular letters from early 2000 onwards, which unilaterally informed and directed schools to implement certain curriculum changes that were evoked. Such unilateral decisions by the education ministry led to the rise of

my ‘noble dream’ to earn a PhD in Education, focusing on Curriculum Studies because I wanted to better my understanding of curriculum issues. As such, I enrolled with UNISA towards the realisation of my ‘noble dream.’ Resultantly, I got the opportunity to learn that curriculum issues in education are so complex, and at the same time, positive outcomes would be enhanced when the former are handled on a consensus basis. To this end, I am gratefully prepared to continue sharing what I learnt as I journeyed towards the realisation of my ‘noble dream.’

Whatever we do, let us do it well.

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Press.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Secretary's circular number 3 of 2002

Ref: D/11/7

All communications should be addressed to
"The Secretary for Education Sport and Culture"
Telephone: 734051/59 and 734071
Telegraphic address : "EDUCATION"
Fax: 794505

Ministry of Education Sport and Culture
P.O Box CY 121
Causeway
Zimbabwe

28 January 2002

SECRETARY'S CIRCULAR NO. 3 OF 2002

Distribution:

Directors
Regional Directors
Deputy Directors
Deputy Regional Directors
Under Secretaries
District Education Officers
Education Officers
Correspondence and Independent Colleges
Heads of Secondary Schools
Heads of Primary Schools
Zimbabwe Teachers' Association Chairperson
Progressive Teachers' Union of Zimbabwe Chairperson
National Association of Education Officers Chairperson
National Association of Secondary Heads Chairperson
National Association of Primary Heads Chairperson
Association of Trust Schools - Chairperson
Responsible Authorities
Church Education Secretaries
The Secretary for Higher Education and Technology
Department of Teacher Education, University of Zimbabwe
All Universities
All Teachers' and Technical Colleges
ZIMSEC

RE: CURRICULUM POLICY: PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS

This circular cancels and replaces Secretary's Circular Minute No. 2 of 2001.

1.0 Introduction

The relevance of the curriculum is based on the extent to which it meets the needs of the individual learner, the national economy, society at large and the future challenges of the country. The ultimate goal is to provide an opportunity for each learner to obtain maximum benefit from the school curriculum according to the learner's potential. The focus is on the individual's development of sound national values such as self-reliance, entrepreneurship and responsible citizenship.

1

The four year secondary curriculum is a vehicle to enable each learner to realise his/her aspirations according to the environment, interests and abilities.

4.2 **Core Subjects**

4.2.1 It is compulsory for all learners to study the following five core subjects up to 'O' level:-

English Language;

History;

Mathematics;

Shona or Ndebele; and

Science (selected from 4.4.2).

4.2.2

HIV/AIDS and Life Skills Education.

Guidance and counselling

Physical Education, Sport and Culture.

The subject areas under 4.2.2. above are compulsory but non-examinable except through other subjects.

4.3 **Full 'O' Level Certificate**

A full 'O' Level certificate shall consist of at least five (5) subjects passed at grade 'C' level standard or better.

4.4 **Optional Subjects**

Learners' interest, abilities and available resources should guide the selection of optional subjects from the following five groups:-

4.4.1 **Group 1: Languages**

- Kalanga, Tonga, Nambya, Shangani, Venda, Sotho, Nyanja, Swahili, Afrikaans, Portuguese, German, Spanish, French and Latin.

4.4.2 **Group 2: Science**

Integrated Science

Biology

Chemistry

Physics

Physical Science

APPENDIX B

UNISA Ethics Review Committee clearance letter

UNISA COLLEGE OF EDUCATION ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE

Date: 2017/09/13

Dear Mr Mashayamombe

Decision: Ethics Approval from 2017/09/16 to 2022/09/13

Ref: **2017/09/13/33528349/08/MC**
Name: Mr E Mashayamombe
Student number: 33528349

Researcher:

Name: Mr E Mashayamombe
Email: mashayamombee@africau.edu
Telephone: +263 712504459/ +263 773144324

Supervisor:
Name: Prof S Schoeman
Email: schoes@unisa.ac.za
Telephone: +27 12 4842808

Title of research:

Curriculum reforms in Zimbabwe's secondary education system: the case study of school history in the Manicaland province

Qualification: DEd in Curriculum Studies

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 2017/09/13 to 2022/09/13.

