An analysis of the representation of minority groups in the secondary school history curriculum: A case of the Vhavenda learners in Zimbabwe

by

LENNON LENNOS MAPURANGA

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DECLARATION

Name: Lennon Lennos Mapuranga

Student number: 14002531

Degree: PHD in Education (History)

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

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

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ACKNOWLEDMENTS

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my three beloved children, Sean, Faith, and Daniel Mapuranga. It is my sincere wish that this work will serve as a source of inspiration, motivating them to pursue academic advancement throughout their lives.

ABSTRACT

This research delves into the intricate web of representational injustices embedded within the Zimbabwean secondary school curriculum, with a focused examination of the plight of the Vhavenda learners. Guided by Nancy Fraser's social justice theory, the study uncovers layers of representation, recognition, and distributive injustices that impede the positive portrayal of the Vhavenda ethnic group. For the purposes of this study, the multiple case study research design was selected. This choice was made to allow for an in-depth exploration of complex phenomena within real-life contexts, facilitating a comprehensive understanding of the research questions. Additionally, a qualitative research methodology was adopted to explore the rich narratives and perspectives of participants, enabling a nuanced analysis of the underlying themes and patterns inherent in the data. Through a comprehensive analysis, a kaleidoscopic array of factors influencing representational injustices was unearthed. Foremost among these factors is the enduring legacy of colonial language policies, which enshrined only two native languages, Shona and Ndebele, marginalizing others such as Vhavenda. The pervasive influence of colonial heritage continues to shape educational policies, perpetuating disparities in the curriculum representation of the history of the Vhavenda. The study reveals that Zimbabwe's nation-building agenda has been hindered by deep-seated linguaphobia, ethnic biases, and regionalism, exacerbating the marginalisation of minority groups like the Vhavenda. In the secondary school curriculum, the history of the Vhavenda is relegated to peripheral status, construed merely of an account of when the Vhavenda came into contact with the Ndebele on their way from South Africa. This research adopts a diagnostic and remedial approach, proposing solutions to rectify the representational anomalies within the curriculum. By advocating for inclusive policies that recognize and valorize the cultural diversity of Zimbabwe, the study aims to address the systemic injustices that undermine the educational experiences of minority groups. Ultimately, this research contributes to the ongoing discourse on social justice in education, shedding light on the urgent need for curriculum reform to foster inclusivity, recognition, and equitable representation of all ethnic groups within the Zimbabwean educational landscape. It centers on the construction of an authentic post-colonial inclusive curriculum characterized by comprehensive representation.

Key terms: Representational injustices, Recognition, Linguaphobia, Inclusivity, Minority groups, Vhavenda

MANWELEDZO

Tsenguluso iyi i ṱoḓisisa nga vhuronwane webu yo serekanaho ya u sa tevhedzwa ha vhuimeleli ho ṱanganaho na kharikhuḽamu ya zwikolo zwa sekondari zwa Zimbabwe, hu na ṱhoḓisiso yo livhiswaho kha vhuleme ha vhagudi vha Vhavenḓa. U livhiswa nga theori ya vhulamukanyi ha matshilisano nga Nancy Fraser, ngudo i bvukulula zwipiḓa zwa vhuimeleli, u dzhielwa nṱha, na u sa tevhedzwa ha u phaḓaladza zwine zwa thithisa u sumbedzwa havhuḓi ha lushaka lwa Vhavenḓa. U itela ndivho dza ngudo iyi, ho khethwa nḓila ya ṱhoḓisiso ya ngudo ya tsumbo nnzhi. Khetho iyi yo itwa u itela u tendela u ṱoḓisisa ho dzikaho ha zwithu zwo serekanaho nga ngomu ha zwiimo zwa vhukuma, zwi tshi leludza u pfesesa ho fhelelaho ha mbudziso dza ṱhoḓisiso. Zwiṅwe hafhu, ho ṱanganedzwa ngona ya ṱhoḓisiso ya khwaḽithethivi u tandula vhaanetsheli vho pfumaho na mavhonele a vha dzhenelaho, zwine zwa konisa tsenguluso yo ṱanḓavhuwaho ya thero dza mutheo na phetheni dzine dza vha hone kha data. Nga kha tsenguluso yo fhelelaho, ho bvukululwa zwithu zwinzhi zwine zwa ṱuṱuwedza u sa tevhedzwa ha vhuimeleli. Tshihulwane kha zwithu izwi ndi ifa ḽi sa fheli ḽa mbekanyamaitele dza nyambo dza vhukoloni, dze dza vha dzi tshi khwaṱhisa nyambo mbili dza ḓamuni fhedzi, Tshishona na Tshindebele, dzi tshi dzhiela fhasi dziṅwe dzi ngaho Vhavenḓa. Ṱhuṱhuwedzo yo phaḓalalaho ya vhufa ha vhukoloni i khou bvelaphanḓa na u vhumba mbekanyamaitele dza pfunzo, i tshi isa phanḓa u sa lingana kha vhuimeleli ha kharikhuḽamu ha ḓivhazwakale ya Vhavenḓa.

Ngudo i dzumbulula uri adzhenda ya Zimbabwe ya u fhaṱa lushaka yo thithiswa nga u ofha luambo ho dzikaho, u dzhia sia ha mirafho, na u ṱalula dzingu, zwine zwa ṋaṋisa u dzhielwa fhasi ha zwigwada zwiṱuku u fana na Vhavenḓa. Kha kharikhuḽamu ya zwikolo zwa sekondari, ḓivhazwakale ya Vhavenḓa yo fhungudzwa ya vha kha tshiimo tsha nga nnḓa, i ṱalutshedzwa fhedzi sa mafhungo a uri Vhavenḓa vho ṱangana lini na Vhandebele musi vhe nḓilani u bva Afrika Tshipembe.

Tsedzuluso iyi i dzhia nḓila ya u ṱola na u lugisa, i tshi ṋetshedza thandululo dza u lugisa zwithu zwi songo ḓoweleaho zwa vhuimeleli nga ngomu ha kharikhuḽamu. Nga u tikedza mbekanyamaitele dzo katelaho dzine dza dzhiela nṱha na u dzhiela nṱha mvelele dzo fhambanaho dza Zimbabwe, ngudo yo sedza kha u tandulula u sa tevhedza mulayo ha sisteme hune ha dzhiela fhasi tshenzhemo dza pfunzo dza zwigwada zwiṱuku.

Mafheleloni, ṱhoḓisiso iyi i shela mulenzhe kha nyambedzano ine ya khou bvelaphanḓa nga ha vhulamukanyi ha matshilisano kha pfunzo, i tshi bvisela khagala ṱhoḓea yo ṱavhanyiswaho ya tshanduko ya kharikhuḽamu u itela u ṱuṱuwedza u katelwa, u dzhielwa nṱha, na vhuimeleli ho linganelaho ha tshaka dzoṱhe nga ngomu ha mvelele ya pfunzo ya Zimbabwe.

I sedza kha u fhaṱwa ha kharikhuḽamu ya vhukuma ya nga murahu ha vhukoloni yo katelaho ine ya ṱaluswa nga vhuimeleli ho ṱanganelaho.

Maipfi a ndeme: U sa tevhedzwa ha vhuimeleli, U dzhielwa nṱha, U ofha luambo, U katelwa, Zwigwada zwiṱuku, Vhavenḓa

OKUCASHUNIWE

Lolu cwaningo luhlose ukudingida ngokungabibikho kobulungiswa ekumelelekeni ngokwekharikhulamu ezikoleni zamabanga aphakeme eZimbabwe, ngokugxila kulokho okuyizingqinamba zabafundi abangamaVhavenda. Ngokulekelelwa yitiyori eqondene nobulungiswa emphakathini ka*Nancy Fraser*, lolu cwaningo luzoveza iminxa yokumeleleka, ukwaziswa, kanye nokungabibikho kobulungiswa okuveza ngokusobala ukucindezeleka kwabantu besizwe samaVhavenda. Ukuze kuqhutshwe lolu cwaningo, kukhethwe ubuka kusetshenziswe indlela yokucwaninga imibhalo yezingxoxo ezahlukahlukene. Le ndlela ikhethwe ukuze ukuhlola okwenziwayo kujule kuthathwelwe ezindleleni ezahlukene eziwubunjalo besimo eseqhubekayo, ukuze siyiqonde ngokuphelele nemibuzo yocwaningo. Ukwengeza, lapha kusetshenziswe indlela yokucwaninga iqophelo ukuze kuhlolwe izilandiso nemibono yababambiqhaza, ngokuvumela ukuhlaziya ngokuguquguquka kwezindikimba eziyisisekelo namaphethini atholakale kudatha. Ngokokuhlaziya okuphelele, kutholakale imithelela eminingi eyimbangela yokungabibikho kobulungiswa ekumelelekeni. Okuhamba phambili phakathi kwale mithelela yifagugu elingapheli lezinqubomgomo zezilimi zamakoloni, neziqhakambisa izilimi ezimbili kuphela zomdabu, isiShona nesiNdebele, nokukhipha inyumbazane ezinye ezifana nesiVhavenda. Umthelela omkhulu wegugungqangi lamakoloni uyaqhubeka nokuhlela izinqubomgomo zemfundo, uqhubekisela phambili ukungameleleki kukharikhulamu yomlando wamaVhavenda. Lolu cwaningo luveza ukuthi uhlelo lokwakha isizwe saseZimbabwe luphazamisekile ngenxa yokucwaswa kwezilimi ezindala, ukucwasa ngokwezizwe, nokucwasa ngokwezifunda, okubhebhethekisa ukucwaswa kwedlanzana labantu abafana namaVhavenda. Ngokwekharikhulamu yezikole zamabanga aphakeme, umlando wamaVhavenda ubukelwa phansi, udungekile ngokumataniswa nodaba lwangesikhathi amaVhavenda ehlangana namaNdebele besuka eNingizimu Afrika. Lolu cwaningo lusebenzisa indlela ezoxilonga futhi ilungise, ngokuphakamisa izisombululo zokulungisa ukungafani kokumelela ngaphansi kwekharikhulamu. Ngokukhuthaza izinqubomgomo ezibandakanya zazise futhi ziqhakambise ukuhlukahluka kwamasiko eZimbabwe, ucwaningo luhlose ukubhekana nokungabibikho kobulungiswa okubukela phansi ulwazi lwemfundo yedlanzana labantu abathile. Ekugcineni, lolu cwaningo lufaka isandla enkulumweni eqhubekayo yobulungiswa bezenhlalakahle kwezemfundo, okucacisa ngesidingo esiphuthumayo sokuguqulwa kwekharikhulamu ukuze kugqugquzelwe ukubandakanywa, ukukwaziswa, nokumeleleka ngokulinganayo kwazo zonke izinhlanga yaseZimbabwe. Ucwaningo lugxile ekusungulweni kwekharikhulamu yangemva kobukoloni

ebandakanya wonke umunu ngokuyiqiniso ezobonakala ngokumeleleka kwabantu ngokuphelele.

Amagama amqoka: Ukungabibikho kobulungiswa ekumelelekeni, Ukwaziswa, Uku

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CHAPTER ONE

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This study focuses on curriculum and pedagogical issues in the history of Zimbabwean people. It explores policy trajectories in the history curriculum and how they promoted representation of minority ethnic groups. The research scrutinises how syllabi have represented the history of minority groups in the post-independence era. The study interrogates the extent to which the history of the Vhavenda in the secondary school curriculum of Zimbabwe is represented. This chapter deals with background information, statement of the problem, the objectives of the study, the research questions, and the significance of the study, assumptions, delimitation and limitations of the study. Definition of terms to be used throughout the research is given in this chapter.

1.2 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

History as a subject has a national obligation of unifying people and stimulating patriotism in the country. Jamatia and Gundimeda (2019) acknowledge the fact that textbooks and school curricula are the platforms where multiple identities of a nation are represented. Fafunwa (1967) avouches that the history syllabus in Africa has a conduit function of incorporating and exposing learners to the instituted norms, values, goals, ideals and cultural diversity in society. Harris (2013) believes that special interest should be given to pupils' appreciation of history with regards to differences between expert and civic discourses. Osler (2009) is of the view that expert discourses focus mostly on the general understanding of history whereas the civic discourse focuses mainly on the ability of history to bring about national unity and identity.

Barton and Levstik (2004) contend that the justification of studying history is premised on the importance of identity at personal or national level. Tajfel and Turner (1979) suggest that one realises one's identity through the nature of history one is taught. Identity is easily realised if the history is inclusive. Hence, there is need of all the indigenous tribes to be included in the national history curriculum in order for them to identify themselves with the country. This will nurture the spirit of identity and nation-building. This basis inherently invites an investigation into the

curriculum framework and the secondary school history syllabus content to find out whether the content depicted is reflective of the various ethnic groups recognised by the Constitution of Zimbabwe. The research specifically focused on the Vhavenda ethnic group's degree of representation in the secondary school history curriculum.

It is in view of this background, synergised with public discourse on the teaching and learning of history as well as the nature of content with regards to the representation of minority groups in Zimbabwe, that this research was conceived. Consequently, this thesis critically examines and evaluates how the curriculum framework and secondary history syllabus fairly represents the Vhavenda ethnic group in Zimbabwe. The concept noted thus provides a contextual premise to the research, proclamation of the problem, the relevance of the study, demands of the research, methodology to be used in the study, preliminary literature review, delimitations and limitations of the study and how these are dealt with.

1.3   GENERAL STATEMENT

Zimbabwe, characterized by its diverse ethno-linguistic composition, grapples with the complexities of integrating minority narratives into its national discourse post-independence. This endeavor is exemplified through ongoing revisions of historical curricula spanning from the nation's independence to the contemporary period. The country boasts a rich tapestry of linguistic and cultural diversity, housing various ethnolinguistic groups such as the Sotho, Vhavenda, and Tonga (Ndhlovu, 2006). However, the quest for representation within the public sphere prompts competition among these diverse ethnic entities. Despite this diversity, conversations pertaining to ethnicity remain infrequent due to their association with tribalism, which is perceived as a threat to national cohesion (Mhlanga, 2013). Nukunya (2003) contends that discussions regarding tribal or ethnic affiliations in the context of nation-building and modernization evoke profound emotional responses.

The research endeavors to analyze matters of ethnicity and tribalism methodically within the educational curriculum, striving to approach these issues with objectivity and scholarly rigor, devoid of emotional or political bias. Ethnicity and tribalism are identified as catalysts for conflict

and societal fragmentation. Zimbabwe's historical narrative is marred by pervasive political intolerance, likely stemming from a legacy of ethnically driven violence, notably exemplified by the 1982 genocide, known as Gukurahundi.

Of the several groups in Zimbabwe, only two (Shona and Ndebele) enjoy supremacy and prominence in the Zimbabwean history curriculum. This means that the official recognition of the minority ethnic groups (Vhavenda included) in the Constitution of Zimbabwe (2013) and principle of inclusivity underpinning the national curriculum framework does not necessarily mean that they have been included in the secondary history curriculum. Doll (1993) acknowledges that formulation of a comprehensive and balanced curriculum is indeed a daunting task. Hence, the updated Zimbabwean secondary education curriculum is an attempt to meet that challenge. The government has an obligation to stimulate the study of the history of all ethnic groups in order to instill patriotism and the spirit of nation-building. Given this situation the principles underpinning the updated curriculum include diversity, inclusivity, equality and fairness; hence, the government should promote the study of the history of all tribal groups.

The Zimbabwean government is obliged to promote the study of the history of all Zimbabwean ethnic groups including the Vhavenda. The history curriculum since independence has given priority to Shona and Ndebele groups. A critical analysis by Moyo and Modiba (2013) accentuates that the selection of content in the Zimbabwean history curriculum is biased towards promoting the dominance of one group. This is similar to the situation in Tripula (a state of India). The Tripula school textbooks and curriculum are largely dominated by a group known as the Bengali, whereas the identity of minority groups has been systematically ignored (Jamatia and Gundimeda, 2019). Moyo and Modiba (2013) believe that the secondary school history curriculum is dominated by political factors and should be evaluated beyond textuality so as to excavate the constraining and unconscious representations in it.

Parkes (2007) views the secondary school history as uncontested practices of representation of history itself. The ongoing discourse surrounding the national history curriculum poses a considerable challenge to attaining a thorough and inclusive representation within its framework. This research was keen to find out whether the contestation has been settled in the new curriculum

or not. Previously, the colonial regime divided the nation into two major groups, the Shona or Ndebele; minority groups have been associated with the Shona or Ndebele. Hence, the minority groups have been taken as appendages of these two majority groups despite the fact the Shona groups are composed of different dialects. However, the fundamental tenets of the revised curriculum spanning from 2015 to 2022 are rich with significance concerning the representation of all ethnic factions within its framework.

Embedded within these principles are ideals of inclusivity, equality, impartiality, and diversity. Moreover, the Zimbabwe Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (MOPSE) articulates a vision aimed at fostering an education system characterized by inclusivity, quality, fairness, relevance, and equity (Zimbabwe, 2015). This vision further delineates MOPSE's aspiration to emerge as a prominent advocate for inclusive education, with the overarching objective of driving socio-economic transformation in the 21st century (Zimbabwe, 2015).

The vision is indicative of MOPSE's foundational and fundamental role in the nation-building agenda. The inclusivity and equitable tenets enshrined in MOPSE's vision are attributes which point towards representation. Potzsch (2011, as cited in Moyo and Modiba 2013) asserts that the action is deliberate, indicating it is not merely a coincidence but a result of planned selection. This selection of content is done to achieve set objectives. Hooks (1990, as cited in Moyo and Modiba, 2013) suggests that embracing a counter-hegemonic trajectory or discourse involves scrutinizing the motivations and goals behind the inclusion or exclusion of particular historical content. The process results in a balanced evaluation of representation of minority groups in the curriculum.

The national history curriculum is a conduit in the nation-building agenda as it gives learners their full identity and a sense of belonging. History has the immense power to liberate the mind and give a national vision not only to learners but the nation at large. A typical example is that of Ukraine. Korostelina (2011) asserts that Ukraine completely changed its history education soon after attaining independence in 1991. The historical narratives in Ukraine were inclined towards its road to independence and instilling national identity among the people of Ukraine. Popkewitz (2001) views the school as an apparatus which can be used for the social propagation of national

dentities by means of developing an individual according to the narratives and images of nationhood.

An analysis of the previous history syllabus 2167 by Moyo and Modiba (2013) shows that the selection of content is done in such a way as to make learners think according to a certain intended trajectory. Moyo and Modiba (2013) identified the politics of (mis)representation as being at the centre of Zimbabwean curriculum practice, since the selection of content is biased towards promoting a specific group. There has been a deliberate manipulation of learners through the content they are taught in order to mold them to think and above all to be according to what the state intends. The effort by the state in the selection of content in a bid to attain a national identity or nationhood has resulted in the distortion of representative historical content in the curriculum (Moyo and Modiba, 2013). The selective curriculum content has narrowed the specifications or characteristics of what a nationalistic curriculum intends to be (Moyo and Modiba, 2013).

The analysis by Moyo and Modiba (2013) indicates the importance of addressing or re-addressing the issue of representation in the secondary history curriculum. Hence, this study was an addition to the already existing body of knowledge which is perforated with the absence of certain historical narratives. The research was done against the backdrop of an updated curriculum 2015-2022, igniting interest into whether the issue of representation of minority groups has been attended to by the current curriculum.

Moyo and Madiba (2013) avouch that Zimbabwe, as a nation-state, is in genuine need of a secondary history curriculum that will not assume or prescribe what learners want or think. There has been a general outcry or concern by the minority groups such as the Vhavenda on the issue of representation which they feel has been relegated to the periphery or background. Moyo and Modiba (2013) observe that the struggle for democratisation of the history school curriculum has resulted in it being a contested terrain. This has also made the issue of representation of minority groups a contested subject.

Moyo and Modiba (2013) accuse the ruling party (ZANU PF) of including content which it wishes to celebrate rather than including content which comprehensively covers the heritage of

Zimbabwe. An analysis of the previous syllabus 2167 shows that it did not include the history of the minority since the content was biased towards the interests of the ruling party. Kossler (2010) notes that the post-colonial syllabus content was premised on a nation-state building attempt or farrago of disparate ethnic groups synthesised through colonial adventurism which was propelled by political expediency and not rational. The ruling party's proclivity for recognition and acceptance from the general population has compromised the issue of representation in the curriculum (Moyo and Modiba, 2003).

Muzondidya and Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2007) are of the view that the post-colonial secondary history curriculum did not fully take heed of the ethnic configurations present in the inherited state, including the poignant factors which enacted and propagated ethnicity. In an attempt to decolonise the curriculum by removing or replacing racial terms, Moyo and Modiba (2013) observe that terms such as tribe was substituted with ethnicity resulting in misconceptions and distortions prevailing among learners especially on the aspect of identity. Hence, this research has attempted to dismantle the misconceptions of tribe and ethnic group entrenching the curriculum through tracing the genesis of the problem in order to establish the truth. Extreme caution was taken to avoid the confusing interchangeable use of the terms, tribe and ethnic group when dealing with the concept of representation. Ethnicity is a poignant factor in the representation of minority groups in the curriculum and cannot be disregarded or ignored.

The distortion and misconception of a tribe or an ethnic group has conceived an academic or curriculum milieu of limited understanding among both learners and teachers. The research attempted to demystify the stereotypes and negative connotations associated with the words. Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2009) asserts that the schism within ZAPU in 1963, leading to the emergence of ZANU, delineated tribal boundaries between the Shona and Ndebele communities. According to Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2009), subsequent to this division, ZANU became widely perceived as a predominantly Shona-affiliated political entity, while ZAPU was viewed as primarily aligned with the Ndebele community. This historical narrative, steeped in tribal politics, persisted into the post-colonial era. The contribution of each tribal faction represented by these parties in the Zimbabwean liberation struggles has been a subject of contention and debate.

These perceived 'tribal' conflicts and rivalries, rooted in the historical contributions of the aforementioned political parties, have contributed to misconceptions regarding the definition of tribes or ethnic groups. ZAPU comprised individuals fluent in both Ndebele and Shona languages, whereas ZANU was primarily aligned with the Shona speaking demographic. However, it is important to acknowledge that Shona represents a linguistic category rather than a distinct tribal or ethnic group, encompassing various dialects. Ndhlovu (2008) indicates that within the Shona linguistic spectrum, the Zezuru dialect holds a prominent or central position compared to others. Similarly, the Ndebele language is spoken by multiple ethnic groups who may be categorized as Ndebele. The rivalry between speakers of these languages is a legacy of colonial influence, as colonial authorities categorized indigenous populations into two linguistic groups: Ndebele and Shona. This rivalry has significantly skewed the representation of ethnic minority groups in post-colonial curricula.

A meticulous examination of Ndlovu-Gatsheni's (2009) argument regarding the divisions between ZANU and ZAPU being primarily attributed to tribal politics reveals a surface-level interpretation. The division, fundamentally, was exacerbated more by linguaphobia and regionalism, both of which are products of colonial legacies. ZAPU consisted of individuals from various ethnic backgrounds, a similar composition to ZANU, which also encompassed members from diverse and sometimes rival ethnic groups. The divisions within ZANU were not driven solely by tribal politics; rather, they were influenced by linguaphobia, ethnicity, and regionalism.

According to Mutambara (2023), evident ethnic tensions emerged between the Zezuru ethnic group and the Manyikas and Karangas within the context of ZANU. The Zezuru reportedly undertook concerted efforts to undermine the dominance of the Karangas and Manyikas within ZANU until 1975 (Mutambara, 2023). The persistent ethnic rifts within ZANU serve as a tangible indicator that divisions within Zimbabwe are not solely tribal in nature. Rather, these divisions are driven by linguaphobia and regional ethnic dynamics, which regrettably often remain obscured or downplayed under the guise of 'superficial tribalism'. It is noteworthy that Shona and Ndebele, at their core, are languages spoken by a diverse array of ethnic groups in Zimbabwe. Consequently, these languages have been erroneously utilized as frameworks for categorizing or classifying distinct ethnic identities.

Language, tribe and ethnicity have been regarded as one and the same aspect, as a result of misconceptions rooted in colonial heritage. This research attempted to dismantle these three aspects. Speaking a language does not automatically make one a member of an ethnic group or tribe, for instance, one can speak English and practice English culture, but it does not make one British neither does it delete one's ethnicity. Though language, tribe and ethnicity are related or interconnected at times, they are different. Clinical dismemberment of these three was done in this research in order to address the complex issue of representation. Previous researches have mainly focused on representation of minority groups in the curriculum without tackling the aspect of ethnicity separately. Hence, most researches are premised on mudded colonial language and tribal misconceptions which have been replicated in the post-colonial epoch. An iconoclastic approach was taken which resulted in me focusing specifically on ethnicity. The selected ethnic minority group for this study are the Vhavenda people.

Muzondidya and Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2007) also cite the deliberate post-colonial exclusion of history from the curriculum as a result of politics of silence. Muponde (2004) describes these aspects of history which are deliberately left out of the syllabus as ugly history. The exclusion of some historical narratives has a detrimental effect on the understudy of the topic of representation. Moyo and Modiba (2013) observe that the struggles for democratisation of the history school curriculum have resulted in it being a contested terrain. This has also made the issue of representation of minority groups a contested subject. Therefore, it is an area in need of research in order to realise the facts as well as suggest corrective measures.

The politics of silence and exclusion of ugly history in the curriculum resulted in the generation of a potpourri of contradictory, punitive, vindictive and self-defeating curriculum which was not aligned to the rambunctious nation-building agenda. The updated curriculum presented itself as panacea to the vast post-colonial curriculum mess. This study was necessitated by the need for forensic academic evaluation of the curriculum framework (2015-2022) in order to establish whether it has lived up to its underpinning principles of inclusivity, fairness and equality. The analysis should not be taken as a mere diatribe since it is not founded on anecdotal evidence but reality on the ground. The research took a holistic, comprehensive and pragmatic approach.

Muponde (2004) identifies the liberation struggles which were renamed the Chimurengas as given new symbolisms so as to justify or legitimise those who had permission to rule the country. The post-colonial historical narrative was founded on ethnic bifurcations which were a product of colonial heritage (Muponde, 2004). The secondary history curriculum was formulated in a bid to create new nation-state; hence, its formulation lacked objectivity and was punctuated by misrepresentation of historical narratives. Minority groups were totally excluded in the "nation-state". The curriculum was buttressed by the history syllabus (2167) which was largely informed by the patriotic historiography.

Ranger (2009) expresses skepticism over the patriotic historiography which he feels is extreme nationalist history which is repugnant to academic history. The rebranding of the so-called nation-state conceived a representational problem. With regard to the exclusion of certain historical narratives from the history syllabus, Moyo and Modiba (2013) avouch that it resulted in the government gaining mass popularity as it gave a false impression of representing national interests.

The Zimbabwe Junior Certificate (ZJC), Ordinary level, Advanced level history syllabi, and the overarching updated curriculum framework all underscore the significance of inclusivity. Consequently, the impetus for this research was spurred by the principle of inclusivity delineated in the updated curriculum framework spanning from 2015 to 2022. I aimed to investigate the extent of curriculum coverage allocated to the history of the Vhavenda, a minority group, within the updated curriculum. Motivated by the foundational principles of inclusivity, equality, fairness, and diversity that underpin the updated curriculum, I embarked on this inquiry. While prior research has addressed the marginalization of certain minority languages, such as Ngandani's study on the Tonga in 2016, no research has specifically examined the marginalisation of Vhavenda history within the secondary history curriculum. Hence, I was motivated to explore the degree of inclusion of Vhavenda history within the history curriculum.

1.4   STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Despite a professed commitment to inclusive education fostering diversity, equity, balance, and fairness, which are purported to cultivate patriotism and contribute to nation-building, the Zimbabwean secondary school history curriculum appears to fall short of this objective. A preliminary examination of the curriculum content indicates that the history taught at this level predominantly focuses on the narratives of two predominant groups, namely the Ndebele and the Shona. Consequently, the apparent absence of representation and acknowledgment of minority groups significantly undermines the nation-building agenda.

1.5   PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The objective of this study is to assess the extent of inclusion of minority groups within the Zimbabwean secondary school history curricula and to evaluate its implications for the nation-building agenda in Zimbabwe.

1.6   SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The research is important in the teaching and learning of history as it promotes inclusion and tolerance of minority ethnic groups. It will further promote respect, unity and identity among the diverse ethnic groups in Zimbabwe. I chose the Vhavenda because they are one of the minority groups in Zimbabwe and no specific research has been done concerning the inclusion of their history in national history curriculum. This research is of significance to the Government of Zimbabwe, the Curriculum Development Unit (CDU), Zimbabwe Examinations Council (ZIMSEC), MOPSE, to I as a teacher, other history teachers, minority groups, majority groups and educational policy makers in Zimbabwe. The study will augment the nation-building agenda.

1.7   THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

For the purpose of this research, the theoretical framework draws upon Nancy Fraser's social justice theory. Central to this theory is Fraser's three-dimensional model, which emphasizes the

significance of recognition, representation, and redistribution justices (Fraser, 2008). Fraser's model provides a practical foundation for devising potential interventions aimed at achieving justice within various educational contexts (Musara, Grant, & Vorster, 2021). The selection of this theory is motivated by its promotion of equality, fairness, and inclusivity (Hargraves, 2021).

The issue of equitable representation within the curriculum, particularly concerning historical content, is underpinned by the principles of social justice theory. No solitary discipline possesses exclusive authority over truth, especially when examining complex themes such as equality. Thus, I chose to employ the comprehensive social justice theory, which adopts a multidimensional approach to addressing issues of representation. Within the realm of education, social justice entails the commitment to challenging inequalities stemming from variations in power dynamics and distribution of privileges within society.

Education trajectories play a pivotal role towards the attainment of social justice in a country. Education is a locomotive in the lessening of inequalities (United Nations [UN], 2018). Furthermore, education is vital in facilitating the realisation of numerous sustainable Development Goals (UN, 2018. The choice of the social justice theory as the theoretical framework for this study is substantiated by Learning for Justice (2023), who argue that promoting social justice in education involves creating policies that ensure equitable treatment of all students and fair distribution of resources. Learning For Justice (2023) accentuates that social justice also involves teaching of inclusive content through engaging learners in multiple perspective issues, incorporating their past into the curriculum which helps them comprehend their position in a nation. The research subscribes to an inclusive education system founded on intercultural ethics which extends equal status to ethnic groups in Zimbabwe. An inclusionary education system should be balanced by an equality ethos.

This research is in contrast with the traditional perception of educational discourses dominated by the "majority" or bigger groups which regard the historical narratives of minority groups (the subalterns) as inferior resultantly subjugating their knowledge. Shor (1993) avers that traditional education positions learners to adapt, accept inequality and embrace their places in the status quo as well as submit to authority. The curriculum is a contested terrain which is punctuated with

relations of power. The dominant and powerful group has the tendency of dominating the curriculum. It has the power to decide on which knowledge should be included in the curriculum. However, this research is inclined to the Freirean critical education which invites learners to question the institutions they live in, and the information being subscribed for them (Shor, 1993).

The social justice approach is applicable to this research as it dismantles the traditional system. The traditional system before the introduction of the updated curriculum was patched with equivocal standards as it failed to carry across a systematic and sustained historical narrative to represent all ethnic groups in Zimbabwe equally. Representation should be established on standards, integrity, evidence and credibility. Apple (1996) opposes the decision to impose certain groups' knowledge as the official and legitimate knowledge while the knowledge of other groups is not recognised. Knowledge of minority groups such as the Vhavenda should be equally legitimised, recognised and valued. Social justice ensures that educational policies are reviewed inclusively, which fortifies relations among learners and their communities (Hart, 2019).

I used Nancy Fraser's social justice lens to challenge the normative education system on the premise of being prejudicial as well as discriminatory towards the ethnic minority groups like the Vhavenda. I was of the view that both learners and teachers should live in accordance with their ontological values of accepting ethnical diversity. The research is in full support of intercultural inclusivity based on an intercultural approach other than a multicultural approach. I aligned with Kenny's (1997) distinction between multiculturalism and interculturalism, wherein multiculturalism positions the dominant culture as the normative standard, relegating ethnic minority group cultures as exotic or peripheral, while interculturalism treats all ethnic group cultures as equally valid and significant. Fitzgerald (2003) echoes these observations, asserting that a multicultural approach often leads to minority ethnic groups striving for inclusion while the dominant group reinforces its position of authority. In contrast, an intercultural approach fosters mutual learning and benefit between both dominant and minority cultures. It is in consideration of these dynamics that I opted for the social justice theory, as it advocates an inclusive and intercultural education system.

The history of an ethnic group is inseparably connected to its culture. It is in light of this fact that a group's history is represented in the curriculum and automatically its culture is imparted to the learners. Cultural and historical impartation through cultural interchange enhances tolerance. Comprehension of one's history and culture results in peaceful co-existence among diverse ethnic groups. The theory of social justice supports cultural interchange in totality. Schools should unveil platforms where learners display their cultural experiences which afford the learners an active voice in institutional settings (Aronowitz and Giroux, 1986). The full representation of the history of minority groups or subalterns in the secondary school curriculum promotes cultural interchange which is founded on social justice principles.

The research was propelled by the social justice theory not only to focus on representation of the Vhavenda in general but also to focus on the historicity of the minority Vhavenda ethnic group. Glass (2001) describes historicity as the dialectical interaction between the fashion in which history and culture brand people even while people are making that very history and culture. Historicity refers to the quality or genuineness of the history based on actualities. It is institutionalised on a truthful representation of factual historical narratives. I embarked on this research with the intention of measuring the representation in the curriculum based on magnitude or depth as well as the quality of the historical narrative. The representation of minority groups should not be done as a ritualistic formality but should be done in earnest.

Social justice pedagogies find their foundation in Paulo Freire's critical pedagogy, which perceives education as an avenue for exercising freedom (Hargraves, 2021). Freire (1970) opposed the dissemination of imposed knowledge by dominant groups and advocated for inclusivity. These perspectives endorse the equitable inclusion and representation of minority groups within the educational curriculum. Hart (2019) asserts that social justice endeavors to dismantle structural and institutional practices that adversely affect certain groups. Freire (1970) suggests that a dialogic approach should be employed to foster understanding and challenge groups to recognize that their circumstances can be altered, as they are a result of the dynamics of dominant social interests rather than a natural order. Social justice pedagogy is influenced by Ladson-Billings (1995), who advocates for culturally relevant teaching. Cultural relevance entails integrating cultural experiences into the educational content, thereby ensuring that minority

ethnic groups have the opportunity to learn about their history and culture in schools, facilitating their engagement and relevance in the subject matter (Hargraves, 2021).

According to Alvarez (2019), social justice involves the fair distribution of resources and treatment of learners in order for them to feel physically and psychologically safe. In education, the policy documents which include the curriculum framework should support inclusivity and equality. The social justice theory views education as an essential tool which can be used to respond to pressing social injustices through creation of a favourable environment of equality and tolerance (Hargraves, 2021). This view is supported by Camarillo (2022) who avers that social justice basically focuses on how people, practices, policies, institutions and curricula can be used as liberation tools for the marginalised. It can be used to address disproportionality in the history curriculum whenever exists. Camarillo (2022) posits that the social justice framework aims at resisting inequality and unfairness while promoting possibility and freedom for all.

An inclusive curriculum, therefore, is bound to promote tolerance and equality. If these elements do not exist, the social justice theory is also premised on efforts to redress inequalities reproduced by the schools (Hargraves, 2021). The same concern is raised by Camarillo (2022) who accentuates that schools have a propensity to duplicate instead of remedy patterns of oppression and social exclusion observed in a greater society. A redress of inequalities will lead to a cohesive and peaceful society. The social justice theory in education supports positive ethnic identity, a response to injustice and inequality in education (Hargraves, 2021). The social justice theory advocates inclusive practice ensuring that everyone is heard particularly disadvantaged or marginalised groups (Hargraves, 2021). Injustices may include challenges of minority groups in as far as their experiences are being recognised and valued. With regards to this research special interest is focused on the minority Vhavenda ethnic group.

The social justice theory supports strategies that offer specific or targeted support for specific groups as minority groups (Hargraves, 2021). Nancy Fraser's three-dimensional model aims not only at identifying the recognition, representation and redistribution injustices but addressing them. According to Fraser (2008), the recognition justice dimension aims at injustices interpreted as cultural and entrenched in social identities. Positive recognition is closely associated with the

attitudes of teachers and learners toward individuals from diverse cultural, linguistic, and historical backgrounds (Waitoller & Kozleski, 2013). Fraser's three-dimensional model identifies injustices and how learners who belong to diverse groups are positioned in relation to others (Fraser, 2008). Social justice is attainable only if resources are equitably distributed and all learners are culturally recognised and represented in education systems (Musara, Grant and Vorster, 2021). According to Fraser (2008) participatory parity is a prerequisite in the attainment of the recognition and redistribution dimensions. Participatory parity is the glue which holds the dimensions together.

The essence of ethnic pride lies in the distinctiveness of each ethnic group; thus, it is imperative for ethnic groups to be acknowledged as unique entities within the educational curriculum. Fraser (2000) critiques the detrimental aspects of the Hegelian-styled culturist model of identity politics, which prioritizes overcoming misrecognition by others through affirmative self-representation. In essence, marginalized groups must assert their presence and identity to attain recognition within the educational curriculum.

Power dynamics and the representation of interests play a significant role in research concerning the content of secondary history curricula. The Equality Studies Centre has acknowledged the centrality of power imbalances within secondary schools (Lynch and Lodge, 1999) and in public education more broadly (McMinn, 2000). Frequently, the group wielding the most power dictates the content of the curriculum. In the Zimbabwean context, the Shona and Ndebele-speaking groups hold considerable power and dominance. Phillips (1995) and Fraser (1997) critique the application of power within democratic frameworks. Phillips (1995) suggests alternative approaches for distributing power to empower minority groups in the process.

History should not be told from one perspective to suit the interests of a particular group or groups. The selection of content should have a collective and inclusive approach. World histories should not be written or studied to suit the interests of a particular group but to reveal the truth. It is in light of this view that the Zimbabwean secondary school history curriculum needs to consider the manifold chronicles that define a nation. Promoting an unostentatious account is likely to result in the exclusion of other histories leading to an exclusivist curriculum. Foucault (1980) asserts that

the history of minority groups is swept to the periphery or totally smeared out by the history of a dominant group. In this regard the national curriculum is regarded as intrinsically ensnared with matters to do with control, influence, identity making, power and the nation-state.

1.8   RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The main research question guiding this research is: *What are the factors influencing the representation of minority groups in the Zimbabwean secondary school history curriculum?*

This study is also guided by the subsequent research questions:

1.   Which approaches undergird the design of an inclusive history curriculum which gives an equitable representation of the histories of minority groups? (RQ1)
2.   In what ways is the history of the Vhavenda represented in the Zimbabwean secondary school history curriculum according to curriculum documents and instructional materials, and factors have led to the marginalisation of the history of the Vhavenda? (RQ2)
3.   What are the approaches used in teaching the history of the Vhavenda at O' level by teachers in Zimbabwean secondary schools? (RQ3)
4.   What are the factors that hinder the equitable representation of the history of the Vhavenda in the secondary school history curriculum? (RQ4)
5.   What recommendations can be made to ensure the equitable representation of Vhavenda history in the Zimbabwean secondary school history curriculum? (RQ5)

1.9   RESEARCH AIM AND OBJECTIVES

Aim: *To establish the factors influencing the representation of the history of minority groups in the Zimbabwean secondary history curriculum.*

Objectives:

1. To critique approaches undergirding the design of an inclusive history curriculum which gives an equitable representation of the histories of minority groups;

2. To examine ways in which the history of the Vhavenda has been represented in the Zimbabwean secondary school history curriculum according to curriculum documents and instructional materials, and identifying factors that have led to the marginalisation of the history of the Vhavenda;

3. To explore approaches to teaching the history of the Vhavenda of O' level history by teachers in Zimbabwean secondary schools;

4. To identify factors that hinder the equitable representation of the history of the Vhavenda in the secondary school history curriculum;

5. Based on the literature study and empirical inquiry, to make recommendations to ensure the equitable representation of Vhavenda history in the Zimbabwe secondary school history curriculum.

1.10 OVERVIEW OF RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

1.10.1 Data collection method

Data collection is a fundamental aspect of research as it encompasses the processes, techniques, and tools used to gather and measure information. The methods employed for data collection can significantly influence the validity, reliability, and generalizability of research findings.

1.10.2 Multiple case study

A collective multiple case study was used to address the task of this research. Generally, a case study is essential in that it promotes in depth study and detailed analysis of issues under study or investigation (Berg, 2004). Creswell (2013) believes that multiple case study is ideal for research since it explores numerous sources of information.

The reason why I chose to use the collective case study (one composed of strictly Vhavenda people and the other composed of strictly non-Vhavenda people) is to avoid obvious responses from the Vhavenda on how they feel about representation. I intended to compare the responses of Vhavenda and non-Vhavenda learners as well as responses of teachers teaching in the Vhavenda communities. Multiple case studies are useful in predicting or showing differences or similarities in research (Yin, 2003). The outcome of a case study can, therefore, be used to measure the validity of a research (Eisenhardt, 1991). Comparison of case studies can provide or exhibit literature which is essential to a study (Vannoni, 2015). A case study is usually regarded as comprehensive in terms of strength and reliability (Baxter and Jack, 2008).

The decision to adopt the collective case study was guided by the social justice perspective approach. The views of Vhavenda and non-Vhavenda people are important in that they give a balanced objective collective view. The purpose of a multiple case study is to comprehend the dissimilarities and resemblances between cases (Baxter and Jack, 2008). A multiple study allowed me to analyze the information both within each circumstance and across different circumstances (Yin, 2003). The other advantage with a multiple case study is that it unveils more convincing empirical evidence. Thus, collective studies permit wider reconnoitering of study questions and theoretical development (Eisenhardt and Graebner, 2007). Furthermore, I used a multiple case study since it is robust and dependable. It permitted me to illume if the outcomes from the study were valuable or not. It facilitated a meticulous verification and analysis of the research outcomes to take place. In this multiple case study, I analysed numerous cases to comprehend the resemblances and dissimilarities of the cases under study. Crowe et al (2011) acknowledges that although the evidence produced by a multiple study is of great magnitude, and has high levels of reliability, it requires lengthy periods to conduct and is costly in nature. This observation is shared by Baxter and Jack (2008) who posit that collective case studies are very costly and time consuming to conduct. I adopted cost cutting measures in order to counter the hyper inflationary forces which were experienced in the country at the time of conducting this research.

1.10.3   Target Population

Three secondary schools located in the Beitbridge West district of Zimbabwe were chosen for inclusion in the study: Zezani High School, Majini Siyoka, and Chamnanga Khwalu High School. Selection was based on their geographical proximity within the same district. Both the perspectives of the focal group under investigation (the Vhavenda) and those not under study (non-Vhavenda speakers) are deemed essential for drawing comprehensive conclusions in this research. The target population comprises all Vhavenda ordinary level history students and the teachers instructing ordinary level history in the three specified schools. Additionally, it includes the ZIMSEC subject manager, the Curriculum Development Unit (CDU) subject specialist, and the author of the ordinary level history textbook.

1.10.4   Sampling

I employed sampling techniques to select participants for the study. Sampling refers to the methodical process of selecting a subset of individuals from a larger population or group, undertaken specifically for research purposes Bhardwaj (2019). Sampling is a valuable method in research, particularly for mitigating financial costs associated with conducting the study. A non-probability sampling approach, specifically purposeful sampling, was utilized to select participants. This method is employed when researchers aim to concentrate on and comprehend specific and distinctive cases within an identified sample within a limited timeframe (Acharya, Prakash, Saxena and Nigam, 2012). Additionally, this sampling approach expedited the process by enabling the selection of participants who possessed the desired characteristics necessary to address the research questions (Robinson, 2013). By selecting samples who are deemed suitable respondents for the study, I anticipated obtaining real-time results, as these individuals possessed relevant knowledge and a strong grasp of the subject matter Bhardwaj (2019).

In this study, a sample of 18 ordinary level Vhavenda learners was selected, with 6 students drawn from each of the three chosen schools. Additionally, 6 ordinary level history teachers participated, with 2 teachers from each of the selected three schools. At the national level, the

sample included one ordinary level history textbook author, a ZIMSEC subject manager, and a CDU subject specialist. This resulted in a total sample size of 27 participants.

1.10.5   Instrumentation

For purposes of data collection in this study, document analysis, focus groups and semi-structured interviews were used. Privitera (2012) alludes to the fact that mixing of different instruments in data collection results in the instruments complementing one another. Its use results in a complementary effect being realised. The concept of triangulation was highly utilized in this study. Triangulation is employed as a technique to enhance the trustworthiness and robustness of research outcomes (Noble and Heale, 2019). Triangulation was essential in ascertaining validity and corroboration of instruments used in this research. The concept was premised on the notion of comprehending social phenomenon from diverse viewpoints and how data analysis can converge to a common conclusion (Brannen, 2005). Triangulation entails employing multiple data collection techniques to investigate a singular subject or phenomenon (Arias Valencia, 2022).

Focus groups were used for this research since they offer a dynamic and interactive environment for gathering in-depth information. Focus group discussions were limited to Vhavenda learners who have selected history as an elective subject. Participants were able to build on each other's responses, providing a richer and more nuanced understanding of the research topic.

Document analysis was used for this research due to its numerous advantages, such as data availability, cost efficiency, and access to historical information. The method involved systematically examining and interpreting documents to extract significant data and insights pertinent to the study. The analyzed documents included the Constitution of Zimbabwe, the curriculum framework, and the history syllabus. This approach capitalized on the readily accessible nature of documents, offering a rich source of information.

Mathers, Fox and Hunn (2002) point out that the semi-structured interview is a product of open-ended questions anchored in the intended research topic. When selecting interview participants, such as Ordinary level history teachers, the history textbook author, the CDU subject specialist,

and the ZIMSEC subject manager, I intentionally did not target Vhavenda speakers exclusively. This deliberate decision allowed for the inclusion of non-Vhavenda viewpoints on the research topic. It is noteworthy that while a selected participant could coincidentally belong to the Vhavenda ethnic group, this approach facilitated the practical feasibility of the research, as these positions are open to individuals from any ethnic group and region within the country.