*The **low risk** application was reviewed by the Ethics Review Committee on 2017/09/13 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:

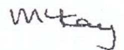
University of South Africa
Preller Street, Muckleneuk Ridge, City of Tshwane
PO Box 392 UNISA 0003 South Africa
Telephone: +27 12 429 3111 Facsimile: +27 12 429 4150
www.unisa.ac.za

1. The researcher(s) will ensure that the research project adheres to the values and principles expressed in the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics.
2. 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.
3. The researcher(s) will conduct the study according to the methods and procedures set out in the approved application.
4. 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.
5. 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.
6. 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.
7. No field work activities may continue after the expiry date 2022/09/13. Submission of a completed research ethics progress report will constitute an application for renewal of Ethics Research Committee approval.

Note:

The reference number **2017/09/13/33528349/08/MC** *should be clearly indicated on all forms of communication with the intended research participants, as well as with the Committee.*

Kind regards,



Dr M Claassens
CHAIRPERSON: CEDU RERC
mcdtc@netactive.co.za

Prof V McKay
EXECUTIVE DEAN

University of South Africa
Preller 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

APPENDIX C

Letter requesting permission from the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education to carry out the study

Hartzell High School
P.O. Box 770
Mutare
Zimbabwe

Date: ……………………………………………………….

The Secretary of Primary and Secondary Education
Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education
P.O. Box CY 121
Causeway
Harare
Zimbabwe

Dear Sir/Madam

Re: Request for permission to conduct research in secondary schools in the Mutasa and Mutare districts in Manicaland province

I, Ephraim Mashayamombe, am doing research under supervision of S. Schoeman, a professor in the Department of Curriculum and Instructional Studies towards a PhD degree in Education at the University of South Africa. Herewith, I am appealing to you to allow some of the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education officials, Secondary School principals and O-level History teachers to participate in a study entitled: **Curriculum reforms in Zimbabwe's secondary education system: the case study of school History in the Manicaland province**.

The aim of the study is to determine the success of the curriculum reforms and the implementation of the teaching and learning of History at secondary school level in Zimbabwe's Manicaland

Province from 2002 to 2016.

Permission for the study has been given by Department of Curriculum and Instructional Studies and the Ethics Committee of the College of Education, UNISA. Upon the completion of the study, I will provide you with more information related to this project should you allow them to take part. The proposed study is of value because its findings will significantly influence curriculum theory and practice in Zimbabwe, and in other African and international countries. The study will expose the degree of the success of the curriculum implementation of the History curriculum reforms. In addition, a hard copy of a brief outline of the research findings of the study will be submitted to the Manicaland Provincial Education Office. This will empower decision-makers in the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education of Manicaland as well as other education stakeholders in the Province to support and/or assist to achieve the envisaged aims. In terms of publications, one article would be published in a well-established University of Zimbabwe journal entitled *Zimbabwe Journal of Educational Research* (ZJER) which is widely read in Zimbabwe. This will then encourage other researchers to conduct similar studies in Manicaland, and the other provinces of the country to positively encourage and assist the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education to conduct a review of the implementation of the curriculum reforms. The study will also add value to the worldwide curriculum theory and practice fraternity.