The interviewer is given the privilege to probe the interviewee which results in accumulation of more information. Semi-structured interviews may take too long hence I used an audio recorder to avoid losing data. Thus, semi-structured interviews were conducted with the Vhavenda learners, Ordinary level history teachers, renowned history textbook author, a CDU subject specialist and the ZIMSEC subject manager.

1.10.6   Data analysis

In a bid to address the research questions, the MOPSE curriculum framework, the Ordinary level history syllabus, Ordinary level history textbooks and the Zimbabwean Constitution were selected as the documents to appreciate ethnic representation in secondary schools in Zimbabwe. This research adopted a social justice perspective which calls equality in terms of recognition and representation in education. Document analysis was employed to amass and examine or analyse data from the Zimbabwean updated curriculum framework, the Ordinary level secondary history syllabus and the Ordinary level history textbooks. The analysis was centred on the representation of the history of the Vhavenda ethnic group in the curriculum.

The data was collected through qualitative means, namely, interviews, focus discussions and document analysis. These methods enabled the coding of information in order to recognize designs and themes that could be detected on the foundation of the information and objectives presented. Kutsyuruba (2023) posits that, document analysis involves a structured approach to examining and assessing documents by locating, choosing, evaluating interpreting, and integrating the information they contain. The contents of the curriculum framework document were used as the yardstick to measure the expected standards on the ground. The expectations of the government

are all outlined in the Constitution of Zimbabwe, MOPSE curriculum framework and the Ordinary level history syllabus.

The purpose of analysing documents was to find meaning of the topic under study. It involved coding content into themes just as interview scripts are analysed (Bowen, 2009). I analysed official documents namely the Constitution of Zimbabwe, the Ordinary level syllabus, recommended history curriculum textbooks and the MOPSE curriculum framework. Document analysis plays an important role in complementing other research instruments as it provides a convergence of supporting information that raises trustworthiness (Bowen, 2009). Documents can additionally serve in the process of gathering and analyzing data, aiding in addressing research inquiries (Dalglish, Khalid, McMahon,2020).

Focus group discussions were conducted on Vhavenda learners. Focus group discussions comprise assembling people with similar involvements to discuss a precise theme of interest together (Nyumba, Wilson, Derrick and Mukheerjee, 2017). Main theme of the discussion was to discuss the feelings of the Vhavenda learners about the representation of their history in the curriculum as well as how much they know about their past. Rich qualitative data was collected and this method saved time since I had a discussion with a group of ten learners at once rather than having a face-to-face interview with each learner (Gorman and Clayton, 2005). However, a few vocal participants may dominate other members of the group in the course of discussions. In the focus group discussions, the moderator aimed to generate a diverse range of viewpoints and arguments within a specified time frame (Akyildiz and Ahmed,2021). Therefore, since these discussions were conducted in groups of ten, I made sure every learner contributed something during the discussion.

1.11   TRUSTWORTHINESS

Trustworthiness is important in any research as it addresses the aspects of validity and reliability of a research. Hawley (2019) asserts that trustworthiness hinges on the ability to avoid making promises that cannot be kept, necessitating both prudence in taking on new commitments and diligence in honoring current ones. In qualitative research, the notion of trustworthiness

encompasses several critical components, including credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Ahmed,2024). I conformed to all these standards throughout this research. Research becomes acceptable and useful once these aspects are given due attention.

1.11.1   Credibility

Credibility is premised predominantly on internal validity. Through the utilization of diverse data collection methods or sources, researchers can validate information from multiple perspectives, thereby bolstering the credibility of their interpretations and mitigating the influence of biases that may arise from relying on a single method or data source (Ahmed, 2024). Employing triangulation, which integrates multiple data sources or approaches, aids in verifying findings, thereby bolstering their credibility (Gunawan, 2015). Triangulation may include the use of diverse approaches, especially focus groups, observation, and individual interviews, which are the bedrock of data collection approaches for much qualitative study. According to Brewer and Hunter (1989), the use of diverse approaches in research results in them complementing one another. Credibility can be initiated through the checking of individual members to test the outcomes of the research (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). For purposes of this research, different methods were used to collect data hence, verification of research findings.

1.11.2   Dependability

Dependability refers to the consistent and steadfast quality of research findings over time (Kakar, Rasheed, Akhter, 2023). Dependability is closely linked to reliability. Therefore, as a researcher, authenticity and honesty were assured findings were collected in order to enhance dependability. In order to ensure dependability, researchers make sure the process is well documented, logical and traceable (Tobin and Begley, 2004). In order to enhance dependability, I engaged the services of an assistant researcher who is fluent in Tshivenda as well as being well versed with the Vhavenda culture. This enhanced accuracy in data collection and it contributed to authenticity of the findings. Triangulation was also used to cross check the findings of the research thereby augmenting dependability of the research as a whole.

1.11.3   Transferability

Transferability denotes the possibility of an inquiry to be generalized. It is essential for external validity. According to Kakar, Rasheed, Rashid and Akhter, (2023), transferability concerns the extent to which research findings can be applied or generalized to different contexts or circumstances. External validity measures the magnitude to which the results of a research can be applied to different scenarios. Transferability is achievable since the research was detailed and done in depth so as to allow comparisons to be made. The research was done in a thorough manner in as far as provision of evidence through documentary analysis and interviews was obtained. Therefore, the research findings could be applied to situations, other contexts and other minority groups.

1.11.4   Confirmability

Tobin and Begley (2004) believe that confirmability is centred on the establishment of my interpretations and results are evidently derived from my ability to prove how he or she reached research conclusions. Confirmability relates to the neutrality and objectivity of the findings, ensuring they are free from the biases or my preferences, thereby maintaining their integrity (Kakar, Rasheed, Rashid and Akhter, 2023). Researchers employ various methodologies to enhance the objectivity and impartiality of their findings (Rose and Johnson, 2020). Koch (1994) commended researchers to include indicators such as analytical choices during the study so as to enable others to comprehend the factors behind the decisions. I documented all procedures throughout the study to allow independent cross checking of the data collected during the research. These processes include collection, analysis and interpretation of data.

1.11.5   Ethical considerations

The issues of marginalisation of minority groups or subalterns are closely knitted to the issues of identity. Therefore, sensitive questions to do with marginalisation of the history of minority groups such as the history of the Vhavenda in the curriculum were treated in a thoughtful and compassionate manner. Since qualitative research involves subjectivity and active researcher involvement in the research process, I employed multiple strategies to establish ethical

approaches in participant interaction (Brennen, 2017). Great effort and caution were taken to in order to achieve confidentiality with regards to the information given by the people being interviewed.

Informants were assured that their identity would remain anonymous and only known to me. Interviewees were notified on their right to halt the interview in the event that they felt like not proceeding with the interview. All interviewees were given consent forms to sign before the commencement of the interviews.

1.12   DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

Ethnicity - is a social grouping of a population set apart and bound together by common ties of language, race, culture and nationality (Sanders, 2007).

Ethnic group - is a group of people which is characterized by symbols of cultural criteria, relating to normative behavior, value systems and language and whose members are connected by virtue of coming from the same territory (Otie as cited in Asante, 2003)

Curriculum frameworks – are the superintending elements that cater for the cohesion and regularity of the intended educational activities (Zimbabwe, 2015).

Curriculum – is the sum total of all learning experiences and opportunities that are provided to learners in the context of formal and non-formal education (Zimbabwe, 2015).

Tribe - is a societal unit within traditional communities, comprising individuals who share common attributes such as language, culture, religion, and often led by a singular authority figure known as a chief (Oxford Learner's Dictionaries, 2024).

Minority group - is a subgroup of the population with unique social, religious, ethnic, racial, and/or other characteristics that differ from those of a majority group (Perkins and Wiley, 2014).

1.13   LIMITATIONS

The limitation of this study is that it is limited to one minority ethnic group, the history of the Vhavenda people of Zimbabwe. There are several other minority groups which need to be studied in terms of the representation of their history in the curriculum. In light of this observation, the research findings might be limited to a few minority groups. However, I acknowledge that it would be practically impossible to cover all the minority groups in one research; hence, the research leaves room for future researches. The research's emphasis on representation of minority groups will inform the responsible authorities to consider the full representation of the history of all ethnic groups. The second limitation is the sample size which is rather small and therefore, does not fully represent all the teachers and learners. However, due to time limitations, this research was done on a small sample of the population, that is, three schools in the district.

1.14   ORGANISATION OF THE STUDY

Chapter one contains the following elements: an introduction to and background of the study, the problem statement, research questions, the aim of the study, objectives, a synopsis of description of methods of investigation, and data analysis. Chapter two presents a review of the literature from global, continental, and national perspectives. Additionally, it outlines the theoretical framework utilized for this study. Chapter three details the research methodology, including the design selected for data collection and its justification, population and sampling procedures, research instruments and their justification, data collection methods, the trustworthiness of the study, reliability of the study and ethical considerations. Chapter four comprises data presentation, analysis, and interpretation, with the data displayed in both narrative and diagrammatic formats. In Chapter five, the main findings derived from the research are presented, along with the conclusions drawn from these findings. The limitations of the study are also identified and discussed.

1.15 SUMMARY

The chapter establishes a foundational framework for the study by outlining its key components and situating it within the relevant academic context. It begins with background information, offering an in-depth exploration of the topic and underscoring its significance within its disciplinary field. The statement of the problem then identifies the precise research issue or gap, highlighting its importance for investigation. Following this, the purpose of the study is articulated, specifying the study's primary aims, which are further validated by the significance of the study, detailing its anticipated theoretical and practical impacts. The chapter introduces a theoretical framework that elaborates on the principal theory of social justice guiding the research. Rooted in social justice theory, the study adopts a qualitative research approach suitable for its aim of understanding perspectives and performing content analysis. This is followed by a preliminary literature review, which synthesizes existing scholarship and identifies the gaps the current study aims to fill. The chapter also defines the research questions and research objectives, outlining the main inquiries and goals the research intends to pursue. An overview of the research design and methodology is then presented, detailing the approach, including data collection and analysis methods, to ensure methodological rigor. To support clarity, a definition of terms section explains the key concepts and terminology used throughout the study. The chapter critically acknowledges the limitations of the study, discussing potential constraints that might influence the research outcomes. An organization of the study section provides a structural overview of the remaining chapters, serving as a guide for the reader. The research primarily focuses on identifying factors influencing the representation of Vhavenda history within the Zimbabwean secondary history curriculum, and evaluating the extent of its inclusion. The geographical focus of the study is Beitbridge West District.

CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1   INTRODUCTION

This chapter will focus on reviewing literature on representation of minority groups in the national curricula of different countries in the world as well as attempts which have been made to bring about equal representation. The chapter will also focus on the theoretical framework which guided this particular research.

2.2   INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES

For the international perspective of the research on the representation of the history of minority groups in the curriculum, I chose the Travellers in Ireland and the Roma in Romania as case studies due to their unique and historically marginalized statuses within their respective societies. The Travellers in Ireland, with their distinct cultural identity and nomadic heritage, face significant social exclusion and educational disadvantages, making their inclusion in the curriculum a critical issue for promoting social justice and cultural understanding. Similarly, the Roma in Romania, as one of the largest and most historically oppressed ethnic minorities in Europe, encounter pervasive discrimination and systemic barriers to education. By focusing on these groups, this research aims to highlight the importance of inclusive education in fostering a comprehensive understanding of national histories, combating stereotypes, and promoting equity and inclusion in diverse educational settings.

2.2.1   The representation of the Travellers in the Irish secondary school curriculum

The Traveller population, an ethnic minority group with a centuries-long presence in Ireland, is estimated at 30,987 individuals as of the 2016 Census (CSO, 2018). Despite their enduring heritage, the history of Irish Travellers has often been marginalized or misrepresented in mainstream historical narratives. Kavanagh and Dunpot (2021) identify a range of factors contributing to the marginalization and misrepresentation of Travellers within the Irish secondary

school curriculum. This exclusion perpetuates cultural racism and reinforces unequal power dynamics between Travellers and other members of the Irish community. Bryan (2007) notes the presence of institutional racism within the Irish education system, evident through cultural and curricular misrecognition and neglect. Furthermore, Irish curricula tend to exhibit bias in favor of the settled community, effectively silencing and erasing the historical narratives of the Travellers (McGaughey, 2011).

A media analysis revealed the propagation of stereotypical portrayals of Travellers, associating them with characteristics such as indecency, vulgarity, violence, uncouthness, and criminality (Bhopal, 2018). Kavanagh and Dunpont (2021) attribute these pathologizing depictions to the perpetuation of racist stereotypes, exacerbating discriminatory attitudes towards Travellers. Moreover, social networking platforms like Twitter and Facebook have been found to contain substantial evidence of stereotyping, dehumanization, denigration, and demonization of Travellers (Siapera, Moreo, and Zhou, 2018). Kavanagh and Dunpont (2021) criticize the lack of legislative measures in Ireland to address hate crimes targeting Travellers on such platforms. Additionally, Joyce (2018) notes that Travellers' resistance to conforming to societal norms regarding attire, speech patterns, and lifestyle choices often serves as justification for their exclusion and the derogatory labeling they endure.

Traveller advocacy groups have engaged in research on various issues impacting the Traveller community, submitted findings to governmental bodies, and spearheaded the development of intercultural education initiatives (Fay and McCabe, 2015). These organizations have been actively advocating for acknowledgment and representation of Travellers' rights and perspectives. Their persistent efforts have led to notable advancements for the Traveller community at large. In 2017, Irish Travellers were formally recognized as an ethnic minority group in Ireland, marking a significant milestone in addressing the pervasive institutional racism and marginalization they have faced (BBC, 2017; Kavanagh and Dunpont, 2021). Described by Irish President Michael D. Higgins as a "momentous decision," this official recognition represents a crucial step towards rectifying historical injustices and fostering inclusivity within Irish society (BBC, 2017).

Travellers within existing school curricula, aiming to incorporate Traveller history and culture into primary and post-primary education levels (Kavanagh and Dunpot, 2021). Spearheaded by then Oireachtas member, Senator Colette Kelleher, the introduction of the Traveller Culture and History in Education Bill 2018 sought to amend the Education Act of 1988 to formally integrate Traveller history and culture into educational frameworks (Pringle, 2021). Senator Kelleher asserted that the inclusion of Travellers' history and culture in the curriculum would significantly contribute to acknowledging and validating their distinct culture, facilitating both educators and students in learning about Ireland's diverse cultural landscape (Houses of the Oireachtas, 2018). According to the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) (2019), the history of Travellers could be contextualized through various facets, including ancient manuscripts, their contributions to Irish crafts, music, storytelling heritage, wartime efforts, struggles for independence, and economic activities.

The introduction of a bill advocating for curricular inclusivity aligns with recent government policies aimed at promoting equality and educational opportunities, such as the National Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy 2017–2021 (Department of Justice and Equality, 2017). The passage of the Education Bill of 2018 marked a significant milestone in recognizing the distinctive contributions of Travellers to Irish society. It facilitated the incorporation of Traveller history and culture into school curricula and the establishment of Traveller cultural centers. Additionally, this legislative action was consistent with Ireland's international commitments, including recommendations from the Committee of Ministers to member states regarding the integration of Traveller history into educational materials (CoE, 2020). Recognizing a prevalent misconception of Traveller culture, the Irish parliament emphasized the importance of initiating educational efforts to foster understanding and appreciation of Traveller history and culture among students (Dail Eirean, 2021; Ellis, 2021).

2.2.2   The approaches to teaching the history of the Travellers in the Irish schools

The portrayal of Irish Travellers within the Irish curriculum is notably limited. Significant contributions made by Travellers to Irish national history are overlooked, leading to a lack of representation within the educational framework. Omissions of Travellers' involvement in pivotal

events like the Irish War of Independence contribute to the perpetuation of harmful stereotypes and ongoing discrimination (Dail Eirean, 2021; Smith, 2021). Essentially, this absence not only results in the underrepresentation of Traveller history but also distorts the broader narrative of Irish national history. The exclusion of Travellers' historical narratives renders the depiction of Ireland incomplete, highlighting the vital role Travellers play in shaping the nation's history. Furthermore, the historical context of Travellers remains largely unexplored and undocumented within the inclusive framework of the broader community (NCCA, 2019).

The omission of Travellers from the narrative surrounding the Irish War of Independence serves as a poignant illustration of their historical marginalization and lack of acknowledgment. This exclusion extended to the postwar redistribution of land and resources, leaving the Traveller community without access to secure housing or resources. Collins (1920) emphasized the significance of land redistribution in the success of the independence movement, highlighting how its absence perpetuated poverty and marginalization among Travellers in Ireland. This glaring absence underscores the detrimental consequences of overlooking Travellers' contributions to the Irish War of Independence. Thus, the inclusion of Traveller history would provide both Travellers and non-Travellers with a more comprehensive understanding of Irish history.

The educational curriculum fails to acknowledge the significant contributions of Irish Travellers in traditional crafts and skills. The Irish Traveller Movement (1996) highlights the exclusion of Traveller culture, including tin smithing skills, traditional medicine, and horse dealing, from history curriculum. Hauser (2019) concurs, asserting that Traveller culture, history, and traditional skills, such as tin-smithing, receive insufficient attention in schools. This observation underscores the ongoing need for comprehensive inclusion of Traveller culture within educational frameworks. Farrell (2019) argues that by omitting Traveller culture and history from the curriculum, the government neglects an integral aspect of Ireland's heritage and identity. This exclusion denies Travellers the recognition and representation they rightfully deserve. Additionally, the substantial contributions of Travellers in agriculture, particularly animal husbandry, remain largely overlooked.

2.2.3   Recommendations given to ensure equitable representation

In 2005, recommendations were proposed advocating for the inclusion of Traveller culture as an integral component of the intercultural curriculum within Irish schools (Dail Eirean, 2021; Pringle, 2021). The establishment of the Development and Intercultural Education Project (DICE) subsequently provided avenues for advancing intercultural education and recognizing minority cultures (NCCA, 2019). The underlying premise was to ensure concerted efforts toward enhancing the visibility of Traveller history and culture across educational levels (NCCA, 2019). Intercultural education, as delineated in the literature, serves to confront discrimination, foster equality, and uphold human rights principles (NCCA, 2006). Embracing an intercultural framework, rather than a multicultural one, guided the selected research approach concerning the Vhavenda community, as interculturalism underscores the importance of parity and the exchange of cultural norms. It emphasizes the equitable treatment of all ethnic groups, without privileging any single culture over others.

Incorporating various viewpoints into history textbooks and educational materials has the potential to challenge stereotypes and enhance comprehension among students, as highlighted by Kavanagh and Dunpot (2021). To guarantee comprehensive coverage of Traveller history and culture across different subjects, it is imperative to integrate it into textbooks, as emphasized in proposals by Dail Eirean (2021) and Pringle (2021). This legislative initiative aims to provide a holistic depiction of Irish history by incorporating Traveller narratives. The official acknowledgment of Travellers as an ethnic group within Ireland signifies a significant advancement toward incorporating their historical experiences into the educational curriculum.

2.2.4   The representation of the history of the Roma ethnic group in the Romanian curriculum

The Roma, alternatively known as Gypsies or Romani, constitute an ethnic minority group within Romania. However, their historical narrative has long been marginalized within the Romanian educational curriculum. Since the early 21st century, there has been a growing political emphasis on integrating the Roma community into mainstream society, both nationally and across European

borders (Hodne, 2022). Seeking to explore representations of Roma history and culture, Tunegaru (2021) conducted a comprehensive content analysis of primary and middle school textbooks spanning from 2nd grade to 6th grade. Tunegaru's investigation scrutinized the presence or absence of historical facts pertaining to the Roma ethnic group.

The analysis uncovered significant instances of underrepresentation and misrepresentation regarding Roma history, traditions, and experiences within the textbooks. Utilizing a social justice lens, Tunegaru (2021) argued that such inadequacies systematically discriminate against Roma learners, perpetuating their marginalization. According to the Roma Education Fund, (2007) textbooks predominantly adopt the viewpoint of the dominant cultural group, frequently perpetuating cultural biases and gender stereotypes. Roma representation within textbooks is sporadic and incidental, rather than deliberate or substantive (Roma Education Fund, 2007). The omission of Roma history from the textbooks is posited as a form of oppression, perpetuating systemic inequalities.

Furthermore, insights gleaned from the content analysis of textbooks used in the Romanian curriculum informed subsequent research endeavors, including investigations into the representation of the Vhavenda history, wherein a similar analytical approach was adopted. Various factors contribute to the marginalization of the Roma within Romania, including social denigration, lack of acceptance, and discrimination, as extensively documented in academic literature (Pogany, 2006). Additionally, biased media reporting has led to the stereotyping of the Roma as criminals, profiteers, beggars, and lazy individuals, resulting in their social exclusion and marginalization (Van Dijk, 2012; Sam Nariman et al., 2020). It is the convergence of these multifaceted factors that has contributed to the marginalization of Roma history within the Romanian educational curriculum.

The portrayal of the Roma ethnic group's history within the Romanian educational framework has emerged as a significant subject both in academic circles and within society. Throughout history, the depiction of Roma in Romanian educational resources has often been constrained and prejudiced, perpetuating harmful stereotypes while sidelining their cultural contributions and historical narratives. This limited portrayal mirrors widen societal biases and entrenched

discrimination against the Roma community, ultimately impeding efforts towards social cohesion and diversity education by depriving students of a nuanced understanding of Romanian society and its diverse cultural tapestry (Soros Foundation Romania, 2018). The absence of Roma perspectives in the curriculum further exacerbates these challenges, hindering attempts to foster inclusivity and equity within educational settings.

2.2.5   The approaches to teaching the history of the Roma in the Romanian schools

The examination of textbooks and curricula across Europe, including Romania, revealed a striking absence of acknowledgment regarding the Roma's significance within national societies (Spielhaus, Szakács-Behling, Ailincai, Hopson, and Pecak, 2020). Particularly concerning was the underrepresentation of the Roma within European curricula, a finding evident in Romanian textbooks as well. In the context of Romanian educational materials, mentions of the Roma minority group are predominantly confined to discussions surrounding the Holocaust and the abolition of slavery (Spielhaus, Szakács-Behling, Ailincai, Hopson, and Pecak, 2020). Costache (2021) contends that merely presenting a narrative of Roma history in Romania falls short if its contemporary relevance and impact on Roma discourse are not adequately explored and analysed.

An analysis conducted by Tunegaru (2021) underscored the introduction of diversity discussions in second and third-grade textbooks, with explicit mentions of the Roma ethnic minority group appearing in fourth-grade history textbooks. Hodne (2022) further emphasizes that textbooks are essentially products of curriculum authors' interpretations, highlighting the profound influence of the curriculum on textbook content. This observation was corroborated by teachers' responses, indicating a widespread exclusion of Roma history from the curriculum (Hodne, 2022). Tunegaru (2021) additionally observed significant omissions of essential topics pertaining to the Roma within the national history of Romania, further underscoring the inadequacies in the representation of Roma history within educational materials.

Hodne (2022) posits a critical perspective on the representation of Romani history within the curriculum, highlighting its tendency to perpetuate negative stereotypes. The curriculum often presents a one-sided narrative, focusing predominantly on the adverse aspects of Romani history,

such as discrimination and poverty. This limited portrayal neglects to encompass the richness of Romani culture and traditions, thereby reinforcing misconceptions and biases among students. Hodne (2022) believes that the curriculum's depiction of Romani history is often myopic and fails to provide a balanced perspective. By predominantly emphasizing the challenges and struggles faced by the Romani community, the curriculum overlooks the constructive aspects of Romani heritage, including their vibrant cultural practices and resilient traditions.

2.2.6   Recommendations given to ensure equitable representation

UNICEF (2011) recommends that the imperative task at hand is the comprehensive reassessment of the curriculum to guarantee its encompassment of all learners, devoid of any deleterious or disparaging depictions of Roma communities. Integral to this recalibration is the incorporation of pedagogical materials that foster inclusivity and cultural sensitivity, alongside the integration of Roma language, culture, and historical narratives into the educational framework (UNICEF, 2011).

In recent years, endeavors have been undertaken to address the representation of Roma history in the Romanian curriculum, although progress has been uneven. Educational reforms have sought to integrate Roma viewpoints into history textbooks and learning materials, aiming to highlight the vibrant cultural heritage and societal contributions of the Roma community to Romanian society (Council of Europe, 2019). Nevertheless, obstacles persist in ensuring the accuracy, inclusiveness, and sensitivity of these representations, as well as in promoting critical engagement with the complexities of Roma history and contemporary challenges confronting the community (Ionescu, 2020). Furthermore, the successful implementation of inclusive educational practices demands sustained commitment from policymakers, educators, and stakeholders to combat entrenched prejudices and structural inequities.

Hodne (2022) advocates for the incorporation of a diverse portrayal of Romani agency and resilience to establish a more nuanced and accurate depiction of the Roma community, both as a minority ethnic group and as citizens of Romania. The concepts of recognition and representative justice are pivotal in ensuring the fair representation of Roma history within the curriculum.

Gabor et al. (2014) underscore the discrepancy between the intention to include Roma history and the stark reality of its exclusion from the national curriculum. Thus, there is a clear imperative to augment the presence of Roma history within the curriculum.

Recognition entails acknowledging and validating the experiences and viewpoints of the Roma people, ensuring their incorporation into the curriculum. Hodne (2022) asserts that the portrayal of Roma history is pivotal for achieving recognition justice within an inclusive education system. Representative justice involves ensuring that the Roma community's voices are represented in the curriculum and that they have a role in shaping how their history is presented. Kovacs (2020) suggests that Romania's curriculum should become more inclusive by encompassing the diverse Romani culture. Hodne (2022) concurs with Kovacs (2020), advocating for a more balanced Romanian curriculum that integrates a wider range of perspectives.

Educators would also involve the integration of Roma viewpoints into existing history curricula, thereby enriching students' comprehension of historical occurrences and societal dynamics. By infusing Roma narratives, educators can present a more comprehensive and nuanced view of Romanian history, spotlighting the varied experiences and contributions of Roma communities (Ionescu, 2020). This method not only aids in dispelling stereotypes and biases but also cultivates empathy and critical thinking skills among students by encouraging exploration of multiple perspectives.

The portrayal of the Roma ethnic group's history within the Romanian curriculum remains a multifaceted and evolving issue with profound implications for social cohesion and educational fairness. Despite efforts to rectify historical marginalization through educational reforms, persistent hurdles impede the achievement of comprehensive and equitable representations. Looking ahead, it is imperative to center the voices and experiences of Roma individuals and communities in curriculum development processes, facilitate critical discourse and empathy among students, and dismantle systemic barriers to educational access and achievement for Roma learners (UNESCO, 2020). Only through collaborative and persistent endeavors can the Romanian curriculum authentically reflect the diversity and richness of its multicultural heritage.

2.3   CONTINENTAL PERSPECTIVE

For the continental perspective of this research on the representation of the history of minority groups in the curriculum, I selected the representation of minority groups in the Ghanaian primary school curriculum and the representation of the history of the Copts in the Egyptian secondary school curriculum as case studies. In Ghana, the inclusion of diverse ethnic groups such as the Ga-Dangme, Ewe and Guan, in the primary school curriculum is crucial for fostering a sense of national unity and appreciation of the country's rich cultural tapestry from an early age. This approach helps combat ethnic biases and promotes social cohesion. Conversely, in Egypt, the Copts, as the largest Christian minority in a predominantly Muslim country, have a long and significant history that is often underrepresented in educational narratives. Examining their portrayal in the secondary school curriculum sheds light on issues of religious and cultural inclusion, and highlights the importance of presenting a balanced and comprehensive historical account that acknowledges the contributions and experiences of all societal groups. Through these case studies, this research underscores the vital role of education in fostering inclusive societies that respect and celebrate diversity.

2.3.1   Representation of minority groups in the Ghana primary school curriculum

Research done in Ghana by Del Mar (2012) divulges those social studies placed Ghana's history and traditions on the periphery. Del Mar (2012) notes the absence of intensive criticality in books used in social studies at primary school level since they did not represent the cultural aspects and history of the country. Dwomoh's (2018) reveals that the primary school social studies syllabus of Ghana did not have adequate Ghanaian history. Dwomoh (2018) suggests that the inadequacy could be a result of the interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary innate characteristics of syllabus (for social studies). Results from Dwomoh's (2018) study concur with Del Mar's (2012) study. Drawing from Del Mar's (2012) research, Oppong, Gyimah and Yeboah (2021) suggest that Ghana's primary school social studies syllabus lacked Ghana's cultural heritage and history. Upon commenting on the results of Dwomoh's (2018) research Oppong, Gyimah and Yeboah (2021) assert that the social studies syllabus partially or totally did not fulfil the objectives of the

curriculum. The debates and researches on the representation of ethnic groups in Ghana show that they were affected by inadequate coverage.

Ghana, like Zimbabwe, implemented a new curriculum, as noted by Aboagye and Yawson (2020), which took effect in September 2019 to address deficiencies in the prior curriculum. Oppong, Gyimah and Yeboah (2021) conducted research on the representation of minority group histories in the Ghanaian primary school curriculum. Although their focus was on primary education in Ghana, their study provides valuable insights into the necessity of equitable representation of minority histories in the broader national curriculum. Their research underscores the significance of inclusivity in curriculum content and the promotion of multicultural education. According to Oppong, Gyimah and Yeboah (2021), the history curriculum serves as a platform for realizing multicultural education objectives. The primary goal of history education is to foster tolerance among learners and society as a whole. Odumah and Golo (2016) recognize Ghana's multicultural composition, comprising individuals from diverse ethnic backgrounds. The national motto, "Freedom and Justice," underscores the country's commitment to respecting the rights of ethnic minority groups (Odumah and Golo, 2016).

In Ghana, the Ministry of Education (2019) acknowledged that the study of Ghana's history by learners would foster unity among the diverse ethnic groups, national integration, national pride and above all national identity. Harmonious co-existence among ethnic groups enables the harnessing of manpower resources towards national development projects (Odumah and Golo, 2016). Oppong, Gyimah and Yeboah (2021) believe that a clear understanding of other ethnic groupings cultivates empathy and tolerance not only in the history classroom but in society in general. Banks (1997) accentuates that content integration calls for the inclusion of perspectives of different cultural groups in the history curricula. This alludes to the importance of including the history of minority ethnic groups in the history curriculum of a country. The assertions by the different authors are in full support of the nation-building agenda. Empathy is essential in molding a good character and positive attitude towards members of other ethnic groups. Gibson (2012) is in total support of the notion, since he argues that historical empathy is a locomotive of social change as it fosters recognition of diversity, open mindedness and mutual understanding among learners.

Aboagye and Yawson (2020) assert that history as a subject plays a pivotal role of harnessing and enhancing cross-ethnic tolerance and assist learners embrace diverse cultural identities. Oppong, Gyimah and Yeboah (2021) concur with Aboagye and Yawson (2020), as they maintain that a multi-cultural approach in the compilation of content in the history syllabus will promote the value of tolerance, inclusion and democracy. Oppong, Gyimah and Yeboah (2021) further state that a multi-ethnic country like Ghana should have a history syllabus which indicates or shows equity in terms of representation. Equity denotes settings of fairness in all aspects. According to Boadi (2004) Ghana has about 92 ethnic groups. The 92 ethnic groups are usually classified into eight large groups, namely, Mande-Busanga, Grusi, Gume, Guan, Ga-Dangme, Ewe, Mole-Dagbani and Akan (Ghana Statistical Service, 2000).

2.3.2   The representation of the history of the minority groups in curriculum

Findings from the research carried out by Oppong, Gyimah and Yeboah (2021) indicate that ethnic groups are not listed as syllabus topics and are underrepresented in the Ghanaian history curriculum. In primary 4, minority groups such as the Mande-Busanga, Gurma and Grusi, are totally not mentioned in the syllabus (Oppong, Gyimah and Yeboah 2021). Such exclusion of minority groups promotes an inferiority complex that supports inequity and inequality (Chen and Reed, 2018). Inequality in terms of representation will limit the learners' understanding of the connection between the origins of their ethnic group and Ghana's history as a whole. This is opposed to what Harris (2013) believes in, which is the importance of blending personal connection and the national educational experiences.

Oppong, Gyimah and Yeboah (2021) assert that the current syllabus lacks inclusivity regarding minority groups, as it primarily focuses on dominant ethnicities in Ghana. While the research did not ascertain the reasons for this disparity, I aimed to investigate whether similar disparities existed in the Zimbabwean context and, if so, to determine their underlying causes. Bank (1971) suggests that such disparities may result in learners receiving incomplete coverage of the country's history. Oppong, Gyimah and Yeboah (2021) are in support of deliberate and intentional efforts to ensure equity and inclusion of the history of minority groups in the curriculum, arguing

that ethnic groups not included as syllabus topics are underrepresented in the Ghanaian history curriculum.

2.3.3 The approaches to teaching the history of the minority groups in the Ghanaian primary schools

Oppong, Gyimah and Yeboah (2021) critique the curriculum for only providing learners with a basic identification of ethnic groups in each region, arguing that this falls short of providing comprehensive coverage. They contend that the syllabus restricts pupils to merely identifying the history of their respective ethnic groups without fully appreciating the cultures of the diverse ethnicities. While the origins of various ethnic groups are introduced at primary 3, the depth of coverage remains insufficient, particularly for minority groups. The depth of coverage is crucial for achieving full representation. I sought to examine the extent of coverage of the history of the Vhavenda ethnic group in the curriculum, with insights from the Ghanaian case study informing the research. Both studies aimed to assess the depth of coverage of minority groups in the curriculum, but the Ghanaian study focused on the primary school curriculum, encompassing all minority groups in Ghana, while the research on the Vhavenda in Zimbabwe concentrated on one minority ethnic group at the secondary school level. This focused approach aimed to uncover nuanced factors influencing the representation of minority groups in the national curriculum.

2.3.4 Recommendations given to ensure equitable representation

Oppong, Gyimah and Yeboah (2021) acknowledge the syllabus's efforts to recognize the various ethnic groups in Ghana but assert that a gap persists due to the underrepresentation of minority groups. Recommendations from various studies and established committees have raised expectations for the provision of equitable curriculum content for all ethnic groups in Ghana, irrespective of their size (Oppong, Gyimah and Yeboah, 2021). They advocate for the inclusion of content addressing multicultural education as outlined by the Ghana Education Ministry. Oppong, Gyimah and Yeboah (2021) suggest utilizing the history syllabi to encompass the diverse ethnic groups rather than restricting the scope of identity topics in the syllabus.

2.3.5   The representation of the history of the Copts in the Egyptian history curriculum

Abdou (2018) researched the representation of the history of the Copts in the Egyptian history curriculum. The research covered the depth of their representation in the Egyptian secondary school textbooks as well as the Copt learners' general feelings on the issue of non-inclusion in the history curriculum. The Copts are a minority group in Egypt. According to Tadros (2013) the Copts make up about 10% of the Egyptian population of 100 million people. Tadros (2013) called for the inclusion of the history of the Copts in the school curricula so as to end discrimination of the Copts. It should be noted that El-Khawaga (1998) acknowledged that multiple scholars have researched how Copts have been side lined from the public sphere in Egypt. The Coptic era is essential in the history of Egypt as it covers the period between 30 CE and 641 CE.

2.3.6   The representation of the history of the Copts in the curriculum

The representation of the Copts is primarily influenced by religious factors. Awad (2017) attributes the exclusion of Coptic history to religious differences between Christians and Muslims, with Copts being Christians. Unlike the Zimbabwean research on the Vhavenda, which centers on ethnicity, the Coptic issue revolves around religion. However, both cases share the commonality of being previously marginalized minority groups. The study on the Vhavenda focused on assessing whether the updated curriculum framework (2015-2022) addresses past disparities in representing minority groups. Therefore, the case study of the Copts in Egypt serves as valuable insight for the research on the Vhavenda in Zimbabwe.

Abdel-Melek (1968) noted the exclusion of Coptic history from curricula between 1950 and 1960 during Nasser's rule. Adel (2016) asserts that Egyptian activists and journalists agree that while Coptic history was omitted during Nasser's era, subsequent regimes failed to address this issue. Textbooks exhibit bias towards Arab conquest history, neglecting Coptic history entirely (Adel, 2016). Abdou (2016) conducted a textual analysis of 2013/2014 history textbooks, revealing disproportionately minimal coverage of Copts compared to other groups in Egyptian history. Abdou (2016) observed the apparent marginalization of Coptic history in Egypt. Abdou (2018)

echoes similar sentiments, stating that Coptic history is only briefly mentioned in history textbooks used in Egypt.

Studies conducted on the Coptic community in Egypt offer valuable insights into the investigation of the representation of Vhavenda history within Zimbabwe's revised curriculum. Employing textual analysis, I examined the extent to which Vhavenda history is portrayed in current Ordinary level history textbooks used in Zimbabwean secondary schools. The study aimed to assess the degree of representation in terms of equality, fairness, and balance, aligning with key principles of the updated Zimbabwean curriculum.

2.3.7   The approaches to teaching the history of the Copts in the Egyptian schools

In his research Abdon (2018) discovered that learners are openly told not to worry about Coptic history as it seldom barely features in the exams. Abdon (2018) researched the general feelings of the Copts on the exclusion of their history in the Egyptian national curriculum. One of the learners interviewed by Abdon (2018) expressed his deep desire to explain to his classmates who exactly the Copts are. This feeling is ignited by the fact that the Copt learners feel that their history is marginalised during lessons. Abdou (2016) in his research on the Copts indicated that the Copt learners felt excluded and alienated. The research on the Vhavenda in Zimbabwe will also inquire into the general feelings of the Vhavenda with reference to their representation in curriculum. The views of the ethnic minority group (the Vhavenda people) will give a clear reflection of exactly what is on the ground.

2.3.8   Recommendations given to ensure equitable representation of the Copts in the curriculum

The issue of the Copts has been contested for by both Copts and Muslims in Egypt (Ibrahim, 2015). Egyptian scholars and intellectuals have continuously called for the full inclusion of Coptic history in the national curriculum. Tadros (2013) called for the inclusion of the school curricula so as to end the discrimination of the Copts. One Muslim interviewed by Abdon (2018) expressed great interest in learning Coptic history. Larsen, Sonja and Sender (2018) are in total

support of inclusion of the history of minority groups in the national curriculum as it promotes tolerance.

2.4   ZIMBABWEAN CONTEXT

2.4.1   Education in Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe's historical narratives have undergone distortion, manipulation, and misrepresentation over time. The colonial-era educational curriculum was a product of entrenched racial discrimination, offering distinctly different educational experiences for whites and Africans. African education was largely vocational and limited, preventing full societal participation. Mlambo (2013) characterizes the colonial history curriculum as heavily biased toward British history, marginalizing the histories of other ethnic groups and downplaying African achievements to justify theories of white supremacy like Social Darwinism. The colonial curriculum exhibited a pronounced Eurocentric bias, overtly promoting imperialistic ideologies that portrayed the British as benevolent civilizers. Conversely, white students enjoyed privileged access to careers in management and leadership positions.

Mlambo (2013) argues that the curriculum aimed to instill British beliefs and values, emphasizing loyalty and obedience. The colonial curriculum served as a tool for the colonial powers to exert dominance, oppression, subjugation, and exploitation over Africans, as highlighted by Mavhunga (2006). It functioned as a mechanism for perpetuating social, political, and economic inequalities within society. Through the manipulation of curriculum content and pedagogical methods, colonial authorities sought to exert control over the minds of the colonized populace, fostering a sense of psychological subordination and instilling a mentality of subservience, as noted by London (2001). London (2001) extends this argument by contending that textbooks propagated a narrative in which whites were consistently portrayed as heroic figures, while the benchmarks for societal standards, norms, and values were overwhelmingly Eurocentric. This Eurocentric perspective was presented as the sole legitimate depiction of reality, thereby marginalizing alternative viewpoints and reinforcing the hegemony of colonial ideologies.

Rodney (1983) delineated the colonial schooling system as an institutional framework crafted to sustain processes of subordination, exploitation, the cultivation of cognitive disarray, and the perpetuation of underdevelopment. This characterization underscores the multifaceted role of education within colonial contexts, wherein educational structures were instrumentalized to uphold systems of oppression and socio-economic inequality.

In a similar vein, Masaka (2016) advances the argument that power dynamics and dominance were fundamental elements utilized to establish and maintain privileges for colonial authorities, often to the detriment of other members of society. Masaka's analysis illuminates the intricate power dynamics inherent in colonial governance, wherein the imposition of authority was wielded as a means to consolidate control and extract resources, further entrenching existing social hierarchies and marginalizing subjugated groups.

Even in the post-colonial period, the curriculum perpetuated the marginalization of subordinate groups' histories, promoting a narrative of national unity while disregarding the experiences of marginalized communities (Togarasei, 2009). Moyo (2014) asserts that the historiography of Zimbabwe following its independence has been notably deficient in inclusivity, particularly concerning the representation of diverse social groups. The narrative crafted post-independence has predominantly centered around a singular perspective, neglecting the multifaceted experiences and contributions of various societal factions. This exclusionary approach to historical documentation not only undermines the richness and complexity of Zimbabwe's socio-cultural tapestry but also perpetuates a skewed understanding of its past. By marginalizing the histories of other social groups, the prevailing discourse risks perpetuating biases and reinforcing power dynamics that have historically marginalized certain voices.

 Furthermore, Moyo (2014) underscores the importance of incorporating diverse perspectives into historical narratives to attain a more comprehensive understanding of Zimbabwe's post-independence trajectory. Failing to acknowledge the histories of marginalized social groups perpetuates a narrative that privileges certain identities over others, contributing to the perpetuation of social inequalities and erasure of significant contributions. This selective retelling of history not only distorts the collective memory of the nation but also hinders efforts towards

fostering a more inclusive and equitable society. In light of this, Moyo (2014) advocates for a reevaluation of historical methodologies and an intentional effort to amplify marginalized voices in the reconstruction of Zimbabwe's post-independence narrative. This necessitates a paradigm shift within historical scholarship towards greater inclusivity and recognition of the diverse experiences that have shaped the nation's history.

Moyo (2014) asserts that since Zimbabwe's independence, the historical narrative has predominantly marginalized the experiences and contributions of various social groups, thereby perpetuating a selective representation of the nation's past. Despite concerted efforts to reform postcolonial curricula, remnants of colonial influence persist, as noted by Shizha (2013). Mavhunga (2006) goes further to argue that these curriculum reforms have primarily tinkered with colonial legacies, leaving fundamental colonial structures intact.

Jansen (1991) offers insight into the limited efficacy of radical curriculum changes in Zimbabwe, highlighting how entrenched colonial elements persist within educational materials and practices. This continuity, despite purported transformations, is underscored by Jansen's (1989) comprehensive review of postcolonial curricula across Africa over the past quarter-century, which concludes that curricular content and pedagogical approaches often lack contextual relevance.

Moreover, scholars such as Masaka and Chingombe (2013), and Shizha (2013), collectively emphasize that postcolonial curricula continue to mirror colonial frameworks concerning objectives, content, teaching methodologies, assessments, classroom dynamics, and educators' perspectives. They argue that while attempts have been made to diversify voices within the curriculum, the underlying colonial paradigms remain largely unchallenged.

In addressing these challenges, Bassnett (2006) suggests that curriculum reconstruction should involve creating space for marginalized perspectives, thus transforming the process into a more inclusive endeavor rather than a prerogative solely of the state. Moyo (2014) echoes this sentiment, reiterating the exclusionary nature of Zimbabwe's post-independence history curriculum and advocating a more comprehensive and inclusive approach that incorporates the histories of all social groups.

Doke's 1931 language report in Zimbabwe distorted the ethnic landscape by categorizing the country's linguistic diversity into two main languages: Shona and Ndebele. This classification amalgamated six distinct ethnic languages under the umbrella term "Shona," inaccurately portraying its speakers as a singular ethnic group. Consequently, this colonial legacy spurred a contentious struggle for inclusion within the curriculum between the Shona and Ndebele groups. This struggle led to the assimilation of ethnic minority groups into either Shona or Ndebele categories. The apparent tribal contestation between these two groups is, in fact, a nuanced form of linguaphobia, characterized by a disdain for certain languages. Linguaphobia in Zimbabwe is further compounded by glottophobia, linguicism, and languagism, constituting forms of xenolinguistic discrimination. The enduring historical misconceptions stemming from this distorted colonial heritage have perpetuated a toxic battle for curriculum space. This contestation has resulted in a draconian hegemony of the curriculum by the Shona and Ndebele, effectively stifling the recognition and representation of ethnic minority groups.

An incident exemplifying linguaphobia and regionalism occurred when Simelisizwe Sibanda, the Deputy Minister of Higher and Tertiary Education, was dismissed by the president after advocating for the immediate relocation of an Early Childhood Development (ECD) teacher with a Shona surname from Bubi district in Matabeleland North Province. However, the minister apologised after being dismissed and was later reinstated by the president. According to Farekaye (2024), Sibanda argued that the teacher was unsuitable for teaching young children in their local isiNdebele language. At a school meeting on June 24, 2024, Sibanda insisted on the immediate transfer of Winnet Mharadze, the ECD teacher at Clonmore Primary School, criticizing her openly for allegedly jeopardizing children's futures. This critique notably included questioning her knowledge of uqethu (lawn grass), to which she did not respond (Farekaye, 2024). Initially perceived as tribalism, a closer examination reveals this controversy to be a manifestation of both linguaphobia and regionalism.

In Zimbabwe, teachers who speak Ndebele or Shona routinely educate children from minority groups such as the Vhavenda, which is considered normal given the dominance of these two languages nationwide. However, minority groups remain largely voiceless under the dominance of Shona and Ndebele speakers. This dominance extends to the history curriculum, with tensions

only emerging when conflicts of interest arise between Shona and Ndebele speakers based on regional and linguistic politics. The colonial practice of naming provinces according to the perceived predominant language spoken in each area, exemplified by Mashonaland, Matabeleland, and Manicaland, fostered regionalism and linguistic prejudice. This division was reinforced by Clemence Doke's 1931 report

The aforementioned example illustrates this narrative clearly. The dismissed minister's request for the transfer of a Shona-speaking teacher implies an expectation for her relocation to a predominantly Shona-speaking region. These regional and linguistic divisions were created by the colonial regime and continue to exist 44 years after the attainment of independence. Had the teacher borne a Ndebele, foreign, or any ethnic group which is not associated with Shona speaking groups, she might not have faced such harassment.