The stakeholders' participation in this study is voluntary. The latter will involve an interview of approximately ten to fifteen minutes at a mutually agreed location at a time convenient to the interviewees. They may decline to answer any of the interview questions, if wish so. Furthermore, they may also withdraw from the study at any time without any negative consequences. With your permission, the interview will also be audio-recorded to facilitate the collection of accurate information and will later be transcribed for analysis. Shortly after the transcriptions have been finalised, each participant will receive an electronic copy of the transcripts to provide him/her with an opportunity to confirm the accuracy of the conversations, and to add or clarify any of the issues. All information provided is completely confidential. The names of the participants will not appear in any publication resulting from the study. However, with their permission, anonymous quotations may possibly be used. The data collected during the study will be retained on a password protected computer for 5 years in a secure location.

There are no known or anticipated risks to them for participating in this study. No incentives will be paid for their participation. The participants will be requested to sign the consent form. Please

contact Mr Ephraim Mashayamombe on 0773144324 or email mashayamombee@africau.edu for any information regarding the final research findings. For additional information, please contact me using the afore-mentioned contact details.

I am looking forward to your response and thanking you in advance for your participation in the project.

Yours sincerely

______________________	______________________	______________________
Researcher name (print)	Researcher signature	Date

APPENDIX D

Letter of permission from Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (head office) granting the researcher to carry out the study

All communications should be addressed to "The Secretary for Primary and Secondary Education
Telephone: 732006
Telegraphic address : "EDUCATION"
Fax:794505

Reference: C/426/3
Ministry of Primary and
Secondary Education
P.O Box CY 121
Causeway
HARARE

16 November 2017

Ephraim Mashayamombe
Hartzell High School
P. O. Box 770
Mutare

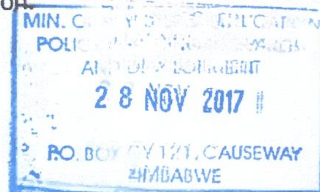
Re: **PERMISSION TO CARRY OUT RESEARCH IN MANICALAND PROVINCE: MUTARE AND MUTASA DISTRICTS**

Reference is made to your application to carry out research at the above mentioned districts in Manicaland Province on the research title:

"CURRICULUM REFORMS IN ZIMBABWE'S SECONDARY EDUCATION: THE CASE OF SCHOOL HISTORY IN THE MANICALAND PROVINCE"

Permission is hereby granted. However, you are required to liaise with the Provincial Education Director, Manicaland Province, who is responsible for the districts which you want to involve in your research. You should ensure that your research work does not disrupt the normal operations of the school. You are required to seek consent of the parents /guardians of all the learners who will be involved in the research.

You are also required to provide a copy of your final report to the Secretary for Primary and Secondary Education.



T. Thabela (Mrs)
ACTING SECRETARY FOR PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

APPENDIX E

Letter of permission from Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education Manicaland Province) granting the researcher to carry out the study

Hartzell High School

P.O. Box 770

Mutare

9 February 2018

Provincial Education Director

Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education

Manicaland Province

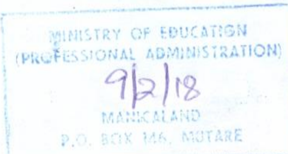
Mutare

Dear Sir/MADAM

Re: Application for permission to conduct an educational research in Mutasa and Mutare districts

I am kindly seeking for permission to conduct an educational research in the afore-mentioned districts in Mainland Province. The study focuses on Curriculum reforms and History teaching in Zimbabwean secondary schools. The participants of the study would include Provincial and district education officials as well as a sample of secondary school History teachers. Refer to the attachment as you consider my application.

Thank you in anticipation.



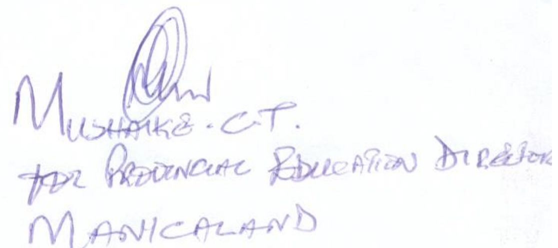
The DSI's Mutare and Mutasa

Could you please assist the member

Yours faithfully,

Ephraim Mashayamombe

E.C Number 0859155. N



APPENDIX F

Letter requesting an adult to participate in focus group discussion

Dear _______________

This letter is an invitation to consider you to participate in a study that I, Ephraim Mashayamombe, am doing under the supervision of S. Schoeman, a professor in the Department of Curriculum and Instructional Studies towards a PhD degree in Education at the University of South Africa. The topic of the study is entitled: **Curriculum reforms in Zimbabwe's secondary education system: the case study of school History in the Manicaland province.**