Matabeleland North, Matabeleland South, and Bulawayo provinces, recognized for their cosmopolitan demographics, house people of diverse ethnic origins. Historical regional entitlement or divisions and linguistic disparities deeply entrench the rivalries between Shona and Ndebele speaking groups. The contemporary Shona identity comprises multiple ethnic groups speaking mutually comprehensible languages, collectively recognised as Shona dialects. The Shona identity was constructed in modern political terms by the colonial state. This decision resulted in the categorization of ethnic groups such as the Tsonga and Ndau under the umbrella of Shona, despite their distinct separation from traditional Shona groups. Significant social manipulation occurred during the colonial era. Maseko and Dhlamini (2021) are of the view that, the government has actively contributed to maintaining the dominance of Shona and Ndebele groups, thereby marginalizing and excluding minority groups.

2.4.2 The representation of the history of minority groups in the Zimbabwean curriculum: The Zimbabwean debates on representation of minority groups

The Constitution of Zimbabwe of Amendment number 20 Act recognises the existence of multiculturalism and multilingualism (Mpofu and Salawu, 2018). This includes the recognition of the language, culture and history of any ethnic group recognised by the Constitution of

Zimbabwe. Therefore, constitutionally the history of minority ethnic groups should be represented in the secondary school curriculum. The learning of one's history promotes identity among different ethnic groups. Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013) avers that identity making is a product of a political process which is informed by inclusion and exclusion. Ndlovu (2007) posits that from colonial times, Ndebele and Shona are the predominant languages which enjoyed widespread coverage in media. Mlambo (2014) observes that the main challenge affecting the on-going national building agenda is the methodology of constructing a national identity in contested and debated precolonial, colonial and post-colonial epochs. Mpofu and Salawu (2018) notes that the colonial government demarcated Rhodesia (present day Zimbabwe) into Ndebele and Shona speaking regions.

Mpofu and Salawu (2018) argue that Shona and Ndebele dominance continued in the post-colonial period. Ndlovu (2009) avouches that Ndebele and Shona are "killer" languages which snare the survival and very existence of the other indigenous languages. Mpofu and Salawu (2018) subscribe to the view that Ndebele and Shona speaking people enjoy political influence in the country, which suffocates the minority groups threatening their existence. Mozondidya and Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2007) are in agreement that minority language speakers were placed in ethnicised administrative individual units and distinctive identities are overlooked. These trenchant observations aptly and critically capture the current Zimbabwean ethnic representation dilemma. Language, culture and history of an ethnic group are inseparable. This insinuates that the domination of the both the Ndebele and Shona languages over minority languages overlaps to the secondary history curriculum. The advent of the updated curriculum was meant to be a remedy to the previous disproportionate representation of ethnic groups in the curriculum. I intended to find out whether there has been a historical disenfranchisement of the history of the Vhavenda in the secondary history curriculum.

Previous debates and researches on representation of minority groups have been centred on the Ndebele and Shona speaking ethnic groups. I was of the view that, in as much as the Ndebele are a minority group when compared to the Shona speaking ethnic groups, they are a dominant group when compared to other minority groups such as the Vhavenda. Mpofu and Salawu (2019) contend that the dominance of the Ndebele language extends to the extent where minority groups

must adopt Ndebele to gain acceptance. This marginalization of other ethnic groups has perpetuated colonial hegemony and reinforced the ethnic dominance of both Ndebele and Shona-speaking communities (Zivave, 2022). According to Mpofu and Salawu (2019), the imposition of Ndebele and Shona as the exclusive official languages at independence exemplified a nation with linguistic identities, overlooking the linguistic richness of Zimbabwe and the contributions of other minority groups to the country's cultural and historical tapestry.

Mpofu and Salawu (2018) argue that despite the Zimbabwean government's attempts to foster linguistic diversity, the prevailing dominance of Ndebele and Shona speaking groups poses a hurdle for minority communities. Ndebele and Shona have been singularly acknowledged as the indigenous cultural groups (Zivave, 2022). Gudhlanga (2005) expresses concerns that other indigenous cultures face the risk of extinction due to marginalization stemming from colonial legacies and the educational framework. This predicament impacts the acknowledgment and portrayal of minority groups within the history curriculum. However, there is a general consensus among the Ndebele speaking ethnic groups that the Zimbabwean historical narrative is in favour of the Shona speaking ethnic groups and tends to downplay the role played by the Ndebele speaking people in the different historical epochs. The debates have turned out to be a Trojan horse. It should be noted that this debate has stolen the limelight from the other ethnic groups whose history has not fully been recognised over years.

Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2009) contends that the rift within ZAPU, culminating in the emergence of ZANU, delineated tribal divisions between the Shona and Ndebele communities. According to Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2009), post-split, ZANU (PF) became predominantly associated with the Shona ethnic group, while ZAPU was perceived as primarily Ndebele-aligned. This tribal contestation, Ndlovu (2009) argues, led to the predominance of Shona speaking ethnic groups in the portrayal of liberation struggle narratives, a dominance evident since the first Chimurenga. Gusha (2018) acknowledges a contrasting perspective emerging during the war of independence, where Ndebele and Shona nationalists advocated for the acknowledgment of Ndebele and Shona languages as national rather than tribal identifiers. This viewpoint was subsequently institutionalized in the post-independence era. However, Beach (1974) contends that Ndebele and

Shona are languages spoken by groups with shared historical and cultural backgrounds, rather than national languages.

A meticulous examination of Ndlovu-Gatsheni's (2009) assertions suggests that the perceived tribal distinctions were superficial, evidenced by ongoing challenges encountered by the splinter group ZANU even subsequent to its separation from ZAPU. As previously discussed in this dissertation, ZAPU retained Shona-speaking members following the split. According to Mangiza and Mazambani (2021), ZANU was marred by ethnic tensions from its inception, leading to the emergence of factionalism and disputes among party members. Additionally, Mangiza and Mazambani (2021) contend that these ethnic tensions resulted in divisions delineated along ethnic lines, particularly among the Zezuru (northerners), Manyika (easterners), and Karanga (southerners). Competition for leadership positions and internal conflicts among members of these ethnic groups culminated in fatalities and the expulsion of individuals from the party. These divisions persist in post-independence Zimbabwe, exacerbated by linguaphobia and regionalism.

ChiZezuru, ChiKaranga, and ChiManyika are distinct yet related languages that along with other dialects, were amalgamated to form the ChiShona language. An examination of these circumstances reveals that the concept of a unified "Shona ethnic group," established through what can be described as a "linguistic convenience" or "fragile amalgamation" by early missionaries and later by Doke, has not succeeded in creating a cohesive Shona identity. Instead, true ethnic and regional identities persistently assert themselves. These groups aspire for long-awaited acknowledgment, representation, and identification as independent ethnic entities, rather than being subsumed under the overarching and distorted colonial linguistic identity of Shona. The ramifications of these distorted colonial linguistic and regional identities have permeated into the secondary school history curriculum, significantly impeding the authentic representation and recognition of Zimbabwe's diverse ethnic groups.

The attainment of independence in 1980 marked a period in Zimbabwe's history characterized by the deliberate misrepresentation and manipulation of historical narratives to align with a particular political ideology. These narratives were carefully crafted to portray the ruling party as the preeminent liberation movement, while concurrently marginalizing and vilifying other

movements or factions. Zimbabwe is a nation marked by its multiethnic composition, with each ethnic group playing a significant role in the nation's historical development. However, the adulteration of historical accounts has led to a disproportionate emphasis on the experiences and achievements of dominant groups within the history curriculum, overshadowing the contributions of subaltern groups. This imbalance has perpetuated societal polarization and exacerbated ethnic tensions within Zimbabwe.

In his scholarly inquiry into Zimbabwean history and heritage, Ndlovu (2021) emphasizes that the country's heritage narrative has been monopolized by the divisive agenda of the ruling ZANU (PF) party, which deliberately seeks to exclude Ndebele culture and history. Ndlovu (2021) contends that the Ndebele people are misrepresented in Zimbabwean history, often depicted as malevolent outsiders who invaded the nation. According to Ndlovu (2021), Ndebele history has either been purposefully demonized or selectively omitted to establish a heritage and history devoid of Ndebele influence. Kriger (2003) supports Ndlovu's (2021) assertions, asserting that ZANU PF's triumphalism is characterized by the glorification of Shona precolonial heroes and their historical monuments, while the history of the Ndebele and their heroes is significantly marginalized.

Ndlovu (2021) emphasizes the prevalence of misrepresentation, exclusion, and marginalization of Ndebele history, evident in the absence of Ndebele heroes and spiritual leaders from the country's historical narrative. Ndlovu (2021) asserts that the contributions of ZAPU and ZIPRA to the Zimbabwean liberation struggle have been extensively pathologized and marginalized by ZANU PF and the government. This sentiment aligns with Nyathi's (2002) earlier argument that the history curriculum lacks sensitivity to the Ndebele historical perspective, instead portraying the Ndebele as subordinate to the Shona or the broader Zimbabwean identity.

Ndlovu (2021) criticizes fellow Zimbabwean historians for crafting narratives that align with the interests of ZANU PF and perpetuating negative stereotypes about ZAPU and the Ndebele community. Nyathi (2002) asserts that the Ndebele-speaking population has been misrepresented in the post-colonial era through various means, often depicted as passive participants in the formation of a national Zimbabwean identity. He advocates for a nuanced and inclusive approach

to the history curriculum. Nyathi (2002) contends that the severe misrepresentation of the Ndebele extends to portrayals of them as inherently violent, militant, and inclined towards warfare. Ndlovu (2021) further argues that Zimbabwean children have been exposed to distorted versions of Zimbabwean history through the school syllabi, leading them to perceive Ndebele history as malevolent and unworthy of inclusion in the nation's heritage.

A thorough examination of Ndlovu's (2021) analysis reveals several limitations. His research is constrained by misconceptions regarding tribal affiliations, and it conflates language with ethnicity. The colonial practice of naming provinces as Matabeleland and Mashonaland contributes to a distorted understanding of language distribution (Nhongo and Tshotsho, 2021). Ndlovu (2021) erroneously categorizes the Shona as an ethnic group, which is historically inaccurate. Shona is, in fact, a language consisting of numerous dialects, and therefore does not represent a distinct ethnic group. Multiple ethnic groups in Zimbabwe speak Shona. The misrepresentation of Shona as a tribe can be traced back to research conducted by Clement Doke, who was commissioned by the Rhodesian government (now Zimbabwe) to study the languages spoken in the region (Ndhlovu, 2008).

Doke amalgamated several similar languages, including Kalanga, Korekore, Zezuru, Manyika, Ndau, and Karanga, resulting in the collective designation of "Shona" (Ndhlovu, 2008). Within the Shona dialects, Zezuru held a dominant or influential position compared to others (Ndlovu, 2008). This critical error of conflating language with ethnicity, originating from the colonial era, persisted into the post-colonial period. According to Chimhundu, (1992), Doke's 1931 report led to the biased recognition of Ndebele and Shona as the two official African languages in Zimbabwe. Post-independence efforts tended to favor Ndebele and Shona cultures, marginalizing minority groups and encouraging them to adopt either Ndebele or Shona in school settings (Hachipola, 1998). Doke's report restricted ethnic groups to the categories of Shona and Ndebele, resulting in injustice to both these groups and ethnic minorities in Zimbabwe. Missionaries also played a role in promoting Ndebele and Shona dominance by translating the Bible into these languages (Nhongo, 2014). Nhongo and Tshotsho (2021) attribute the deep-seated misconception to Doke's 1931 report, which categorized ethnic groups in Matabeleland as Ndebele.

This misinterpretation and distortion have significantly hampered the understanding of both learners and policymakers regarding the ethnic dynamics in Zimbabwe. Ethnic minority communities such as the Kalanga express dissatisfaction with their portrayal in the curriculum, asserting that they do not receive adequate acknowledgment and representation. Dube (2020) attributes this marginalization of the Kalanga language to both colonial and post-independence policies. Similarly, Maphosa (2021) contends that the Zimbabwean educational framework erroneously depicts the Kalanga people as inconsequential within Zimbabwe, a perspective she deems entirely inaccurate. The enduring impact of colonial distortions has greatly influenced the representation of minority groups in the secondary school curriculum. Therefore, it is crucial to assess the representation of ethnic minority groups independently, rather than assimilating them into the narratives dominated by the majority groups. Addressing this issue involves unraveling the colonial misrepresentation by dismantling the forced amalgamation of ethnic identities imposed by colonial authorities.

The inclusion of the histories of ethnic groups such as the Vhavenda, baSotho, Kalanga, Ndau, and others should be treated independently within the curriculum. In 2013, the Ndau language achieved constitutional recognition as an official language distinct from Shona (Sithole, 2022). Previously, Ndau had been categorized as a Shona dialect. Sithole (2022) strongly contends that Ndau history has been significantly underrepresented and overshadowed in mainstream narratives. Maseko and Dhlamini (2021) argue that the Zimbabwean government has not adequately addressed the continued dominance of Ndebele and Shona-speaking groups, leading to the marginalization of minority ethnic groups. The research aimed to deconstruct the amalgamation of languages and ethnicity to assess the recognition and representation of minority ethnic groups in the history curriculum. The separation of language and ethnicity was intended to provide a clearer understanding of the representation of ethnic group histories in the curriculum.

Doke's 1931 report continues to exert a significant influence on language policies in Zimbabwe even 42 years into the post-colonial period (Nhongo and Tshotsho, 2021). These language policies, in turn, have implications for the history curriculum, particularly concerning ethnicity and language. UNICEF (2017) acknowledges that Zimbabwe's language policy, as outlined in the 1987 Education Act, favors the use of three languages: Ndebele, Shona, and English. Nhongo and

Tshotsho (2021) contend that the revision of the 1987 Education Act was notably shaped by Clement Doke's 1931 report, as it classified all languages found in Matabeleland under Ndebele and those in Mashonaland under Shona. Msindo (2005) recognizes that disparities in ethnic narratives and linguistic geopolitics in Zimbabwe stem directly from Clement Doke's influence. Furthermore, the colonial practice of naming provinces based on the dominant language in the region has exacerbated linguaphobia and regionalism in Zimbabwe. Unfortunately, Doke's adoption of the ethnolinguistic boundaries established by missionaries, which were influenced and intensified by competition for influence and missionary spaces, has had lasting repercussions (Ndhlovu, 2009).

It is worth noting that unlike in countries outside of Africa such as Greece and Norway where linguistic distinctions typically do not correspond to ethnic boundaries (Khon cited in Maseko and Dhlamini, 2020), the situation is different in Africa. Chimhundu, (1992), asserts that Ndebele and Shona were designated as the official languages of Zimbabwe due to their large number of speakers relative to other languages. However, it is important to recognize that colonial naming practices, such as labeling regions as Matabeleland and Mashonaland, perpetuate a distorted narrative regarding language distribution (Nhongo and Tshotsho, 2021). This further undermines the recognition and representation of the diverse ethnic groups in Zimbabwe within the context of the history curriculum.

According to Gramsci's theory of hegemony, dominant groups establish and maintain control over weaker groups through either overt coercion or intellectual manipulation to assert their supremacy (Chimhundu, 1992). Focault (1998) further emphasizes the inseparable connection between knowledge and power, suggesting that the most powerful group dictates the type of knowledge disseminated. Consequently, powerful and dominant groups exert hegemonic influence over the content and presentation of history in educational curricula. In Zimbabwe, there is a prevailing perception that the Shona and Ndebele ethnic groups are dominant, reflected in the extensive coverage of their history in the curriculum. Msindo (2005) notes that efforts to revitalize languages in Zimbabwe often carry implicit ethnic and tribal associations, leading to the marginalization of minority groups (Moyo, Mdlongwa and Ncube, 2015). It is imperative to systematically categorize ethnic groups and evaluate the depth or proportion of their

representation in the curriculum. Moreover, it is essential to distinguish between language and ethnicity and measure them separately to avoid distortion in academic discourse when researching or linking language and ethnicity-related topics. Extreme caution must be exercised to ensure the integrity and accuracy of academic narratives.

Language cannot be equated directly with ethnic identity. The Zimbabwean Constitution officially recognizes 16 languages, but it is important to note that not all of these languages correspond to distinct ethnic groups. For example, while Shona and English are among the 16 official languages, they do not represent separate ethnic groups. Prior to the arrival of European settlers in 1890, the term "Shona" was not used to denote the local population. Instead, people in Mashonaland were primarily identified politically as subjects of various chiefs rather than linguistically, as there was no centralized authority in the region (Ranger, 2010). Additionally, individuals who speak Shona do not commonly use the term "Shona" to describe themselves; rather, it was coined by linguists to refer to a Bantu language cluster spoken by these individuals (Gelfand, 1973). Sithole (2018) contends that the identity of a Zimbabwean Shona person illustrates how identities were artificially constructed by colonial administrators, missionaries, and scholars. The misleading concept of "Shona" has led to the emergence of multiple fluid identities, and it should not be conflated with ethnicity but rather understood as an artificially created linguistic category.

In Matabeleland, there exists a phenomenon where certain ethnic groups self-identify as Ndebele despite not being ethnically Ndebele. This misidentification stems from various factors, including the dominance of Ndebele speaking individuals in the region, leading to the assimilation or incorporation of these ethnic groups due to their association. Minority ethnic groups have adopted what Pieterse (1993) terms the 'chameleon strategy,' where they align themselves with their ethnic group when advantageous or with the larger community for economic or political reasons. Nhongo and Tshotsho (2021) assert that similar to Shona, Ndebele is a language rather than an ethnic group.

In essence, the Ndebele comprise a heterogeneous mix of linguistically and ethnically diverse individuals (Nhongo and Tshotsho, 2021). This argument is supported by the presence of various ethnic groups in Matabeleland, including Venda, Xhosa, Tjwa, Sotho, Tonga, Tswana, Kalanga,

Chewa, and Nambya, among others. Across many African nations, shifts in ethnic identities have occurred, resulting in new identity formations where ethnicity becomes fluid (Fearon, 2004). Nhongo and Tshotsho (2021) suggest that the role of language has contributed to the distortion of ethnicity. In Zimbabwe, ethnicity is remarkably fluid, leading to misunderstandings and misconceptions within academic discourse. These misconceptions perpetuate colonial legacies of inter-ethnic animosity and contribute to distorted academic narratives.

The consolidation of African languages significantly impacted the educational landscape, diminishing the prevalence of bilingualism and multilingualism (Nhongo and Tshotsho, 2021). This process of linguistic unification had profound implications for the ethnic identities within Zimbabwe, leading to a fluidity in ethnicity. It exacerbated and widened ethnic schisms among indigenous Africans, intentionally impeding the development of unified national identities by fragmenting communities and favoring select groups (Ranger, 1985). The failure to recognize the diverse minority groups in Matabeleland North and South provinces marked the inception of their marginalization, the repercussions of which persist to this day (Ndhlovu, 2009). This study stands out in its objective to dismantle the colonial imposition of ethnic homogenization and evaluate the representation of a minority group, the Vhavenda, as an independent entity within the curriculum. The research distinctly focuses on the portrayal of the Vhavenda as a distinct entity rather than as a subordinate to the Ndebele.

The Ndebele are the largest minority group and as a result their language and history are recognised in the national curriculum. Rivalry or contestation for media and curriculum coverage by the Ndebele ethnic group has been researched. However, it should be noted that existing researches on the Ndebele have been clouded by colonial distortions which were inherited and extended in the post-independence era. Nhongo and Tshotsho (2021) aver that the Education Act of 1987 did not recognise the existence of multiple languages in Zimbabwe. This in turn affected the recognition of the individual histories of minority groups in Zimbabwe. Nhongo and Tshotsho (2021) further argue that there is a deliberate misconception that one becomes competent in Ndebele by entering Matabeleland and that one becomes competent in Shona by entering Mashonaland.

The territorial partitioning of Rhodesia, now Zimbabwe, into provinces such as Mashonaland, Matabeleland, and Midlands established expectations regarding language usage, where Shona was designated for Mashonaland,

Ndebele for Matabeleland due to its dominance, and both Shona and Ndebele for Midlands province (Nhongo, 2013). This misinterpretation leads to distortions in ethnicity and identity, compelling minority groups to become subordinate to dominant ones. Colonialism instigated the politicization of African ethnic identities by endeavoring to shape and reshape them through geographic and cultural categorization (Muzondidya and Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 1997). Consequently, the historical predominance of Shona and Ndebele has previously impacted the representation of minority groups in the educational curriculum due to these misconceptions and distortions.

The Education Amendment Bill of 2019 recognises the 16 languages stated in the Zimbabwean Constitution (Nhongo and Tshotsho, 2021). The Education Amendment Bill of 2019 is silent about the position or place of the history of minority groups in the curriculum. The Act focuses mostly on language and not specifically on ethnicity. The representation of minority groups such as the Vhavenda in the curriculum has not been given particular or specific attention. However, the MOPSE curriculum framework (2015-2022) has underpinning principles which highlight the importance of equality, fairness and balance. Therefore, the research was premised on the underpinning principles of the MOPSE curriculum framework.

A research gap is evident concerning the portrayal of small minority groups, such as the Vhavenda, within the curriculum. Previous studies addressing small minority groups, like the Vhavenda, have primarily focused on linguistic aspects, with limited attention given to their historical representation. Historians and educators investigating the representation of minority group histories have predominantly concentrated on the underrepresentation or misrepresentation of the largest minority group, namely the Ndebele. It is important to recognize that the Ndebele ethnic group encompasses other groups identifying with Ndebele culture or language, despite not being inherently Ndebele themselves. Therefore, there is a necessity to disaggregate major ethnic groups and analyze subsidiary ethnic groups independently.

Thoroughly dissecting and scrutinizing each ethnic group officially recognized by the Constitution provides a comprehensive understanding of the prevailing circumstances. It is within this context that I became convinced that an investigation into the portrayal of the Vhavenda in the curriculum would serve as a litmus test for the credibility of the updated curriculum. The updated curriculum is guided by foundational principles centered on equality, equilibrium, and impartiality. This study introduces a fresh analytical discourse on the depiction of minority group histories within the curriculum.

2.5   AN ANALYSIS OF FACTORS INFLUENCING REPRESENTATION OF ETHNIC MINORITY GROUPS

A meticulous examination of the literature surveyed highlights a myriad of factors impacting the portrayal of ethnic minority groups within the curriculum. These factors synergize to contribute to the underrepresentation or misrepresentation of these groups. International literature underscores similar trends, revealing historical omissions in the narratives of countries like Ireland and Romania. In these contexts, the histories of marginalized groups such as Travellers in Ireland and Roma in Romania have been notably overlooked or minimized in official accounts.

The Travellers and Roma communities have endured enduring discrimination and marginalization over time, profoundly influencing the framing and portrayal of their historical narratives. Prejudice has frequently led to the erasure or marginalization of their stories. Their social standing, historically low within many societies, has significantly impacted the perception and presentation of their histories. In Ireland, for instance, Travellers have often been relegated to the status of 'outsiders' or 'others,' rather than being integrated into the national narrative. Moreover, both communities have been subject to pervasive negative stereotypes and misconceptions, perpetuated through various channels, including the media. Media portrayals have tended to emphasize negative incidents and events, overshadowing the broader historical and cultural contexts of these groups. Consequently, this skewed representation has contributed to a limited and distorted understanding of their histories.

The historical portrayal of Travellers and Roma has been significantly shaped by institutional racism and discrimination within educational and governmental establishments. These systemic biases have hindered their ability to assert their own narratives and present their histories authentically. Authors of history textbooks and curriculum developers have often harbored biases that influenced the representation of minority groups' histories. Textbooks frequently overlook or trivialize the histories of these groups, and when included, they are often presented in a superficial or stereotypical manner. This portrayal tends to emphasize the differences between minority and majority groups rather than highlighting their contributions. For example, Travellers and Roma may be portrayed as 'exotic' or 'mysterious,' rather than as multifaceted individuals with diverse experiences. As a result, stereotypes are perpetuated, and there is a lack of appreciation for the complexity of their historical narratives.

In Africa, various factors contribute to the imbalance of power between majority and minority groups, including the prevalence of certain historical narratives and the enduring impacts of colonization and imperialism. The historical accounts of numerous ethnic minority groups across the continent have frequently been marginalized in favor of narratives centered around dominant ethnic groups. For instance, in Ghana, the classification of the nation's 92 ethnic groups into 8 broader categories has had detrimental implications for representation. This oversimplification of ethnic diversity has the potential to perpetuate stereotypes and misconceptions, as it fails to capture the nuances within each group. Such categorization often leads to the erroneous assumption that all members of a particular ethnic group share identical histories, cultures, and beliefs, which is rarely the case. Consequently, there exists a significant gap in the representation and comprehension of the histories and cultures of these minority groups.

Similarly, in Egypt, the Coptic Christian minority has experienced marginalization, with their historical narratives often overshadowed by the focus on the country's Muslim majority. This marginalization has resulted in the neglect of the Coptic Christian community's contributions to Egyptian history and culture, further perpetuating the imbalance in representation.

The historical narrative of the Coptic community in Egypt has frequently been marginalized within the nation's educational literature and official historical accounts for instance historical

textbooks. Educational materials have predominantly emphasized the history of the Muslim majority while neglecting or minimizing the historical contributions of other groups, notably the Copts. Consequently, there has been a notable absence of the Coptic perspective within Egyptian academic discourse and media representation. This dearth of representation has resulted in limited public awareness and comprehension of Coptic history and cultural heritage. However, in recent years, there has been a burgeoning movement aimed at rectifying this oversight and raising awareness of the history of the Coptic community. This movement encompasses initiatives to preserve significant historical sites and artifacts associated with the Copts, as well as endeavors to educate the populace about the rich historical legacy and cultural identity of the Coptic people.

Scholarly investigations into the Zimbabwean context have drawn parallels with the situation in Ghana regarding the aggregation of diverse ethnic groups into larger, heterogeneous categories. The distinguishing factor lies in the classification of Zimbabwean groups based on language rather than solely ethnicity, primarily under Shona and Ndebele speakers. While various factors have been identified, the root cause of this phenomenon can be traced back to the recommendations outlined in Doke's 1931 report, a legacy of colonial heritage perpetuated into the post-independence era. However, the primary objective of this study was to assess the representation of the Vhavenda ethnic group's history within the new curriculum framework (2015-2022) alongside the 2013 Constitution, which recognizes 16 official languages, 12 of which correspond to minority ethnic groups in Zimbabwe.

The study aimed to dispel the misconception that language automatically equates to ethnicity. Given that the MOPSE curriculum framework (2015-2022) is founded on principles of equity, equality, and impartiality, it was imperative to objectively evaluate the impact of these principles on the history curriculum. Furthermore, the research sought to identify the factors influencing the representation of the Vhavenda and gauge the extent of their representation as a minority ethnic group within the Zimbabwean secondary school history curriculum.

2.6   THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

For the purposes of this study, I embraced the social justice theory as conceptualized by Nancy Fraser. Fraser's framework, which encompasses recognition, representation, and redistribution, serves as a lens through which to discern injustices within an education system and to assess the positioning of various learner groups relative to one another (Vincent, 2020). Scholars such as Musara, Grant, and Vorster (2021) have underscored the efficacy of Fraser's theory in examining and dissecting issues pertaining to social justice, highlighting its guiding principle of participation parity as well as its utility in devising intervention measures. They contend that social justice is only realized when all learners are inclusively engaged in educational processes and practices, and when resource allocation is conducted impartially, alongside the equitable representation and acknowledgment of cultural diversity within systems.
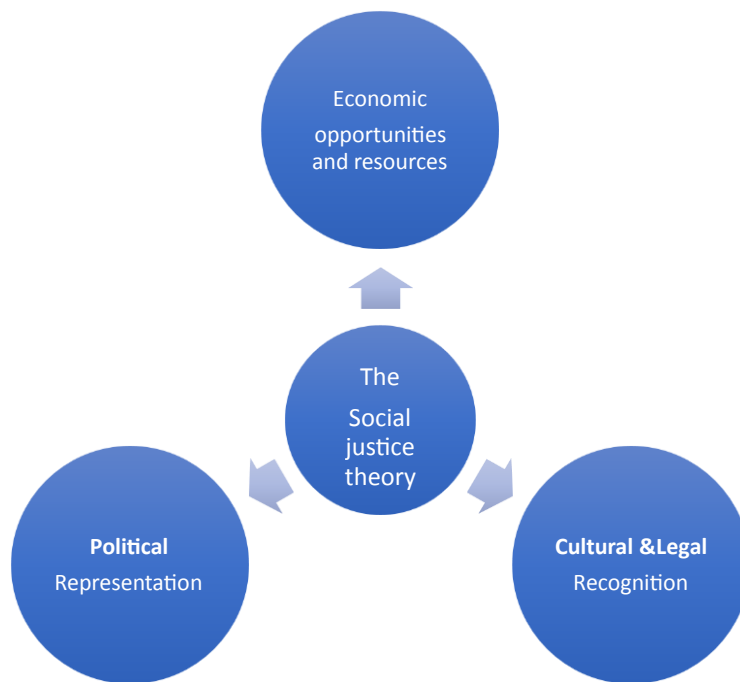
Figure 2.1: Fraser's three-dimensional model of social justice

Fraser's framework of social justice, comprising three dimensions, can be further delineated into specific components, namely economic opportunities and resources, cultural and legal recognition, and political representation. Within this educational research, the focus on economic opportunities and resources primarily pertained to the availability and accessibility of educational provisions, such as textbooks. Cultural and legal recognition entails being acknowledged as a full

member of society and possessing equal legal rights. Fraser argues that a culturally responsive educational environment is fundamental for achieving social justice within the education system (Keddie, 2020). Conversely, political representation concerns having a voice in government and decision-making processes. Fraser contends that inadequate political representation can impede learners' educational success (Keddie, 2020), emphasizing the importance of addressing political representation for all ethnic groups in the curriculum. In many Western educational contexts, the political constitution often fails to provide a voice for marginalized groups, leading to misrepresentation and political injustice (Keddie, 2020). The three-dimensional model serves to enhance understanding and address social injustices.

2.6.1 A social justice approach to curriculum

The adoption of a social justice framework within the curriculum serves to address and rectify various forms of injustice, including those related to acknowledgment, representation, and equitable distribution. These injustices hinder the realization of an inclusive curriculum. Illustrated in the diagram below are the outcomes resulting from implementing a social justice-oriented perspective within the history curriculum. Such an approach fundamentally alters a curriculum characterized by exclusivity, facilitating its evolution into one that embraces inclusivity.
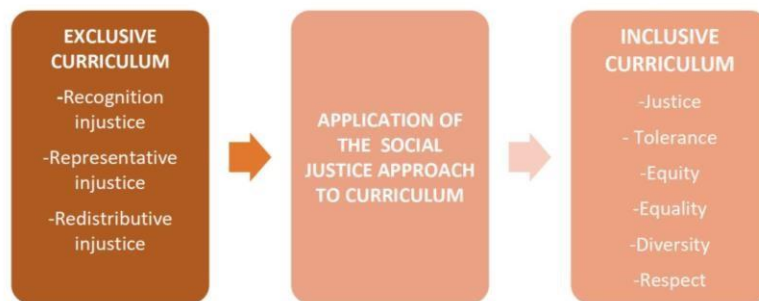
Figure 2.2: Transformative power of the social justice approach to the history curriculum

A social justice-oriented perspective towards the history curriculum addresses the issue of recognition injustice, thereby ensuring that ethnic groups receive the appropriate level of dignity and respect. Failure to adequately represent certain ethnic groups within the curriculum

constitutes a form of recognition injustice. Similarly, the exclusion or minimal representation of historically significant ethnic groups recognized within the constitution also falls within this category. A social justice approach prioritizes recognition justice, aiming to guarantee that all constitutionally recognized ethnic groups within a nation are accorded dignity and respect, irrespective of their identities.

The rectification of representative injustices inherent in an exclusive curriculum can be achieved through the application of social justice principles. Representative justice addresses and mitigates these injustices by ensuring ethnic groups are afforded a meaningful presence in decision-making processes that impact their educational experiences. A robust correlation exists between representation justice and ethnic diversity within educational settings. Historically, learners from marginalized groups, including ethnic minorities, have often been sidelined from participatory decision-making processes.

A social justice framework effectively addresses redistributive injustices inherent in an exclusive curriculum through the application of redistributive justice principles. Redistributive injustice denotes the uneven and unjust allocation of resources. Drawing on Fraser's (1995) seminal work, redistributive justice primarily concerns the equitable distribution of material resources. Hence, the adoption of redistributive justice within a curriculum serves to rectify such injustices, ensuring the fair allocation of material resources. These resources encompass essential educational materials such as textbooks containing comprehensive histories of all ethnic groups recognized by the country's constitution, as well as syllabi that incorporate the histories of these ethnic groups. An exclusive or non-inclusive curriculum is characterized by redistributive injustices, which a social justice approach to curriculum development effectively remedies. By promoting equality, equity, and justice, a social justice-oriented curriculum fosters inclusivity. Addressing redistributive injustice is thus imperative for the establishment of a more just and equitable societal framework.

2.6.2 Inclusive history curriculum

UNESCO (2010) contends that an inclusive curriculum is characterized by the acknowledgment of multiple perspectives, the incorporation of diverse cultures, and the promotion of equitable access and participation. Hart (2019) asserts that it is unacceptable in the contemporary era to have a history curriculum that neglects the rich diversity of the past, emphasizing the necessity for representations that encompass the histories of all peoples. Hodgson (2020) advocates for an inclusive history curriculum grounded in a comprehensive and balanced selection of historical sources that offer varied perspectives, thereby encouraging learners to explore the diversity of human experiences, fostering empathy and understanding in the process. According to Appleby (2014), an inclusive curriculum should be based on historical evidence that reflects the experiences of all societal groups, challenging misconceptions and stereotypes while promoting critical thinking skills.

A social justice-oriented framework applied to the history curriculum prioritizes the representation of marginalized ethnic communities, aiming to foster a comprehensive understanding of historical narratives. Through an inclusive history curriculum, respect and empathy for individuals from diverse ethnic backgrounds are promoted. By adopting a social justice approach, the curriculum becomes more inclusive and reflective of all ethnic groups acknowledged within a nation's constitution. Figure 2.3 below illustrates the qualities or features of an inclusive history curriculum achieved through the application of a social justice approach to education.

Figure 2.3 Tenets of an inclusive history curriculum

The attributes shown in Figure 2.3 serve as benchmarks for gauging inclusivity within the curriculum. The principles guiding an inclusive curriculum operate synergistically to achieve a comprehensive history curriculum that embraces inclusivity. Relying solely on any single principle would impede the realization of a truly inclusive curriculum. For instance, Nancy Fraser argues against the exclusive reliance on recognition justice, advocating instead for a fusion of distributive and recognition justice principles to cultivate a societal framework characterized by equitable participation (Honneth, 2004). As Keddie (2020) observes, both recognitive and distributive approaches have the potential to enhance the educational participation, performance, and engagement of marginalized learners. The consideration of social status within the realm of recognition supports the integration of struggles pertaining to both recognition and redistribution (Fraser, 2008).

2.6.3   Recognition justice

A social justice theory, as articulated by Honneth (2004), places significant emphasis on acknowledging human dignity and recognizing the distinctions between dominant and subaltern groups. Its primary objective is the eradication of discrimination, disrespect, and the humiliation of individuals, thereby addressing recognition injustice and advancing social equality and inclusion. As noted by Strzelecka et al. (2021), recognition injustices stem from cultural dominance exerted by one group over another and represent the antithesis of recognition justice. This concept pertains to the refusal or absence of acknowledgment of the identities, histories, and cultures of minority groups, manifesting through various forms such as social exclusion, deprivation of rights, or the perpetuation of negative stereotypes. Recognition injustice can engender feelings of bitterness and resentment, impeding the full societal participation of ethnic groups.

The advocacy for recognition entails a transformative approach to curriculum and pedagogy aimed at affirming the identities of all learners, encompassing their language, literature, art, culture, and history (Waitoller and Kozleski, 2013). Nancy Fraser discerns the emergence of recognition justice, which specifically targets the elimination of disrespect and humiliation experienced by certain groups (Honneth, 2004). Fraser (2014) further observes that claims for

recognition of difference, advanced by subaltern groups, often take precedence over demands for social equality. Additionally, Fraser (2008) highlights the potential of recognition justice to disrupt dominant social structures that perpetuate inequitable status hierarchies. Schweiger (2019) acknowledges the complex nature of recognition justice, rooted in the phenomenological engagement of groups. Recognition justice enhances learners' motivation, participation in schooling, and academic outcomes (Sleeter, 2005).

Fraser (1996) argues that dominant cultural norms and representations significantly influence daily social interactions. Strzelecka et al. (2021) assert that the absence of recognition stands as a fundamental factor contributing to inequitable redistributions. Consequently, attaining social justice in education requires the comprehensive acknowledgment of the histories of marginalized groups, exemplified by the Vhavenda. The promotion of recognition justice aligns inherently with principles of inclusion.

Keddie (2020) exemplifies Australia's National Goals for Schooling Framework, which prioritizes cultural inclusivity. The Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (2008) underscores the Framework's significant emphasis on indigenous marginalization and the educational responsibility to recognize the cultures and histories of marginalized indigenous communities. Similarly, research on the Vhavenda people is grounded in the guiding principles outlined in Zimbabwe's curriculum (2015), which include equality, fairness, equity, diversity, and inclusivity. This research aims to assess the depth of recognition and representation of the Venda people's history within the national curriculum. The evaluation is based on the foundational principles delineated in the curriculum framework, which has been operational over the past seven years (2015 to 2022).

According to Keddie (2020), the recently implemented Australian National Curriculum incorporates the histories and cultures of minority indigenous groups to foster historical inclusivity across various educational domains. Similarly, in England, there has been a push for culturally inclusive learning as a means to integrate cultural diversity and advance social justice objectives. This endeavor, as validated by Osler and Starkey (2005), aims to cultivate responsible citizens who actively challenge inequality by embracing cultural diversity. Keddie (2020)

emphasizes that integrating the histories of non-dominant groups into the curriculum supports recognition justice, particularly for marginalized learners. Furthermore, Keddie (2020) contends that such inclusive educational initiatives or practices contribute to fostering equitable patterns of cultural recognition, reflecting respect and acknowledgment for marginalized groups.

Keddie (2020) contends that recognitive approaches contribute to the enhanced academic performance, engagement, and participation of marginalized learners. Additionally, Keddie (2012) asserts that globally, marginalized groups often suffer from misrepresentation or political marginalization, as they lack representation in the political constitution, particularly within educational contexts. Furthermore, Keddie (2012) argues that many schools, particularly in the United States, United Kingdom, and Australia, are predominantly comprised of white teachers and students, leading to the underrepresentation of marginalized groups. For example, in Australia, indigenous teachers constitute less than 1% of the teaching population, which is considered a contributing factor to the subpar academic achievement of indigenous students in schools.

Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) (2011) highlights recent governmental initiatives aimed at augmenting the presence of indigenous educators in Australian schools, envisaging the cultivation of heightened cultural sensitivity and the provision of indigenous students with inspirational role models. Keddie (2020) underscores the significance of equity in educational settings, grounded in the multifaceted nature of justice claims. Fraser (2008) asserts that the acknowledgment of marginalized or non-dominant groups within the curriculum exemplifies the potential of recognition justice to disrupt conventional social structures responsible for generating inequitable status hierarchies. Bishop and Glynn (2003), contends that such recognition leads to significant enhancements in the performance, motivation, and overall participation of marginalized learners. Keddie (2020) acknowledges the presence of tensions and challenges arising from endeavors to establish a culturally responsive learning environment in Zimbabwe. Fraser (2008) posits that such recognition reflects a shift in political and justice claims from the predominant focus on redistributive justice toward recognition justice.

It is evident that the government holds a crucial responsibility in advancing social justice, particularly through policy formulation, to ensure equitable educational opportunities and promote equality across all strata of society. However, Nieuwenhuis (2011) suggests that developing countries may face challenges in allocating economic resources and demonstrating political commitment to providing quality education based on principles of equality.

Conversely, Christie (2010) contends that even if developing nations possess the necessary political will and resources, cultural beliefs may pose obstacles to safeguarding against discrimination and upholding the right to equality. This assertion stems from the recognition that cultural norms can impede the implementation of social justice reforms. Christie (2010) argues against approaching social justice from a geo-historical standpoint, warning against perpetual cycles of reconstruction. Nieuwenhuis (2011), on the other hand, advocates for an examination of social justice in education through the lens of social reality, considering the contextual circumstances under which social justice is to be achieved.

Previous studies have used the social justice theory to address inequality in education in terms of lack of equal access to education by different ethnic groups. This study has special interest in a specific ethnic group's representation in terms of the presence and depth of historical content in the history curriculum. The social justice theory is used as a yard stick to measure representation in terms of equality, equity, balance and inclusiveness. The approach to the study is to evaluate the representation of the history of the Vhavenda in the curriculum as well as suggest ways in which equality, equity, balance and inclusiveness can be fully achieved. The study is both diagnostic and remedial in approach. Inequality can be addressed through redistribution. According to Rawls (1971) redistribution is an ethical imperative to make sure that unmet desires are redressed. Redistributive justice is a correctional tool meant to correct representational disparities. Reisch (1998) is of the view that uneven or imbalanced distribution of resources is justified only if it serves to improve the least advantaged groupings in the society. This view is premised on the principles of equity and balance which are tenets of the Zimbabwe primary and secondary curriculum framework.

Prior research has utilized social justice theory to examine educational disparities concerning unequal access to education among various ethnic groups. This study focuses on the representation of a specific ethnic group within the history curriculum, assessing both the presence and depth of historical content. Utilizing the social justice theory as a framework, the study evaluates representation in terms of equality, equity, balance, and inclusiveness, aiming to propose strategies for achieving full parity in these dimensions. The study adopts a diagnostic and remedial approach, aiming to address inequalities through redistribution. According to Rawls (1971), redistribution is ethically imperative to rectify unmet needs, and redistributive justice serves as a corrective measure to address representational discrepancies. Reisch (2002) argues that an unequal or imbalanced allocation of resources is justifiable only if it serves to uplift the least advantaged groups in society. This can be aligned with the principles of equity and balance inherent in the Zimbabwean primary and secondary curriculum framework.

2.6.4 Representation justice

Representation justice extends beyond mere numerical or proportional representation, encompassing diverse perspectives that offer a comprehensive portrayal of shared facets of human experiences (Haeffner et al., 2021). Conversely, representation injustices entail the exclusion of certain groups from the decision-making processes (Fraser, 2008), manifesting in their marginalization within economic and political structures. This exclusion from positions of power leads to the implementation of decisions that disregard their perspectives and desires. Consequently, marginalized groups may develop a lack of trust in existing institutions and feel powerless. Representation injustice also encompasses the portrayal of minority ethnic groups in popular culture and media. These injustices perpetuate inequalities and contribute to the marginalization of certain ethnic groups within educational curricula.

Representation justice questions the authority to speak on behalf of marginalized groups (Young, 2000). It plays a pivotal role in facilitating the participation of minoritized communities in problem-solving and decision-making processes (Young, 2000). Young (2000) argues that representation justice prevents dominant groups from exerting excessive control or influence over processes and outcomes. In the context of this study, the concept of representation justice is

crucial in assessing how the history of the Vhavenda is depicted in Zimbabwean secondary school history curricula. Keddie (2020) advocates the implementation of equity policies to foster inclusive learning environments for students. Accordingly, curriculum documents and instructional materials will be scrutinized to evaluate the extent and significance of the representation of Vhavenda history in the curriculum.

Young (2000) asserts that representation justice fosters a meaningful social perspective and knowledge that may otherwise be overlooked due to unjust representation. According to Young (2014), key indicators of representation injustice include marginalization, misrecognition, oppression, violence, and cultural imperialism. Historically, minority groups such as the Vhavenda in Zimbabwe have faced marginalization and misrecognition. Therefore, this study aimed to investigate whether such injustices persist under the new curriculum. Giarrizzo (2012) argues that the omission of minority group histories from textbooks creates a false impression of their irrelevance. The inaccurate or absent representation of minority group histories in textbooks may lead learners to perceive their histories as unimportant (Giarrizzo, 2012).

Wolf (1992) argues that the exclusion of minority group histories from history textbooks deprives minority learners of positive role models from history. The content presented in textbooks significantly shapes learners' perceptions, and the absence of essential information about minority group histories can foster negative attitudes among learners towards their own history (Giarrizzo, 2012). Providing unbiased and accurate information about minority groups in history textbooks has the potential to dispel misconceptions held by learners and society as a whole (Giarrizzo, 2012). Romanowski (2009) contends that textbook publishers tend to align their content with the topics prescribed in the curriculum. Good (2009) conducted research on the representation of Native Americans in high school textbooks and found their history to be decontextualized, vague, and brief. This suggests that publishers exhibit a bias towards recommended topics while neglecting those beyond the syllabus. Overreliance on textbooks confines learners to the information contained within them (Giarrizzo, 2012), and the exclusion of a topic from a textbook implies its irrelevance. It is not an exaggeration to assert that textbook content is closely intertwined with the contents of the curriculum.

Representation is a significant concern that cannot be overlooked, as it elicits strong emotional reactions. This study was undertaken to assess the extent to which the history of the Vhavenda is represented in Ordinary level textbooks. Additionally, it aimed to examine the portrayal of Vhavenda history in these textbooks. This inquiry is crucial, as the presentation of history influences learners' perceptions regarding its importance. Giarrizzo (2012) emphasizes the importance of providing learners with unbiased and accurate information about minority groups in their textbooks. Research on the representation of minorities in history textbooks is essential, as it enables educators to select and teach accurate information, while empowering learners to evaluate texts critically (Giarrizzo, 2012).