Permission for the study has been granted by the Department of Curriculum and Instructional Studies and the Ethics Committee of the College of Education of UNISA. This is a request to participate in a focus group discussion. You have been purposefully identified as a possible participant because of your valuable experience and expertise related to the research topic.

The aim of the study is to determine the success of the curriculum reforms and their implementation in the History teaching and learning at secondary school level in Zimbabwe's Manicaland Province from 2002 to 2016. Upon the completion of the study, I will provide you with more information about the project and what your involvement would entail should you be willing to take part. The proposed study is worthwhile because the research results would significantly influence the present-day curriculum theory and practice in Zimbabwe, and even in other African and international countries. Additionally, the study will expose the degree of success of the curriculum implementation, which may result in a debate on curriculum theory and practice, and curriculum implementation in Zimbabwe and beyond. A hard copy with a brief outline of the research findings will be submitted to the Manicaland Provincial Education Office. This may encourage decision-makers in the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education in Manicaland or any other education stakeholders in the Province to support or assist the attainment of the much needed aims. In terms of publications, one article would be published in the *Zimbabwe Journal of Educational Research* (ZJER). This may encourage other researchers to conduct similar studies in Manicaland, as well as in the other provinces of the country in order to prompt the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education to conduct an evaluation of the curriculum reforms.

In the focus group discussion, your views and opinions on the topic will be sought. Your participation in this study is voluntary. It will involve a discussion of approximately one and half to two hours in length to be taken at a mutually agreed upon location at a time convenient to you. You may also decline to answer any of the interview questions. Furthermore, you may also decide to withdraw from the study at any time without any consequences.

The focus group discussion will be audio-recorded to facilitate the collection of accurate information which will later be transcribed for analysis. A copy of the transcript will be forwarded to you to confirm the accuracy of the discussion. All information provided by you is considered as completely confidential. Your particulars will not appear in any publication resulting from this study and any identifying information will be omitted from the report. However, with your permission, anonymous quotations will be used. The data collected during this study will be retained on a password protected computer for 5 years in a locked location.

Lunch will be provided after the focus group session. You will also be reimbursed for your transport expenses to and from the venue. The focus group discussion will be held at ………………………………………………………………………. on ……………………… from ………………. to ………………..

If you would like to be informed of the final research findings, please contact Mr Ephraim Mashayamombe on 0773 144324 or send an e-mail to mashayamombee@africau.edu. If you have any further questions regarding the study, or would like additional information to assist you to reach a decision about your participation, please contact me at 0773 144324 or by e-mail at mashayamombee@africau.edu. Kindly confirm if you will be able to attend. If you accept the invitation to participate in the study, you will be requested to sign the consent form.

Yours sincerely

____________________	____________________	____________________
Researcher name (print)	Researcher signature	Date

APPENDIX G

Consent form to participate in interview or focus group discussion

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 been verbally explained) and understood the study as explained in the information sheet. I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and am prepared to participate in the study.I understood that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without penalty (if applicable).

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 interview or focus group discussions (tick the appropriate data-collection method).

I have received a signed copy of the informed consent agreement.