Fraser (2008) subscribes to participatory parity as a fundamental objective of representation justice. Therefore, in light of the Zimbabwe updated curriculum framework parity or equality is tremendously emphasised. This means that the history of minority groups such as the Vhavenda should be represented equally in the curriculum.

2.6.5   (Re)distributive justice

Redistribution entails alterations in the holdings of groups, collective entities, or specific individuals (non- resource holders), or shifts in groups with holdings (resource holders) (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 2018). Redistributive justice encompasses the concept of reallocating resources to advance equality and social justice. (Re)distributive justice serves to rectify distribution injustices or (re)distributive injustices and addresses historical inequalities. Efforts aimed at (re)distribution have sometimes resulted in (re)distributive injustices, serving as a response to distribution injustice. In the educational realm, distribution injustices manifest in various forms, including unequal distribution of resources and opportunities within the education system, and discrimination based on factors such as gender, race, tribe, or ethnicity. These injustices can hinder learners from accessing the education they are entitled to.

Distribution injustices can result in significant disparities in the texture or quality of education that learners receive. Unequal distribution of opportunities, such as the omission of one's history from the curriculum, restricts learners' choices and perpetuates inequality. This study specifically

aimed to assess the extent of curriculum representation of the Vhavenda, a subaltern or minority group in Zimbabwe. Additionally, the research sought to identify distribution injustices that may contribute to depriving the Vhavenda of the opportunity to learn about their own history.

I opted for a (re)distributive justice approach, building upon the distributive justice framework that was initially utilised post-independence in representing both settler and native historical narratives in the curriculum. The objective of the history curriculum was to rectify the underrepresentation and misrepresentation of indigenous black people's history. However, the representation of black history gave rise to new forms of underrepresentation and misrepresentation rooted in ethnicity. The revised curriculum provoked my interest in conducting this research to assess the extent to which all constitutionally recognized ethnic groups are represented.

Fraser (1997) asserts that increasing pressure on sectoral politics impedes redistributive endeavors aimed at enhancing the well-being of marginalized citizens. Rawls (1971) contends that achieving equality in the allocation of resources and opportunities in society can lead to an egalitarian society. According to Rawls (1999), a just distribution should benefit everyone, and positions of responsibility and authority should be accessible to all. Thus, distributive justice is grounded in principles of fairness, equality, and proportionality. (Re)distributive justice was pivotal in this study as it assessed the allocation of resources dedicated to teaching the history of the Vhavenda and the accessibility of these resources to learners. (Re)distributive justice was of utmost importance in this study as it addresses the restitution of what the Vhavenda minority group lost over the years when their history was not recognized in the curriculum.

I adopted (re)distributive justice due to its focus on compensatory justice, which aims to restore individuals to the positions they would have occupied had unfair treatment not occurred. The foundational principles of the curriculum framework embody elements of (re)distributive justice in education, including the provision of resources such as textbooks containing information on the history of the Vhavenda. Additionally, it pertains to how individuals assess or perceive what they receive from a system. In this context, I was interested in exploring the perceptions of the Vhavenda people regarding the representation of their history in the curriculum.

Nozick (1973) argues against centralizing distribution, advocating instead for the absence of a singular entity or group controlling all resources and dictating their allocation. He asserts that every individual or group should enjoy equal access to resources. Rawls (1999) contends that all individuals should have equal access to material goods and services, grounded in the moral principle of human equality, which necessitates the equitable distribution of resources. This principle finds relevance in the education sector, particularly concerning curriculum content, where all ethnic or racial groups within a country should be adequately represented.

2.7   EDUCATION FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EQUITY

Education for social justice is founded on principles of recognition, representation, and redistributive justice, aiming to rectify inequalities and injustices prevalent in both the education sector and broader society. It operates under the belief that education serves as a crucial tool for advancing social justice and effecting transformative change within society.

The social justice theory is grounded in legal frameworks and constitutional principles that regard equality as a fundamental right within society. It aligns closely with a human rights approach, particularly concerning issues of equality, and emphasizes legal tenets such as fairness and inclusivity (The Education Hub, 2021). Calderwood (2003) argues that the social justice theory deconstructs socially constructed differences, ultimately dismantling systems of privilege that disadvantage certain groups. This theory was chosen for the study due to its iconoclastic nature, which fosters inclusivity among minority learners. It is rooted in efforts aimed at overcoming barriers that perpetuate social exclusion.

When applied from a geo-historical angle, social justice is punctuated with a struggle for social transformation, specifically struggles against oppression and domination by other groups (Nieuwenhuis, 2011). For instance, at the onset of this particular study, the Ndebele and Shona speaking groups have been identified as the dominant groups. Young (1990) believes that when implying the theory of social justice, more emphasis should be placed on just outcomes rather than limiting it to just procedures. This means the application of social justice should be sincere and not be just a mere formality. Furthermore, Young (1990) warns that caution should be taken

when including previously excluded groups since they can be forged into a public deliberative sphere but still remain stuck in the periphery of deliberation. The ardent desires and specific needs of previously excluded groups should be comprehensively considered. This has more to do with the operationalization of the principles of a curriculum.

The social justice theory is propelled by actions of society and government to promote equality through issues to do with the constitution, the human rights bill and other supporting laws. It takes the legal route in addressing inequality. This research accesses the policy documents formulated by government in order to attain equality in education; therefore, the social justice theory was adopted for the study. Laws or policies are a social construct and hence, were formulated to address the issues to do with inequality in the education sector. It is therefore, imperative to evaluate the depth of implementation of the laws and statutes in order to establish the extent they have addressed the issue of equal representation in the curriculum.

The social justice theory is premised on the poignant factor of equality which is pivotal to the justice system. The theory was adopted in order to expose and establish the dominant groups in control of the power and resources which cause inequality in the education system. Furthermore, the theory guides the study into giving working solutions in the dismantling of the hegemonic control of power by the dominant group or groups and how the redistribution can be attained. The social justice theory is in full support of redistribution of economic resources in a bid to attain equality.

The intention of the social justice theory is to achieve equality through stipulated policies or laws. The issue of equal representation in the curriculum in terms of historical content is supported by the social justice theory. I chose the social justice theory as it under guides an inclusive history curriculum which gives an equitable representation of the histories of minority groups such as the Vhavenda people in Zimbabwe. According to Alvarez (2019) social justice involves the fair distribution of resources and treatment of students in order for them to feel physically and psychologically safe. In education social justice is also concerned with the type of curriculum one gets Alvarez (2019).

The social justice theory regards education as a crucial instrument for addressing prevalent social injustices by fostering an environment of equality and tolerance (The Education Hub, 2021). Hawkey (2015) underscores the importance of expanding the curriculum to encompass histories traditionally overlooked. An illustrative case is the neglect of minority group histories, such as the Vhavenda, in Zimbabwean syllabi, spanning both pre- and post-colonial eras. Hlalele (2012) contends that social justice is rooted in vigorous efforts to eliminate exclusionary practices entrenched in societies over time. Consequently, an inclusive curriculum is poised to advance tolerance and equality. In the absence of these elements in a curriculum, the social justice theory advocates for remedial actions to address inequalities perpetuated by educational institutions (The Education Hub, 2021). Addressing these inequalities will contribute to fostering a cohesive and peaceful society.

Hawkey (2015) avouches that history is a conduit for the attainment of national identity. Hence, social justice values representation of all ethnic groups. Equal representation of all ethnic groups results in all of them identifying with a country and therefore realising national identity in full sense. School history, from the beginning, has an aim of developing a feeling of national identity (Hakey, 2015). Freire (1970) believes that a dialogic approach should be used to bring about understanding to oppressed groups that their situation can be transformed since it is a product of dynamics of dominant social interests and not natural order. This view is in support of equal inclusion or representation of minority groups in the educational curriculum. Freire (1970) was against the teaching of imposed information by dominant groups but advocated inclusivity. Social justice pedagogies are premised on Paulo Freire's critical pedagogy which viewed education as an expression of freedom (The Education Hub, 2021). Indicative literature from different spheres of the world advocates inclusive curriculum beyond the limits of dominant ethnic groups.

The foundation of social justice pedagogy draws from Lason-Billings' (1995) advocacy for culturally relevant teaching, which emphasizes the inclusion of cultural experiences in school curricula (Hegreaves, 2021). Cultural relevance entails recognizing and representing the culture and history of various ethnic groups within a nation's curriculum. Kose (2009) acknowledges that many scholars argue that social justice addresses issues of cultural imperialism and societal marginalization. The choice of the social justice theory for this study stems from its anti-ostracism

stance and opposition to the marginalization of any social group. This theory serves as a means for the equitable distribution of social benefits across all segments of society. Social justice pedagogy inspires learners to challenge and transform inequalities in power dynamics (Hegreaves, 2021). Consequently, minority groups like the Vhavenda are entitled to learn about their history in schools to foster relevance and inclusivity in the subject matter.

The social justice theory advocates strategies that provide targeted support for specific groups (Hegreaves, 2021). Bowe (1995) suggests that the social justice theory establishes mechanisms to regulate social structures fairly for the benefit of all. Social justice encompasses both diagnostic and remedial approaches to curriculum rationalization, rendering it well-suited for the topic under investigation. Calderwood (2003) asserts the necessity of eradicating oppression, regardless of individuals' feelings about it. Vincent (2020) contends that addressing injustice involves dismantling institutional barriers that hinder some individuals from participating equally in social interactions. Keddie (2012) acknowledges the importance of social justice principles such as redistribution, recognition, and representation in assisting marginalized learners in achieving educational success by promoting equality.

Social justice promotes inclusive practices, ensuring that all voices, particularly those of disadvantaged or marginalized groups, are heard (Hegreaves, 2021). Social justice pedagogy encourages learners to challenge and transform inequalities in power dynamics (Hegreaves, 2021). Injustices may encompass the struggles faced by minority groups in having their experiences recognized and valued. Hlalele (2012) asserts that social justice aims for equal justice across all facets of society, including education. This extends beyond ensuring equal access to educational opportunities to encompass equal representation in historical content. For example, the history of minority groups should be accessible to those respective minority groups within the curriculum. The research was guided by the principles of (re)distributive justice, recognition justice, and representation justice, all derived from the social justice theory.

Nieuwenhuis (2011) argues that equality of condition provides equitable outcomes to marginalised groups by recognising the post disadvantaged and existence of structural barriers embedded in the social, economic and political systems that perpetuate systematic discrimination.

The social justice principles of equality of condition and equality of opportunity provided a framework to evaluate the impact of the updated curriculum (2015-2022) on the representation of the history of the Vhavenda. Equality of condition recognises that there are situations where application of some rules to unequal groups can generate unequal results.

Adebayo (2020) acknowledges the persistent challenge posed by the lack of quality, equitable, and accessible education in many countries, hindering socio-economic development. This includes the absence of content related to the history of minority groups in the educational curriculum. The United Nations, through its Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4, aims to realize equitable, quality, and inclusive education for all individuals by 2030 (Verger and Moschetti, 2016). An examination of these objectives indicates that an inclusive curriculum should incorporate content that is equitable and representative of all ethnic groups within the country by 2030. Rawls (1971) contends that adherence to principles of social justice can pave the way for an egalitarian society by ensuring equal opportunities for all members of society.

Rawls (1971) contends against the notion that policies should be accepted without regard for their outcomes. It is within this context that I was compelled to investigate the outcomes of the policies outlined in the MOPSE curriculum framework (2015-2022). The aim is to ascertain whether the foundational principles of the curriculum have been achieved. These principles include equality, fairness, and inclusivity. Rawls (1971) opposes utilitarianism for advocating that society should prioritize the common good over individual interests. He argues that society requires a social contract that equally promotes the welfare of all individuals, thereby advocating for equal representation in the education sector, particularly concerning curriculum content. Nieuwenhuis (2011) asserts that past disadvantages and systematic discrimination are addressed through the principle of equality of condition. Consequently, the social justice theory emerged as a guiding framework for assessing the representation of the Vhavenda in the curriculum.

Rawls (1971) espouses views that align with the nation-building agenda in developing countries, particularly those in Sub-Saharan Africa (Adebayo, 2020). Adebayo (2020) argues that many nations in Sub-Saharan Africa were formed as a result of colonial imposition rather than through a social contract. Zimbabwe is cited as a pertinent example of this historical context. Sandel

(2011) suggests that Rawls's egalitarian stance on justice stems from the perceived shortcomings of utilitarianism and intuitionism. Utilitarianism, according to Sandel, fails to ensure equal representation for minority groups as it tends to favor the interests of the majority.

The study's context reveals that historically in Zimbabwe, the Shona and Ndebele speaking groups held predominant control over the history curriculum due to their larger populations, suggesting a utilitarian approach. However, with the recent curriculum updates emphasizing inclusivity, there is a perceived shift towards equality. This study aimed to assess whether these curriculum changes adequately incorporate the history of minority groups such as the Vhavenda. Nieuwenhuis (2011) suggests that educational equality can be achieved when the state ensures every learner's right to quality education based on equity. This entails redistributing resources to ensure uniform quality across educational settings.

Hawkey (2015) emphasizes that discussions on social justice typically revolve around two central concepts: recognition and redistribution. Recognition involves acknowledging and valuing different social groups (Fraser, 1995), while redistribution aims to address economic inequalities and diminish group distinctions. Fraser (1995) contends that recognition and redistribution pursue divergent goals, yet they are both fundamental dimensions of justice and cannot be reduced to each other. Hence, these concepts will be thoroughly examined as they are pivotal to the framework of social justice theory and the broader scope of this research.

2.8   SUMMARY

This chapter offers an in-depth review of literature concerning the representation of minority groups, examining the topic from international, continental, and national levels, with a particular focus on Zimbabwe. It is organized to provide a layered understanding of the various issues and determinants that impact the representation of minority groups. The chapter then delves into the Zimbabwean context, discussing academic debates and policy frameworks related to minority group representation. It further outlines the political and legal contexts influencing these groups in Zimbabwe, emphasizing both historical and contemporary developments. The theoretical framework of social justice is used to encapsulate the principles of recognition, representation, and

redistribution, all of which aim to promote equality. Given the complexity involved in representing minority groups within the curriculum, a detailed analysis is necessary. Such a detailed approach is anticipated to achieve the intended results. The study incorporated both diagnostic and remedial strategies, justifying the application of the social justice theory.

CHAPTER THREE
RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1   INTRODUCTION

This chapter focuses on research design and methodology. This chapter focused on describing the steps that were followed to gather data pertaining to research. In this chapter, I outlined the research methodology, the design chosen for data collection and its justification, population and sampling procedures, research instruments and their justification as how the data was collected. The chapter details the research methodology, the research design chosen for collecting data and justification of its usage. Furthermore, the chapter outlines the population and sampling procedures, research instruments and justification for using the methods.

Figure 3.1 A general description of the concepts presented in Chapter 3

3.2   RESEARCH DESIGN

The research design pertains to the comprehensive strategy selected to integrate the various components of the study in a coherent and logical manner, ensuring the research problem is effectively addressed. It serves as the blueprint for the collection, measurement, and analysis of data (Thakur, 2021). Research design encompasses "the systematic procedures employed for gathering, analyzing, interpreting, and presenting data within the context of research endeavors" (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2007:58).

Kothori (2010) defines research as a meticulously crafted plan, encompassing strategies, structures, and investigative methodologies, formulated to achieve and regulate variance. It serves as a comprehensive blueprint outlining the procedures for data collection, quantification, and deduction. The research design serves as a strategic framework for aligning conceptual research inquiries with specific research domains, functioning as the operational software driving the research process. For the purposes of this research, I used the multiple case study research design. Within this framework, the research design establishes the boundaries within which the research activities are conducted.

I opted for a design aimed at mitigating bias during both data collection and analysis phases (Akhatar, 2016). McNabb (2010) asserts that a research design serves as a preemptive tool for methodological planning, delineating the methodologies to be employed for pertinent data collection and analysis. The chosen research design incorporated a degree of flexibility, derived from the iterative refinement of essential design elements (Coldwell and Herbst, 2004). This flexibility rendered the research design both feasible and adaptable to varying situational contexts, delineating the parameters within which the study was conducted (Akhatar, 2016).

3.3   RESEARCH APPROACH

A research approach provides the plan and procedure for conducting research that spans the steps from broad assumptions to detailed methods of data collection, analysis, and interpretation

(Creswell and Creswell, 2017). It encompasses the overall strategy that guides the type of research conducted and includes the theoretical and philosophical foundations of the research.

3.3.1   Qualitative approach

The selection of the qualitative research approach was deliberate and integral to this study. This methodological choice afforded me an avenue through which to gain a comprehensive understanding of a particular phenomenon by engaging directly with the participants involved in the research (Denzin and Lincoln, 2008). Qualitative research seeks to gather original, firsthand textual data and interpret it through specialized analytical techniques (Taherdoost, 2022). Within the qualitative paradigm, researchers aim to explore phenomena within their natural contexts, with an emphasis on elucidating the meanings ascribed to them by individuals (Newman and Benz, 1998). In this regard, qualitative research endeavors to delve into the essence of a phenomenon as it occurs naturally. Thus, the primary objective of this study was to elucidate the perspectives of both Vhavenda and non-Vhavenda individuals regarding the representation of Vhavenda history within the curriculum. Given the inherent diversity of human perceptions, variations in viewpoints regarding any given phenomenon are expected.

A notable strength of the qualitative approach lies in its capacity to yield intricate narratives elucidating the cognitive processes of participants, often delving into the underlying rationales behind the occurrence of phenomena (Creswell, 2003). The qualitative underpinnings of this research entail conducting interviews with various stakeholders including learners, educators, textbook authors, the CDU and ZIMSEC. These interviews were intended to provide insights into the central research question: what are the factors influencing the representation of minority groups in the secondary history curriculum of Zimbabwe?

Learners and educators constitute pivotal stakeholders who engage directly with the curriculum on a daily basis, thus rendering their insights indispensable and germane to the study. Their perspectives offered profound insights into the subject under scrutiny, enriching the depth of analysis. Moreover, the input of the CDU assumed critical significance, given its central role in formulating curriculum content. Similarly, the ZIMSEC emerged as a pertinent entity, tasked with

the formulation of examination questions aligned with the prescribed syllabi. Conversely, the perspectives of authors of secondary history textbooks bear relevance, as they wield authority in generating educational content. Given the substantial reliance of both learners and educators on textbook materials, the inclusion of interview data from the aforementioned participants served to reinforce the qualitative orientation of this thesis, facilitating a comprehensive exploration of the factors influencing the representation of minority groups within the curriculum.

3.3.2 Research Paradigm

This study adopted a qualitative approach grounded in an interpretive paradigm. Creswell (2003) elucidates the notion of a paradigm as encompassing epistemological, ontological, and methodological dimensions, thereby shaping the broader framework of research inquiry. To interpret meanings from human actions or experiences, interpretivist researchers typically employ qualitative approaches for data collection and analysis, aiming to gain in-depth and rich meanings from a smaller number of participants through methods such as in-depth interviews (Sol and Heng, 2022). Within the interpretivist paradigm, research endeavors are imbued with a re-humanized, impartial ethos, employing contextual and insightful perspectives that pivot around the subjective understanding of human knowledge and its nuanced meanings (Yanow and Schwartz-Shea, 2014). An advantage of this paradigm is that interpretivist scholars can utilize their diverse viewpoints on phenomena to both describe objects, individuals, or events and achieve a deep understanding of them within their socio-cultural contexts (Pervin and Mokhtar, 2022). Saunders (2012) asserts that the interpretivist methodology exhibits a distinctive inclination towards connotation, thereby embracing a multiplicity of methods aimed at elucidating diverse facets of a given subject. The interpretivist approach endeavors to capture the essence of social reality through the reflections and responses of participants.

The adoption of interpretivism was influenced by the fact that it puts prominence on qualitative scrutiny other than quantitative. Conventions sustaining interpretive study are that there are manifold realities or truths which are historical, precise and not generalizable (Guba and Lincoln, 1994, in Bertram and Christiansen, 2017). Social perceptions are created from individual or group insights and communications. Collins (2010) posits that interpretivism is linked to idealism, and

brings together sundry advances which include phenomenology, hermeneutics and social constructivism. The multiple veracities are fashioned through the elucidations of research data in order to comprehend human agency, attitudes, beliefs, behavior and perceptions (Bertram and Christiansen, 2017).

The interpretivist approach was adopted in this study to delve into the perceptions and conceptions of learners, teachers, and other education stakeholders regarding the representation of minority groups. This approach prioritizes the exploration of the unique context and complexities of the phenomenon under investigation, eschewing attempts to generalize findings across the entire population (Creswell, 2007). Through interpretivism, researchers aim to attain a nuanced understanding of the subject matter, acknowledging the multiplicity of interpretations that arise within human relationships and experiences.

As Creswell (2007) posits, interpretivist researchers seek to comprehend the diverse ways in which individuals perceive and interact with the world, taking into account varying cultural and situational contexts. This approach emphasizes the importance of avoiding bias and subjectivity in the study of events and people, encouraging researchers to remain open to the manifold interpretations that emerge from different perspectives and lived experiences (Hammersley, 2013).

The first advantage is that, with the diversifying views to look into phenomena, interpretivist researchers can not only describe objects, human or events, but also deeply understand them in social context. Moreover, researchers can undertake such inquiries within natural settings, employing key methodologies such as grounded theory, ethnography, case study, or life history, thereby eliciting insiders' insights into the objects of research (Tuli, 2010), thereby furnishing more authentic and contextually rich information pertaining to the research subject. Second, as leveraging the key method of the interactive interview which permits me to study and prompt responses to things that one cannot observe, researchers can probe an interviewee's thoughts, values, prejudices, perceptions, views, feelings and views (Wellington and Szczerbinski, 2007). A limitation is that the interpretivists aim to gain the deeper understanding and knowledge of phenomena within its complexity of the context rather than generalise these results to other people

and other contexts (Cohen, Manion and Marison, 2011), hence it tends to leave a gap in verifying validity and usefulness of research outcomes with using scientific procedures. However, it should be noted that the epistemological underpinnings of interpretivism appreciate the fact that when there is a contextual change, reality has to change as well. Findings can only be transferred if the contexts are similar.

The second criticism of interpretivism is that its ontological view tends to be subjective rather than objective (Mack, 2010). For this reason, research outcomes are unquestionably affected by my own interpretation, own belief system, ways of thinking or cultural preference which causes too many biases. I bypassed that limitation through the use of triangulation in the data collection process in order to verify findings through comparison. The last limitation of interpretivism is about its lack of addressing the political and ideological impact on knowledge and social reality. This paradigm targets to understand the current phenomena rather than focuses on the problems related to empowerment of individuals and societies. However, it should be noted that recommendations given after the research can empower individuals and societies. The recommendations can inform future policy formulation which can positively influence social reality.

3.3.3   Epistemological and ontological assumptions

Epistemology is the connection between the researcher and the truth or how this truth is captured or known (Carson et al., 2001). Epistemology, broadly speaking, is a branch of philosophy concerned with the theory of knowledge (Pervin and Mokhtar, 2022). It is concerned with origin of knowledge and the best way one can investigate knowledge or reality. The epistemological assumptions for this research were underpinned by the interpretivist paradigm. The knowledge view or epistemology of interpretivism is that social phenomena are generated from individual or group perceptions and interactions. According to Steup and Neta (2020), for our true beliefs to be classified as knowledge, they must be derived from sources deemed reliable. Reality is created by people's perceptions, feelings and beliefs about a phenomenon. Hence, the research was premised on the collection of perceptions of both individuals and groups on the representation of the history of the Vhavenda in the curriculum.

In research, ontology pertains to my beliefs regarding the nature of reality (Steup and Neta, 2020). It is concerned with the nature of reality under study. It pays special interest in detecting the complete nature of the presence of a specific phenomenon or reality. Interpretivists believe in the multiplicity of reality. Reality or truth is subjective to one's perspective, position and preceding directives. In addition, they believe that reality is relative.

I looked for authentic responses to the research questions. It in light of this the research questions focused on the experiences of groups and individuals. I was concerned with how the topic under study could be construed from the participant's viewpoint.

3.4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research methodology involves a systematic analysis of the research methods used to address and solve the problem under investigation (Kapoor, Mahamuni, Bhowmick and Qureshi, 2022). It refers to the practical steps taken when conducting research. It reveals how the research was done, how the data was collected, where the data was collected and above all, how the data was analysed. Research methodology explains how I responded to or answered the research questions. The chapter further justifies the steps taken in the data collection process and the research in general.

3.4.1 Multiple case studies

A case study is a methodological research approach employed to cultivate a thorough comprehension of a current issue or phenomenon within a specific and defined system (Coombs, 2022). In a multiple case study, I chose multiple instances to exemplify a single issue or concern (Creswell and Poth, 2018). This approach was used since the phenomenon under investigation was uncommon or challenging to observe (Coombs, 2022). The primary benefit of conducting multiple case research is its emphasis on cross-case analysis (Hunziker and Blankenagel, 2024). In a multiple case study, each case may demonstrate either similarities or differences; nonetheless, my objective was to discern overarching patterns or correlations that extend beyond individual cases (Yin, 2018). According to Gall et al. (1996), a case study constitutes an in-depth examination of occurrences of a phenomenon within its ordinary or natural context, from the perspective of the

participants involved in the phenomena. Equally, a multiple case study involves the examination of multiple cases to discern the similarities and disparities among them (Baxter and Jack, 2008). In essence, a case study entails an empirical investigation that probes a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, particularly when the boundaries between the context and phenomenon are nebulous (Yin, 2002).

I chose the multiple case study because of the possibility of similar as well as contrasting responses from the participants (Yin, 2003). I was able to clarify if the findings from the results are valuable or not (Eisenhardt, 1991). The multiple case study is an essential tool when studying the nexus between cultural, social, personal and environmental factors. It was imperative in capturing people's subjective views on a topic under study. People interpret the same events or scenarios in different ways.

Furthermore, the multiple case study method was chosen for this study since it provides a much wider, deeper and vivid view of the topic under study than other methods (Marshall and Rossman, 1999). Consideration was given to the subjective nature of the topic under study. Hence, the use of the multiple case study was meant to establish the objective truth and avoid the subjective truth, enhancing the authenticity of the research outcome. The general dynamic and sensitive nature of the minority groups necessitated the adoption of the multiple case study approach. The multiple case study approach is ideal when a researcher wishes to obtain a deep understanding of a relatively small number of people, situations and problems (Patton, 1990).

I was interested in the concept of representation of minority groups. Equality of representation in terms of the history of the Vhavenda was the poignant focus of the study. The notion of using a multiple case studies approach was built on the premise of finding out the similarities and differences. Information was constructed from the responses obtained from the different cases which were under study. Comparisons were done on the responses. Naturally people explain realities differently. Both conflicting and related responses raised interest for me to infer the reasons behind the differences in order to establish the actual reality.

Crowe et al. (2011) assert that the evidence obtained from a multiple case study is considered vigorous and reliable, but it can also be extremely tedious, time consuming and costly to conduct. This observation is shared by Baxter and Jack (2008) who aver that multiple case studies can be immensely expensive and time consuming to implement. I adopted cost cutting measures in order to counter the hyper inflationary forces which were being experienced in Zimbabwe at the time of conducting this research.

I acknowledged that Beitbridge town exhibited a significant presence of diverse ethnic groups, potentially introducing biases into the study's outcomes and compromising objectivity. The focus groups were purposefully sampled in a serial manner with specific interest in Ordinary level learners. Six learners were selected from each of the three sample schools in the district. Of the six learners, three were males whereas the other three were females in order to attain gender equality and representation. This selection was done in a bid to obtain objective results. The selection process was informed by Zikmund (2000) who suggested that the group should be composed of participants who are relevant to the research and serve a particular purpose. Such clinical selection consequently led to sufficiently accurate findings (Zikmund, 2000).

In order to avoid drawbacks which may be caused by the involvement of an observer, I involved a moderator (facilitator) during the data collection process. The involvement of a moderator drastically reduced the chances of bias, in the data collection process as well as analysis. I chose the multiple case studies because it enhances credibility of a study. Credibility, confirmability and readability all matter in research (Yin, 1994). Furthermore, triangulation was used to reinforce the credibility of the study. The use of the multiple case study allowed me to check and confirm the accuracy of the responses or conclusions of the study (Yin, 1994). It increased transferability since I used purposive sampling while choosing participants for focus groups. In addition, multiple case studies promote dependability and confirmability.

The multiple case study approach was adopted since it relies on analysis supported by replication logic which in turn provides external validation to findings (Yin, 2018). The multiple cases complemented each other through disconfirming or confirming the conclusions drawn out of the cases under study. The use of the multiple case study approach presented an in-vivo context of

the research. It paid attention to detail in contextual factors which gives it a higher construct validity (Yamashita and Moonen, 2014).

This research adhered to the interpretivist paradigm, thus favoring the utilization of a multiple case design as the most suitable approach. According to Dayman and Holloway (2011), interpretivists or interpretive researchers are not focused on predicting behavior, but rather on interpreting human understanding derived from individual experiences. The interpretivist paradigm is concerned with interpretation of multiple truths and realities that change due to social interactions which produce multiple realities (Dayman and Holloway, 2011). In the context of this research, emphasis was placed on exploring the sentiments of the Vhavenda community regarding their portrayal in the curriculum.

The study aimed to interpret the diverse perspectives and realities existing among both the Vhavenda and non-Vhavenda stakeholders concerning the representation of the Vhavenda in the curriculum. The research was interested in gaining empathic understanding of the people's feelings, reasons for the way they feel as well as interpreting their experiences (Rubin and Babbie, 2013). I used information gathered through three case studies to depict the feelings of the Vhavenda on their representation in the history curriculum.

The qualitative tenets of this research involved undertaking interviews with learners, teachers, textbook authors, the CDU and ZIMSEC so as to provide responses to the main research question: What are the factors influencing the representation of the minority groups in the Zimbabwean secondary school history curriculum? The contributions of the above-mentioned stakeholders were alluded to earlier in this chapter.

3.4.2 Research sample

A sample is a group of individuals, objects, or items selected from a larger population for the purpose of measurement (Mujere, 2016). It refers to a reduced and controllable subset utilized by researchers to infer and derive conclusions regarding the entire population (Bhardwaj, 2019). The

sample must be representative of the population to ensure that the research findings can be generalized to the entire population (Salant and Dillman, 1994).

3.4.2.1 Sampling

Sampling is the technique of choosing a suitable representative part of a population for the purpose of determining parameters or characteristics of the whole population (Mujere, 2016). Sampling is the procedure of selecting a subset of individuals or a portion of a larger population for the purpose of addressing a specific research objective (Makwana, Engineer, Dabhi, and Chudasama, 2023). Sampling was used for this research since it ensures comprehensiveness and enhanced accuracy which comes with the restricted zone of operation.

It economises time and resources while yielding quicker outcomes due to the smaller sample size in comparison of the entire op entire population (Bhardwaj, 2019). It was imperative for me to recognize the importance of ensuring the sample's representativeness to yield valid findings. Sampling facilitates the acquisition of information regarding specific characteristics of the population (Bhardwaj, 2019).

3.4.2.2 Purposive sampling

I adopted purposive sampling for this particular research so as to get intended relevant information for the topic under study. Purposive sampling also known as deliberate sampling, involves selecting sample members based on the specific objectives of the study (Bhardwaj, 2019). In purposive sampling, individuals are selected to be part of a sample based on their relevance to the research objectives (Makwana, Engineer, Dabhi, and Chudasama, 2023). It was imperative to surgically and clinically select relevant people with the information which I required as well as willingness to share the information dispassionately. I determined the selection of participants by considering their availability and readiness to contribute information. Additionally, I assessed whether the individuals possessed the necessary experience and knowledge relevant to the study. This approach ensured that the chosen participants were not only

accessible but also capable and willing to provide valuable insights and data, thereby enhancing the credibility and depth of the research findings (Bernard, 2002).

Purposive sampling was used to safeguard and not to compromise the results of this research. This type of sampling is assumed when researchers or investigators intend to understand specific and unique cases, from a chosen sample, within a brief period of time (Achaya, Prakash, Saxena and Nigam, 2013). I had the capability to achieve intended outcomes by engaging directly with the target audience through communication (Bhardwaj, 2019). This type of sampling also saved time as it allowed me to select participants that match desired characteristics required to answer the research questions (Robinson, 2014).

Purposive sampling is most effective when a researcher has extensive prior knowledge about the research topic, as this familiarity allows for the careful selection of participants who are most likely to provide relevant and insightful data, thereby enhancing the sample's quality (Nikolopoulou, 2023). This approach was ideal for the study since I intended to work with a limited number of participants, focusing on those who could contribute the most valuable information.

Purposive sampling has the advantage that I chose only those history learners and teachers he wanted and left out those he did not want to deal with. Purposive sampling gave complete control to me since only 27 participants were used. I sampled 18 ordinary level Vhavenda learners who study history, 6 history teachers, one history textbook author, the history subject manager from ZIMSEC, and a subject specialist from the CDU. Vhavenda learners were selected as participants because they represented the specific population of interest, and I aimed to gather their perspectives on the topic being investigated. Beitbridge West district was selected due to its high population density of the Vhavenda community, which facilitated easier access to this group. This choice helped minimise time and financial constraints for me.

3.4.2.3 Setting (Multiple sites)

The research was conducted in Matabeleland South province in Beitbridge north district. The research was specifically done at three secondary schools, namely, Zezani, Majini Siyoka and Chamnanga Khwalu.

 Map 3.1 Map of Zimbabwe (Source: Google Maps)

The cartographic depiction illustrates the geographical positioning of Matabeleland South, the locale of the research investigation, in relation to neighboring provinces within Zimbabwe and contiguous nations. Notably, Matabeleland South shares a border with South Africa, with

Beitbridge serving as a prominent border town within this province. A substantial concentration of Vhavenda speakers is observed in Beitbridge, mirroring the demographic distribution of this ethnic group across the Limpopo province in South Africa. This delineates a geographical demarcation, the Limpopo River, which concurrently serves as a political boundary demarcating Zimbabwe and South Africa.

Despite this geographic separation, the Vhavenda communities on either side of the river maintain robust cultural and linguistic ties, fostering familial relations that facilitate cross-border visitations. However, the intermingling of Vhavenda populations across national borders engenders a transborder identity quandary, particularly among Zimbabwean Vhavenda, who may perceive themselves as South Africans residing in Zimbabwe rather than identifying solely as Zimbabwean nationals. This identity predicament resonates beyond the Vhavenda populace, influencing Zimbabwean individuals irrespective of their familial connections across the Limpopo River.
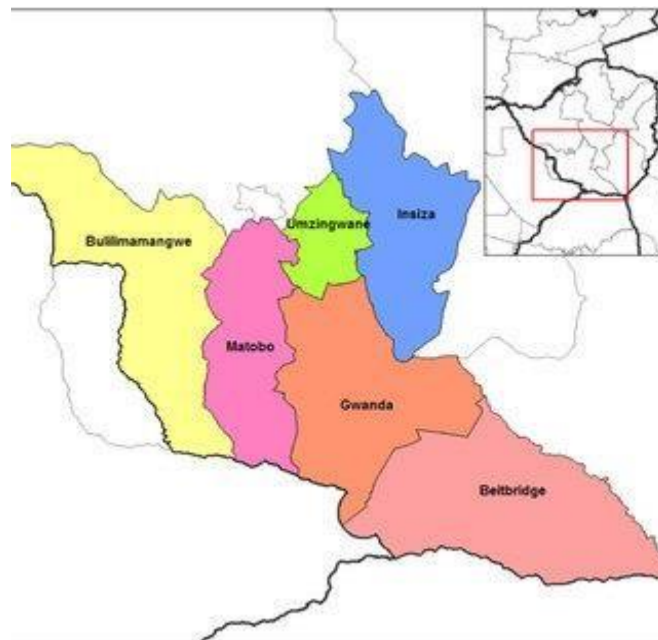
Map 3.2 Map of Beitbridge in relation with other districts within Matabeleland South Province in Zimbabwe (Source: Google Maps)
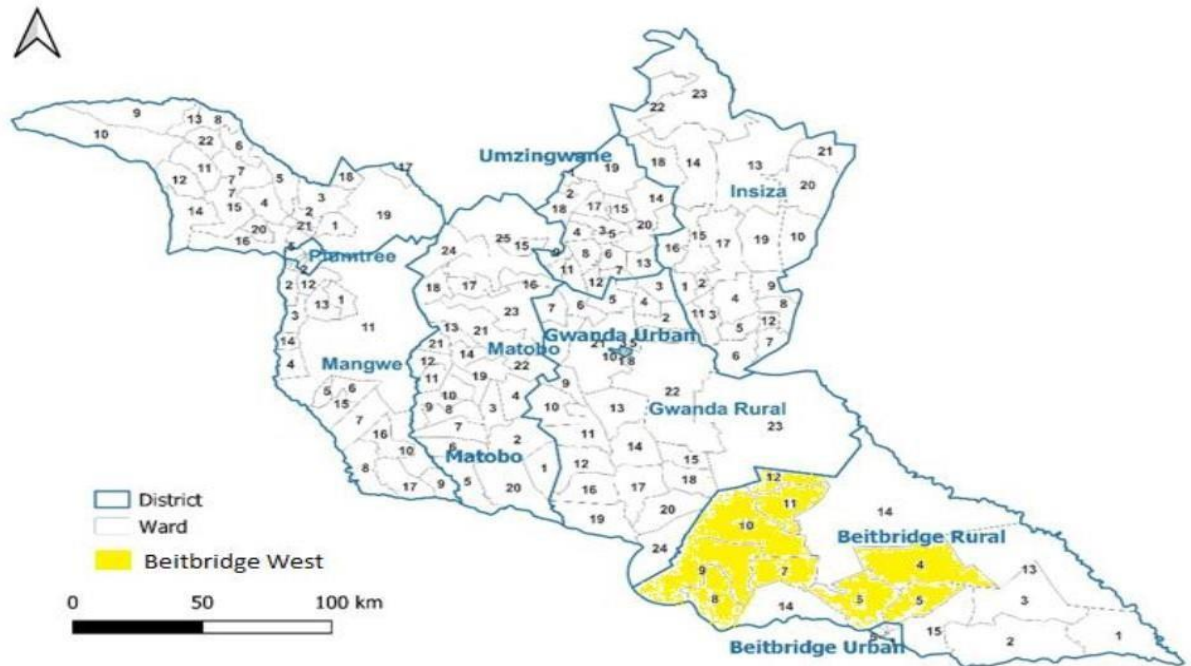
Map 3.3 Beitbridge West District, the specific district where the research was conducted (Source: Zimstat)

Map 3.3 provides a visual representation of the precise geographical area under study, namely Beitbridge West, which served as the primary research site. The outlined region comprises the designated wards highlighted in yellow, signifying the spatial scope of Beitbridge West. Notably, the research investigation was specifically conducted within the rural environs of Beitbridge, characterized by a notable presence of Vhavenda learners.

3.4.2.4   Target population

A target population encompasses all individuals who meet the specified criteria for a research investigation (Alvi, 2016). Willie, (2022) asserts that the target population represents a subset of the overall population from which conclusions are intended to be drawn, focusing on the characteristics that interest me. The target population must be sufficiently specific to prevent inclusion of participants who do not accurately represent the study's requirements, thus avoiding

misrepresentation of the population of interest (Casteel and Bridier, 2021). Berg (2009) defines a population as the entirety of a person, case records events, organisation units, or other sampling units which are related to the research. Thus, target population is a population from which a sample was drawn. Target population is the group of people to whom the results are intended to apply. In this study, the target population consists of all ordinary-level history learners in the three schools under study (Zezani, Majini Siyoka, and Chamnanga Khwalu) in Beitbridge West district.

3.5   DATA COLLECTION METHODS

The data collection methods refer to the factfinding strategies used in collecting data. Data collection methods are generally classified into two main categories which are namely primary data collection methods and secondary data collection methods (Taherdoost, 2021). For purposes of this research both primary and secondary data collection methods were used. This was done in order to improve and add value to the quality of data collected.

3.5.1   Semi-structured interviews

George (2022) defined a semi-structured interview as a data collection method which relies on questioning within the predetermined thematic framework. Magaldi and Berler (2020) posit the semi-structured interview serves as an investigative interview aimed at exploration. According to Magaldi and Berler, (2020) the semi-structured interview typically adheres to a predefined guide or protocol established before the interview, centering around a central topic to establish a foundational framework and also permits exploration and flexibility to pursue various topical paths as the conversation evolves. Semi-structured interviews are used in qualitative research as an exploratory tool. For purposes of this research, semi-structured interviews were used as they gave room for anticipated responses and facilitate the emergence of other relevant aspects through the application of open-ended questions (Tod, 2006). Ryan, Conghlan and Cronin (2009) acknowledge that semi-structured interviews present a more flexible avenue to the interview procedure. Despite their predefined topics, semi-structured interviews, facilitate in-depth exploration for researchers to make discoveries (Megaldi and Berler, 2020).

Furthermore, semi-structured interviews allowed the interviewer to explore spontaneous issues which were raised by the participant during the interview (Ryan, Conghlan and Cronin, 2009). Ruslin, Mashuri, Rasak, Alhabsyi and Syam (2022) acknowledge that, participants in semi-structured interviews are typically diverse in terms of their backgrounds and professional roles. I selected semi-structured interviews since they accommodate participants from different backgrounds as well as with different levels of education. Although there are differences in approach and cultural practices, the semi-structured interview possesses distinctive attributes (Ruslin, Mashuri, Rasak, Alhabsyi and Syam, 2022). According to Berg (2009), the wording of semi-structured interviews is flexible and accommodates different depths of language which can be used, as well as clarifications to be done by the interviewer. I carefully structured the interview guides (as shown in Appendices C, D, E and F) so as to accommodate the teachers, history textbook author, ZIMSEC and CDU officials.

Semi-structured interviews allowed the interviewee to outline his or her story unlike in the situation of structured questions. This was exactly what I was interested in, extracting the truth from the participants in a bid to obtain authentic results. Semi-structured interviews created a conducive platform for deducing personal experiences of interviewees on the subject under study (Bridges et al, 2008). This promotes the collection of more remunerative and textured data during the interview to structured schedule questions (Ryan, Conghlan and Cronin, 2009).

Mathers, Fox and Hunn (2002) point out that the semi-structured interview involves a series of open-ended questions based on the topic areas I wanted to cover. This methodology is opposed to closed questions or surveys which elicit limited answers. The interviewer had freedom to probe the interviewee to elaborate on the original response or to follow line of inquiry introduced by the interviewee. Semi-structured interviews may take too long hence I used an audio recorder to avoid losing data. Thus, semi-structured interviews were conducted with the Vhavenda learners. Naturalistic observation was used in observing natural behaviour of participants in natural surroundings. Therefore, I was able to understand and capture the context within which learners interact (Angrosino, 2005).

The main task when interviews were conducted was to understand the meaning of what the interviewees were saying (Kvale, 1996). Interviews are predominantly advantageous in that you get the story behind a participant's experiences. During the interview, the interviewer had the opportunity to probe and ask follow up questions. A probe serves as a neutral, non-directive questionnaire intended to prompt further elaboration on incomplete or ambiguous responses obtained through open-ended questions, as described by Chikoko and Mhloyi (1995).

Semi-structured interviews afford interviewees the flexibility to diverge from the predetermined course of the interview based on their responses, allowing for a more dynamic and nuanced exchange, as highlighted by Schuh and Upcraft (2001). In this research, interviews were conducted with key stakeholders including the ZIMSEC history subject manager, the history subject specialist at the CDU, and a renowned history textbook author.

A well-executed semi-structured interview ideally harnesses the internal perspectives of the interviewee, facilitated through active participation from both the interviewer and the interviewee (Kakilla, 2021). Furthermore, the semi-structured interviews enabled me to explore both verbal and non-verbal cues, including intuitions, laughter, and periods of silence, to unveil concealed information that could be beneficial in the eventual data analysis of various themes derived from the conversations (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003).

On the contrary, interviews demand significant preparation from me, particularly in structuring the interview effectively. This preparation entails carefully crafting questions to ensure they elicit the desired information, as well as considering the flow and sequencing of topics to facilitate a productive conversation. Additionally, I anticipated potential follow-up questions and probes to dig deeper into participants' responses, and this required thorough planning and foresight. The other limitation of an interview is that the interviewee might not be willing to speak on certain confidential matters or might just be shy to explain the issues in English. Ethical considerations were observed and I clearly explained to the interviewees the purpose of the study and how the information provided would be strictly kept as confidential information.

3.5.2   Formulation of the interview schedule

Great care and consideration were taken in formulating the interview schedules for the research. In formulating the interview schedule, I carefully considered the objectives, aims, and nature of the study, as recommended by Ryan, Conghlan, and Cronin (2009). Drawing guidance from Polit and Hungler (1995), who emphasized the importance of aligning interview questions with the research objectives, the interview schedule was structured to incorporate categories pertinent to the aims of the research, ensuring relevance and coherence in the questioning process. Clinical care was taken in sequencing the questions in a bid to allow the flow smoothly. In crafting the interview schedule, I conscientiously took into account the research objectives, aims, and overall nature of the study, following the guidance provided by Ryan, Conghlan, and Cronin (2009). Building upon the insights of Polit and Hungler (1995), who underscored the significance of aligning interview questions with research objectives, the interview schedule was meticulously structured to encompass categories directly relevant to the aims of the research. This approach ensured that the questions posed during the interviews were both pertinent to the study's goals and conducive to a coherent and focused interrogation process.

Berg (2009) suggests pilot interviews or pre-testing of interview schedules prior to the interview. I adopted this approach in order to refine the interview questions. It allowed me to identify grey areas or vague and inappropriate questions which were subsequently refined. Ryan, Conghlan and Cronin (2009) further advise that it is imperative to formulate questions that will respond to the research question.

3.5.3   Telephone interview

Frey (1983) defines a telephone dialogue as an interaction sequence which does not involve visual cues. Hopper (1992) asserts that the two parties involved, set the context strictly with their voices, in the dialogue. Robson (2002) posits that telephone interviews have multiple advantages which are accustomed to interviews done face to face. Among these advantages are rapid response rate and the privilege to probe the interviewee. According to Block and Erskine (2012), the use of the telephone has tremendously increased because of its significant benefits.

The COVID-19 pandemic and its aftermath brought about a significant increase in the utilization of non-face to face interactions in research endeavors. Among these, telephone interviews emerged as a prominent method for data collection. I opted for telephone interviews due to the numerous advantages associated with this approach. Specifically, I conducted telephone interviews with key stakeholders including the subject specialist from the CDU, the secondary school history textbook author, and the subject manager from ZIMSEC. The telephone interviews were conducted for durations ranging from 25 to 30 minutes.

Taylor (2002) highlights time efficiency and cost effectiveness benefits as the most significant benefits of telephone interviews. Carr and Worth (2001) note lower costs in terms of money, time and effort as some of the advantages of telephone interviews over face-to-face interviews. The challenging economic conditions prevailing in Zimbabwe during the research period significantly influenced the decision to utilize telephone interviews as a data collection method. This approach was deemed cost-effective and financially prudent for me, without compromising the quality of the information gathered. Lavrakas (1987) asserts that telephone interviews offer several advantages which include enhanced quality control, streamlined data collection and processing, and cost-effectiveness. Furthermore, they mitigate potential interviewer biases, thereby promoting objectivity in the research process.

Furthermore, I chose the telephone interviews after consideration of the vast geographical spacing of the interviewees. This decision was also informed by Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) who assert that telephone interviews have the advantage of allowing communication between people who are geographically distant. I drastically reduced financial and time costs since no travelling was involved (Block and Erskine ,2012). Worth and Tierney (1993) claim that the cost savings of the telephone interviews is between 50% and 75% of interviews done face-to-face. Sobo et al (2003) conclude that telephone interviews are less time consuming as compared to face-to-face interviews.

3.5.3   Focus groups

Focus group discussion involves assembling participants with similar involvements or experience to deliberate on a precise subject of interest together (Nyumba, Wilson, Derrick and Mukheerjee, 2018). A focus group interview or discussion entails gathering data by conducting interviews with a group of individuals (Basnet, 2018). The discussion is centered on responses on questions in a moderated setting. The small group was formulated basing on predefined demographic traits. The questions which were asked were designed to radiate light on the topic under study. Focus group discussions were conducted with Vhavenda speaking learners. The main leitmotif of the discussion focused on the perceptions of the Vhavenda learners on their representation in the history curriculum. Focus groups were essential in the collection of in-depth knowledge on attitudes, beliefs, opinions and perceptions of individuals on a given topic (Then, Rankin and Ali, 2014). Rich qualitative data was gathered and the tactic preserved time since I or investigator had a dialogue with a small group of learners at once rather than taking face-to-face interviews with each learner (Gorman and Clayton, 2005). Numerous scholars argue for diversity in group size, yet they concur that the group should neither be too small nor excessively large in terms of the number of informants (Basnet, 2018). I settled for a focus group of 6 learners per school. The groups were gender-balanced, with each consisting of three females and three males.

Focus groups are part and parcel of semi-structured interviews. It was in light of this that I had to formulate a moderator's guide. The moderator's guide was composed of engagement exploration and exit questions as advised by Then, Rankin and Ali (2014). I gave the learners tags with pseudonyms for purposes of maintaining confidentiality and for transcription purposes later. This was meant to hide the participants' identity.

In adhering to best practices, the focus group discussions were intentionally limited to a maximum duration of one hour and ten minutes. Plummer-D'Amato (2008) recommends that the total time allocated for focus group discussions should not exceed two hours, ensuring optimal engagement and participation. Moreover, mindful of the learners' attention span, I took into account their capacity for sustained concentration. To maintain interest and focus throughout the discussion,

the questions were thoughtfully summarized, thereby facilitating sustained engagement and attentiveness from the learners.

Interaction within the focus groups resulted in the participants developing their own ideas and relevant contributions to the discussion (Liamputtong, 2011). I took advantage of the non-verbal communication as an addition to the actual words obtained from the focus groups (Then, Rankin and Ali, 2014). The non-verbal expressions displayed by the participants included gestures and facial expression during the focus group discussions. Furthermore, during the focus group discussions, learners exhibited a high level of comfort in expressing themselves freely. Prior to the discussions, participants were assured that the utmost confidentiality would be maintained regarding their identities, thereby instilling a sense of trust and encouraging open dialogue.

The use of focus group discussion for the data collection reduced bias associated with individual interviews since the participants were likely not to say things to impress the interviewer but say the truth as it is (Vaughn, Schumm and Sinagub, 1996). This view is supported by Then, Rankin and Ali (2014) who assert that focus groups enhance confidence in participants since they promote a safe and secure environment for one to express his or her views. The grouping of age mates, classmates, stream mates and above all schoolmates increased the chances of honest discussions which were pregnant with reality and honest views. Peer influence and group dynamics were at play. In addition, the focus groups presented equal opportunity to those who are not gifted in writing but are able to express themselves eloquently in discussions to present their opinions and beliefs (Then, Rankin and Ali, 2014). This allowed me to collect in-depth data which is rich in relevance to the topic understudy (Then, Rankin and Ali, 2014).

3.5.4   The use of a moderator (facilitator) during the focus group discussions

To ensure the smooth facilitation of the focus group discussions, a moderator was employed. The role of the moderator, as outlined by Krueger and Casey (2000), encompassed several key responsibilities. These included establishing a conducive environment for information collection, fostering rapport among participants, and facilitating the exploration of participants' perceptions. Additionally, the moderator exercised careful oversight of the discussions to prevent them from veering off course or becoming overly contentious. Matters arising from the discussion were

superbly handled so as not to lose focus on the issue at hand. The moderator was swift in capturing non-verbal clues, verbal insinuations, was a good listener who displayed an ability of addressing arising issues in group discussion (Then, Rankin and Ali, 2014).

The moderator was able to keep the focus discussion on track engaging all participants. The moderator was able to manage the lethargic, passive, docile and dynamic participants as recommended by Then, Rankin and Ali (2014). Warnings of Lamputtong (2011) of dominant individuals who may influence the flow of the discussion or group dynamics was well handled by the moderator.

3.6   DATA ANALYSIS

According to Marshall and Rossman (1999), data analysis is the process of bringing order, structure and meaning to the data collected. It refers to the systematic transformation of collected data into interpretable and useful insights (Taherdoost, 2022). Its function is to give meaning to collected data so that it can be interpreted and relayed in research account.

3.6.1   Thematic analysis

Thematic analysis serves as a qualitative data analysis method involving the exploration of a dataset to discern, analyze, and present recurring patterns, as elucidated by Braun and Clarke (2006). Thematic analysis is a methodological approach to analyzing data that focuses on identifying, describing, explaining, providing evidence for, and establishing connections among themes (Kampira & Meyer, 2021). This approach not only entails the descriptive portrayal of data but also necessitates interpretation during the selection of codes and construction of themes. The primary advantage of thematic analysis lies in its flexibility and straightforward application (Nowell et al., 2017). In this study, thematic analysis was employed to identify significant themes or patterns within the data, which were subsequently utilized to address the research objectives. A comprehensive thematic analysis goes beyond mere summarization, offering interpretations that elucidate the underlying meaning of the data, thereby facilitating a deeper understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. A theme is an entity that can be labeled, described, or categorized

in some manner (Kampira & Meyer, 2021). It represents the concepts derived from content, independent of the original intent or purpose of that content (Kampira & Meyer, 2021). The data underwent preparation prior to its utilization in the data analysis procedure (Taherdoost, 2022). Analysis of the data from the focus group discussions was based on questions asked during the group sessions. Each data analysis method begins with becoming acquainted with the given dataset (Kampira and Meyer, 2021). Transcribing of the information collected during the focus group discussion was done before the analysis process. The moderator and I went through the focus group transcript and identified meaningful patterns of themes across the collected data. The patterns were analysed through theme creation, data reading and data coding.

3.6.2   Document analysis

Document analysis is described by Bowen (2009) as a systematic procedure meant to evaluate or review printed and electronic material. According to Kutsyuruba, (2023) document analysis, as a qualitative approach, involves a systematic method for examining and assessing documents by identifying, choosing, interpreting, and integrating the data they contain. I chose document analysis for this particular research since the research topic is closely linked to educational policies which are outlined in official government documents. Policy is not just announced verbally but is accompanied by documents to support and confirm its authenticity. Moreover, it is a point of reference during implementation.

Taking heed of Corbin and Strauss' (2008) guidance, document analysis in this study was conducted with the aim of interpreting and scrutinizing data to derive meaning and understanding, ultimately contributing to the development of empirical knowledge. This process involved coding the content of documents into themes, akin to the analysis of interview scripts as outlined by Bowen (2009). Importantly, document analysis was not employed in isolation; rather, it was integrated with other data collection methods, facilitating a comprehensive and multi-faceted approach to data interpretation and analysis.

Triangulation was used in this study so as to verify the information obtained from the research. Researchers have identified the utilization of research triangulation as an approach to generate

dependable findings (Bans-Akutey & Tiimub, 2021). Conventionally, triangulation is understood as employing various methodologies to investigate the same subject (Arias Valencia, 2022). When a researcher utilizes diverse sources or methodologies in a study, the weaknesses of one method are mitigated by the strengths of another method Bans-Akutey and Tiimub, 2021). The use of multiple methodologies is taken from Bowen's (2009) view that a qualitative researcher should extract evidence from multiple sources. Triangulation refers to my utilization of multiple approaches in the study to extract necessary information and critically analyze findings (Social Sciences Research Laboratories, 2018 cited in Bans-Akutey and Tiimub, 2021). Bowen (2009) posits that triangulation reduces the chances of biases which come with a single study. An advantage of triangulation lies in its capacity to offer additional insights that assist me in providing a more comprehensive explanation of a Phenomenon (Bans-Akutey & Tiimub, 2021).

I opted for document analysis as it plays a fundamental role in data triangulation as well as its relevance when conducting case study research (Bowen, 2009). Triangulating document analysis entails examining various categories of documents or integrating document analysis with other methods of data collection to authenticate or substantiate the findings (Hassan, 2024). I also acknowledged the importance of documents as sources of data for research formulated under an interpretive paradigm (Bowen, 2009). Contents of documents such as the curriculum framework, syllabus and national constitution were used to formulate questions for the study. This notion is derived from Bowen (2009) who avers that documents can generate some questions which need to be answered and scenarios that need to be checked during research. Research questions guided the formulation of questions used in the data collection process.

Documents such as the curriculum framework has information on government policy and expectations in the updated curriculum (2015-2022). The curriculum framework outlines the expectations of the government in terms of implementation. Bowen (2009) asserts that documents present a platform for tracking change. Educational policy documents served as a valuable resource for tracking changes and advancements concerning the representation of minority groups in the curriculum. While the previous curriculum lacked clarity on the representation of minority ethnic groups in education, the updated curriculum explicitly emphasizes inclusivity. Consequently, I utilised the specifications outlined in the curriculum framework to monitor

changes and developments regarding the representation of Vhavenda history. Documentary analysis serves to authenticate and corroborate findings obtained through alternative research methodologies (Hassan, 2024). This involved using the research findings to ascertain whether the stipulations outlined in the curriculum framework were being implemented effectively in practice.

In selecting document analysis, I considered the merits associated with document analysis such as efficiency, availability, cost-effectiveness and exactness. Bowen (2009) avers that document analysis involves data selection rather than data collection; hence it is more efficient and less time consuming. Documents such as the curriculum framework, syllabus and constitution are public documents, therefore, they are easily available and accessible to anyone interested in using them. Numerous documents are easily obtainable, particularly due to the widespread availability of digital archives and databases (Hassan, 2024). This means these documents are easily accessible and available. The fact was that, at the time of the research, I was a practicing educational practitioner who had access to all documents relevant to the research. Furthermore, the internet is awash with most of the public documents.

Document analysis was used in this research because it is cost-effective since the content is already gathered and awaiting evaluation. To add to that I opted for document analysis because of its exactness or accuracy. Examining textual sources like books and journal articles can also be advantageous due to the reliability and consistency of the data they provide (Morgan, 2022). Researchers may exert influence over participants during interviews or observations, but when they engage in document analysis using pre-existing texts, the integrity of the data remains unaffected (Merriam and Tisdell, 2016).

Documents offer contextual information that assists in situating research within a wider social, cultural, historical, or institutional framework (Hassan, 2024). To mitigate the limitations associated with insufficient detail, depth, or content in individual documents, I consulted multiple sources, thereby enhancing the robustness of the analysis. Document analysis provided numerous advantages to me, outweighing any potential drawbacks. When data has been gathered via interviews, surveys, or observations, examining documents can offer supplementary evidence to

corroborate or interrogate your conclusions (Hassan, 2024). Document analysis can also be effectively integrated with other methodologies to triangulate and enhance the robustness of concurrent research methods Daglish, Khalid and McMahon (2020). I complemented documentary evidence with insights from interviews to minimize bias and enhance credibility, in line with Bowen's (2009) recommendations.

Special attention, recognition, and validation were accorded to the curriculum framework document, given its pivotal role as the foundation of the updated curriculum (2015-2022). Before its incorporation into the research, the curriculum framework's dependability, confirmability, transferability, and authenticity were carefully evaluated to ensure its suitability for research purposes.

3.6.3   The use of a research assistant

As a Zimbabwean national who is unable to fully communicate in Tshivenda, I acknowledged the potential advantages of collaborating with an "insider" who could deeply understand the community. Therefore, I invited a colleague, who is a mhuVenda to join the project as a research assistant. The first advantage is that she was familiar with TshiVenda culture and was fluent in the TshiVenda language. She also had knowledge of the history of the Vhavenda and was well versed with the interpersonal dynamics between learners and teachers in the area since she is an educator by profession. I anticipated that this familiarity would allow her to 'access' the community more readily and establish trust and rapport which are crucial elements when carrying out fieldwork. The research assistant was able to interpret the information obtained from the interviews to me since she was fluent in TshiVenda. Given my inability to speak or fully understand TshiVenda, the inclusion of a research assistant proved invaluable in facilitating the acquisition of accurate information. This decision was made with meticulous consideration, acknowledging that English serves as a second language for the learners involved in the study, with TshiVenda being their mother tongue.

Nevertheless, it is worth noting that the research assistant lacked familiarity with the areas proximate to Zezani, Majini Siyoka, and Chamnanga Khwalu secondary schools. This

unfamiliarity created a degree of social distance, resulting in a sense of "outsiderness." This outsider status facilitated a more candid exchange of information from the participants, who could have been less forthcoming if the interviewer were a permanent resident of those areas. This deliberate social distance was deemed necessary, particularly considering that the interviews delved into sensitive issues regarding the exclusion of Vhavenda history from the national history curriculum.

I doubled as an observer during the focus group discussions. I arranged with the moderator (assistant researcher) to create a conducive environment for the group to operate from. The observer, similar to the moderator, monitored the non-verbal cues and verbal insinuations, voice tone, behavior, eye contact and participation of individuals as advised by Greenbaum (1998). As an observer I sat behind the participants although I was part of the circle. I engaged the moderator at the end of the group session with regards to what happened during the group session as well as the themes which emerged.

3.7   TRUSTWORTHINESS

Trustworthiness refers to how much truth value one can place in the information or data gathered in research. Trustworthiness encompasses components such as credibility, dependability, transferability and confirmability (Ahmed, 2024). It is the true representation of what is being studied or researched on. Trustworthiness encompasses five overlapping elements which are namely, credibility, dependability, confirmability, transferability and authenticity.

3.7.1   Credibility

It refers to the sureness in the veracity and interpretations of the data. Terrell (2016) highlights, among other elements in attaining credibility, the importance of prolonged engagement, persistent observation and triangulation. I collected adequate information through prolonged engagements with the learners, teachers, ZIMSEC history subject manager and an ordinary level history textbook author. I persistently observed the behaviour and attitudes of the participants during the

interviews and focus group discussions. Triangulation further enhanced credibility of the research since different data collection tools were used in the research.

3.7.2   Dependability

Dependability refers to the consistent and steadfast quality of research findings over time (Kakar, Rasheed, Rashid and Akhter, 2023). The researched information can stand the test of time since the analysis process involved an assistant researcher. The involvement of a research assistant in the data collection and analysis process reduced bias.

3.7.3   Confirmability

Confirmability relates to the impartiality and objectivity of findings, ensuring they are not influenced by researchers' biases or preferences (Kakar, Rasheed, Rashid, and Akhter, 2023). It refers to the warranty that the findings from the research are reliable and accurate. I made reference of findings and literature by other authors which augment confirmability of the research. I remained neutral throughout the data collection process and therefore, the findings can independently be compared with findings from previous findings from elsewhere. The inclusion of a research assistant in the collection and analysis of data from focus groups enhanced data accuracy as well relevance of the research. In a bid to corroborate the research findings, I used different data collection methods as well as different sources.

3.7.4   Transferability

Transferability concerns the extent to which research findings can be applied to different contexts or circumstances (Kakar, Rasheed, Rashid, and Akhter, 2023). The research findings are applicable or can be transferred to a different setting or group. Deep and adequate data was harnessed from the participants hence, making transferability possible. The procedure in the systematic data collection process enhanced transferability. The use of purposive sampling gave a proportional representative of the total population making the results transferable. The research

findings can be used when studying the representation of the history of minority groups in a different setting.

3.7.5 Authenticity

The research is authentic to a greater extent since it faithfully and fairly reflects different realities which were drawn from the participants' experiences. Authenticity denotes what is genuine, true and real (Lehman et al., 2019). Inclusion of raw quotes and excerpts in the write up is adequate proof of authenticity of the research. I matched the participants' responses to the given themes. Snippets of the participants' responses during the interviews were not diluted during the transcribing process. Transcribing was clinically and professionally done in order to maintain the true meaning of the realities obtained through interviews.

3.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Initially, to meet the ethical standards required for the research, I applied for and secured an ethical clearance letter from the University of South Africa. This clearance granted me the authorization to conduct the study and facilitated the acquisition of an additional clearance letter from the MOPSE in the Beitbridge District.

In considering ethical dimensions, I heeded Mabelle's (2011) assertion that ethical concerns often emerge when research is conducted within culturally diverse contexts. Ethics involves investigating concepts of morality, discerning between right and wrong actions, and determining the appropriate conduct expected from researchers (Bos, 2020). Accordingly, ethical considerations were meticulously addressed from the outset of the research. Ethics focus on the responsibilities researchers hold toward their participants, audience, society, and academic communities (Mirza, Mirza and Bellalem, 2023). Guided by Liamputtong (2011), I remained vigilant not to overlook cultural nuances when capturing participants' perspectives, and avoided dismissing alternative viewpoints to mitigate the risk of compromising the reliability and integrity of the research findings.

The issues of marginalisation of minority groups tie in with people's sense of belonging and identity. As such, questions concerning representation of the history of minority groups such as the Vhavenda, in the curriculum, needed to be treated with sensitivity and discretion. Ethical procedures and standards were followed during the data collection processes. Informed consent was obtained from the focus group participants, since the learners were below 18 years. Parental or guardianship consent was sought for all the learners below 18 years. Pseudonyms were used in an effort to safeguard identities of research participants (Smyth and Williamson, 2004). Every effort was made to maintain confidentiality and guarantee that the information provided would not be discussed with other informants. Informants were assured that their names and any identifying information would only be known to interviewer and transcriber. Only the relevant members of the research team and myself were permitted access to the data collected (Mirza, Mirza, and Bellalem, 2023).

Interviewees were informed of their right to stop the interview at any point and change their minds in regard to the use of the information they provided for this thesis. All telephone interviewees gave verbal consent which was recorded on audio files. Krueger and Casey (2009) assert that this kind of assurance alleviates fears of insecurity or apprehensions which might overcome learners during the group session. Data cleaning was done in a bid to hide the participants' identity. Kaiser (2009) describes data cleaning as a process in which researchers remove identifiers to produce a clean data set free of participants' names and addresses.

3.9   SUMMARY

Chapter 3 of this thesis provides a comprehensive outline of the research framework employed in the study. The chapter systematically details the research design, offering an overview of the structure and strategy adopted to address the research objectives and questions. It explains the research approach, situating the study within a qualitative framework, justifying its selection based on the nature and requirements of the research inquiry. The chapter also discusses the research paradigm, clarifying the philosophical underpinnings guiding the study which in this case is interpretivism. Furthermore, the research methodology is elaborated upon, describing the specific techniques and processes used for data collection and analysis. The data collection methods section

highlights the methods used to collect data as well as the rationale for their selection, ensuring they are appropriate for generating reliable and relevant data. In addressing data analysis, the chapter outlines the techniques and processes applied to interpret the collected data, ensuring alignment with the research approach and methodology. Additionally, measures to enhance the trustworthiness of the study are thoroughly explored, encompassing discussions on credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability. These criteria are used to demonstrate the rigor and validity of the study, showing how I ensured that findings are accurate, reliable, and applicable in other contexts. The chapter examines ethical considerations, detailing the protocols followed to protect participants' rights and ensure the ethical integrity of the research process, including informed consent, confidentiality, and the mitigation of potential biases. This holistic approach underscores the chapter's contribution to establishing a robust, transparent, and ethically sound research foundation for the study. Chapter 4 which follows is devoted to data presentation, results and discussion of the research findings.

CHAPTER FOUR
DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1   INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents, analyses and interpret data collected during the research. Collected data was presented in narrative and diagrammatical form. The information presented was collected through documentary analysis, face-to-face interviews with Ordinary level history teachers, telephone interviews with the CDU subject specialist, the ZIMSEC subject manager, learners and the Ordinary level textbook author (see Table 4.1).

Table 4.1: Research participants

Teachers	6
ZIMSEC Subject Manager	1
CDU Subject Specialist	1
Textbook author	1
Learners	18
Total	**27**

Two (2) teachers who teach Ordinary level learners at each of the three (3) schools participated in the interviews which were conducted giving a total of six (6) teachers altogether. Eighteen (18) Ordinary level learners participated in the focus group interviews conducted during the research, six (6) participants were chosen from each of the three (3) participating schools. One (1) reputable Ordinary level textbook author was selected for the telephone interview. One (1) subject specialist from the CDU was chosen for the telephone interview. The ZIMSEC subject specialist also participated through a telephone interview. The total number of research participants was 27.

The study addressed the following research questions:

The main research question guiding this research was: What are the factors influencing the representation of the minority groups in the Zimbabwean secondary school history curriculum? The sub-research questions were:

1. Which approaches undergird the design of an inclusive history curriculum which gives an equitable representation of the histories of minority groups? (RQ1)
2. In what ways is the history of the Vhavenda represented in the Zimbabwean secondary school history curriculum according to curriculum documents and instructional materials, and what factors have led to the marginalisation of the history of the Vhavenda? (RQ2)
3. What are the approaches used in teaching the history of the Vhavenda at O' level by teachers in Zimbabwean secondary schools? (RQ3)
4. What are the factors that hinder the equitable representation of the history of the Vhavenda in the secondary school history curriculum? (RQ4)
5. What recommendations can be made to ensure the equitable representation of Vhavenda history in the Zimbabwean secondary school history curriculum? (RQ5)

Table 4.2 represents the themes and their respective sub-themes. In the section that follow, themes and sub-themes will be discussed.

Table 4.2 Themes and their respective sub-themes

	Theme	Sub-theme	Data collection Instrument
RQ1: (approaches undergirding the design of an inclusive history curriculum)	1. Inclusivity of government policies with reference to minority groups	1. Absence of implementation of government policy for minority groups	Zimbabwe policy documents (Constitution, Curriculum Framework; Ordinary Level History Syllabus)
RQ2: (how the history of Vhavenda is represented in the Zimbabwean secondary school history curricula)	2. Absence of history of Vhavenda in history curriculum	1. 2. Biased and non-inclusive documentation of history of Zimbabwe. Misrepresentation of the notion of inclusivity for minority groups in terms of language.	Interviews with teachers, ZIMSEC Subject Specialist, CDU subject Specialist
RQ3: (Approaches to teaching the history of the Vhavenda at O' level by history teachers)	3. Nationalist approach to history of minority groups	4. Insufficient coverage of minority groups	Interview with ZIMSEC subject manager, CDU Subject Specialist

RQ4: What are the factors that hinder the equitable representation of the history of the Vhavenda in the curriculum?	Factors that hinder the equitable representation of the history of the Vhavenda in the curriculum		Interviews with teachers, Subject Specialist, CDU Subject Specialist

4.2 FINDINGS

The following are findings which came from using documentary analysis. The documents which were analysed are the Constitution of Zimbabwe, the curriculum framework and the Ordinary level history syllabus.

4.2.1 Findings using documentary analysis

In this section, I embarked on a meticulous policy document analysis in order to establish the government position on representation on ethnic groups in Zimbabwe. The main documents brought under scrutiny are outlined in Figure 4.1. These documents support inclusion and equality of the diverse ethnic groups in Zimbabwe. The following theme emerged from the research question: Which theoretical approaches undergird the design of an inclusive history curriculum?
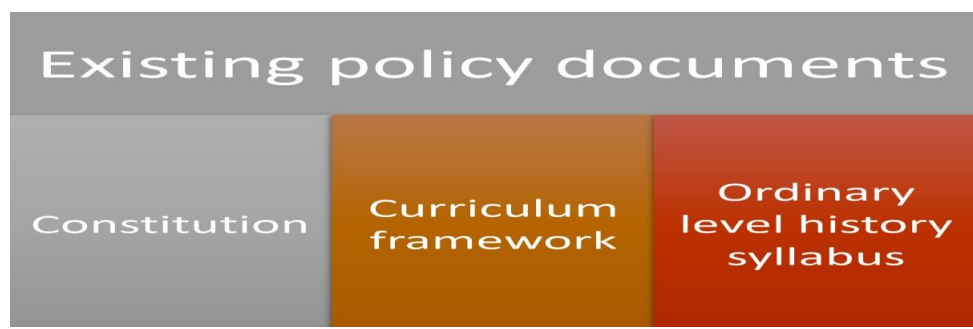
Figure. 4.1: Existing policy documents

RQ1: Which approaches undergird the design of an inclusive history curriculum?

4.2.2   Theme 1: Inclusivity of government policies with reference to minority groups

The Constitution of Zimbabwe is the major document as it the supreme law of the country which guides and informs the curriculum framework of Zimbabwe. The Ordinary level syllabus is informed by the curriculum framework. An analysis of the Constitution pertaining to representation of the diverse ethnic groups revealed that the Constitution of Zimbabwe is in support of equality, fairness and inclusivity. The Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment (no.20) Act 2013 emphasizes inclusivity, fairness, equity, relevance and equality of the 16 officially recognized languages (Article 6), upholding cultural heritage (Article 16) and preservation of traditional knowledge (Article 33).

Article 16 is of particular relevance to the topic under study as it compels the state and all government institutions to promote and preserve the diverse cultural practices and values which foster dignity, equality and well-being of Zimbabweans. The state and all institutions of government and Zimbabwean citizens are expected not only to preserve but protect Zimbabwe's heritage. This applies to all the ethnic groups' cultural practices. The Constitution acknowledges that the Vhavenda cultural practices and values should be preserved since they are equally part of Zimbabwean heritage.

Under the provision of the Constitution the state is expected to put in places measures to protect, promote and preserve indigenous knowledge systems. This is outlined in Article 33 of the Constitution. Article 10 of the Constitution which stipulates that the State and all government institutions are compiled to enhance national peace, unity and stability. The indigenous knowledge systems are embedded in the history of the ethnic groups of Zimbabwe including the Vhavenda. Hence, the teaching of the history of all ethnic groups is of paramount importance in the promotion and preservation of the indigenous knowledge systems.

Article 6 stipulates that the 16 official languages should be recognized equally. This means the history of these ethnic groups should be equally recognized like their languages. The Shona and

Ndebele are distinctive examples of groups whose language and history are represented in the curriculum as stipulated by the Constitution. The diverse groups in Zimbabwe should be equally represented linguistically and historically in the curriculum. This will promote unity as the groups will be afforded an opportunity for cultural exchange and tolerance.

As alluded earlier in this thesis, the research advocates intercultural inclusivity grounded on the intercultural approach other than the multicultural approach. I subscribe to Kenny (1997) who indubitably distinguished the two terms; multicultural regards the dominant culture as the normative or regulating culture and ethnic minority group cultures as outlandish, whereas the intercultural approach places all ethnic group cultures at par or equal validity. This is exactly what the Constitution of Zimbabwe advocates with regards to the diverse ethnic groups in Zimbabwe. All groups are at par or equal and therefore, should be represented equally in every sphere of life.

I acknowledged similar observations made by Fitzgerald (2003) regarding the debate between multiculturalism and interculturalism. Fitzgerald (2003) posits that in a multicultural context, minority ethnic groups strive for inclusion while the dominant group reinforces its position. In contrast, Fitzgerald (2003) suggests that an intercultural approach fosters mutual learning and benefits between both the dominant and minority cultures. The Zimbabwean Constitution supports an intercultural approach, emphasizing the appreciation and understanding of diverse cultures. Interculturalism surpasses multiculturalism as it moves beyond mere tolerance and advocates for the establishment of relationships between different cultures. Its foundation lies in the interaction of cultures and the potential for mutual learning.

Multiculturalism entails the simple coexistence of various cultures in a society, whereas interculturalism focuses on fostering cooperation and connections among these cultures. Adopting an intercultural approach to developing historical content will result in a more inclusive curriculum that values diversity and respects all cultures. Interculturalism emphasizes cultural exchange rather than the dominance of any single culture or group, thereby reducing discrimination and prejudice and promoting positive interactions between diverse groups. The provisions of the Constitution of Zimbabwe advocate equal representation of all groups recognized by it.

Profound understanding of one's history and culture results in peaceful co-existence among diverse ethnic groups. The theory of social justice supports cultural interchange in totality. Schools should unveil platforms where learners display their cultural experiences which afford the learners an active voice in institutional settings (Aronowitz and Giroux, 1986). This can be achieved through an inclusive history curriculum.

Through document analysis I discovered that the curriculum framework, grossly adopted its principles from the Zimbabwean Constitution. In search of government policy on equality and inclusivity in the curriculum I analyzed the contents of the Curriculum Framework for Primary and Secondary Education (2015-2022). The Government of Zimbabwe (2013) and the Education Act as amended in 2006 were considered in the formulation of the Curriculum Framework for Primary and Secondary Education (2015-2022). The curriculum framework was also conversant with country's history, heritage, aspirations and national ideals (Zimbabwe, 2015). This is in line with the Zimbabwean constitutional expectations.

The Curriculum Framework for Primary and Secondary Education (2015-2022) is the handbook for the MOPSE which provides a policy direction for both primary and secondary schools in Zimbabwe. It was meant to provide an all-inclusive plan for a sustainable change of the Zimbabwean education system. Furthermore, it was intended to encourage unity in diversity of cultures through the development of the 16 officially recognized languages as articulated in the Constitution of Zimbabwe (Zimbabwe, 2015).

The vision of the MOPSE as outlined in the Curriculum Framework for Primary and Secondary Education (20152022) is "to be the lead provider and facilitator of inclusive quality education for socio-economic transformation by 2020" (Zimbabwe, 2015:4). The mission of the MOPSE is "to provide equitable, quality, inclusive and relevant infant Junior and Secondary Education" (Zimbabwe, 2015:5). Inclusivity is one of the generic principles superintending the curriculum. According to Zimbabwe (2015:15) inclusivity refers "to an education system that takes account and addresses the different learners' needs and abilities without disadvantaging any group or individual". The vision of MOPSE is in total support of the equal inclusion of the history of all ethnic groups including minority ethnic groups such as the Vhavenda.

According to the Curriculum Framework for Primary and Secondary Education (2015-2022) among the underpinning principles of the curriculum are respect, inclusivity, diversity, balance, equity and fairness (Zimbabwe, 2015).The Curriculum Framework for Primary and Secondary Education (2015-2022) aimed at promoting the Zimbabwean identity based on patriotism, awareness of heritage, history, culture and traditions, inter-cultural understanding and tolerance, self-respect and respect for others (Ubuntu/Unhu/Vumunhu) (Zimbabwe, 2015).

Inclusivity highlighted in the Curriculum Framework for Primary and Secondary Education (2015-2022) is in sync with the social justice theory which is the guiding theory for this research. Inclusive education directly connects with principles of social justice and equity (Musara, Grant and Vorster, 2021). Shyman (2015) argues that the practice and application of social justice is inseparable from inclusion. Murrell (2006) avers that social justice involves identifying and eliminating all forms of differential treatment and oppression in policies of institutions. On the other hand, inclusion is premised on elimination of systematic social inequalities so as to foster institutional arrangements which permit or provide all learners equitable opportunities (Musara, Grant & Vorster, 2021).

The other aim of the curriculum is to prepare learners for participatory citizenship premised on tolerance and mutual respect, management of diversity, differences and conflicts as well as national unity (Zimbabwe, 2015). One of the generic principles and the value guiding the curriculum is respect. Respect refers to valuing of self and others, embracing diversity and Ubuntu/Unhu/Vumunhu (Zimbabwe, 2015). Relevance as a generic principle and the value of the curriculum refers to the curriculum that addresses the developmental needs of the learner, the community and the nation (Zimbabwe, 2015). "Equity and fairness refer to the provision of equal and fair access to information, learning and other resources to all learners regardless of religion, ethnicity, gender, ability, and residence" (Zimbabwe, 2015:16). Information and other resources include textbooks with the history of the Vhavenda. Equity and fairness can only be achieved if all ethnic groups including the Vhavenda have access to information about their history.

The major thrust of the curriculum framework is to promote unity, tolerance, diversity and realization of a national identity. Representation of the histories of all indigenous ethnic groups within a country is an essential step towards embracing diversity, promotion of unity and tolerance. This is meant to ultimately lead to the attainment and achievement of the nation-building agenda. There is a similarity to with what the Ministry of Education in Ghana subscribes to as earlier highlighted in chapter two. The Ghana Ministry of Education believes that the study of Ghana's history by learners will foster unity among the diverse ethnic groups, national integration, national pride and national identity.

The curriculum framework curriculum meets the expectations of the social justice theory. In this research, I used the social justice theory based on Fraser's three-dimensional theory. Musara, Grant and Vorster (2021) affirm that Fraser's theory presents a basis for making analysis on whether educational policies and practices are inclusive and socially just. The curriculum framework curriculum is a government document which clearly promotes equal representation and recognition as well as equitable distribution of resources. These factors are reflected in the principles underpinning the curriculum framework which are namely, inclusivity, diversity, balance, respect (Ubuntu/Unhu/Vumunhu), gender sensitivity, responsiveness, transparency, accountability, lifelong learning, equity and fairness. The mentioned principles are a pure reflection of the social justice theory. The underpinning principles of the curriculum framework are in agreement with the stipulations of the national constitution.

The curriculum framework is further based on mutual respect and tolerance, management of diversity, differences and conflicts as well as national unity. These aspects point to the fact that the history of groups such as the Vhavenda should automatically and obviously be included in the curriculum. Balanced inclusivity and tolerance of all ethnic groups is promoted by the curriculum framework.

Furthermore, the curriculum framework promotes a Zimbabwean national identity among all ethnic groups in the country. This national identity is attained through exposing the learners to their culture. The culture of different ethnic groups is embedded in their history; therefore, the diverse Zimbabwean ethnic groups' history is supposed to be included in the national history. An

understanding of the diverse ethnic differences will build tolerance and respect for one another. This will promote the developmental agenda.

I also scrutinised the Ordinary level syllabus to find out the extent to which the Vhavenda are represented. The history Ordinary level syllabus was derived from the Curriculum Framework for Zimbabwe Primary and Secondary Education 2015-2022. The syllabus' preamble and aims point at inclusiveness through patriotism. An interest and appreciation of history is expected to develop patriotism among learners. However, an analysis of the content does not reflect inclusion at all. Topics outlined in the history syllabus indicate that the syllabus excludes the history of the Vhavenda since it does not contain an exclusive topic on the Vhavenda. Topics on the Shona and Ndebele groups are clearly portrayed in the syllabus. The syllabus takes the exclusivist national approach indicated earlier by the ZIMSEC subject manager. The indigenous ethnic minority groups are mentioned in the process of covering the topics on the Shona and Ndebele groups. This ambiguous coverage of the minority groups such as the Vhavenda was confirmed by the teachers who were interviewed during the data collection process.

The syllabus does not have a specific topic focusing on the Vhavenda; hence it is not inclusive in the full sense and meaning of the word inclusive. Keddie (2012) asserts that one of the multiple inclusive educational practices which is in support of recognitive justice for marginalized learners is connecting with cultures, histories, perspectives and contributions of non-dominant groups in the curriculum. An approach of that nature promotes a more equitable pattern of cultural recognition which highly esteems marginalized groups (Keddie 2012). It is thus, clear that the Ordinary level syllabus is punctuated with both representation and recognition injustices.

The Vhavenda are not mentioned in the syllabus whereas the Shona speaking states like the Great Zimbabwe, Mutapa and Rozvi are clearly outlined. In addition, the Ndebele state is also covered as a stand-alone topic. This means that both the Shona and Ndebele speaking groups are recognized as well as represented in the syllabus. Conversely, the Vhavenda are represented in an assumptive manner under the topic, Bantu migration and under the Mfecane as one of the groups which was affected by the Mfecane. The Mfecane was a significant historical era characterized by increased warfare, population displacement, and the establishment of states in

Southern Africa. The Vhavenda are briefly mentioned or vaguely referenced within discussions concerning the Mfecane period. This kind of representation is not inclusive in as far as the history curriculum is concerned. The principles underpinning the curriculum which include diversity, respect, equity and fairness were not taken into cognisance when the syllabus was formulated especially with regards to representation of minority groups.

The syllabus does not fully serve the purpose of a history syllabus in the African context as prescribed by Fafunwa (1967), when he asserts that the syllabus has an important function of incorporating as well as exposing learners to diverse societal cultural norms and values. The current syllabus content confirms Kossler's (2010) analysis that the syllabus formulation was propelled more by political expediency rather than rational. Its biased nature is surely a product of political expediency at the expense of equal ethnic recognition and representation. The syllabus content affirms Muzondidya and Ndlovu-Gatsheni's (2007) view that the secondary history curriculum after independence did not holistically consider the ethnic configurations which existed in the country.

The results of this study align with those of Oppong, Gyimah, and Yeboah (2021) conducted in Ghana. In their research, they observed that ethnic groups are absent from the syllabus topics and are inadequately represented in the Ghanaian history curriculum. Similarly, the findings regarding the Vhavenda in Zimbabwe indicate that they are not included as a topic in the syllabus, highlighting a form of underrepresentation. This omission goes beyond mere underrepresentation since teachers typically focus on topics outlined in the syllabus. Consequently, I concluded that the syllabus in Zimbabwe does not adequately embrace minority ethnic groups like the Vhavenda but instead prioritizes the representation of dominant groups.

RQ2: In what ways is the history of the Vhavenda represented in the Zimbabwean secondary school history curriculum according to curriculum documents and instructional materials, and what factors have led to the marginalisation of the history of the Vhavenda? (RQ2)

4.3 THEME 2: ABSENCE OF HISTORY OF VHAVENDA IN HISTORY CURRICULUM

An analysis of the Ordinary level history textbook showed that there is no specific mention of the Vhavenda as a group or chiefdom. This was confirmed by all the six teachers who participated in the interviews:

Teacher 1A at school A gave the following response:

> They don't, even when they are talking about Chimurenga (war of liberation), they don't even say the Vhavenda did this or that. [Teacher 1A]

Teacher 2A at school A gave the following response:

> There is no content on the Vhavenda. There are topics such as the Mutapa and Rozvi which have nothing to do with the Vhavenda. [Teacher 2A]

Teacher 1C at school C gave the following response:

> Ah, currently they don't represent the history of the Vhavenda. Currently it's not seen anywhere. [Teacher 1C]

Teacher 2C at school C had this to say:

> Ah, there is no history of the Vhavenda, even if we talk of the history of Great Zimbabwe controversies, some Vhavenda claim that the Great Zimbabwe was built by the Vhavenda from Mapungubwe. [Teacher 2C]

The other two teachers just gave simply and straightforward responses which indicated that the history of the Vhavenda was not represented in the history textbooks. Responses from the teachers interviewed in the three schools (School A, B and C) point to a common observation that the

history of the Vhavenda is excluded in the history textbooks commonly used in Zimbabwean secondary schools.

The teachers' responses collectively reveal a critical gap in the Ordinary Level history textbook regarding the inclusion of the Vhavenda people and their history. This exclusion demonstrates the curriculum's bias, selective coverage, and lack of inclusivity, which marginalises the Vhavenda and deprives students of a comprehensive understanding of their nation's history. For a truly inclusive and representative educational system, it is essential to address these gaps, incorporating the histories of all groups and communities that make up Zimbabwe's rich and diverse past.

The approach to teaching Vhavenda history adopts a nationalistic perspective, as previously emphasized by the ZIMSEC subject manager. Rather than being addressed directly, Vhavenda history is presumed to be encompassed within broader topics such as Bantu migration and Mfecane. This coverage lacks specificity and is generalized, akin to a 'blanket' or 'umbrella' approach. Examination of the content revealed a lack of explicit mention of the Vhavenda ethnic group as a standalone topic, corroborating the responses provided by the interviewed teachers.

4.3.1   Sub-theme 2.1: Biased and non-inclusive documentation of the national history of Zimbabwe

An examination of the content of a commonly used Ordinary level textbook across all three schools indicated a bias in national history towards the narratives of dominant groups, namely the Shona and the Ndebele speaking. This finding mirrors a study conducted in Tripura, India, referenced earlier in this thesis. Textbooks used in Tripura schools predominantly highlighted the Bengali group, overlooking minority groups systematically (Jamatia and Gundimeda, 2019). Similarly, the research findings regarding the recognition and representation of the Vhavenda in textbooks reveal the prominence of Shona and Ndebele-speaking groups, neglecting minority groups.

The feedback regarding the inclusion and representation of Vhavenda history in the secondary history curriculum was consistent among all six interviewed teachers. They unanimously acknowledged a significant lack of inclusivity and representation within the curriculum. The teachers collectively agreed that the portrayal of Vhavenda history was not proportionate. They commonly shared the view that the curriculum predominantly emphasized Shona and Ndebele history. Below are the responses obtained from the six teachers interviewed across Schools A, B, and C:

> When you look at minority groups to a lesser extent it is inclusive because the history, we have talks about Shona states. The Vhavenda, the Sotho, the Tonga are just mentioned in passing. [Teacher 1A]

> It's not inclusive, it mainly focuses on Shona and Ndebele. We never hear about the history of the Vhavenda, we are no aware maybe there were not there, we only hear about the Shona and the Ndebele. [Teacher 2A]

> It's absolutely not inclusive. [Teacher 1B]

> Ahh, it's not inclusive, because there are minority groups we don't learn about, for example these guys are talking about 16 languages but currently some are not equally represented. Generally, we only know about the history of the Shona and Ndebele here in Zimbabwe, but some minority groups, we don't even know their history. [Teacher 1B].

> It's not inclusive, it covers the history of Shona and Ndebele. No history of the Vhavenda, Kalanga and Ndau. History favors the majority dominant groups like the Shona and the Ndebele, the approach is bias…if you look at the liberation struggle, they do not mention the Vhavenda commanders but there some of the Vhavenda who played a very important role in the liberation struggle, but the history is not documented. [Teacher 2C]

The responses from the teachers reveal a consensus that the Ordinary Level history curriculum in Zimbabwe is not inclusive, as it prioritizes the histories of dominant groups while marginalizing

or entirely omitting the histories of minority groups such as the Vhavenda, Kalanga, and Tonga. This exclusion reflects a biased and selective approach to curriculum development, which fails to recognize the diverse and multicultural nature of Zimbabwean society.

To address these issues, it is essential to rethink and restructure the curriculum to incorporate the stories, contributions, and identities of all ethnic groups, ensuring that students receive a comprehensive and representative education. A curriculum that embraces the histories of all groups, no matter their size, is critical for promoting a unified and inclusive understanding of Zimbabwe's past, fostering a sense of belonging among all students, and building a cohesive national identity.

The ZIMSEC subject manager held the view that the Zimbabwe secondary school history curriculum was inclusive since all the people in the country were accommodated somewhere within the content of the curriculum. The sentiments express a profound realization that the current Ordinary level history syllabus is national, meaning it refers to all Zimbabweans. From the evidence shown in the syllabus, he reiterated that there are topics which point out at all groups which are resident in the country and teachers are expected to teach on the histories of many groups.

> When you are talking about the Bantu people you are talking about the Vhavenda people, you are talking about the Shona, you are talking about the Zulu, you are talking about everyone at that level, although historically these groups you call the Vhavenda, Tshangana (Tsonga) and many others are Bantu people. [Subject Manager]

The subject manager's perspective reflects an idealized view of the curriculum as a neutral and comprehensive document, designed to cover all historical aspects of Zimbabwean society. This view, however, assumes that simply including references to different groups (even if minimal) equates to actual inclusiveness. In reality, as the teachers point out, the curriculum's treatment of these minority groups is tokenistic at best, with limited depth or focus on their specific historical narratives. This mismatch between curriculum design and implementation reveals a deeper structural issue in how history is taught in Zimbabwean schools.

Moreover, by conflating multiple groups under the broad "Bantu" umbrella, the subject manager ignores the complexity and richness of each group's individual history. This approach reflects a tendency in national history curricula to prioritize dominant group narratives (Shona and Ndebele in this case) while relegating minority histories to the margins. The framing of all groups under a broad "Bantu" migratory history thus serves as a form of historical erasure, where the specific contributions and experiences of minority groups are diminished or omitted entirely.

The two quotations from the subject manager reveal a significant disjunction between the intended inclusiveness of Zimbabwe's history curriculum and the lived experiences of teachers tasked with teaching it. While the subject manager views the curriculum as comprehensive and inclusive, the teachers' feedback suggests otherwise, pointing to a lack of meaningful representation for minority groups. This highlights a deeper issue of historical bias within the curriculum, where dominant group narratives overshadow the histories of marginalised communities. To address this issue, the curriculum needs to move beyond broad generalisations of Bantu history and offer more detailed, nuanced accounts of the histories of all Zimbabwean ethnic groups, ensuring that minority groups are not merely mentioned but are fully integrated into the national historical narrative.