Participant name and surname (please print) ________________________________

____________________________ ____________________________________

Participant signature Date

Researcher name and surname (please print) ________________________________

____________________________ ____________________________________

APPENDIX H

Interview schedule for education officials

1. For how many years have you been employed in the Ministry responsible for primary and secondary education?
2. In what capacity, and briefly state your duties?
3. From independence to 2001, at least three O-level History syllabi were implemented in secondary schools, namely History Syllabi 2160, 2166 and 2168. The teaching of each of these syllabi was optional. However, O-level History Syllabus 2167, which was introduced in 2001, was compulsory since 2001 until 2016. Provide the reasons why the syllabus was made mandatory?
4. Before the syllabus and Circular number 3 of 2002 were introduced in schools, were the any efforts made by the ministry to educate the teachers for an effective curriculum change and implementation?
5. How was the information related to the new curriculum reforms communicated? What was/were the rationale for using the approach(es)?
6. Was there any form of supervision by the then Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture to ensure an effective implementation of the curriculum reforms? If so, provide specifics.
7. More than a decade has passed since the study of the school subject History was made compulsory. As a ministry in charge of secondary education, have you ever conducted any form of evaluation in regards to the implementation of the mandatory study of secondary school O-level History between 2002 and 2016. Was there any kind of periodic consultation with the secondary school principals or History teachers to determine if the reform was being comprehensively implemented, and/or to identify the problems experienced by the curriculum implementers?

   i). If any, when and how was it conducted?

   ii) What were the findings?

   iii) How did you respond to the findings?

   iv) If no curriculum evaluation was done, what could be the reason?
8. In your opinion, what could have been done to enhance the successful implementation of the O-level History curriculum reforms?

APPENDIX I

Interview schedule secondary school heads/history teachers

1. When did you join the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education?
2. Are you aware that the study of History at O-level was compulsory from 2002 to 2016? If so, how were you informed about the compulsory study of the subject and, in your view, was it a good decision to make History a core subject?
3. In your opinion, what was the rationale for making the study of History compulsory at secondary school level?
4. Was the subject History compulsory for the O-level learners at your school from 2002 to 2016? If not, why not?
5. What measures, if any, were taken by your school to ensure the successful implementation of the O-level History reforms?
6. Was there any form of supervision that was conducted by the then Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture to ensure the effective implementation of the curriculum reforms? If so, provide specifics.
7. In as far as you know/remember, has the ministry responsible for secondary education held consultations or review meetings with the History teachers in terms of the implementation of the reforms? If so, provide detail.
8. In your opinion, what could have been done by the education ministry to ensure the successful implementation of the O-level History curriculum reforms?

APPENDIX J

Focus group discussion schedule

1. When did you join the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education?
2. In 2002, the Permanent Secretary of the then Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture issued Circular Number 3 of 2002 which made the school subject History mandatory from Zimbabwe Junior Certificate (ZJC) level up to Ordinary level (O-level). In your own understanding, was this the best way to implement curriculum change and to communicate the latter to the various role-players in the education sector, particularly to the History teachers and the School Heads? Elaborate.
3. Since independence in 1980 to 2001, three O-level History Syllabi were implemented in secondary schools, namely Syllabi 2160, 2166, 2168. These syllabi were optional as pupils could choose whether or not to study the subject History. However, the O-level History Syllabus 2167 introduced in 2002 was compulsory. In your opinion, what was the rationale for making the study of O-level History compulsory?
4. In your view, was it a good decision to make the study of History compulsory?
5. If anything, what did the school head/History teachers at your school do to ensure the successful implementation of the O-level History reforms?
6. Was there any form of supervision that was conducted by the then Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture to ensure the effective implementation of the curriculum reforms? If so, provide specifics.
7. In your view, what could have been done the ministry responsible for secondary school education do to ensure that the successful implementation of the O-level History curriculum reforms?

APPENDIX K

Language and technical editing declaration letter

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1/15/2024

To Whom It May Concern

Re: Declaration and confirmation of language and technical editing

I hereby declare and confirm that the thesis written by Ephraim Mashayamombe, entitled "***The implementation of the History curriculum reforms at secondary school level in the Manicaland province in Zimbabwe,***" was edited by me. Nevertheless, I am not responsible for the accuracy of the contents of the thesis and I shall not accept responsibility for any alterations that were done after I conducted the language and technical editing.

Sincerely,

Morgan Chitiyo

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