Apple (1996) expresses deep resentment over the imposition of particular groups' history as the legitimate and officially recognized knowledge whereas that of other groups is not recognized. In this case, the history of both the Shona and Ndebele speaking groups is imposed on minority groups such as the Vhavenda. This confirms Potzsch's findings (2011, as cited in Moyo and Modiba, 2013) that selection of the content is intentional and not based on coincidence. Fraser (2008) calls for recognitive justice to destabilise the dominating social patterns which create inequality in social hierarchies.

While crafting a well-rounded, inclusive, and comprehensive curriculum poses significant challenges (Doll, 1993), it is imperative to genuinely strive for the inclusion of the histories of all ethnic groups recognized by the Constitution of Zimbabwe. Drawing from the example of Ukraine, as previously discussed in this thesis, it becomes evident that achieving a balanced and inclusive national history is feasible. Korostelina (2011) illustrates how Ukraine developed a history that forged a national identity shortly after gaining independence in 1991. Therefore, the

school, through an inclusive history curriculum, serves as a platform for reinforcing national identity (Popkewitz, 2001).

This study bears resemblance to the research conducted by Adel (2016), which revealed a bias towards the history of the Arab conquest in textbooks, while disregarding the history of the Copts, a minority group in Egypt. Similar to the situation with the Vhavenda in Zimbabwe, the Copts' history received inadequate coverage. Abdou (2016) conducted a textual analysis in 2013 and 2014, finding that the Copts were significantly underrepresented compared to other groups in Egyptian history. Abdou's (2018) observations align with this, noting that Coptic history is only briefly mentioned in Egyptian history textbooks. This parallels the treatment of Vhavenda history in Zimbabwean textbooks, where their history is also mentioned briefly and in passing.

The ZIMSEC subject manager expressed a strong belief that minority groups like the Vhavenda were addressed within broader topics such as the Mfecane, which elucidates the migration of Nguni groups across Southern and Central Africa. However, this coverage operates at a macro level, contrasting with the more detailed treatment of other groups, thus resulting in under-representation of the Vhavenda. Upon further inquiry, the subject manager admitted that the Vhavenda were not equally represented in the secondary school history curriculum. The following is the exact response from the ZIMSEC subject manager regarding the representation of the Vhavenda:

> It's not equally represented if you are talking in terms of coverage and amount of space in history textbooks. Our approach was not to individualize but as much as you can tell the new curriculum, the new thrust which there now even in the languages has now been to ensure that even those so-called minority groups in terms of language, we have Tshivenda being examined at Ordinary level, Sotho, Tshangani (Tsonga) and all other languages which have not been examined before are now being examined at secondary school level whereas over the years only Shona and Ndebele were examined. Our curriculum now includes chi Tshivenda and other indigenous languages. But from a historical perspective you may need a deliberate stance or position that you want now to write a history of the Vhavenda, history of the Tshangani (Tsonga), Sotho and other

groups but at the moment we don't have a specific coverage of those but we refer them through national history. [Subject Manager]

The narrative provided by the subject manager highlights the lack of specific historical attention given to the Vhavenda. This absence contradicts the principles of social justice. Fraser (2008) posits that social justice necessitates environments where everyone can engage as equals in societal activities. According to Fraser's three-dimensional model, social groups may be denied equal participation when deprived of social status, political influence, and economic resources (Musara, Grant, and Vorster, 2021). Gewirtz (2006) suggests that social justice involves challenging and overturning systems that perpetuate marginalization and exclusion. In line with this perspective, Musara, Grant, and Vorster (2021) propose that a social justice approach aims to enhance opportunities for self-expression and development by encouraging the involvement of diverse groups through representation. While equal representation has been achieved in languages, the historical coverage of indigenous groups like the Vhavenda remains unequal. The current history curriculum's inclusivity appears superficial and subjective.

4.3.2   Sub-theme 2.2: Misrepresentation of the notion of inclusivity for minority groups in terms of language

It became apparent to me that the language policy has given a false impression of recognition and representation of the history of indigenous groups. An interview with the CDU subject specialist showed that inclusivity was acknowledged from a language perspective and not in terms of historical narratives of these indigenous groups in the curriculum.

> The competence-based curriculum is highly inclusive; it has seen the upgrading of the once termed minority languages into the school system. Around 12 of them are now taught in schools and at secondary schools about 8 including Tshivenda language that you are talking about, so it's highly inclusive. [CDU subject specialist]

Drawing comparisons between the responses from the ZIMSEC subject manager and the CDU subject specialist it is clear that representation in terms of language is regarded as inclusivity.

However, close analysis reveals that it is partial inclusivity, representation and recognition since there is no specific coverage on the history of those indigenous such as the Vhavenda. A social justice approach to curriculum development would respond to the aspirations of the indigenous community or minority groups, such as acknowledging indigenous linguistic rights and the right to determine what is taught in their schools. It took further probing from me to get clarity on the representation of the Vhavenda in terms of their historic inclusion. The CDU subject specialist gave the following response:

> The history depends on whether they have the material that will support the curriculum or not and as you know that the Curriculum Development Unit is only there to write syllabi and materials that support the syllabi. If there is no one who is forth coming with their history no one will write for them. [CDU subject specialist]

The response attests to a certain degree that the CDU subject specialist was aware of the absence of specific historical coverage of the Vhavenda in the curriculum. The response pointed at the possible reason behind the absence and not absolute acknowledgement of the actual absence of the history of the Vhavenda in the curriculum. Further inquiry from me resulted in the participant acknowledging the absence of the history of the Vhavenda from the curriculum.

> What I will say is that it remains a dream yet to be fulfilled. All languages that are there in the curriculum, we need them to be fully represented, they need their history fully documented… [CDU subject specialist].

This honest response by the CDU subject specialist gave me a hint on possible reasons for the absence of the history of indigenous groups such as the Vhavenda, which will be addressed later in the chapter. The Ordinary level textbook author confirmed the absence of the history of the Vhavenda not only in the curriculum but the history textbooks.

Responses on the aspect of inclusion and representation of the history of the Vhavenda in the secondary history curriculum all the six interviewed teachers expressed a profound acknowledgement that the curriculum was not fully inclusive and representative.

The responses tap into recent debates highlighted earlier in chapter two of this thesis. The responses resonate with Mpofu and Salawu (2018) who argue that the Ndebele and Shona dominance continued in the post-colonial period. The genesis of this dominance can be traced back to the colonial period when the colonial government demarcated present day Zimbabwe into Shona and Ndebele speaking regions (Mpofu and Salawu, 2018). The Ndebele and Shona dominance has extended into the updated secondary school history curriculum. This has resulted in the under representation as well partial or non-recognition of minority groups such as the Vhavenda. Shaddock et al. (2009) assert that the expansion of mainstream thinking, structures and practices is so as to ensure that all learners are accommodated. The findings of this research indicate that the current curriculum is not inclusive and non-representative in terms of the history of the minority groups.

Inclusion has an emancipatory effect; hence, it should be implemented to attain social transformation through social justice (Musara, Grant and Vorster, 2021). Keddie (2012) is of the view that one of the inclusive schooling practices which can back recognitive justice for sidelined or marginalized learners is linking with the histories, beliefs, participations and perceptions of non-dominant assemblages through the curriculum. Fraser (2008) believes that appreciating the cultures of non-dominant groups within the curriculum is a reflection of recognitive justice in its capacity to destabilize the social patterns of dominant groups that results in the creation of inequitable status hierarchies. Therefore, the social justice theory is in support of the dismantling of the hegemonic dominance of the dominant major groups such as the Shona and the Ndebele. Attainment of participatory parity can only be achieved through dismantling of institutionalized impediments that block other groups from participating at an equal levels as full cohorts in social interaction (Fraser, 2008). In this case the non-inclusive curriculum is an institutionalized impediment.

The Vhavenda learn history without seeing themselves in the context of the historical epoch. In history lessons they hear about the greatness of other ethnic groups and what they have contributed to the national history. Looking at the history content they fail to clearly define where they belong. They cannot point out exactly what the Vhavenda people have achieved historically. Positive representation in the history content ushers in an opportunity for underrepresented

groups to learn about their forefathers so that they resonate with who they are and develop into whom they are supposed to be. Ethnic groups were not meant to be appendages of other ethnic groups but should be distinctively identified as who they are, and acknowledged as who they really are. A representative secondary school history curriculum should be used as an instrument to sieve misrepresentation and thwart underrepresentation.

RQ3: What are the approaches to teaching the history of the Vhavenda at O' level by history teachers?

4.4   THEME 3.1: NATIONALIST APPROACH TO THE TEACHING OF THE HISTORY OF MINORITY GROUPS

I envisioned to establish how the history of the Vhavenda was represented with regards to the way it was presented to the learners. I was curious to find out the approaches used in teaching the history of the Vhavenda at Ordinary level. This was meant to establish the issues to do with positive representation, under representation and misrepresentation. The way the history of a particular group is presented to the learners is an express reflection of the objective truth or reality on representation in the curriculum.

The ZIMSEC subject manager revealed that a nationalistic approach is used in the teaching of history. When teaching Ordinary level topics such as the Bantu migration, the Vhavenda history is also covered in the process.
The ZIMSEC subject manager asserted:

> There are topics which point out at all groups which are resident in the country and teachers are expected to teach on the histories of many groups. We have a national history…. historically these groups you call Vhavenda, Tshangana (Tsonga) and many other groups are Bantu people. [ZIMSEC Subject Manager]

The ZIMSEC subject manager further explained how the national approach covers ethnic groups such as the Vhavenda:

…using the approach, we are currently using of looking at national history, when we teach Southern African history, we teach the Mfecane, we teach how groups migrated, we teach how the Vhavenda were affected, how the Shona were affected by Mfecane. [ZIMSEC Subject Manager]

The ZIMSEC subject manager's approach was confirmed by Teacher 1C of school C who had this to say:

We only touch the Vhavenda history when we say there were migrations in South Africa coming this side, but generally we only focus on issues in the curriculum. Most of the issues we teach in the classroom are examinable things that is why we tend to focus on that. [Teacher 1C]

Teacher 2C at school C explained:

Aah, there is no history of the Vhavenda. They are only mentioned when talking about the social structure of the Ndebele, the ebenhla group, Mkwati is mentioned as a Venda spirit medium. [Teacher 2C]

While the ZIMSEC subject manager emphasizes a nationalistic, inclusive approach to history teaching, the implementation in schools appears to marginalize minority groups like the Vhavenda. Teachers highlight the dominance of examinable content and larger ethnic narratives, leaving little room for the histories of smaller groups. From a learner's perspective, this may result in a fragmented understanding of Zimbabwe's history, underlining the need for a more balanced approach that gives adequate attention to all ethnic histories within the nation. A truly inclusive curriculum would help learners appreciate the diverse historical contributions of all groups, fostering a stronger sense of national unity.

The research findings indicate that the teaching approach employed for the history of the Vhavenda at the Ordinary level in Zimbabwean secondary schools fails to recognize the Vhavenda as an independent ethnic group. Rather, the Vhavenda are only mentioned or

acknowledged in contexts such as the Mfecane period or when specific individuals like Mkwati, a mhuVenda, are referenced as spirit mediums during the first Chimurenga. Their presence in the curriculum seems to be confined to instances where they interact with dominant ethnic groups, reflecting a pattern of underrepresentation and misrepresentation. This issue primarily revolves around the concept of representation, influencing learners' perceptions of their own history.

The Vhavenda are merely mentioned incidentally, emphasizing their interactions with dominant groups, rather than being explored in depth as an autonomous ethnic group. This deficiency can be attributed to the absence of specific topics dedicated to the history of the Vhavenda within the curriculum. As noted by Moyo and Modiba (2013), the selective nature of curriculum content has led to a narrowing of the intended specifications and characteristics of a truly nationalistic curriculum, a sentiment that is corroborated by the research findings.

The findings showed that the dominant groups, the Shona and Ndebele speaking, dominate the national history. The minority groups are mentioned in passing or when they came in contact with the dominant groups in the historical discourses. Oppong, Gyimah and Yeboah (2021) criticized the mere identification of ethnic groups in each region by learners as insufficient coverage. Oppong, Gyimah and Yeboah (2021) argue that the syllabus limits the learners to mere identification of the history of their respective ethnic groups and not to a level of fully appreciating their cultures of the diverse ethnic groups. This is similar to what is happening in the Zimbabwean history curriculum.

The research findings have evidently indicated that the history of the Vhavenda is superficially covered or represented in the curriculum. The approach used to cover the national history is to a greater extent biased towards the dominant groups, which are namely the Shona and Ndebele. Research findings have revealed that the minority ethnic groups and the Vhavenda in particular, are grossly affected by inadequate coverage. This applies to the Copts in Egypt who were referred to earlier in chapter two. Abdou (2018), discovered that learners are openly told not to worry about the history of the Copts as it seldom barely features in the exams. In Zimbabwe, the teachers mention the Vhavenda in passing as they refer to the Vhavenda interaction with the dominant groups. This is due to the fact the syllabus has no topics on the Vhavenda as a stand-alone ethnic

group. Earlier on Moyo and Modiba (2013) asserted that the selective curriculum content has narrowed the specifications or characteristics of what exactly a nationalistic curriculum intends to be. The research findings have affirmed that assertion.

Foucault (1980) asserts that the history of minority groups is swept to the periphery or totally smeared out by the history of a dominant group. In this regard the national curriculum is regarded as intrinsically ensnared with the matters to do with control, influence, identity making, power and the nation-state. In this research, the dominant groups, namely Shona and Ndebele, have obliterated the history of the minority groups. Fraser expressed concern over the unequal social and cultural positioning which results in the exclusion of people in the diverse decision-making levels limiting individuals' capacity to engage in different types of political and civic activity (Musara, Grant and Vorster, 2021).

The findings revealed that the approach used to cover national history is biased towards the majority groups in Zimbabwe and marginalizes the minority groups. Over the past years, of the several groups in Zimbabwe, only the Shona and Ndebele enjoy supremacy and prominence in the Zimbabwean history curriculum. The research findings have revealed that nothing has changed since the Ndebele and Shona still enjoy the same supremacy and dominance over the minority groups.

Gramsci's hegemony theory asserts that the dominant groups impose their control or supremacy over weaker groups through overt coercion or use of intellectual means to attain dominance (Chimhundu,1992). Foucault (1998) accentuates that knowledge and power were inseparable, hence, the most powerful group decides the type of knowledge to be learnt. The research findings proved this to be correct. At its inception the history of Zimbabwe was dominated by the Shona and the Ndebele.

Freire (1970) is against the teaching of imposed information by dominant groups but advocated inclusivity. These views support the equal inclusion or representation of minority groups in the educational curriculum. Bentley-Henson and Stearns, (2022) believe that social justice eliminates structural and institutional practices that negatively impact on a group. Freire (1970) believes that

a dialogic approach should be used to bring about understanding to opposed groups that their situation can be transformed since it is a product of dynamics of dominant social interests and not natural order. The social justice pedagogy is informed by Ladson-Billings (1995) who supports culturally relevant teaching. Cultural relevance is anchored in including cultural experiences in the content learnt in schools (Hargraves, 2021).

RQ4: What are the factors that hinder the equitable representation of the history of the Vhavenda in the curriculum?

4.5 THEME 4: FACTORS WHICH HINDER THE EQUITABLE REPRESENTATION OF THE HISTORY OF THE VHAVENDA IN THE CURRICULUM

The research revealed that there is a kaleidoscopic array of factors that hinder the representation of the history of the Vhavenda in the curriculum. Some of the factors are tortuously entangled and overlap into each other. In this research, I attempted to clinically dissect these factors in an effort to establish the real issues hindering positive representation of the Vhavenda in the history curriculum. The factors were separately presented and discussed or analysed in order to distinctively show their impact on the representation of the history of the Vhavenda in the curriculum.

4.5.1 The absence of literature

The research findings indicated that one of the major factors affecting the representation of the history of the Vhavenda in the curriculum is the absence of documented material on the history of the Vhavenda in Zimbabwe.

The CDU subject specialist, the ZIMSEC subject manager, the Ordinary level textbook author and history teachers were all in agreement that there was a gap in terms of information about the history of the Vhavenda in Zimbabwe. The blame for the absence of literature on the Vhavenda was transferred to the Vhavenda themselves and the government of Zimbabwe. The CDU subject

specialist highlighted the fact that the Vhavenda were not forthcoming to document their history. The CDU subject specialist had the following to say:

> If there is no one who is forth coming with their history no one will write for them. They are no really supportive, the books they are using that can capture their history are mainly South African based. [CDU subject specialist]

I probed further to find out whether there was a total absence of material on the history of the Vhavenda in Zimbabwe. The CDU subject specialist responded by saying the following:

> The material so far, they rely on is purely South African as I said earlier on, even in their literature which has part of their documented history or textbooks they are using were transcribed from South African textbooks and written in the Zimbabwean context which might not fully represent their own history as Zimbabweans. I don't know if it's a concept of lack of writers of lack of motivation or like you know in Zimbabwe, there isn't much on offer in terms of remuneration. I think most of the people even if they wanted to write and document, they feel demotivated to do so, therefore, there isn't much on offer in terms Zimbabwean Vhavenda history. [The CDU subject specialist]

The CDU subject specialist's sentiments on the use of South African books were reiterated by Teacher 2C from school C who said;

> …. even if you look at the Tshivenda curriculum, books used are from South Africa…there are no books from Zimbabwe meaning that there are no local authors. [Teacher 2C]

Evidently, the CDU subject specialist's concerns over the absence of materials or literature on the Vhavenda was confirmed by the six Ordinary level teachers who were interviewed. The teachers indicated that the textbooks they were using did not have content on the Vhavenda. Teacher 2C from school C had the following to say:

From my own analysis, there is no literature or written down information on the Vhavenda in Zimbabwe.

We depend on South African historians for information on the Vhavenda history. There are very few Vhavenda writers. [Teacher 2C]

Teacher 1A in school A noted:

… the Ordinary level history textbooks don't represent the history of the Vhavenda even when they are talking about the Chimurenga (war of liberation), they don't even say the Vhavenda did this or that. [Teacher 1A]

I noted a common Ordinary level textbook which was used in all three schools where interviews were done. This textbook is commonly used as a reference book when setting ZIMSEC examinations and marking schemes. I analyzed the content of the textbook and confirmed the absence of the history of the Vhavenda. I was irked by history authors' lack of interest in writing about the history of minority groups such as the Vhavenda. Teacher 1C had this to say:

I think it may be the issue of scholars. These days people no longer write or those who are writing don't focus on minority groups and their history. [Teacher 1C]

This suggestion resonates with what the CDU subject specialist said earlier about the lack of motivation of authors to write about the history of minority groups. However, the Ordinary level history textbook author divulged a different narrative concerning the selection of topics to include in the history textbooks. The Ordinary level history textbook author revealed:

Textbook authors are given guidelines, objectives and principles to satisfy the regime of the moment. [History Textbook Author]

The textbook author explained that there was fear of one ending up discrediting the leadership in power, hence, they need to protect their legacy. The writings have to make the current regime

relevant. If the politicians leave it open, authors might end up writing about what glorifies other people at the expense of their own achievements. Authors are cautioned on the use of certain words such as dictators, the naming of certain opposition figures and the use of certain colours such as red which is associated with revolutions and certain political parties. The textbook author went on to say:

> Curriculum developers are given a prescribed dose to come up with a curriculum. There is need to liberate the textbook writing process as well as the syllabus although there must be some guide for instance, an ideology of the moment. However, the curriculum should be independent so as to reveal the real history or pure history. [History Textbook Author]

The textbook author also raised another critical factor behind the absence of literature on the history of minority groups such as the Vhavenda. The MOPSE was identified as one of the stumbling blocks in the documentation of the history of minority groups. History textbooks have to be approved by MOPSE before being used in the schools. Textbook authors are forced to write in accordance to the syllabus therefore they are limited in terms of diversity. The textbook author highlighted the following fact:

> MOPSE limits when they sell their books to schools since schools first check MOPSE approval before checking on their content. [History Textbook Author]

I was convinced by the informants' response that indeed there was no literature on the history of the Vhavenda. Absence of literature is a product of a multiplicity of factors. The absence of the literature has many negative effects on the issue of representation of the history of the Vhavenda in the curriculum. The absence of literature can be classified under the economic dimension in Fraser's three-dimensional model. The economic dimension includes the provision of resources hence the absence of literature on the Vhavenda deprives the Vhavenda of an essential resource. This means that social settings are unfair if they ensconce obstacles that prohibit people accessing parity of participation (Fraser, 2003). The absence of the literature deprives not only the Vhavenda of their history but even the non-Vhavenda of a complete national history. Non-inclusion of the history of an ethnic group which is recognized by the Constitution is tantamount

to underrepresentation, misrepresentation and non-recognition. Participatory parity is the vital standard against which to appraise social arrangements (Fraser, 2003). Furthermore, the absence of the history of the Vhavenda gives are false impression or perception of the Vhavenda as a Zimbabwean ethnic group. The findings resonate with Giarrizo's (2013) argument that by limiting the amount of relevant information of minorities in textbooks, students begin to draw conclusions that these minorities are not important.

Romanowski (1996:170) explains, "to a significant extent, textbooks define and determine what is important in American history". Romanowski (1996) argues that by not including minorities, the message that these textbooks are sending to students is that minorities are not important enough to be included. Learners are not being offered an accurate account of society and their information about others becomes skewed. As a result, the student's skewed perceptions of minorities can create disconnected and ignorant inter-group relationships (Giarrizo, 2013). Barricades are molded and strain is generated as a result of what is being communicated through the textbooks.

The research findings revealed that one of the reasons for the absence of literature is caused by the CDU and the MOPSE. This is despite the fact that the CDU feels that there is no literature because the Vhavenda are not forthcoming in as far as documenting their own history. The research findings have indicated that the authors are limited and confined to the topics that are in the syllabus which is generated by the CDU. Furthermore, MOPSE is responsible for approving textbooks which are to be used in schools. This leaves the authors focused on meeting the CDU and MOPSE requirements or expectations. Logically an author can only write within the confines of the CDU and MOPSE in order for his or her efforts be viable and relevant. Once a book is condemned by the MOPSE, the author has no other market to sell his or her book since no school will buy the book. It goes to show that the issue has more to do with policy makers who formulate the syllabus. The policy makers are the ones responsible for selecting topics to be included in the syllabus and the topics to be excluded or left out.

The policy makers have political power to include certain topics within the syllabus and then invite authors to write on those topics. I witnessed the introduction of the updated curriculum

when authors were invited to provide literature in the form of textbooks for new subjects such as heritage studies. There was nothing at all in terms of literature before the invitation was extended. The government unveiled funds to kick start the program which resulted in several authors writing books to support the new curriculum.

The same approach could be used if government is sincere about the documentation of the history of minority ethnic groups such as the Vhavenda. It should be noted that it is not necessarily the case of Vhavenda documenting their history as this can be done by a non mhuVenda. Previously the history of the dominant groups such as the Shona and Ndebele speaking was documented by whites. Though this not usually ideal, it is possible that an objective history author can accurately document the history of any ethnic group despite and in spite of the ethnic group to which the author does not belong.

Furthermore, the strict guidelines given to authors eliminate innovation among the authors, as highlighted by the interviewed author. The "prescribed dose" given to the textbook authors by the CDU and MOPSE results in authors not focusing on the history of minority groups which eventually distorts the objectivity of authors in coming up with "pure history". The "prescribed dose" according to the textbook author is a product of politicians' desire to satisfy the political ideology of the day. That is common and necessary but should be done in moderation in order not to compromise the quality of history which learners are exposed to. Selection of topics has to been done objectively so as to establish pure "history" which is free from bias and subjectivity.

4.5.2   Lack of political will

The CDU subject specialist suggested that the government could have done much more to improve the representation in the secondary school's history curriculum. The same government which has set the fundamental principles of equality and has brought about equal representation in terms of recognition of indigenous ethnic languages could do the same with the history of indigenous ethnic groups. The CDU subject specialist said:

Maybe we could say first the government which gave them that platform to say, be equal, you are now recognized should have gone further maybe and held some workshops or given them some materials to start, the government only gave them a platform for equality, the platform gave them recognition but it didn't give them material. Maybe I would go back to the government and say could you assist these minority groups so that they attain that equal opportunity status with the Shona, Ndebele and English. [CDU subject specialist]

The textbook author raised a related observation about the policy makers who, in this case, are political appointees. Minority groups are being let down by policy makers. The textbook author had this to say:

We don't have policy makers representing the ethnic minority groups in decision making forums like the parliament. In an all-inclusive curriculum we should have stakeholders and representatives from the ethnic groups and we should have their inputs. The policy makers are not well acquainted, they are not people who have the expertise or experience in the classroom, in the teaching and learning process. The people occupying the offices are political appointees who are picked because of their political affiliation. Those with the love for the educational system of Zimbabwe are not occupying decision making offices maybe because they are politically active or they inclined to a certain political group so they are actually excluded. [History Textbook Author]

The textbook author's critique provides valuable insight into how the state's political agenda, rather than merely a lack of political will, shapes the curriculum. This agenda results in a narrow, selective version of history that prioritizes dominant groups and marginalizes ethnic minorities. The state's vision of nation-building, as presented through the curriculum, focuses on unity at the cost of diversity, social justice, and equity. Political interference, through both the appointment of decision-makers and the control over educational content, plays a critical role in shaping the national narrative, influencing not only what is taught but also how history is understood and remembered by future generations. Addressing these issues would require a more inclusive and representative curriculum that acknowledges the histories of all ethnic groups in Zimbabwe.

The CDU subject's response is a clear indication that there is a grave element of lack of political will from the government. The CDU subject specialist believes that the government should provide the platform and resources to facilitate the inclusion of the history of the Vhavenda. The ZIMSEC subject specialist earlier on concurred with the CDU subject specialist when he suggested a change to the trajectory when compiling the national history.

They both suggested that the approach used in the introduction of minority languages in schools could be used in the documentation and inception of the history of minority ethnic groups in the curriculum. The suggestions were poignant and witty as they garner more credence in exposing government's lack of political will in addressing the issue at hand. Furthermore, the support which was given by the government at the inception of the new curriculum was overwhelming, the same approach can be used in the inclusion of the history of the minority ethnic groups. The lack of political will from the government is reflected by its selective commitment to national projects like the ones highlighted above. If the government was committed to the inclusion of the history of minority groups, it would have rolled out resources to do so. It would have done so in the same manner it has shown commitment in the introduction of indigenous languages in the curriculum as well as the introduction of an updated curriculum. Such actions by the government would be forever be etched in the annals of history as they would bring an everlasting heritage of inclusion and equality.

The textbook author raised another pertinent issue of inclusion at government level. He highlighted the absence of equal representation at policy level making positions. This falls under the political dimension of Fraser's three-dimensional model. It refers to the kind of political voice accorded to the minority groups in parliament and other political arenas. It also points out at the political appointments in critical government decision making institutions. Those who are not accorded a political voice are incapable of articulating and defending their interests with regard to recognition and distribution which eventually exacerbates their misrepresentation (Fraser, cited in Thompson 2009). In this case the government should foster equal representation in the CDU, MOPSE and other policy formulation departments. This will go a long way in promoting inclusion at government level which will cascade in syllabus, curriculum and policy formulation.

The textbook author suggested that appointments of policy making boards should be premised on meritocracy not on partisan politics.

The absence of government support through the provision of a platform for writers to document the history of the Vhavenda fits very well into Fraser's three-dimensional model. With regard to the economic dimension which is premised on the equal provision of resources, Fraser (2003) highlights economic inequities as one of the hindrances to social justice. It the duty of government as correctly suggested by the CDU subject specialist, to provide resources to enable the documentation of the history of the Vhavenda. The government successfully facilitated the learning of indigenous languages such as the Tshivenda in schools but it has not done the same with the history of the Vhavenda.

The absence of representatives of the minority groups such as the Vhavenda in decision making positions is a result of power relations which privilege or favor some groups of people excluding, relegating and disadvantaging others in the process (Fraser, 1997). The political dimension influences the economic dimension in that a political decision can result in the unveiling of resources to correct a social injustice. However, it should be noted that even if the Vhavenda do not have a representative from their ethnic group, anyone occupying positions of influence in the curriculum making process should take a nationalistic approach to pursue the documentation of the history of minority groups so as to achieve equality.

This lack of action could stem from a sense of reluctance or unawareness within the Vhavenda community regarding the significance of including their history in the educational curriculum. It falls upon those in positions of authority to take an impartial stance and advocate for the inclusion, recognition, and equitable distribution of resources for minority groups, as highlighted by scholars like Fraser (Nash and Bell, 2007). Achieving this goal requires privileged individuals, such as members of the CDU and the MOPSE to acknowledge and address the voices of marginalized communities and actively work towards their inclusion and representation (Thompson, 2009).

With regard to the exclusion of certain historical narratives from the history syllabus, Moyo and Modiba (2013) observe that it resulted in the government gaining mass popularity as it gave a false impression of representing national interests. These excluded historical narratives need to be included into the national history in order for the learners to have access to pure and undistorted history. The history of minority groups such as the Vhavenda is excluded from the national syllabus.

Muzondidya and Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2007) also cite the deliberate post-colonial exclusion of history from the curriculum as a result of politics of silence. This means that not much attention has been given to the issue of correcting the colonial distortions of the history of the country in terms of recognition of minority groups. Post colonial exclusion is a product of lack of political will from the relevant authorities to correct the misrepresentation and under representation of the history of minority groups. This is against the principle of distributive justice. The principle of distribution normally refers to the parity of opportunity as well as outcome; parity of opportunity refers to crucial issues such as individual rights and participation (Musara, Grant and Vorster, 2021). Fraser (2008) pays attention to the destruction of status equality which happens when one group is systematically belittled or marginalized in cultural life.

The representation injustices in the secondary school history curriculum perpetually dominant. The propensity of representation injustice has perpetuated cultural prejudice which has gone for many years after independence unbated. This is due to the fact that some ethnic groups are more privileged with access to the power of representation than other groups resulting in the perpetuation of representation injustices in the secondary school history curriculum.

4.5.3   Reluctance and obliviousness among the Vhavenda people

Responses from the informants indicated that there was some degree of reluctance and obliviousness among the Vhavenda to document their history as well as contribute meaningfully in the curriculum making process. Teacher 1C from school C who is also a mhuVenda expressed his unawareness of the importance of documenting the history of the Vhavenda. The research was

a wakeup call to him to partake in the exercise of writing or documenting the history of the Vhavenda. The teacher said the following:

> I think your research will propel us to write about our history or maybe even the history of the Sotho. I think your research has a changing element where we have under looked that aspect, yes, it's food for thought now as historians we have been provoked to research about the history of the Vhavenda. I am not so sure but I think we were blinkered to think whatever we are learning right now is okay…thus another contributing factor and maybe you bringing up this thing, and people had under looked all these aspects. [Teacher 1C]

The CDU subject specialist reiterated the fact that the Vhavenda were not forthcoming in terms of authorship and documentation of their history. The CDU subject specialist cited the example of the Ndebele who are now equally recognized because they were pushed towards writing their history after realizing that no one can do it for them. The Ndebele are now giving their history according to how they perceive it. The CDU subject specialist explained:

> …as for the Vhavenda, I might say we still need to see them active, we still need to see these once perceived minority groups active in terms of authorship, in terms of documentation of their history otherwise if it's written by somebody from another community, it means it will be misinterpreted, so they should take a step forward and start writing, that is how they are going to attain equal representation opportunity. (CDU Subject Specialist)

The CDU subject specialist emphasized the fact that the Vhavenda were not behaving like other minority groups in terms of pushing for recognition through the documentation of their history:

> So far what I have seen in evaluation, only those vocal groups like the baTonga people really have seen themselves in the spot light in terms of those who are documenting history or capturing them in the history books or history documents otherwise some who are acting from behind the scenes like the Vhavenda people who are always watching

from the terraces really it will take a long time for them to be recognized and something written on them. (CDU Subject Specialist)

Teacher 1A from school A confirmed the unawareness or obliviousness expressed by the mhuVenda Teacher 1C from school C. Teacher 1A suggested:

Maybe they are silent about that no one has come out to say we want this in the curriculum, add, they are just following what is there, they are just saying as long as children are learning history it's okay even if they are not learning our history. When they are doing curriculum review, they come here to consult, but, maybe the Vhavenda have no realized the importance of including their history in the curriculum. No one has pointed out why is our culture or our history not included in the curriculum because no one can think for you but have to stand for yourself. If you point it out and stand for yourself and nothing is done that's when you can complain why there is no change.

Learner L13 at school C confirmed the obliviousness of some of the Vhavenda people when it comes to the issue of representation. The learner was asked the following question: *How do you feel about the representation of the Vhavenda history in the Zimbabwean history curriculum?*

It never crossed our minds. [Learner L13]

Fraser (2000) openly exposes the negativity of the Hegelian-styled culturist model of identity politics since it emphasised displacing misrecognition by other people through affirmative self-representation. In other words, marginalised groups need to stand and be counted so as to be recognised in the educational curriculum. There is need for the Vhavenda to come forth and document their history. Furthermore, the Vhavenda should advocate the inclusion of their history in the national curriculum.

The research findings underscore the reluctance of the Vhavenda community to document their history. One of the interviewed teachers, who is of Vhavenda descent, admitted to being unaware of the importance of recording their history until the research shed light on the matter. This

revelation echoes the concerns expressed by the CDU subject specialist regarding the Vhavenda's attitude towards documenting their own history. The absence of Vhavenda authors has further hindered the process of documenting their history. It is essential that those who hold the cultural and historical knowledge take responsibility for its documentation to prevent distortion. This situation brings to mind the proverbial wisdom: "Until the lions have their own historians, the history of the hunt will always glorify the hunter" (Achebe and Brooks, 1994).

The verbal collection of information for purposes of documentation requires someone who is verbally and culturally connected to the ethnic group under study. Poor translations can result in the distortion of the historical content. The documentation of the history of an ethnic group's history by someone who is not well versed with its language and culture can result in distortions of the historical narratives. Ki-Zerbo (1981:3) asserts that "…some errors ascribed to tradition are the work of translators. Precaution should be taken to ensure that information is correctly collected and documented." In light of this, the Vhavenda have to take the leading role in the documentation of their history in order to reduce chances of distortions.

However, it should be noted that a multiplicity of factors, some of which have been highlighted earlier, are responsible for the obliviousness and reluctance among the Vhavenda people leading to them not taking the initiative to document their history. The major factor which could be responsible for the obliviousness is the lack of belonging among the Vhavenda since they identify themselves with the Vhavenda in South Africa. This was exhibited by the learners as well who indicated that they had never thought about the issue of being represented historically in the curriculum.

4.5.4   The size of the Vhavenda population in Zimbabwe

The research also revealed that the size of the Vhavenda affects their recognition and representation. Their size results in their domination by the numerically advantaged Ndebele and Shona groups. Teacher 1A at school A gave the following comment:

Shonas and Ndebeles are many, so I think the Vhavenda are a minority group. So, they are dominated by those tribes here.

Teacher 2A from school A also highlighted the numerical disadvantage of the Vhavenda and their limited geographical distribution as a contributory factor to their representation in the secondary school curriculum.

Teacher 2A from school A made the following observation:

The Vhavenda are only found here in Matabeleland South, so they don't much history to talk about.

Teacher 2B from school B had the following to say in response to the question: *What are the possible factors affecting the representation of the Vhavenda in the curriculum?*

I feel the Vhavenda are a small dialect of people have looked down upon them from the very beginning up to now. They are not involved, for instance if you look at the wars like the first Chimurenga you hardly hear about the Vhavenda, you only hear about the Shonas and Ndebeles. These Vhavenda and baTonga people are not represented. They were not active; I think it's because they are a small group of people. I think thus why they remain silent about the Vhavenda.

The ZIMSEC subject manager had this to say:

…in Zimbabwe our largest groups are the Ndebele and the Shona, in the process of studying those you can't avoid referring to other groups which you are calling minority groups in terms of how numerous they are in our country, not in terms of importance I believe but in terms of population and how widespread they are in Zimbabwe, like the Vhavenda, we know we have the Vhavenda who are in Beitbridge.

The Vhavenda's numerical disadvantage according to Teacher 1A at school A is a contributory factor to the underrepresentation of the Vhavenda in the curriculum. Teacher 1A at school A believes that the Vhavenda are dominated by other groups because of their small numerical size. This factor limits their influence within their own area due to the domination by other groups such as the Shona and the Ndebele. Teacher 2A from school A also feels that the Vhavenda's geographical concentration in Matabeleland South and not in other areas further limits their influence in their curriculum. It is, therefore, clear that their concentration in one geographical area and not spread throughout the country is largely or intricately related to their small numerical size. These observations and views were also raised by the ZIMSEC subject specialist.

This generally translates to the influx of other large groups into the Vhavenda geographical space resulting in their absorption or assimilation by the dominant groups such as the Shona and the Ndebele. The Vhavenda's dominance has been weakened by intermarriage. This according to the research findings has also affected their identity. This has tremendously affected the representation of the Vhavenda in the curriculum. It has also affected the perception of the Vhavenda of the current history curriculum which is dominated by the Shona and Ndebele groups. The research findings revealed that the Vhavenda find it normal to have a curriculum dominated by these two groups. However, this precedence was opposed earlier by Apple (1996) who is against the decision to impose certain groups' knowledge as the official and legitimate knowledge while the knowledge of other groups is not recognized.

According to participant responses, the perceived small numerical size of the Vhavenda has often been cited as a reason for their perceived lack of involvement in significant historical events, such as the Chimurenga wars. However, upon closer examination, I found this assertion to be largely inaccurate. In fact, influential figures from the Vhavenda ethnic group, such as Mkwati, played pivotal roles in the first Chimurenga, comparable to or even greater than figures like Mbuya Nehanda and Sekuru Kaguvi from the dominant Shona-speaking group. Despite their significant contributions, individuals like Mkwati are not as prominently recognized and celebrated in national history narratives compared to their counterparts from other ethnic groups.

Earlier on I raised the issue of deliberate selection which results in some content being included and other content excluded in the curriculum. Moyo and Modiba (2013) previously asserted that the process of choosing curriculum content is based on deliberate and carefully considered selection. This selection of content is done to achieve set objectives. This means that inclusion of Shona and Ndebele history and exclusion of minority groups is intentional and was done to achieve set objectives. The study's results confirmed a previous claim made by Moyo and Modiba (2013) that embracing a counter-hegemonic discourse results in reevaluating the criteria for excluding or including specific historical content.

Moyo and Modiba (2013) point at the politics of (mis)representation as taking the center stage of curriculum practice in Zimbabwe because the content selection is biased towards the promotion of a particular group. There has been a deliberate manipulation of learners through the content they are taught in order to make them what the state intends them to think and above all to be. Therefore, inclusion and exclusion of certain topics in the history are deliberate. The syllabus and curriculum formulators are responsible for the selection process.

Chimhundu and Crawhall (1992) posit that the Ndebele and Shona were recognized as the Zimbabwean official languages because they both have proportionately a large number of speakers. The issue of a small population in any country is responsible for their labelling as a minority. However, it should be noted that this has to do with power dynamics because minority groups can dominate large groups if they are in positions of influence. For instance, the white settlers were a numerically small group but dominated the majority groups which were the various African ethnic groups. This was so, because the white settlers occupied positions of influence and hence could control the three political, economic and cultural and legal dimensions. The minority white settlers were able to impose their history on the African majority ethnic groups. The colonial secondary school history curriculum was dominated by the minority white settlers. It is in this regard that one can argue that the marginalization of a numerically small group is not justified based on its size but on access to political representation, economic allocation of resources as well as cultural and legal recognition of that particular group.

4.5.5   Identity crisis

"Every learner should proudly identify themselves as Zimbabwean irrespective of the diversity of origin or socioeconomic status" (Zimbabwe, 2015:19). National identity is attainable through learners who are grounded in their culture and show respect for life and diversity (Zimbabwe, 2015). "The process of developing this national consciousness requires that every learner understands and shares Zimbabwe's history and heritage" (Zimbabwe, 2015:19).

The research findings indicate that the Vhavenda are deeply affected by an identity crisis. The identity crisis is a hybrid of different factors. The Vhavenda's origin, geographic location and proximity to South Africa results in them identifying themselves more with South Africa than Zimbabwe. According to Teacher 2C of school C:

> ...most Vhavenda people are from South Africa, even if they come here, they have South African documents, they go learn in South Africa, they identify themselves as South African...

I also discovered that the Vhavenda identity was affected by their contact with the dominant groups, the Shona and Ndebele. Teacher 1A from school A had this to say:

> There are Shona and Ndebele speaking people in the area. So, the Vhavenda just think they are one with these groups since they can speak any of these languages. Vhavenda children even learn Ndebele. Both Ndebele and Tshivenda are taught up to Ordinary level. So, it's normal for the learners even if they are learning about the history of the Ndebele and Shona groups only because they are also dominated by those tribes here.

It appears that synchronicity of the Vhavenda and other groups has resulted in cultural and identity delusion for the Vhavenda. Teacher 1A from school A explained:

> I also think in the area the Vhavenda culture is so mixed, there are so many tribes, the Vhavenda don't know their origin so generally they don't know their history, so they think

it's okay. This is due to intermarriages and dominance by other groups, even the TshiVenda language is now blended, it's no longer pure TshiVenda.

Teacher 2A from school A felt that:

…these people came from South Africa so they don't have a lot history in Zimbabwe.

Learner L16 at school C had the following to say:

…the Vhavenda were few and ended up being colonized by other groups such as the Ndebele and Shona.

Learner L15 at school C felt that one of the reasons affecting the representation of the Vhavenda was that they "do not originate here in Zimbabwe" [Learner L15]

Learner L12 at school B was of the view that:

…the Vhavenda were dominated by other groups in Zimbabwe [Learner L12]

The identity crisis of the learners was further reflected when I was assessing whether the learners' attitude was affected by the degree of representation of their history in the curriculum. I wanted to find out if there is a link between the degree of representation of the Vhavenda and the attitude of the Vhavenda learners. Responses from the informants dispelled my preconceived ideas which the assistant researcher and I had adopted during the early stages of the interviews. I discovered that the Vhavenda learners' attitude was affected to a lesser extent by the degree of representation of the Vhavenda in the secondary school curriculum. This observation was based on both the responses of the history teachers and the Vhavenda history learners themselves. Here are some of the teachers' responses to the question: From your own observation, do you think the Vhavenda speaking learners' attitude towards history is affected by their representation in the curriculum? Teacher 1A at school A gave the following response:

They don't have love for the subject, most of the learners are not interested in staying here, they want to go to South Africa. They say they belong to South Africa. They don't identify themselves as Zimbabweans, they don't mind about the Zimbabwean curriculum. Only a few have interest. Sometimes one can claim to be a muVenda whilst he or she is a mixture due to intermarriages. They just learn it as a subject but have no interest.

Teacher 2A at school A gave the following response:

Haayi their attitude has not been largely affected, they have interest in knowing the history of the whole of Zimbabwe and they are comfortable with that. They don't reason much on the aspect of representation in the curriculum. Their attitude is generally good.

It is important to note that representation is multi-facetted and is closely connected to identity. In this research, special attention was given to ethnic identity. Ethnic identity and comprehensive representation in the curriculum can safely be regarded as positive representation. Under representation in the history curriculum is tantamount to exclusion. Representation in the history curriculum should have a specific narrative. Positive representation of the Vhavenda in the Zimbabwean history curriculum has the potential to empower the Vhavenda learners to believe that they are equally Zimbabwean and can thrive in spite of prejudice. It is a source of power for any ethnic group or individual to affirm their identity. Tajfel and Turner (1979) assert that an individual's identity is realized through the historical content she or he is taught. Barton and Levstik (2004) affirmed earlier that the study of history in schools is justified by its relevance in the formulation of personal and national identity. Osler (2009) acknowledged the role of history in fostering national identity and unity. Therefore, the history curriculum should foster or augment access to the power of representation to the under-represented ethnic groups.

The research findings revealed that the Vhavenda are currently subjected to an identity crisis which came as a result of the Mfecane migrations and geographical boundaries created by colonization leading to a border crisis. Furthermore, the identity crisis is a result of the Vhavenda being dominated by larger groups which have settled in Beitbridge. The identity crisis has resulted in the Vhavenda associating themselves with the Vhavenda in South Africa. They basically do

not feel Zimbabwean but identify themselves as foreigners in Zimbabwe when in essence they are Zimbabweans.

The responses from the participants point out at the dominance of the Shona and the Ndebele in the area. Learner L16 at school C referred this dominance as colonization by the Shona and Ndebele. This dominance was pronounced by Learner L15 at school C. The dominance is not only geographical but in terms of representation in the curriculum. Coupled with historical inter ethnical wars and colonization, this negatively affected the Vhavenda in terms of identity. This issue was raised earlier in this thesis. In an attempt to decolonize the curriculum by removing or replacing racial terms, Moyo and Modiba (2013) observe that terms such as tribe was substituted with ethnicity resulting in misconceptions and distortions prevailing among learners especially on the aspect of identity.

Maiangwa and Essombe (2021) assert that colonization and endogenous wars of subjugations like the Mfecane forced people of Southern Africa to renegotiate their identity in order to survive and this created a nervousness within them about belonging and acceptance. The colonial delimitations did not prioritize tribal coherence or the historical legitimacy of pre-existing kingdoms. Instead, the territories of various African ethnic groups were divided among colonial powers without regard for their existing relationships or historical significance. The Europeans portioned Africa with limited geographical, historical knowledge and the African ethnic composition (Gashaw, 2017).

Akinyetun and Bakare (2020) argue that language, religion, culture, and ethnicity are primary indicators of identity crises. However, the research reveals that the absence of documentation regarding the history of the Vhavenda, coupled with its exclusion from the curriculum, has precipitated an identity crisis among the Vhavenda residing in Beitbridge. These individuals still associate themselves closely with the Vhavenda community in South Africa, despite the geographic separation imposed by the Limpopo River. Without a documented history, it remains uncertain whether the Vhavenda in Zimbabwe originally inhabited the Beitbridge area or migrated there during the upheavals of the Mfecane era, when the Ndebele traversed their South African territory. Nevertheless, the research indicates that the Vhavenda in Zimbabwe have yet to fully embrace a Zimbabwean identity in terms of belonging and self-identification. Their

reluctance to accept their acquired identity within Zimbabwe's political borders is exacerbated by the colonial legacy that established these artificial boundaries. Consequently, the border crisis significantly contributes to the identity crisis experienced by the Vhavenda community in Beitbridge.

The responses from the informants indicate that the Vhavenda are dominated by the Shona and Ndebele speaking groups who have moved into the area. This has resulted in intermarriage which has further weakened the Vhavenda identity resulting in their unawareness of the effects of the absence of their history from the curriculum. The heavy presence of the Ndebele and Shona speakers in Beitbridge makes the Vhavenda learners accept the absence of their history from the curriculum as normal. Furthermore, it makes them accept the concentrated Shona and Ndebele history as national history despite the absence of the history of minority groups.

Social justice in the context of identity politics, as articulated by Fraser (1996), revolves around the notions of recognition and representation. It aims to rectify misrepresentations and identity-based injustices. Considering the plight of the Vhavenda, it becomes imperative for them to embrace their identity as Zimbabweans and acknowledge that their entitlement to equal representation is safeguarded by the Zimbabwean Constitution. Identity politics underscores the belief that the histories of minority groups warrant dignified acknowledgment and inclusion in the educational curriculum. It serves as a starting point in addressing injustices faced by an ethnic community. This perspective is corroborated by Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2009), who suggests that identity formation is shaped by a political process marked by inclusion and exclusion.

The findings also indicated that the Vhavenda learners' attitude towards the subject is not affected to a greater extent due to the identity crisis which the Vhavenda are currently experiencing. The Vhavenda learners lack a sense of belonging in Zimbabwe and feel that they are foreigners in Zimbabwe. This is different from the Copts learners in Egypt who feel excluded and alienated by the exclusion of their history in the curriculum (Abdou, 2016). One of the learners interviewed by Abdou (2018), expressed his profound desire to enlighten his classmates about who exactly the Copts are. However, that is not the case with the Vhavenda learners since they have an identity crisis and generally feel they are foreigners in Zimbabwe.

Earlier, Bentley-Henson and Stearns (2022) accentuated that social justice also involves teaching of inclusive content through engaging learners in multiple perspective issues, incorporating their past into the curriculum to comprehend their position in a nation. The social justice advocates the inclusion of the histories of all groups so that they can comprehend their position in a country. This points to the issue of identity. An ethnic group can easily embrace its position and identity in a country if its history is included in the curriculum. Positive representation directly corresponds with identity.

4.5.6   The influence of the colonial language policy on representation

All the participants except one, agreed that the colonial language policy influenced the representation of history of the minority groups in Zimbabwe. Here are some of their responses to the question: *Do you think the colonial language policy influenced the representation of the history of the minority groups in Zimbabwe?*

Teacher 1C from school C said:

> Aah, not to a greater extent. I think for now what could have influenced is us who have failed to research about our own history, because we can't always say so and so has done this or the colonial era has done this to us and we failed to change. I think that one could have played its role during that time but not now. I think we should rise up and face it, actually this should be a stepping stone and say this guy has divided the languages so I think its high time we correct such distortions.

Teacher 2A from school A said:

> It did marginalize to a greater extent since it also affected the historiography of Zimbabwe. If you look at the so-called Shona states such as the Great Zimbabwe, Mutapa and Rozvi state give the Shona identity. In the Rozvi state they indicate their identity that they are the Moyo people. So other groups feel left out. So, the Shona find pride in being mentioned whereas the other groups having nothing to say about their history. The

colonial language policy was selective, some people are left out despite the fact that we live in one country. When we talk about other tribes, other groups are not included, they don't feel comfortable being left out.

Teacher 2C from school C said:

Yes, to a greater extent, by then, there were no Vhavenda teachers, only Ndebele and Shona were learnt, examinations written in Shona and Ndebele even in post-colonial Zimbabwe. Tshivenda language was introduced in the curriculum in about 2016 as a language. Even me myself am a mhuVenda, but I did isiNdebele from Grade 1 up to Advanced level. I cannot write even five words in chi Venda but I can write a composition in Ndebele. I am very fluent in Ndebele.

The ZIMSEC subject manager said:

Yes, because it depends on which groups our colonial masters dealt with in Zimbabwe and which groups were of relevance to them at that time. If you look at our history the major players were those two groups who interfaced with the colonialists, their decisions were determining colonial objectives, how they will be achieved. The colonial designs to our country were affected by two groups, their existence here, what they wanted to achieve may not have been achieved had they not contacted these two major groups in the country.

The CDU subject specialist said:

It did to a greater extent because as it is, those whom we say were once minority, still don't value themselves as much as they would have valued themselves if they had been included in Doke's policy then. So, it really did play a great deal in making them feel inferior to other languages like they always see themselves as other rather than seeing themselves like some important group.

As highlighted earlier, Doke's approach orchestrated ethnic and linguistic chaos (Msindo, 2005). The ZIMSEC subject manager, the CDU subject specialist and the interviewed teachers are in accord or concurrence with the academic literature reviewed earlier. The language policy has an interweaving, overlapping and interconnecting effect on representation and recognition of ethnic minority groups in Zimbabwe. It has tremendously distorted the curriculum formulation in the post-independence period since the process is embedded in or intricately linked to the colonial language policy. The colonial language policy does not take note of the tenets of Nancy Frazer's theory of social justice which is the epitome of equality.

4.5.7 Absence of a clear-cut government policy on the representation of the history of minority groups in the secondary school history curriculum

I was curious to know if the government had a clear-cut policy on the representation of the history of minority groups in the secondary school history curriculum of Zimbabwe. My concern was premised by the existence of a clear-cut language policy in the education system. The intention was to find out its stipulations as well as to measure compliance of the education system to the policy. In light of this, the following question was asked to both the CDU subject specialist and ZIMSEC subject manager: *Does the government of Zimbabwe have a clear-cut policy on the representation of the history of the minority groups in the secondary school history curriculum of Zimbabwe?*

The following was the response of the ZIMSEC subject manager:

> Not deliberately clear, but as I am saying, there is inclusivity by implication as far as race, language or group but it may not come out clearly to specify historical perspective, historical groups within Zimbabwe but by implication and not deliberately. We do that reference because we have cross cutting themes in our syllabus, cross cutting themes have inclusivity within them. These are some which are being mentioned by government, government may not have specifically referred to history within its curriculum thrust but they expected all the domains of our syllabus to follow suit those cross-cutting themes which by implication we expect in history the study of all the people in Zimbabwe.

The CDU subject specialist had this to say:

> So far besides the constitution and the syllabi the education system only has an act and that act does not really go up to secondary level. There is nothing because history, culture and the language itself cannot be separated. If you talk of a history of a people, you are also talking of their culture and their language. So far there is nothing to talk about.

Teacher 1C from school C responded in such a way which indicated that a lot could have been done by now to solve the effects of the language policy. His responses pointed out the lack of political will. His response is an acknowledgement of failure of the current leadership to correct the anomaly which was created as a result of the language policy. The teacher does not dispute the effects of the language policy, but queries the inactivity of the current system towards the effects of the language policy 44 years after independence. This activity is tantamount to self-devaluation.

The language policy has to a greater extent normalized the dominance of the Shona and Ndebele for a very long time; hence, it has affected the confidence of the Vhavenda people who regard the absence of their history from the curriculum as normal. Earlier on in this thesis, the effects of the colonial language policy were raised. Previously, the colonial regime divided the nation into two major groups, hence minority groups have been associated with the Shona and Ndebele. Thus, the minority groups have been taken as appendages of these two majority groups despite the fact the Shona groups are composed of different dialects.

The research findings indicate that despite the assertion by the ZIMSEC subject manager that the history curriculum adopts a nationalistic approach, not all ethnic groups are adequately represented. While the Shona and Ndebele speaking states receive comprehensive coverage, other ethnic groups, such as the Vhavenda, are only mentioned in passing. Consequently, the groups explicitly named in the curriculum derive a sense of pride and belonging, identifying strongly with their Zimbabwean identity. In contrast, minority ethnic groups like the Vhavenda lack substantial recognition and representation. Their portrayal in the curriculum appears to be

contingent upon their interactions or contact with the dominant groups, particularly the Shona and Ndebele.

The ZIMSEC subject manager's response touched on the importance of interaction of the indigenous groups with the colonial masters. These were the groups which were recognized by the colonial masters. This led to a biased colonial language policy which recognized only two groups, namely the Ndebele and the Shona speaking groups. The research findings are in sync with the academic literature reviewed earlier in the thesis which pointed at the missionary ethnolinguistic boundaries which were adopted by Doke (Ndhlovu, 2009). The resultant report by Doke led to a misrepresentation and non-recognition of subaltern groups such as the Vhavenda propelling Ndebele and Shona dominance.

The impact of the colonial language policy was exemplified by Teacher 2C from school C, who disclosed that despite being of Vhavenda descent, he had never learned TshiVenda in his life. Instead, he had been taught isiNdebele and was unable to write even five words in TshiVenda. This revelation underscores the regressive consequences of the colonial language policy and its implications for the representation of the Vhavenda community. Over the years, the colonial language policy has eroded the confidence and cultural identity of minority ethnic groups, leading to a loss of their distinct heritage.

The influence of the colonial language policy significantly bolstered the prominence of the Shona and Ndebele groups within Zimbabwean society. This dominance was underscored in the preliminary stages of chapter one, wherein I outlined the research problem. The problem statement indicated that upon initial analysis, the Zimbabwean history curriculum primarily focuses on the histories of two dominant groups: the Ndebele and the Shona. The research findings have substantiated this observation, revealing that the curriculum content continues to prioritize the histories of these two groups under the updated curriculum.

As previously mentioned, language, tribe, and ethnicity have often been erroneously conflated as a single aspect, a misconception perpetuated by the colonial legacy. This misinterpretation has persisted into the post-colonial era unabated. The lingering effects of the colonial language policy

continue to cast a shadow over the educational landscape, even four decades after independence. The adverse ramifications of this policy were affirmed by the participants in the study.

According to Glass (2001), historicity denotes the dynamic interplay between the manner in which history and culture shape individuals, even as individuals actively contribute to shaping history and culture themselves. In essence, historicity encompasses the authenticity and accuracy of historical accounts, grounded in factual realities. The aim of this research was to assess the representation of minority groups in the curriculum, not only in terms of quantity or depth, but also in terms of the quality of historical narratives presented. Based on the feedback provided by the informants, it is evident that the current representation of minority groups in the curriculum particularly the Vhavenda, is perceived as little more than a ceremonial gesture or a ritualistic formality. Despite the intention for representation to be sincere and genuine, rooted in truthfulness and authenticity, the reality appears to fall short of these ideals according to the participants' perspectives.

In the first chapter of this thesis, I introduced Nancy Fraser's social justice theory as the guiding framework for this research. This choice is reinforced by Bentley-Henson and Stearns (2022), who advocate for the enhancement of social justice in education through the development of policies that promote equitable treatment of all learners and equitable distribution of resources. They emphasize the importance of formulating specific policies that support the inclusion of the history of minority groups as essential for achieving positive representation.

Factors hindering positive representation of the Vhavenda history in the curriculum are summed up in Figure 4.1 below.
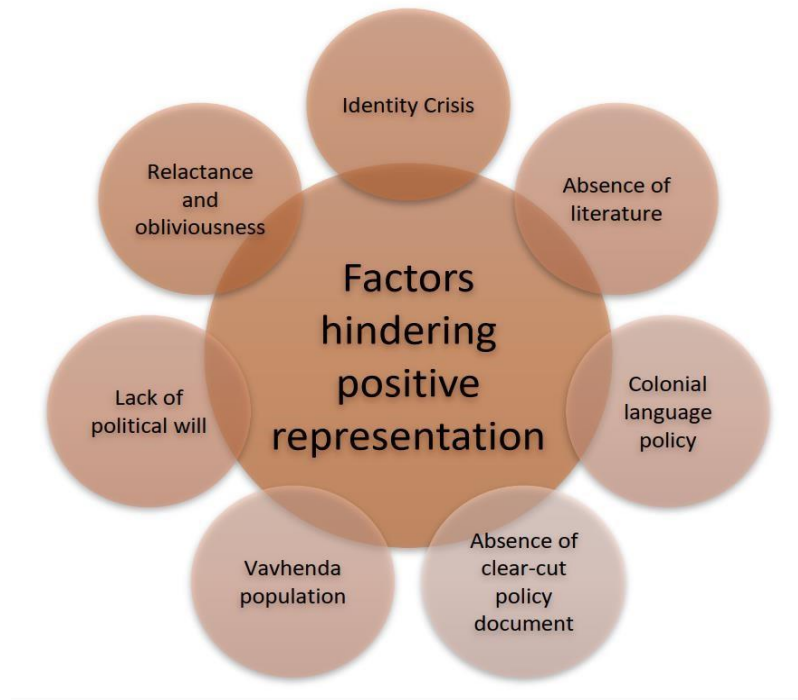
Figure 4.2: Factors hindering positive representation of the Vhavenda history in the curriculum

The diagram (Fig. 4.1) provides a comprehensive overview of the various factors contributing to the hindrance of positive representation of the Vhavenda, as identified through the insights gathered from research participants. It is evident from the diagram that no single factor alone is responsible for this hindrance; rather, it is the combination and interaction of multiple factors that collectively impede the positive representation of the Vhavenda people in the Zimbabwean secondary school curriculum.

RQ5: What recommendations can be made to ensure the equitable representation of Venda history in Zimbabwean secondary school history curricula?

4.6 THEME 5: AN IDEAL APPROACH TO THE INCLUSION OF THE HISTORY OF THE VHAVENDA IN THE CURRICULUM

In the interviews with different stakeholders, I enquired on possible ways which could be used to attain equal representation in the secondary school history curriculum with specific reference to the Ordinary level. The participants gave insightful suggestions which could be used in attaining an inclusive history curriculum.

Out of interest I wanted to find out, possible measures which can be taken in order to attain equal representation in the secondary school curriculum. *What do you think should be done in order to attain equal representation?*

The history textbook author responded as follows:

> There is need for devolution of topics in the curriculum in order to attain equal representation in the curriculum. Each minority group or ethnic group in Zimbabwe should have their history placed in the content of the syllabuses. The Vhavenda should have a portion of their history included in the syllabus and should be given first priority before looking at the history of other groups. The history should be given first priority before looking at the history of other groups. The history should be independent and should be allocated a section in the syllabus. Each indigenous group should be allocated a section or portion in the syllabus such that when a teacher who has been deployed in a certain geographical area should prioritize the history of the dominant ethnic group in that area. The teachers should not impose the history of other groups on the dominant ethnic group, yet their history is side lined or marginalized. The history of other groups is irrelevant to a particular ethnic group if its history is not covered. The indigenous ethnic groups should know their history, where they came from, what was their mode of production, political and social way of life. The reason why we have the updated curriculum was to give first priority to our history and not foreign history. For instance, in America, they prioritize their own history. The same applies to our local ethnic groups

they have their history studied in detail and then other histories can be studied as additional history content.

The history textbook author further suggested that:

There is need to liberate the textbook writing process as well the syllabus although there must be some guide for instance an ideology a nation will be pursuing, like the use of ubuntu which is the ideology of the moment. However, the curriculum should be independent so as to reveal the real history or pure history. History textbooks should be independent of approval of MOPSE so that learners have access to real or pure history. The learners should not be confined to MOPSE approved textbooks it limits their access to true history. The CDU should be liberalised in order to accept different views of authors. MOPSE should give learners the privilege to select textbooks they are comfortable with. MOPSE limits authors when they sell their books to schools since schools first check MOPSE approval before checking on the content.

The ZIMSEC subject manager suggested the following:

That's an issue of the new focus, we could also use the languages approach, they have started deliberately examining the indigenous languages, the authors or curriculum can devote a space within the curriculum to specific indigenous groups so that teachers can teach the history of a particular group for example, the Sotho history, the Tshangani history, space should be unveiled in the syllabus for those histories to be taught deliberately meaning that there would be need for researchers so that they start researching on those groups so that they will be content for teachers to use when they teach the history of those specific groups in the syllabus. It's quite a process because at times the curriculum is determined by what is available in terms of sources. Our historians have not done much really to discuss to write histories of those groups.

The CDU subject specialist had the following to say:

I will start from the government itself, every language has been officially recognized it's the first step towards attaining equal representation, as Curriculum Development Unit we adhere to that command from the constitution and introduced languages in the syllabi so we gave them a platform to say let us start, if you were not heard before you can be heard now so now it depends on the individual communities like I said, how forthcoming are they towards attaining equal representation.

This was confirmed by Learner L12 at school B who felt that *the Vhavenda have no confidence to express themselves.*

The learners who were part of the focus group discussions gave the following responses to the question: *What do you think should be done in order to attain equal representation?*

Learner L2 at school A had this to say:

We have to learn and pass so that we write our own textbooks.

Learner L6 at school A suggested:

We should write a report to the Ministry of Education to recognize the history of the Vhavenda.

Learner L16 at school C suggested that *we have to gather the history of the Vhavenda from those who know it.*
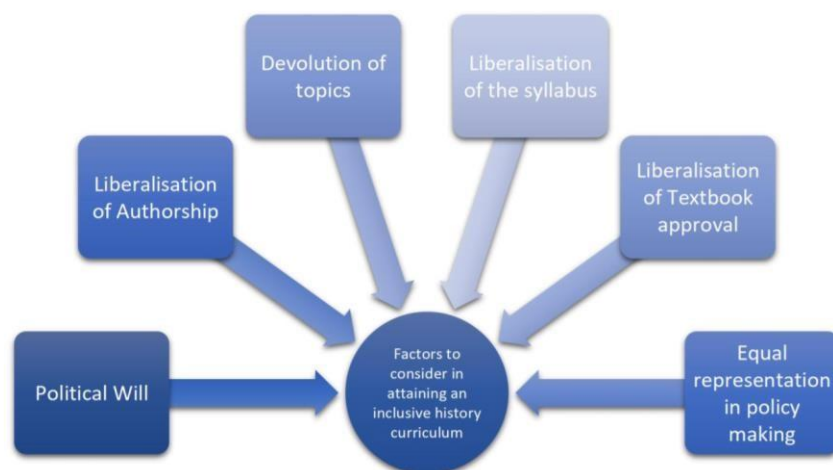
Figure 4.3: Factors to be considered in the attainment of an inclusive history curriculum

Figure 4.3 outlines the key factors that must be taken into account to achieve an all-encompassing, inclusive history curriculum in Zimbabwe. These factors are derived from suggestions provided by research participants and predominantly emphasize the formulation of policies aimed at promoting inclusivity within the history curriculum. By focusing on these factors, policymakers and educators can work towards developing a curriculum that accurately reflects the diversity of Zimbabwean society and ensures that the histories of all ethnic groups are adequately represented and respected.

The statement given by the history textbook author calls for the liberalization of the textbook writing process and syllabus development from strict regulatory control, particularly emphasizing the importance of allowing diverse perspectives and interpretations in educational materials, especially in the teaching of history. The liberalization of textbook writing and syllabus development suggests a departure from centralized control, advocating a more decentralized approach where educators and subject matter experts have more autonomy in crafting educational materials and designing curricula. This decentralization is argued to enable a more dynamic and inclusive education system.

The suggestion put forth by the textbook author regarding the devolution of topics within the history curriculum is commendable for several reasons. By making it compulsory for the history of every ethnic group to be represented in the curriculum and in the final national examination,

this approach ensures that indigenous ethnic groups are afforded the opportunity to learn about their own history. It prioritizes the preservation of cultural heritage by granting each ethnic minority group the privilege of learning their own history as a priority. Furthermore, such an approach fosters mutual appreciation and respect between dominant and minority ethnic groups. If adopted, this suggestion has the potential to significantly contribute to the documentation and preservation of the history of the Vhavenda, thereby safeguarding it from extinction.

The ZIMSEC subject manager proposed adopting a similar approach to that used in the inclusion of minority languages in the curriculum for the documentation of minority group histories. Similarly, the history textbook author suggested the allocation of dedicated space in the syllabus for this purpose. It is noteworthy that both the history textbook author and the subject manager are in complete agreement regarding these recommendations. This alignment of views underscores the potential effectiveness of such an approach and highlights its importance in ensuring the comprehensive representation and preservation of minority group histories within the curriculum.

The approach utilized for the inclusion of minority languages can serve as a model for addressing other areas, particularly history, within the curriculum. Curriculum developers can advocate the documentation of minority group histories within Zimbabwe, thereby enriching the current national history narrative, which is largely dominated by the Shona and Ndebele speaking groups. Just as efforts have been made in the past to include minority languages, a deliberate effort can be made to incorporate the histories of minority groups as the curriculum evolves over time. This proactive approach can contribute to a more inclusive and comprehensive representation of Zimbabwe's diverse cultural heritage within the education system.

The CDU subject specialist echoed the sentiment of encouraging indigenous minority groups like the Vhavenda to take the initiative in documenting their own history. She emphasized that it begins with the Vhavenda themselves to undertake this task, which would help mitigate misrepresentations and afford them equal representation opportunities. Drawing parallels to the approach used in including minority languages, she suggested that Vhavenda historians could use this as a springboard to initiate the documentation of Vhavenda history.

When considering the perspectives of the CDU subject specialist, the ZIMSEC subject manager, and the history textbook author collectively, it becomes evident that their ideas are aligned. Their shared emphasis on empowering minority or subaltern groups to document their own histories, along with the recognition of the successful precedent set by the inclusion of minority languages, highlights a cohesive approach towards promoting inclusivity and accurate representation within the curriculum.

Regarding equal representation in policy making, the author of the history textbooks raised concerns about the insufficient or unequal representation of minority groups in decision-making forums. A holistic curriculum framework should therefore include stakeholders and representatives from these ethnic groups to ensure their perspectives are integrated.

The utterances underline a critical issue in educational policy and governance, highlighting the concerns of the history textbook author regarding the exclusion of minority groups from decision-making processes. By emphasizing the need for equal representation, the author implies that current policy making structures may not adequately reflect the diverse perspectives and interests of all demographic groups. The call for a holistic curriculum framework that incorporates stakeholders and representatives from these minority ethnic groups is not merely about inclusivity, but also about ensuring that educational policies and curricula are sensitive to and reflective of the diverse cultural and social contexts within the nation.

4.7 CONCLUSION

The data presented in this chapter unequivocally demonstrates that the current Zimbabwean secondary history curriculum is exclusionary, as it fails to fully represent the history of the Vhavenda people. A myriad of factors contribute to this exclusion, primarily revolving around issues of representation, recognition, and distribution injustices. However, amidst these challenges, the research participants have offered viable solutions that can be implemented to rectify the current exclusionary curriculum. By acknowledging and addressing these factors, policymakers and educators can work towards fostering a more inclusive and representative curriculum that accurately reflects the diverse historical narratives of all ethnic groups within

Zimbabwe. Through collaborative efforts and proactive measures, it is possible to create a curriculum that promotes equity, respect, and understanding of the histories of all communities, including the Vhavenda.

CHAPTER FIVE
MAIN FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1   INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the focus is on presenting the main findings derived from the research, along with the conclusions drawn from these findings. Additionally, the limitations of the study are identified and discussed. As the research was both diagnostic and remedial in nature, recommendations are provided to address the factors contributing to the underrepresentation of Vhavenda history in the secondary school curriculum. The central research question guiding this study was: "What are the factors influencing the representation of minority groups in the Zimbabwean secondary school history curriculum?" Accompanying this main question were five sub-questions, which were as follows:

1.   Which approaches undergird the design of an inclusive history curriculum which gives an equitable representation of the histories of minority groups?

2.   In what ways is the history of the Vhavenda represented in the Zimbabwean secondary school history curriculum according to curriculum documents and instructional materials with a view to identifying factors that have led to the marginalization of the history of the Vhavenda?

3.   What are the approaches used in teaching the history of the Vhavenda at O' level by teachers in Zimbabwean secondary schools?

4.   What are the factors that hinder the equitable representation of the history of the Vhavenda in the secondary school history curriculum?

5.   What recommendations can be made to ensure the equitable representation of Vhavenda history in the Zimbabwean secondary school history curriculum?

5.2   SUMMARY

The objective of this thesis is to establish the factors which influence the representation history of the minority groups in the Zimbabwean secondary history curriculum. It aims to explore the

extent of representation of minority groups and how these impacts on the nation-building agenda in Zimbabwe. The research focuses on the Vhavenda ethnic minority group.

This study was conducted in the Beitbridge West district of Zimbabwe, a region chosen due to its significant population of learners belonging to the Vhavenda ethnic group. The aim was to obtain authentic results by focusing on the intended group, namely the Vhavenda community. Three secondary schools were selected for the research: Majini Siyoka, Zezani, and Chamnanga, all located within Beitbridge West. The research specifically targeted history learners who identified ethnically as Vhavenda. This focused approach ensured that the study captured insights and perspectives directly relevant to the representation of the Vhavenda history within the secondary school curriculum.

I used a qualitative approach for the study. A qualitative approach was used to gain a deeper understanding of the phenomenon understudy, exploring the lived experiences of participants and gain a comprehensive understanding of the complex issue being investigated. A multiple case study research design was used. This design permitted a full understanding of the different experiences and perceptions of the research participants. The multiple case study research design gave me a broader perspective to identify patterns and themes which cannot be apparent when using a single case study. It permitted me to compare and contrast three different schools within the same district to identify commonalities and unique features. The multiple case study produced more data to analyse which enhanced the reliability and validity of the research findings. Furthermore, use of the multiple case study nuanced understanding of the phenomenon under study.

The data collection methods adopted for this study were interviews, documentary analysis and focus groups. Interviews, focus groups and documentary analysis were used in order to attain triangulation and gain an informed understanding of the research topic. The interviews allowed the collection of in-depth, personal accounts from participants, focus groups provided the opportunity for group discussion and sharing of experiences as well as perspectives. Documentary analysis provided an additional layer of data that was used to corroborate upon findings from the focus groups and interviews.

The data collection methods paved way for coding information into themes which enabled smooth and articulate analysis to take place. These themes grouped information into responses to the research questions. Document analysis was done in order to examine the degree of representation of the Vhavenda in the Constitution, curriculum framework, history Ordinary level textbook and the Ordinary level syllabus.

Sampling was used to choose the research participants. The sampling strategy used in this study is purposive sampling which allowed the selection of participants who were most likely to have relevant knowledge and experiences related to the research topic. This is important in order to gain the richest data and to ensure that the findings would be relevant and meaningful. Purposive sampling was used in selecting focus group participants. Focusing on the Vhavenda ethnic group was important in order to gain a more in-depth understanding of their experiences and perspectives so that they are given the attention they deserve.

In addition to purposively sampling participants, specifically Ordinary level history learners from the target ethnic group, I employed purposive sampling to select key stakeholders relevant to the study. This included a history author, a subject manager from the examination board (ZIMSEC), a subject specialist from the CDU, and Ordinary level history teachers from the selected schools. The inclusion of these stakeholders was crucial for gaining comprehensive insights into the role of history in shaping national identity in Zimbabwe. Their diverse perspectives and expertise provided valuable contributions to the study's findings and analysis.

From the research findings, it became evident that Vhavenda learners are grappling with an identity crisis, largely stemming from the transborder dynamics in the region. Participants in the focus group discussions revealed a pervasive sentiment among Vhavenda learners, who expressed a lack of awareness of their full Zimbabwean identity. Instead, there was a prevailing belief that their rightful place was in South Africa, leading to a diminished sense of belonging to Zimbabwe. Consequently, many Vhavenda learners did not perceive the underrepresentation of Vhavenda history in the curriculum as a significant issue, viewing themselves as foreigners within Zimbabwe.

However, it is important to recognize that this perception does not align with historical realities. Prior to colonialism and the imposition of geographical boundaries, the Vhavenda people inhabited areas both north and south of the Limpopo River. The presence of Vhavenda chiefs in Beitbridge serves as tangible evidence of their historical and cultural ties to Zimbabwe. Despite having relatives across the Limpopo River, the Vhavenda community has a longstanding and distinct Zimbabwean identity, which predates colonial borders.

The absence of literature detailing the history of the Vhavenda emerges as a significant contributing factor to their underrepresentation in the secondary history curriculum. Insights from the ZIMSEC subject manager, the CDU subject specialist, and the history textbook author collectively underscore this observation, highlighting a notable information gap concerning Vhavenda history. This dearth of literature presents a barrier to the inclusion of Vhavenda history in the curriculum, as there is insufficient material available to draw from.

The CDU subject specialist pointed out a lack of motivation among textbook authors as a potential factor contributing to the absence of literature on the Vhavenda. Additionally, the reluctance and passivity of the Vhavenda community in sharing their history were identified as further challenges. These factors combined create a significant barrier to the documentation and dissemination of Vhavenda history, consequently hindering its representation within the secondary school curriculum. Addressing these issues will be crucial in fostering a more inclusive and comprehensive approach to history education in Zimbabwe.

The colonial language policy has overlapping and overspilling effects on the representation of minority ethnic groups in the curriculum. Responses from the research participants in conjunction with reviewed academic literature are all in agreement that the colonial language policy has had a significant impact on the representation of ethnic minority groups in the curriculum. The colonial language policy is responsible for the current lingual naming of provinces as well as the dominance of Shona and Ndebele speaking groups over ethnic minority groups. It is responsible for the subalternation of minority ethnic groups in Zimbabwe. Hence, it has influenced the representation of the Vhavenda history in the curriculum.

The lack of political will from high-level decision-makers within government institutions has emerged as a significant barrier to the representation of ethnic minority groups in the history curriculum. The insights provided by the history textbook author shed light on this issue, highlighting a notable lack of political commitment to the inclusion of minority ethnic group histories in the curriculum. Effecting change in the curriculum necessitates political support and advocacy, as it requires substantial resources and coordination across various levels of governance.

The absence of political will has further exacerbated the situation by failing to produce clear policy directives supporting the inclusion of ethnic minority histories in the curriculum. Without explicit support and direction from policymakers, efforts to address the underrepresentation of minority groups in the curriculum are hindered. As such, fostering political engagement and advocacy is essential in overcoming this barrier and promoting a more inclusive approach to history education.

The absence of a definitive policy regarding the inclusion of minority group histories has led to a representation that is not only fictitious but also exclusionary in nature. While constitutional principles and the curriculum framework advocate for the recognition and equal representation of all groups, the current syllabus fails to incorporate the history of the Vhavenda community. This discrepancy underscores the need for a clear policy directive or statutory instrument outlining the specific inclusion of ethnic minority histories, such as that of the Vhavenda, within the curriculum.

In the absence of such guidance, the curriculum development process lacks the necessary framework to ensure parity and inclusivity in historical representation. Consequently, minority or subaltern groups like the Vhavenda are marginalized and their histories overlooked. Addressing this gap requires the formulation of explicit policies that mandate the inclusion of diverse historical narratives, thereby fostering a more comprehensive and equitable approach to history education.

Reluctance and obliviousness or a lack of awareness among the Vhavenda community have hindered efforts to document their history. This sentiment was echoed by one of the interviewed teachers, who, being of Vhavenda descent themselves, admitted to witnessing a certain degree of reluctance and unawareness within the Vhavenda community regarding the documentation of their history. This acknowledgment underscores the challenges faced in capturing and preserving the historical narrative of the Vhavenda people.

Furthermore, the CDU subject specialist corroborated this observation, highlighting a prevailing sense of reluctance and unawareness among the Vhavenda community when it comes to documenting their own history. This reluctance poses a significant barrier to the comprehensive documentation and dissemination of Vhavenda history, ultimately impacting its representation within the curriculum. Addressing this issue requires proactive engagement and community involvement to foster a greater sense of ownership and appreciation for the preservation of Vhavenda heritage and history.

Furthermore, the relatively smaller numerical size of the Vhavenda community has led to their overshadowing by the larger and more dominant Shona and Ndebele speaking groups. This imbalance was underscored by Teacher 2B from school B, who expressed concern over the lack of recognition for the contributions of the Vhavenda and baTonga communities in the Chimurenga wars, or wars of liberation. He highlighted the predominant focus on the Shona and Ndebele speaking groups within narratives of the armed struggle, which has significantly marginalized the representation of the Vhavenda community in the history curriculum.

This issue reflects broader disparities in historical representation, wherein smaller ethnic groups may find themselves overlooked or marginalized in narratives that prioritize larger and more politically influential communities. Addressing this imbalance requires a concerted effort to acknowledge and incorporate diverse historical perspectives, ensuring that the contributions of all communities are recognized and valued within national historical narrative.

5.3   MAIN FINDINGS

5.3.1   The theoretical approaches which undergird the design of an inclusive curriculum which gives an equitable representation of the histories of minority groups

Nancy Fraser's three-dimensional social justice theory undergirds the design of an inclusive curriculum which gives an equitable representation of the histories of minority groups. The theory is anchored on three essential principles, namely recognition, representation and redistribution. These principles promote parity. I chose Nancy Fraser's three-dimensional social justice theory because it provides a useful framework for considering the role of history education in promoting inclusivity and equitable representation. In relation to history this theory suggests that the curriculum should not only be concerned with the distribution of resources and opportunities, but also with the recognition of diverse histories and perspectives, and with the representation of marginalized groups in the curriculum.

The application of this theory holds promise for the development of a more inclusive and equitable history curriculum. Through a lens of social justice, history education can be restructured to ensure fair distribution of resources and opportunities for learning. This entails guaranteeing access to high-quality educational materials, such as textbooks, that present a balanced array of historical perspectives, including those of all ethnic groups recognized within the country's constitution. Additionally, educational resources like curriculum frameworks and history syllabi should be designed to accommodate the diverse historical narratives of the nation's ethnic groups.

Central to this approach is the principle of providing learners from all backgrounds with equal access to learning opportunities about their respective histories. An inclusive curriculum should transcend socioeconomic barriers, ensuring that all learners, regardless of their background, have the chance to engage with and learn from a comprehensive and diverse historical narrative. In the context of this research, particular emphasis was placed on exploring the history of the Vhavenda ethnic minority group, highlighting the importance of acknowledging and incorporating the histories of marginalized communities within the broader curriculum framework.

In terms of recognition, an inclusive curriculum should include content that recognises and validates experiences and perspectives of marginalized minority ethnic groups. This involves the inclusion of content that focuses on the histories of historically marginalised minority groups such as the Vhavenda. In relation to an inclusive history curriculum, recognition involves more than just acknowledging the existence of diverse histories and perspectives. It also involves respecting and validating the experiences and perspectives of marginalised minority ethnic groups. It involves encouraging learners to consider how their own identities and experiences may shape their understanding of history. This approach to recognition helps to create a more nuanced and inclusive understanding of history.

The history curriculum should include the representation of diverse histories and perspectives in a way that is accurate and respectful. This involves incorporating the voices and experiences of ethnic minority groups into the curriculum, and avoiding the use of stereotypical or biased representations. It involves ensuring that all learners see themselves reflected in the history curriculum, by including histories of people from a variety of backgrounds. This helps learners to feel represented and included in the classroom, and enhances the creation of a more inclusive learning environment.

5.3.2   The way the history of the Vhavenda is represented in the Zimbabwean secondary school history curricula according to curriculum documents and instructional materials.

The research uncovered the expectations outlined in policy documents regarding the recognition and representation of ethnic minority groups. Through documentary analysis of key documents such as the constitution, curriculum framework, and Ordinary level syllabus, it became evident that recognition and representation are primarily categorized based on language. However, the constitution explicitly advocates for the equality of all ethnic and racial groups, acknowledging and recognizing the presence of the Vhavenda within Zimbabwe. Despite this constitutional recognition, there appears to be a disparity between policy aspirations and the actual implementation of inclusive practices within educational frameworks.

A significant nexus exists between the constitution and the curriculum framework, both of which advocate for equality and inclusivity. These documents are aligned with the principles of social justice theory, emphasizing fairness and equal opportunity for all. Moreover, they promote interculturalism by recognizing the importance of acknowledging and valuing diverse ethnic identities. By placing all ethnic groups on an equal footing, constitution and curriculum framework strive to foster a more inclusive and harmonious society.

However, the Ordinary level syllabus does not have a topic on the Vhavenda ethnic group in as far as coverage of their origins, chieftainship, economic and social activities. The Vhavenda are mentioned in passing unlike the Shona speaking ethnic groups and Ndebele who have full topics on their history. Justification given for this anomaly is based on the nationalistic history approach which is believed to be inclusive since it covers topics such as the Bantu migration. The coverage of national history, particularly regarding the Vhavenda, has been approached in a biased and discriminatory manner. While certain historical events such as the Bantu and Ndebele migrations may superficially touch upon aspects of Vhavenda history, this approach is presumptuous and fails to provide adequate recognition. Consequently, minority or subaltern groups like the Vhavenda are underrepresented and insufficiently acknowledged within Zimbabwean historical narratives. This biased approach perpetuates a skewed understanding of national history and contributes to the marginalization of certain ethnic communities.

A detailed examination uncovered that the Ordinary level syllabus lacks explicit alignment with the principles of equality outlined in the constitution and curriculum framework. The syllabus fails to differentiate the history of minority or subaltern groups, resulting in disproportionate coverage. While dominant groups receive comprehensive attention, subaltern groups like the Vhavenda are merely mentioned in passing or assumed to be covered within broader topics such as Bantu migration. This misrepresentation, underrepresentation, and exclusion lead to an incomplete national history characterized by significant distortions. Confirming this disparity, all six teachers interviewed from the three schools unanimously agreed that the Vhavenda are inadequately represented in the syllabus. Consequently, the research underscores that the current Ordinary level syllabus does not fully incorporate the history of the Vhavenda.

Documentary analysis revealed that history textbook commonly used in the secondary schools is guided by the syllabus stipulations. This resonates with sentiments given by the History textbooks author who highlighted during the interview that he writes in accordance with the topics within the syllabus in order for the book to be relevant as well as to get approved by the MOPSE. This confirms the assertion by Romanowski (2009) that textbook publishers are in the habit of aligning with topics in the curriculum. This gives a false impression that once a topic is excluded from a recommended textbook it means it's irrelevant (Giarrizo, 2012). The Vhavenda are mentioned in passing in the commonly used history textbook which was analysed.

History textbooks serve as a crucial platform for representing diverse ethnic identities recognized by constitution. However, the research uncovered that Ordinary level history textbooks fail to include the history of the Vhavenda. This exclusion was corroborated by all six Ordinary level history teachers interviewed across the three schools. The absence of minority ethnic group histories in the textbooks significantly impacts their representation, signaling to learners that their experiences and contributions are undervalued or insignificant. Consequently, Vhavenda learners struggle to identify themselves as Zimbabweans, instead feeling like foreigners from South Africa residing in Zimbabwe which is a misconception contradicted by historical facts. As a result, these learners lack a comprehensive understanding of their own history. Documentary analysis also revealed biased documentation of history of Zimbabwe. An analysis of the textbooks indicated that the content is biased towards the dominant Shona and Ndebele speaking groups. The dominance of these groups was confirmed by all the teachers who were interviewed. The dominance of these two groups resulted in the underrepresentation of minority ethnic groups such as the Vhavenda.

It's essential to note that domination is primarily rooted in linguistic distinctions rather than solely ethnicity. This skewed classification system stems from colonial legacies perpetuated into the post-independence era, resulting in a superficial impression of inclusivity. The CDU subject specialist acknowledges the lack of inclusivity concerning the histories of ethnic groups. While Shona-speaking ethnic groups exhibit distinct compositions, they were erroneously categorized as a single group by Doke, thus distorting the ethnic landscape in Zimbabwe. Consequently, Doke's fictitious classification has distorted the recognition and representation of minority ethnic groups within the country.

The national approach used in the documentation of history referred to by the ZIMSEC subject manager is limited and bias towards the dominant Shona and Ndebele speaking groups. Anything referred to as national should be fully inclusive. I adopted Fraser's social justice theory which promotes parity across all groups in the education sector. Inclusiveness should be in the full sense of the word, meaning all ethnic groups should be distinctively and equally recognised as well as equally represented. The research revealed the Vhavenda are not fully represented, instead their representation is in 'piece meal' or consolation form. Furthermore, ethnic groups should distinctively be represented in their independent capacity not as appendages of other groups. Selective adoption of collective or distinctive representation of groups in the Zimbabwean history curriculum led to bias representation which has its roots in the colonial misconception of Zimbabwean ethnic groups. Interculturalism is not in support of the dominance of a group or selected groups but is support of parity across the spectrum.

This thesis explored the factors influencing the representation of the Vhavenda in the history curriculum as well as possible avenues which can be taken to achieve equal representation. The representation of the Vhavenda falls abysmally short of the expected standards of an inclusive curriculum based on the principles underpinning the theory of social justice. The Vhavenda are underrepresented in the current curriculum.

5.3.3   The approaches to teaching the history of the Vhavenda at Ordinary level by history teachers in Zimbabwean secondary schools

The research revealed that a nationalistic approach is used to cover the history of the Vhavenda. For instance, the ZIMSEC subject manager mentioned that the coverage of the Bantu migration as a topic means the Vhavenda history is covered in the process since they are also a Bantu group. The coverage is general and not specific. Other groups which are specifically covered are equally Bantu as the Vhavenda. Hence, the nationalistic approach is exclusionary and biased in nature. The nationalistic approach falls far short of the expectations of the social justice theory which are founded on parity.

The research also revealed that the history of the Vhavenda is taught in passing and not as a topic. In essence the Vhavenda are mentioned in passing when covering the Mfecane, the Vhavenda are mentioned when they come into contact with the Khumalo who were fleeing away from Tshaka. One person from the Vhavenda group, Mkwati, is mentioned in the first Chimurenga (war of liberation). Interviewed teachers and the history textbook author were in agreement that the Vhavenda were not fully represented in the curriculum. The approach to national history translates to gross under recognition, underrepresentation coupled with misrepresentation. It is punctuated with recognitive, representative and distributive injustices. My findings align with those of Good (2009), who examined the representation of Native Americans in high school history textbooks and found their history to be brief, vague, and lacking context. Similarly, I observed that the history of the Vhavenda lacked depth of representation, indicating a parallel in the marginalization of minority groups in educational materials.

National history is incomplete since the full historical narratives of ethnic minority groups such as the Vhavenda are missing from the secondary history curriculum. The secondary history curriculum prominently features topics centered on the Shona and Ndebele speaking groups, reflecting a recognition framework rooted in language, a colonial construct that homogenizes diverse ethnic identities under linguistic categories. This perpetuation of colonial-era exclusivity continues to marginalize the historical narratives of minority ethnic groups. It is imperative to adopt an all-inclusive understanding of the national history which recognises the experiences and contributions of all Zimbabweans irrespective of ethnicity, tribe or lingual inclination. Embracing a comprehensive and accurate national historical narrative will enable Zimbabweans to strengthen their national identity.

5.3.4 The factors that hinder the equitable representation of the history of the Vhavenda in the curriculum

The research findings revealed that among the factors which hinder equal representation are, absence of literature, identity crisis, lack of political will, absence of clear-cut policy, colonial language policy, Vhavenda population, reluctance and obliviousness of the Vhavenda. The

kaleidoscopic array of factors mentioned above collaboratively and collectively influences the representation of the history of the Vhavenda in the curriculum.

The lack of literature on the history of the Vhavenda presents a significant obstacle to achieving equitable representation in the history curriculum. Over the years, the history of the Vhavenda in Zimbabwe has remained largely undocumented, resulting in a dearth of resources that could support their representation in the curriculum.

This absence of literature has consequently led to the underrepresentation of the Vhavenda's history in the curriculum. It has perpetuated systematic inequalities in as far the representation of the Vhavenda. The CDU subject specialist affirmed that; the availability of materials (literature) would result in the inclusion of the history of the Vhavenda in the curriculum. The CDU subject challenged the Vhavenda to take the leading role in writing their history. Once the history of the Vhavenda has been documented it can be used in the formulation of a more balanced curriculum that fully represents the Vhavenda.

Identity crisis is another hindering factor to the representation of the Vhavenda unveiled by the research. The Vhavenda are grossly engulfed in an identity crisis which emanates from their geographical location. The Vhavenda are a trans-border ethnic group which is experiencing an identity crisis. The research revealed that some of the Vhavenda are confused about their identity. Their transborder location has resulted in them identifying more with South Africa than Zimbabwe. Culturally they identify themselves as Vhavenda, but in terms of origin and belonging they identify themselves as South African.

The challenge of identity formation is closely tied to the legacy of colonization, wherein the establishment of new territorial divisions often resulted in the separation of individuals sharing common ethnic backgrounds, disregarding their interconnectedness and historical bonds. The effects of colonisation are still being felt up to this present day as the boundaries were never adjusted but were in essence maintained are actually being reinforced. The Vhavenda who live in Beitbridge have faced an identity calamity which emanates from a transborder crisis transcending from the destabilizing effects of colonisation. The colonial boundaries did not consider or respect

the ethnic settlements which existed before colonisation. As highlighted earlier on by Gashaw (2017) that the colonisers totally ignored the African geographical ethnic composition. The bulk of the Vhavenda population is in South Africa whereas the reminder is in Zimbabwe. Ethnic and family relations cannot be exterminated by colonial geographical boundaries. Relatives continue visiting each other and engaging in different family programmes.

Information obtained from the interviews with the learners indicated that the learners were not concerned or affected by the absence of their history from the history curriculum. They found normalcy out of the situation because they regarded themselves as foreigners in Zimbabwe as a result of the transborder crisis. Information from the focus groups indicates that the Vhavenda learners strongly attach their origins and belonging to South Africa. Learner L15 at school C was of the view that they don't originate from Zimbabwe hence it affected their representation in the curriculum. Similar sentiments were also shared with Teacher 2A at school A who felt that they did not have much history in Zimbabwe since they originally came from South Africa. Teacher 1A at school A confirmed that some learners say they are from South Africa and do not identify themselves as Zimbabweans. This was also observed and affirmed by Teacher 2C at school C.

The Vhavenda population is naturally small and highly concentrated in a limited geographical area (Beitbridge). This has an effect in terms of influence and inclusion in the curriculum. It has an effect on both the Vhavenda and non-Vhavenda groups. The non-Vhavenda groups such as the Ndebele and Shona speaking groups dominate the Vhavenda in their home area (Beitbridge) where they are naturally concentrated due to their small population. This has resulted in the *Ndebelelisation* and *Shonalisation* of the Vhavenda ethnic group. Existence of numerically advantaged Shona and Ndebele speaking groups within and outside Beitbridge which has limited the influence of the Vhavenda in terms of inclusion in the curriculum. According to one of the interviewed teachers (Teacher 1A from school A), the Vhavenda identity is also affected by contact with the dominant Shona and Ndebele speaking groups.

This observation was supported by learners L16 from school C and learner L12 at school B Some Vhavenda learners closely associate themselves and feel that they are part and parcel of those groups since they speak any of the languages. The Vhavenda learners learn both Ndebele and

Tshivenda up to Ordinary level. Teacher 1A from school A also raised the issue of intermarriages as having diluted the identity of the Vhavenda. Therefore, the Vhavenda learners do not find a problem in learning history of both the Shona and Ndebele speaking groups without learning about their own history.

Colonial naming of provinces according to dominant languages Matabeleland, Mashonaland and Manicaland disparages the subaltern groups' identity and mutilates their spirit of belonging to Zimbabwe as a nation. The naming of these provinces was done by missionaries who were competing for evangelical space and areas of influence (Ndhlovu, 2009). Minority groups in Matabeleland such as the Vhavenda, the Sotho, Xhosa, Kalanga, Nambya, Chewa, baTswana, baTonga and Tjwa were not recognised. It was as if the naming of the province on lingual basis meant that they were not equally entitled to the province in terms of their respective languages, identity, history and were supposed to be appendages of the Ndebele speaking group. In addition to that Doke did not consult the diverse minority groups found in Matabeleland, instead he heavily relied on the missionary views as well as native commissioners (Ndhlovu, 2009).

The absence of a definitive policy or statutory instrument mandating the independent inclusion of Vhavenda history in the curriculum has led to its exclusion from the syllabus. Insights gathered from interviews with the ZIMSEC subject manager and CDU subject specialist underscore the lack of a clear policy directive requiring the independent inclusion of Vhavenda history, along with that of other ethnic groups, in the curriculum. The piece meal inclusion in the form of national history under topics such as the Bantu, Mfecane or Ndebele migration cannot be termed representation. The "blanket" or "umbrella" inclusion under the national history refers to the mentioning of the Vhavenda in passing. There is absence of a distinctive or specific policy which outlines the inclusion of minority groups such as the Vhavenda in the same manner as the Ndebele and Shona speaking groups are represented in the history curriculum.

Research findings indicate that the lingering effects of the colonial language policy persist even four decades after independence, notably influencing the underrepresentation of the Vhavenda in the history curriculum. Consensus among the interviewed teachers, with the exception of one, suggests a collective acknowledgment of the impact of the colonial language policy on

representation. Additionally, both the CDU subject specialist and the ZIMSEC subject manager concurred that the language policy has contributed to the misrepresentation and underrepresentation of minority ethnic groups.

It has contributed to the Ndebele and Shona hegemonic control and dominance in the curriculum. The language policy gave a fictious impression of recognition and representation of the native groups. Zimbabwe is divided by language more than ethnicity and that division has been misconstrued as ethnical or tribal divisions. This has cascaded into the history curriculum where representation and recognition are based on language groupings and not pure ethnical groups. The misconception has heavily contributed to underrepresentation and misrepresentation of minority ethnic groups such as the Vhavenda.

Those who participated in the interviews, namely the history teachers, the ZIMSEC subject manager, the CDU subject specialist and the history textbook author were all in agreement that the colonial language policy contributed negatively to the representation of the histories of ethnic minority groups. The responses were in concurrence with academic literature review earlier in this thesis. Msindo (2005) attributes the Zimbabwean geopolitics of language to Clement Doke's report. In post-colonial Zimbabwe, Doke's recommendations have continuously misinformed the language politics and identity of different groups (Msindo,2005). Doke's recommendations resulted in the subalternisation of minoritised ethnic groups (Moyo, Mdlongwa and Ncube,2015).

The research findings highlight a significant awakening among some Vhavenda participants regarding the importance of documenting their history. Despite previous reluctance and obliviousness, the interviews served as a catalyst for realizing the significance of preserving their cultural heritage. This awakening was exemplified by Teacher 1C at school C, who, upon being interviewed, recognized the importance of documenting Vhavenda history. The CDU subject specialist further emphasized the importance of active participation from the Vhavenda community in documenting their own history to prevent distortions and achieve representational parity. This shift in perspective underscores the potential for positive change and empowerment within the Vhavenda community regarding the preservation of their history.

The impact of reluctance and obliviousness among the Vhavenda is evident in the lack of awareness among Vhavenda learners regarding their representation in the curriculum. As confirmed by Learner L13 at school C, the issue of representation had not previously crossed their minds. However, active involvement of the Vhavenda community in documenting their history and advocating its inclusion in the curriculum can lead to greater awareness and sensitivity. Vhavenda authors, motivated by their sense of belonging to the ethnic group, are best positioned to provide authentic and comprehensive accounts of their history and culture. Their deep understanding of Vhavenda history makes them invaluable contributors to the preservation and representation of their heritage.

5.4   LIMITATIONS

Acknowledging its limitations, this study focuses exclusively on the representation of one minority ethnic group, the Vhavenda people of Zimbabwe. Given the diverse range of minority groups within the country, it is essential to recognize that the findings may not fully capture the experiences and challenges faced by other minority groups. However, this research serves as a foundation for future studies that aim to explore the representation of history among various ethnic communities. By emphasizing the importance of inclusive representation, this research provides valuable insights that can inform policymakers and curriculum developers about the need for comprehensive inclusion of the histories of all ethnic groups in educational materials.

Absolutely, expanding the research scope to encompass a broader geographic area would indeed be beneficial for gaining a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomena under investigation. With a larger sample size and broader representation, future research endeavors with more extensive resources could expand the scope to cover a wider geographic area, thus increasing the diversity and volume of data for analysis. Enlarging the coverage area enhances the depth and breadth of understanding of the researched phenomena.

Despite the constrained sample size, employing multiple data collection methods enabled triangulation, thereby enhancing the validity, credibility, and reliability of the research findings.

Mitigative measures were implemented to address the identified limitations, ensuring that the research results remain robust and informative within the confines of the sampled population.

5.5   RECOMMENDATIONS

5.5.1   Recommendations made to ensure the equitable representation of Vhavenda history in the Zimbabwean secondary school history curricula

Drawing from the research findings, I recommend the following on the representations of the minority groups with specific reference to the Vhavenda people. A cross pollination of the recommendations will bring about a balanced, comprehensively inclusive and representative school history curriculum. There is need for the government to take herculean and affirmative action towards correcting the anomalies in the representation of minority ethnic groups. The government should desist from its feigning attitude and adopt genuine political willingness to address the representation of minority groups in the history curriculum. Political will is an essential component in achieving equal representation. Without the governmental initiative and support, it is difficult or impossible to make significant changes to the curriculum content.

Political will plays a crucial role in driving policy changes and ensuring the implementation of measures that promote equal representation of minority ethnic groups in education. Raising a motion in parliament for debate is a significant step towards garnering political support and attention for the issue. Through parliamentary debate, stakeholders can highlight the importance of recognizing and representing the history of minority groups in the curriculum, leading to the formulation of clear policies and supporting legislation.

Crafting statutory instruments at the national level, empowered by parliamentary debate and political will, can provide the necessary framework for enforcing laws that support the recognition and representation of minority ethnic groups' history. Drawing inspiration from models like the one in Ireland, where laws recognize the history of minority groups such as the Travellers, Zimbabwe can develop similar legislation tailored to its context. By enacting laws and statutory instruments that mandate the inclusion of minority ethnic groups' history in the curriculum,

Zimbabwe can demonstrate its commitment to promoting diversity, inclusivity, and cultural heritage preservation. This proactive approach aligns with international principles of human rights and educational equity, fostering a more inclusive and representative education system.

The government should appoint qualified members of the Vhavenda and other minority groups into strategic influential administrative structures. Representation of the minority groups in every sector of politics, economy and social spheres should be made mandatory. A quota system should be put in place in order for the government to dismantle the hegemony of the dominant groups (the Shona and Ndebele speaking). These qualified members of the diverse minority ethnic groups should be planted in key government educational decision-making organisations such the MOPSE, the CDU and ZIMSEC.

Implementing Fraser's concept of participatory parity within government ministerial portfolio committees is indeed essential for ensuring equal participation and representation of all ethnic groups. By incorporating this principle into decision-making processes at all levels of government, Zimbabwe can foster a more inclusive and representative governance structure. Fraser's emphasis on participatory parity underscores the fundamental importance of equal participation as a standard for evaluating social arrangements. This principle aligns with the goal of ensuring that every ethnic group recognized in the country's constitution is given due consideration and representation in government operations.

Ensuring participatory parity involves actively engaging representatives from diverse ethnic backgrounds in decision-making forums, including ministerial portfolio committees. By doing so, Zimbabwe can leverage the collective wisdom and perspectives of its diverse population to develop more comprehensive and equitable policies and initiatives. Incorporating Fraser's concept of participatory parity into government operations demonstrates a commitment to fostering social justice, inclusivity, and democratic governance. It underscores the value of diverse voices and experiences in shaping policies and practices that reflect the needs and aspirations of all citizens.

The government should finance the research and documentation of the history of the Vhavenda and other minority groups. As suggested by both the ZIMSEC subject manager and CDU subject

specialist, there is need for government to take the approach it used in addressing the representation of the languages of ethnic groups in the Zimbabwean curriculum. The government through the permanent secretary of education's office should adopt the same strategy and documentation which was used in introducing indigenous languages into the curriculum so as to include the history of the minority groups into the history curriculum.

Collaborating with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) can indeed be a viable strategy for the government to overcome financial constraints and ensure the documentation and integration of the histories of minority groups into the national history curriculum. NGOs often have resources, expertise, and networks that can complement government efforts in such initiatives. By partnering with NGOs, the government can leverage external funding and support to finance projects aimed at documenting and preserving the histories of minority groups. These organizations may also bring valuable knowledge and experience in research, education, and community engagement, enhancing the quality and effectiveness of the initiatives.

Additionally, NGOs often have a strong commitment to social justice and inclusion, making them natural allies in efforts to promote representation and recognition of minority voices. Through collaborative partnerships, the government can tap into the passion and dedication of NGOs to advance the goals of equitable education and cultural preservation. Furthermore, involving NGOs in these initiatives can help mobilize broader support and participation from civil society, communities, and other stakeholders. This multi-sectoral approach can foster a sense of ownership and collective responsibility for preserving and celebrating the diverse cultural heritage of the nation. Partnering with NGOs represents a pragmatic and inclusive approach for the government to address financial constraints while advancing the important goal of integrating the histories of minority groups into the national narrative. Through collaboration, governments and NGOs can work together to promote social justice, cultural diversity, and inclusive education for all citizens.

Parity should be adhered to in the allocation of space in the history syllabus. This is in line with Nancy Fraser's three-dimensional social justice model, particularly her emphasis on redistributive justice. By applying Fraser's concepts to the issue of representation in the history curriculum, I highlighted the importance of providing material resources, such as funding for documentation

projects, to historically marginalised groups like the Vhavenda. This approach aims to correct distributive injustices by ensuring that resources are allocated equitably among diverse ethnic groups in Zimbabwe.

Fraser (1995) is of the view that redistribution is premised on provision of material resources especially to historically disadvantaged or marginalised groups in order place to them at parity with previously advantaged groups. Fraser's model underscores the need for structural changes to address systemic inequalities and promote inclusivity. Application of Fraser's social justice framework provides a theoretical basis for addressing the issue of underrepresentation of minority groups in the curriculum, emphasizing the importance of equitable distribution of resources to promote inclusivity and equality. In the context of history education, this might involve advocating for government policies that prioritize the documentation and integration of minority histories into the national curriculum. By adopting a redistributive justice approach, policymakers can work towards leveling the playing field and promoting parity among different ethnic groups in terms of representation and recognition.

Documentation of the history of the Vhavenda will provide the much-needed material resources to facilitate the inclusion of the history of the Vhavenda in the mainstream curriculum. Fraser (1997) highlights the importance of equitable distribution of economic goods. Correction of distributive injustices can be realised by adopting a redistributive justice approach. In the subject under discussion there is need for government to distribute national financial resources (such as national budget allocation) in such a way that they cater for the documentation of the histories of ethnic minority groups such as the Vhavenda so as to bring equality among the diverse ethnic groups in Zimbabwe.

The government should make it mandatory that the Vhavenda and other minority groups should spearhead the writing of their own history. This will prevent misconceptions and distortion the Vhavenda history and other minority groups. This point was raised by the CDU subject specialist. There is need for the establishment of a deliberate forum where the owners of the traditions, the chiefs and other people purposively sampled because of their knowledge, will assist these writers. The traditional leaders are the custodians of the history and culture of the Vhavenda in Zimbabwe.

The current national history approach highlighted by the ZIMSEC subject manager needs to be revised since it is exclusionary and biased towards the dominant groups. There is need to restructure the current national history in order to accommodate the histories of ethnic minority groups. Inclusion of the histories of minority groups will create a comprehensive and complete national history which is authentic as well as nationally representative. The national government through the Ministry of Finance should release funds to the CDU and MOPSE to finance the documentation of the histories of ethnic minority groups. A similar approach as the one used in financing the introduction of the updated curriculum (2015-2022) can be used in the holistic documentation of the history of minority ethnic groups in Zimbabwe.

Liberalisation of authorship is required so as to allow the flow of pure history to the learners. It will promote sundry historical scholarship which will contribute to the documentation and study of a comprehensive Zimbabwean history. Furthermore, it would foster a multi-perspective approach which would pave way for diverse ethnic narratives. History textbooks should be independent of the approval of MOPSE so that the learners will have contact to undiluted pure history. Authors should be given to the privilege to write the histories of diverse ethnic groups which are currently not included in the syllabus. By removing restrictions on authorship and textbook approval processes, historians and scholars would have greater freedom to explore and document the histories of various ethnic groups, including those that are currently underrepresented in the curriculum. Through liberalizing and decentralizing the approval process, textbooks may become more reflective of scholarly consensus and less susceptible to political biases or agendas.

The liberation of authorship will promote the construction of a balanced and representative national history. Liberalizing authorship has the potential to foster a more dynamic and inclusive approach to history education, ultimately enriching students' learning experiences and promoting a deeper appreciation for the diverse cultural heritage of Zimbabwe. Incorporation of multiple perspectives would eradicate biased historical perspectives. MOPSE should give schools the opportunity to use books which they are comfortable with. Furthermore, the CDU should be liberated so that it is in a position to accept the different views of authors.

The government should launch national programmes on television and radio to raise public awareness on the importance of the history of the indigenous minority groups in the nation-building agenda. This will destigmatise and demystify the myths about the minority groups. These programmes will result in the minority groups finding pride in their culture and identity. The indigenous minority groups will gain confidence, move out of their cocoons and share their cultural beliefs with the rest of nation. In regard to that the president of Zimbabwe through the Public Holidays and Prohibition of Business Act, Chapter 21 Section 10 of the Constitution of Zimbabwe should declare a National History and Cultural Day whereby the diverse Zimbabwean ethnic groups can dress in their traditional regalia and commemorate their diverse historical narratives as well as come up with ways to preserve their customs and heritage. Cultural centres of the different ethnic groups should be set up around the different provinces in order to preserve the diverse ethnic identities of Zimbabwe.

I was impressed upon realisation that the Vhavenda have a cultural day as well as a cultural village in Beitbridge North. Coincidently, the day I collected data in Beitbridge North was the Vhavenda cultural day and my co-researcher and I took time to visit the cultural centre after collecting data. We managed to tour the cultural centre and watched the different cultural groups which were performing the traditional Vhavenda dances. The dances and poems were pregnant with historical and cultural information about the Vhavenda. Learners from schools within and far away areas were convened at the cultural village on this particular day. When my co-researcher and I visited the schools on this particular day, they were told that selected learners had gone to cultural centre for the cultural celebrations. What impressed me most was the involvement of learners in the cultural day which is held once a year. In addition, Vhavenda politicians, high ranking officials, Vhavenda Chiefs, village heads, journalists and members of the cooperate world graced the cultural event. The event unified the Vhavenda people from all walks of life. This is when and how I got the idea of a National Cultural Day for the different ethnic groups in Zimbabwe.

Liberalisation of syllabi and devolution of topics are required in order to accommodate more topics which are currently not included in the syllabus. This was suggested by the history author who was interviewed. The history of the Vhavenda should be included in the syllabus and be given priority in their geographical area of residence (Beitbridge). Devolution of topics will

automatically bring a balance in terms of representation of ethnic groups in Zimbabwe. Furthermore, it will promote confidence and the spirit of belonging among the diverse ethnic groups including the Vhavenda in Beitbridge. Liberalizing the syllabus signifies making the content more open and inclusive. For instance, the history of minority groups which is not given coverage by the current syllabus should be accommodated by the syllabus. The liberalization of the national syllabus will result in the inclusion of more sundry perceptions and voices in the content. This means the incorporation of historically sidelined groups such as the Vhavenda into the curriculum. The CDU as a responsible government department on content inclusion should liberalise the syllabus in order to accommodate the histories of the diverse ethnic groups in Zimbabwe. CDU should work in conjunction with MOPSE in accepting new historical narratives and incorporating them into the secondary school syllabus.

There is need to formulate a clear-cut policy on the inclusion of the history of the Vhavenda and other minority groups into the history syllabus. The policy should scratch exactly where it itches. Since every language in the constitution has been officially recognised in the curriculum, it is the first step towards attaining equal representation. There is now need to officially recognise the histories of the different ethnic groups articulated in the Constitution. The government of Zimbabwe through the MOPSE and CDU should come up with a clear-cut policy document (similar to that of language policy) on representation of the history of ethnic groups in the secondary school curriculum. The policy should be informed and supported by the Zimbabwean Constitution and the curriculum framework. The histories of all ethnic groups including the Vhavenda should be allocated a section in the syllabus. This will assist or guide a teacher who would have been deployed in a certain geographical area to prioritise the history of the dominant ethnic group in that area. Such an approach will reduce or eradicate the chances of imposition of the history of other groups on the dominant ethnic group, yet their history is sidelined or marginalised. There is great need for a dominant local ethnic group in any geographical area in the country to have their history studied in detail and then other histories studied as additional history content.

In the spirit of unity, tolerance and recognition among Zimbabwean ethnic groups there is need to structure examination question papers in such a way that it is compulsory for candidates to answer

a question on any of the minority groups in Zimbabwe. Attainment of this goal is based on engagement of ZIMSEC in collaboration with the CDU. ZIMSEC should restructure the Ordinary level paper to accommodate sections on minority ethnic groups. This will result in learners nationally covering the different histories of the previously marginalised ethnic groups. Such an approach will promote equity, equality, tolerance and the nation-building agenda in Zimbabwe through the study of history. These attributes are embedded in the social justice theory which is the guiding theory for this research. Musara, Grant and Vorster (2021) earlier on emphasised that social justice is attained if all learners are represented, recognised and included in the educational processes in an unbiased manner. A balanced national history can be bred from such an approach resulting in a united and tolerant society starting from school level.

The government of Zimbabwe through an act of parliament should dismantle the colonial heritage which divided the country into two major languages cum ethnic groups. The Shona dialects which were used to assemble or build the Shona language by Doke in 1931 should be disintegrated so that they can distinctively stand alone and be counted. This proved to be a success with Ndau, which was separated from being part and parcel of Shona in 2013. Academic literature reviewed earlier pointed at the success of the Ndau in gaining constitutional recognition as a separate official language (Sithole, 2022). A similar process will help in independently identifying Zimbabwean ethnic groups and tracing their history. For instance, the Zezuru, Korekore and Manyika should stand alone as distinctive groups and their history be documented separately in order to correct Doke's misconception.

 Furthermore, the government should put in place a commission of enquiry to establish the number of ethnic groups not included in the Constitution with the aim of including and clearly recognising them in the national Constitution. The current constitutionally recognised list of ethnic groups is not exhaustive. It should be noted that the Ndebele as a group embraces or incorporates diverse ethnic groups which identify themselves with the Ndebele culture or language whereas in essence, they are not Ndebele. This was a product of Doke's report, whose deeds created ethnic and linguistic chaos in Matabeleland (Msindo, 2005). Doke did not consult ethnic minority groups in Matabeleland, instead he relied on the views of native commissioners and missionaries (Ndhlovu, 2009). Therefore, there is need to disintegrate or dismantle dominant groups and examine

appendage ethnic groups separately. Ethnicity has become liquid in Zimbabwe as a result of the colonial heritage which recognised English, Shona and Ndebele as the official languages. Forensic separate examination of each ethnic group recognised by the Constitution gives a full view of the reality on the ground.

The government ought to abolish tribal, linguistic, and ethnic-based provincial designations like Mashonaland, Manicaland, and Matabeleland. These labels perpetuate regionalism, which has deeply fragmented the nation politically, economically, and socially. Instead, the provinces could be renamed as Northern Province, Eastern Province and Western Province respectively. Scholarly literature referenced earlier in this thesis has demonstrated that ethno-linguistic demarcations emerged from missionary rivalry for territorial control and evangelistic areas (Ndhlovu, 2009). These boundaries are a toxic colonial heritage which should be dismantled. The current provincial names inflame or stir linguaphobia and regionalism which is coupled with ethnicity. The updated curriculum has underpinning principles which point at equality, balance and fairness. This is a good point of departure in the quest of fully realising equal ethnical representation in the education sector.

5.6   CONTRIBUTION OF THE RESEARCH

5.6.1   Nation-building agenda

The research is a panacea to Zimbabwe as a nation which is currently rocked by ethnical, regional and lingual divisions. The research is a quantum step towards the nation-building agenda as it promotes unity and tolerance among the diverse ethnic groups in Zimbabwe. Nation-building is embedded in the construction of a single identity out of diversity. Inclusiveness and national incorporation are the prime instruments in the nation-building agenda. History as a school subject informs people about their past and present situation. It assists the different groups to trace their origins and identity. The knowledge of one's past and identity gives one a sense of belonging to a nation. Tolerance and unity are subsequently realised once people know their identity as well as the identity of other ethnic groups in the country.

5.6.2   Vhavenda community

The research enlightens the Vhavenda on the importance of taking the leading role in the documentation of their history. The research findings will help the Vhavenda to claim their rightful position as equal Zimbabweans in both the curriculum and life in general. Reactions of some of the Vhavenda were counterintuitive since they were not aware of the preponderant role they have to play in the documentation of their history. The research findings will enlighten the learned Vhavenda to hold their history in reverence through openly and audaciously taking a leading role in its documentation.

This study is likely to make a valuable contribution to the nation-building agenda and the secondary school curriculum, which is missing an in-depth study on the dynamics of representation of the history of indigenous minority groups. Special focus has been given on representation in terms of language and not the history of these minority groups. The history of these minority groups is in danger of extinction if it is not promptly documented and incorporated into the main stream curriculum. Academics should respond to the knowledge gap in the form of

collecting and documenting the history of the histories of minority groups such as the Vhavenda in Zimbabwe.

5.6.3   Teaching and learning of history

The research findings sweep to the periphery the piecemeal representations that are denoted at the instigation of the current syllabus. A holistic, representative and all-inclusive national history can be formulated premised on the research findings. This will bring educational harmony among the diverse ethnic groups in the teaching and learning of history in Zimbabwe. Educational harmony has been conspicuous by its absence. Tolerance and unity can be achieved through the teaching of an all-inclusive national history at Ordinary level. If implemented, the recommendations derived from the research findings will lead to the documentation of pure history which is a legacy of accurate history for the coming generations.

The research findings serve to educate both teachers and learners about the importance of embracing unity amidst diversity. They raise awareness among teachers about the need to refrain from imposing a narrative of historical inaccuracies that overwhelmingly highlight the hegemonic dominance of the Shona and Ndebele speaking groups in the present national history.

The research findings promote social justice in the teaching and learning of history in Zimbabwe. Diverse ethnic groups spelt out in the Constitution should have their history equally represented in the syllabus in order for them to be identified as equally Zimbabwean. A more inclusive history curriculum will foster a nuanced understanding of the past. It can also assist learners to develop a sense of empathy and embrace of people from diverse backgrounds. In addition, it can foster respect and tolerance for diverse perspectives. Furthermore, it can transform teachers and learners to become agents of change in their own communities.

5.7   AREAS OF FURTHER RESEARCH

Transborder challenges have resulted in the Vhavenda experiencing an identity crisis. Researchers can investigate the effects of transborder challenges in relation to the identity of other affected

ethnic groups. Researchers can carry out in-depth research on the identity crises faced by groups geographically located in the border areas of Zimbabwe. This is a massive gap that calls for address so as to arrive at a fuller picture of the number of ethnic groups affected by this identity crisis as a result of transborder challenges. These groups have links or relations based on origin with groups on the other side of the border. The geographical borders erected by the colonialists have resulted in confused identity among these groups, for instance, the Vhavenda in Beitbridge. The results of this thesis could perhaps signal the existence of an identity crisis of other indigenous groups in the country.

Zimbabwe has several groups geographically located along political borders set by the colonial regimes. Of interest would be groups such as the Tswana speaking people in the south western region, the Tonga in the north western region, the Tshangani in the south eastern region and the Ndau in the eastern region of Zimbabwe just to mention a few. Engaging in such research would produce rich material on the histories of these indigenous ethnic groups. These groups' identity and belonging needs to be ascertained or confirmed through the recognition of their history in the mainstream secondary school curriculum, for example, the Vhavenda in Zimbabwe. The transborder challenges which has muddled the identity of the Vhavenda could also be affecting other groups geographically located along the national borders of Zimbabwe.

5.8   CONCLUSION

The research has revealed that Nancy Fraser's three-dimensional social justice theory undergirds the design of an inclusive curriculum which gives an equitable representation of the histories of minority groups. Nancy Fraser's theory enhances parity in the recognition and representation of the histories of diverse ethnic groups in the curriculum. The Zimbabwean Constitution and the curriculum framework are in support of inclusion and equality. However, the Ordinary level syllabus does not include a topic on the history of the Vhavenda. Currently, the history of the Vhavenda is represented from a nationalistic perspective where they are presumptuously covered in the syllabus. The Vhavenda are not covered distinctively as a stand-alone ethnic group with its own distinctive history. Therefore, the history of the Vhavenda is not fully covered in the current curriculum. Lack of literature, identity crisis, lack of political will, absence of a clear-cut policy

and the colonial language policy are all significant challenges to the inclusion of history of the minority ethnic group in the curriculum. The study on the Vhavenda in Beitbridge West provides a glimpse into the underrepresentation of the Vhavenda in the curriculum. It proves the inclusion of the history of minority groups such as the Vhavenda is ceremonial and a non-event. This thesis concludes that the history of the Vhavenda needs to be documented and included in the secondary school history curriculum. What comes to the fore is the issue of equal representation of all ethnic groups despite their population or the size of their geographical occupation as well as their previous dominance by other groups.

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APPENDIX A: ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

UNISA | university of south africa

UNISA COLLEGE OF EDUCATION ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE

Date: 2023/05/10

Dear Mr LL Mapuranga

Decision: Ethics Approval from
2023/05/10 to 2028/05/10

Ref: 2023/05/10/14002531/14/AM
Name: Mr LL Mapuranga
Student No.: 14002531

Researcher(s): Name: Mr LL Mapuranga
E-mail address: 14002531@mylife.unisa.ac.za
Telephone: +263 772 969 216

Supervisor(s): Name: Prof J Seroto
E-mail address: serotj@unisa.co.za
Telephone: +27782609324

Title of research:

An analysis of the representation of minority groups in the secondary school curriculum: A case of the Vhavenda learners in Zimbabwe.

Qualification: PhD History Education

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 2023/05/10 to 2028/05/10.

The **medium risk** application was reviewed by the Ethics Review Committee on 2023/05/10 in compliance with the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics and the Standard Operating Procedure on Research Ethics Risk Assessment.

The proposed research may now commence with the provisions that:

1. The researcher will ensure that the research project adheres to the relevant guidelines set out in the Unisa Covid-19 position statement on research ethics attached.
2. The researcher(s) will ensure that the research project adheres to the values and principles expressed in the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics.
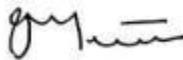
3. Any adverse circumstance arising in the undertaking of the research project that is relevant to the ethicality of the study should be communicated in writing to the UNISA College of Education Ethics Review Committee.

4. The researcher(s) will conduct the study according to the methods and procedures set out in the approved application.

5. Any changes that can affect the study-related risks for the research participants, particularly in terms of assurances made with regards to the protection of participants' privacy and the confidentiality of the data, should be reported to the Committee in writing.

6. The researcher will ensure that the research project adheres to any applicable national legislation, professional codes of conduct, institutional guidelines and scientific standards relevant to the specific field of study. Adherence to the following South African legislation is important, if applicable: Protection of Personal Information Act, no 4 of 2013; Children's act no 38 of 2005 and the National Health Act, no 61 of 2003.

7. Only de-identified research data may be used for secondary research purposes in future on condition that the research objectives are similar to those of the original research. Secondary use of identifiable human research data requires additional ethics clearance.

8. No field work activities may continue after the expiry date **2028/05/10**. Submission of a completed research ethics progress report will constitute an application for renewal of Ethics Research Committee approval.
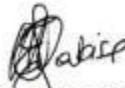
Note:

The reference number **2023/05/10/14002531/14/AM** should be clearly indicated on all forms of communication with the intended research participants, as well as with the Committee.

Kind regards,

Prof AT Motlhabane
CHAIRPERSON: CEDU RERC
motlhat@unisa.ac.za

Prof Mpine Makoe
ACTING EXECUTIVE DEAN
qakisme@unisa.ac.za

Approved - decision template – updated 16 Feb 2017

APPENDIX B: PERMISSION TO CARRY OUT RESEARCH

*All communications should be addressed
to"The Provincial Education Director,
Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education
"*
Telephone: 0284/23009/11
Fax: 0284/23383

The provincial Education Director
Ministry of Primary and Secondary
Education
P. Bag 5824
Gwanda
Zimbabwe

19 MAY 2023

**LENNON LENNOS MAPURANGA
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA**

**RE: PERMISSION TO CARRY OUT A RESEARCH ON THE TITLE "AN ANALYSIS
OF THE REPRESENTATION OF MINORITY GROUPS IN THE SECONDARY
SCHOOL CURRICULUM-A CASE OF VENDA LEARNERS IN ZIMBABWE".**

The above mater refers:

You have been granted authority to carry out a research project on the topic **"An
analysis of the representation of minority groups in the Secondary School
Curriculum-A case of Venda learners in Zimbabwe".**

At the end of your research you will be requested to submit a copy of your findings to
the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (Beitbridge District) so that it can be
useful and of benefit to the Ministry.

```
MIN. OF PRIMARY & SECONDARY
EDUCATION (MAT. SOUTH PROV.)
H.R. OFFICER SERVICES LEGAL & DISCP

1 9 MAY 2023

P. BAG 5824, GWANDA
ZIMBABWE TEL: 0284-23009
```

S.NKALA
For: PROVINCIAL EDUCATION DIRECTOR-MATABELELAND SOUTH

APPENDIX C: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR TEACHERS

Date of data entry: _____
Time of data entry: _____
Institution: _____

I am a PhD History student at the University of South Africa (UNISA), carrying out research on a topic entitled, "An analysis of the representation of minority groups in the secondary curriculum: A case of the Vhavenda people in Zimbabwe". I kindly request you to answer the questions honestly. The responses obtained are intended to guide the Curriculum Development Unit (CDU), the office of the Permanent Secretary of Education, ZIMSEC and the nation at large on the inclusion of the History of minority groups. Please do contact me or my supervisor any time if you would like clarification: Prof. Johannes Seroto (Supervisor) on +27 78260 9324 or serotj@unisa.ac.za. Lennon Lennos Mapuranga (PhD Student) on +263 772 969 216 or 14002531@mylife.unisa.ac.za

All information obtained will be treated with strict confidentiality.

SECTION A: Biographic

section Please tick where

applicable.

Sex ☐ Male ☐ Female

Academic qualifications ☐ Ordinary level ☐ Advanced level ☐ BA

MA

Other---

Professional qualifications ☐ Certificate ☐ BED

☐ Diploma ☐ MED

Other---

Teaching experience ☐ 5 years or less ☐ 1-20 years

☐ 6-10 years ☐ above 21 years

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SECTION B

1.   To what extent is the Zimbabwean history curriculum inclusive?

2.   Is the history of the Vhavenda equally represented in the curriculum?

3.   If your response is no, what are the possible factors affecting the representation of the Vhavenda in the curriculum?

4.   Do you know anything about the History of the Vhavenda people in Zimbabwe?

5.   If your response is yes, where did you get information about the History of the Vhavenda in Zimbabwe?

6.   If the response is no, do you have any interest in knowing the History of the Vhavenda?

7.   Do you think the colonial language policy influenced the representation of the History of the minority groups in Zimbabwe?

8.   Which approaches do you use when teaching the history of the Vhavenda at Ordinary level?

9.   To what extent do you think Secondary School History textbooks represent the History of the Vhavenda?

10.   To what extent do you think the Secondary School History syllabi represent the History of the Vhavenda?

11.   To what extent do you think the colonial language policy influenced the marginalisation of the History of the minority groups in Zimbabwe?

12.   From your own observation, do you think the Vhavenda speaking learners' attitude towards History is affected by the degree of their representation in the curriculum?

APPENDIX D: FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Date of data entry: _____
Time of data entry: _____
Institution: _____

I am a PhD History student at the University of South Africa (UNISA), carrying out research on a topic entitled, "An analysis of the representation of minority groups in the secondary curriculum: A case of the Vhavenda people in Zimbabwe". I kindly request you to answer these questions honestly. The responses obtained are intended to guide the Curriculum Development Unit (CDU), the office of the Permanent Secretary of Education, ZIMSEC and the nation at large in the inclusion of the History of minority groups. Please do contact me or my supervisor any time if you would like clarification: Prof. Johannes Seroto (Supervisor) on +27 78260 9324 or serotj@unisa.ac.za. Lennon Lennos Mapuranga (PhD Student) on +263 772 969 216 or 14002531@mylife.unisa.ac.za

All information obtained will be treated with strict confidentiality Section A: Biographic Section

Name of learner	Age	Gender

Section B

1. Do you know anything about the History of the Vhavenda people in Zimbabwe?

2. If your response is yes, where did you get the information about the History of the Vhavenda?

3. Do you have interest in learning about the History of the Vhavenda people in Zimbabwe?

4. How do you feel about the representation of Vhavenda History in the Zimbabwe History curriculum?

5. In your view, is the history of the Vhavenda equally represented?

6. If you're your response is no, what do you think should be done in order to attain equal representation?

7. In your view, what are the factors which affect the representation of the history of the Vhavenda in the curriculum?

8. Is your attitude affected towards history affected by the degree of representation of the Vhavenda history in the curriculum?

APPENDIX E: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR THE ZIMSEC SUBJECT MANAGER

I am a PhD History student at the University of South Africa, carrying out research on a topic entitled, "An analysis of the representation of minority groups in the secondary curriculum: A case of the Vhavenda people in Zimbabwe". I kindly request you to honestly answer these questions. The responses obtained are intended to guide the Curriculum Development Unit (CDU), the office of the Permanent Secretary of Education, ZIMSEC and the nation at large on the inclusion of the History of minority groups. Please do contact me or my supervisor any time if you would like clarification: Prof. Johannes Seroto (Supervisor) on +27 78260 9324 or serotj@unisa.ac.za. Lennon Lennos Mapuranga (PhD Student) on +263 772 969 216 or 14002531@mylife.unisa.ac.za

All information obtained will be treated with strict confidentiality.

1.   What are the theoretical approaches under guiding the design of an inclusive curriculum?

2.   To what extent is the Zimbabwean history curriculum inclusive?

3.   Do you think the History of minority groups in Zimbabwe fully represented in the secondary school History curriculum?

4.   In your view, is the history of the Vhavenda equally represented?

5.   If you're your response is no, what do you think should be done in order to attain equal representation?

6.   Do you think the colonial language policy influenced the representation of the History of the Minority groups in Zimbabwe?

7.   Does the government of Zimbabwe have a clear-cut policy on the representation of the History of minority groups in History curriculum of Zimbabwe?

8.   What measures have been taken by ZIMSEC to include the History of the minority groups in the curriculum?

APPENDIX F: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR THE CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT UNIT (CDU) SUBJECT SPECIALIST

I am a PhD History student at the University of South Africa, carrying out research on a topic entitled, "An analysis of the representation of minority groups in the secondary curriculum: A case of the Vhavenda people in Zimbabwe". I kindly request you to honestly answer these questions. The responses obtained are intended to guide the Curriculum Development Unit (CDU), the office of the Permanent Secretary of Education, ZIMSEC and the nation at large on the inclusion of the History of minority groups. Please do contact me or my supervisor any time if you would like clarification: Prof. Johannes Seroto (Supervisor) on +27 78260 9324 or serotj@unisa.ac.za. Lennon Lennos Mapuranga (PhD Student) on +263 772 969 216 or 14002531@mylife.unisa.ac.za

All information obtained will be treated with strict confidentiality.

1.   What are the theoretical approaches under guiding the design of an inclusive updated curriculum 2015-2022?

2.   To what extent is the Zimbabwean history curriculum inclusive?

3.   Do you think the History of minority groups in Zimbabwe fully represented in the secondary school History curriculum?

4.   Do you think the History of minority groups in Zimbabwe fully represented in the secondary school History curriculum?

5.   If you're your response is no, what do you think should be done in order to attain equal representation?

6.   Based on your own assessment, what could be the possible factors which affect representation of the history of the Vhavenda people in the curriculum?

7.   Do you think the colonial language policy influenced the representation of the History of the minority groups in Zimbabwe?

8.   Does the government of Zimbabwe have a clear-cut policy on the representation of the History of minority groups in History curriculum of Zimbabwe?

9.   Based on your own assessment, to what extent have history textbook authors incorporated the history of the minority groups into the mainstream curriculum?

APPENDIX G: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR THE SECONDARY SCHOOLS HISTORY TEXTBOOK AUTHOR

I am a PhD History student at the University of South Africa (UNISA), carrying out research on a topic entitled, "An analysis of the representation of minority groups in the secondary curriculum: A case of the Vhavenda people in Zimbabwe". I kindly request you to honestly answer these questions. The responses obtained are intended to guide the Curriculum Development Unit (CDU), the office of the Permanent Secretary of Education, ZIMSEC and the nation at large on the inclusion of the History of minority groups. Please do contact me or my supervisor any time if you would like clarification: Prof. Johannes Seroto (Supervisor) on +27 78260 9324 or serotj@unisa.ac.za. Lennon Lennos Mapuranga (PhD Student) on +263 772 969 216 or 14002531@mylife.unisa.ac.za

All information obtained will be treated with strict confidentiality.

1. What guided you as an Ordinary level history textbook author, in selecting topics and content in general?
2. Do you think the History of minority groups in Zimbabwe fully represented in the Ordinary level secondary school textbooks?
3. Do you think the History of minority groups in Zimbabwe fully represented in the secondary school History curriculum?
4. In your view, is the history of the Vhavenda equally represented in the Ordinary level secondary school textbooks?
5. If you're your response is no, what do you think should be done in order to attain equal representation?
6. Based on your own assessment, what could be the possible factors which affect representation of the history of the Vhavenda people in the curriculum?

7. Do you think the colonial language policy influenced the representation of the History of the minority groups in Zimbabwe?

APPENDIX H: LETTER OF CONSENT

Invitation to participate in research project

You have been approached to participate in this research project as you are a learner who is directly affected by the contents of the curriculum as far as representation of the history of the Vhavenda is concerned. Your participation is entirely voluntary. If you agree to participate, you will be invited to take part in a focus group discussion with other learners regarding your views on representation of the history of the Vhavenda in the curriculum. The discussion will be audio recorded to facilitate analysis.

Information obtained from this study will be treated with the strictest confidentiality and will be used for this research study only. Your name will not be mentioned in this study and all the information collected as part of the study, will be stored securely on password protected computers. While there will be no direct benefit to you from the study, the findings have the potential to make a contribution to our understanding of the extent the history of the Vhavenda is represented in the curriculum. The information obtained from the research can assist both curriculum formulators and implementers.

There are known risks associated with participation, other than some possibly inconvenience in conducting focus group discussions. You can decide to withdraw from the study at any point prior to the transcripts being annonymised without any consequence.

Thank you for taking time to read this information letter.

Yours faithfully,

…………………………………….. ---

Lennon Lennos Mapuranga Prof Johannes Seroto

PhD Research candidate Supervisor

Department of Educational Foundations Department of Educational Foundations

APPENDIX I: REQUEST FOR CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN INTERVIEW

Dear Teacher

I am a PhD student in the department of Educational Foundations at the University of South Africa. I am working on a project that is supervised by Prof Johannes Seroto, a lecturer at the Faculty of Educational Foundations. I kindly request for your participation in my research study.

The study is entitled, "An analysis of the representation of minority groups in the secondary curriculum: A case of the Vhavenda people in Zimbabwe". The study seeks to measure the extent to which the history of the Vhavenda people is represented in the Zimbabwean secondary school curriculum. Although there are no immediate benefits, participating in this study will provide both the teachers and the learners with an opportunity to express their views about the representation of the history of the Vhavenda in curriculum. These views will assist curriculum planners and policy makers in making informed decisions. The research settings will be Beitbridge north schools with Vhavenda history learners. I intend to focus on only three schools. No lessons will be interrupted. Semi structured interviews will be conducted on teachers and focus group discussions shall be conducted on Vhavenda learners who do history. Interviews with teachers will last for the 30 minutes maximum time. I intend to use an audio tape recorder; however, the identity of the teacher shall be strictly confidential.

Your positive consideration to participate in this study will be highly appreciated. Should you agree please sign the document of informed consent attached to this letter.

Kind regards,

Lennon Lennos Mapuranga

APPENDIX J: REQUEST FOR PARENTAL CONSENT FOR CHILD PARTICIPATION IN FOCUS DISCUSSION

Dear Parent/Guardian

I am a PhD student in the department of Educational Foundations at the University of South Africa. I am working on a project that is supervised by Prof Johannes Seroto, a lecturer at the Faculty of Educational Foundations. May you kindly give permission to your son/daughter to take part in my research study?

The study is entitled, "An analysis of the representation of minority groups in the secondary curriculum: A case of the Vhavenda people in Zimbabwe". The study seeks to measure the extent to which the history of the Vhavenda people is represented in the Zimbabwean secondary school curriculum.

Although there are no immediate benefits, participating in this study will provide the learners with an opportunity to express their views about the representation of the history of the Vhavenda in curriculum.

The research settings will be Beitbridge north schools with Vhavenda history learners. I intend to focus on only three schools. No lessons will be interrupted. Semi structured interviews will be conducted on teachers and focus group discussions shall be conducted on Vhavenda learners who do history. The focus group will last for not more than 1 hour 10 minutes. I intend to use an audio tape recorder; however, the identity of the learner shall be strictly confidential.

Your positive consideration to participate in this study will be highly appreciated. Should you agree please sign the document of informed consent attached to this letter.

Kind regards,

Lennon Lennos Mapuranga

APPENDIX K: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION FROM SCHOOL HEAD TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

The School Head

Sir/Madam

RE: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT YOUR SCHOOL

I am a PhD student in the department of Educational Foundations at the University of South Africa (UNISA). I am working on a research project entitled, "An analysis of the representation of minority groups in the secondary curriculum: A case of the Vhavenda people in Zimbabwe", under the supervision of Prof. Johannes Seroto. This is a multiple case study of selected schools in Beitbridge North, Zimbabwe. I kindly request for permission to conduct research at your school on perspectives of both teachers and learners on the representation of the Vhavenda history in the curriculum.

The aim of the study is to establish the extent to which the history of the Vhavenda is represented in the curriculum. The study targets history teachers and Ordinary level learners of Vhavenda ethnicity who do history. The findings of the study will greatly contribute to curriculum formulation and implementation. Furthermore, the findings will greatly contribute to the existing body of knowledge not only in Zimbabwe but the world at large. As part of the study, I would like to interview teachers and conduct focus group discussions with the learners. These interface interactions will assist me with information to respond to the key questions of my research. The interviews and focus group discussions will be audio recorded. The recordings will be safely stored, and only viewed by my research supervisor and myself.

Confidentiality will be ensured by using pseudonyms for all participants. All effort will be made to ensure no harm will happen to the learners and teachers. They will be allowed to withdraw from participating in the study at any point/time even without giving reasons should they wish to do so.
I would like to thank you in advance your anticipated assistance.

Please do contact me or my supervisor any time if you would like clarification on the following contact details:

Prof. Johannes Seroto (Supervisor) on +27 78260 9324

Lennon Lennos Mapuranga on +263 772 969 216 or lennonlennosmapuranga@gmail.com

--   --
Lennon Lennos Mapuranga   Prof Johannes Seroto
PhD research student   Supervisor
Department of Educational Foundations   Department of Educational Foundations
University of South Africa   University of South Africa

APPENDIX L: EDITING CERTIFICATE

EDITING & CRITICAL READING SERVICES

Monday, October 14, 24

864 Justice Mohamet St

Brooklyn 0181

To whom it may concern

This is to confirm that I have edited the following Ph D thesis: **An analysis of the representation of minority groups in the secondary school history curriculum: A case of the Vhavenda learners in Zimbabwe** by Lennon Lennos Mapuranga for language use. The page layout of the document remains the responsibility of the author.

E M Lemmer,

Eleanor M Lemmer (Professor Emeritus, UNISA) D Ed parative Education), UNISA

South African ID 510711 0118 088

CONTACT