

**ZIMBABWEAN TEACHERS' IMAGING OF SELF AND THEIR  
TEACHING PRACTICES IN THE CONTEXT OF EDUCATION  
REFORMS**

**BY**

**WEBSTER KADODO**

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**SUPERVISOR: PROF. T. MBATHA**

**CO-SUPERVISOR: PROF. P. RAMRATHAN**

**DECLARATION**

I, WEBSTER KADODO, declare that:

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- II. this thesis has not been submitted for any degree, qualification or examination at any other university;
- III. this thesis does not contain other person’s data, or other information, unless specifically acknowledged as having been sourced from others;
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Signed by .....  Day 18<sup>th</sup>

In the month of ...March ..... 2022.

As the candidate’s supervisor, I have approved this thesis for submission.

Supervisor: Prof. T. Mbatha .

Co-Supervisor: Prof. P. Ramrathan

## **DEDICATION**

In memory of my late mother, Alice Mapazire, who passed away just after the proposal defense went through, my late brother, Fred Jonathan Kadodo, late sister, Edline Vidah Kadodo and a close friend, Timothy Bhala, all who passed away during the course of this thesis.

For my family: Mavies Kadodo, Edline Fadzai Kadodo, and Precious Rutendo Gelly Kadodo.

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## **ABSTRACT**

The research examined how education policy influenced Zimbabwean teachers' imaging of self as teachers and how that affected their teaching practices in the context of education reforms. The research adopted the qualitative research approach informed by the interpretive paradigm, with the narrative design informing data generation. The semi-structured interview and journal methods were used to initiate participants' interviews on the issues under review. Document and content analysis were employed to understand how the selected education policy influenced teachers' imaging of self as teachers and how that, in turn, affected their teaching practices. The results revealed that the three selected education policies influence how teachers image selves as teachers and, in turn, how that affects their teaching practices. Whilst the performance management system (PMS) and the Result-Based Management (RBM) created contrary views to those of teachers on what education is and what it means to be a teacher, the Practical Education Clocking Register system was viewed as a teacher control mechanism that curtailed teacher autonomy, thereby underplaying the teacher's moral image. Teacher supervision was viewed as more of play-acting rather than a true reflection of the teacher's day-to-day classroom performance. The research concluded that education policy development that excludes teachers' contributions affects their views of education and imaging of self as teachers, thereby influencing their teaching practices. The research recommends that education policy development should involve teachers so as to accommodate their concerns and ensure teachers' buy-in for successful education policy implementation. The research findings provide insights into how education policies influence teachers' imaging of self and their teaching practices.

## **ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

ADEA	Association for the Development of Education in Africa
NASH	National Association of School Heads
PCIET	Presidential Commission of Inquiry into Education and Training
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
SACMEQ	Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Education Quality
ZIMSEC	Zimbabwe Schools Examination Council
PMS	Performance Management System
RBM	Result-Based Management

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# *CHAPTER ONE*

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Overview**

This chapter gives an overview of the central issues discussed in this thesis. The chapter gives the background of the research problem, outlining how the problem was noted as an issue needing close examination. The background shows the possible connections between education policy, teacher imaging and teaching practices. The research argues that education policy has the potential to influence teacher imaging and teaching practices. The chapter presents rationale for the research. In addition, objectives and research questions are also presented. The contextual setting of the research is given. The significance, delimitation as well as limitations of the study are also presented in this chapter. A brief critical review of literature, a summary of the theoretical framework and methodological issues are also highlighted.

### **1.2 Background to the study**

The last twenty years have witnessed implementation of education reforms in various parts of the world (Hargreaves et al., 2010; Fullan, 2009; Lee & Yin, 2011; Goldstein & Beutel, 2009). Chief, among other reasons, has been the desire to prop up and improve the quality of education delivery. In 2000, Zimbabwe began implementing its own education reforms. The impetus for reforms in Zimbabwe has been the perceived poor education standards and the cause has mainly been “attributed to unsatisfactory...teacher performance and commitment” (Presidential Commission of Inquiry into Education and Training [PCIET], 1999:448). Education institutes were accused of producing graduates who failed to fit into the world of work. Even in 2013, the then Minister of Education, Sports and Culture echoed the same views that “Education is in a crises ... Blame quality of teaching in Zimbabwe” (Henson, 2013). Invariably, teachers “were...blamed for lack of dedication to their jobs” and this was seen as having “inadvertently affected the academic performance of students” (Ncube, 2013:227). Teacher quality was, thus, seen to be the most significant resource in education and, therefore, blamed for learners’ non-achievement. In response, the Southern African Consortium for Monitoring Education Quality [SACMEQ] (1998) (non-governmental organisation), undertook research on the state of education in primary schools in Zimbabwe, which culminated in its report presented at the beginning of 1998. Its findings seemed to concur with expressed views that the quality of education had gone down in the country. SACMEQ noted that there was

need for the Zimbabwean education authorities to: “undertake an audit of teacher professional qualification” (p.87), ensure that teachers “attend well- and structured regular in-service courses” (p.90), meet and discuss with teachers’ associations “teachers...job satisfaction...identify strategies for addressing their concerns – especially those related to salary, professional development” (p.86), “establish...benchmark standards for the educational environment” (p.87), and “undertake a continuous system of monitoring” (p.91).

Consequently, the PCIET was set up at the beginning of 1998 to examine the state of education and training in Zimbabwe. Among others, the PCIET’s key terms of reference were to examine the “education system’s relevance, quality and orientation in the rapidly-changing socio-economic environment” (PCIET, 1999: xx). Its findings were published in 1999, recommending recast of the education system for relevance and improved quality. The PCIET suggested a number of reforms in education aimed at improving quality delivery of education in the country. Among others, the PCIET recommended an “outcome-based curriculum...which focuses on learning areas” because it:

provides clear expectations and framework for education standards...gives a clear sense of progress...allows for clarity about course expectations, student achievements and progress...provides a focus for assessment and gives schools and the system the capacity to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of education...allows clear reporting of achievements and provides parents with quality reports that help to achieve optimum learning outcomes (PCEIT, 1999:253).

In addition, addressing teacher variability was noted as crucial in the matrix of the proposed education reforms.

Consequently, education ministries in Zimbabwe embarked on education policy reforms that ushered in new appraisal systems (Public Service Commission, 2000, 2012), inspection systems in education and the Zimbabwe Council for Higher Education (ZIMCHE) Act (2006), to foster quality in education delivery. Central to the reforms were education quality control, teacher accountability and teacher professionalism as focal points in pursuance of quality education in Zimbabwe (UNESCO, 2001, 2004). The reforms placed greater importance on result-based teaching, teacher appraisals, teacher supervision, practical education clocking

register system and teacher-in-servicing seen as drivers for the reforms. In addition, School Development Committees (SDCs) and School Development Authorities (SDAs) were set up to improve school infrastructure. This research examined how teacher performance appraisal systems, teacher supervision and practical education clocking systems act as strategies that influence teachers' imaging of self and the effect the said images have on teaching practices in the context of Zimbabwe education reforms. The purpose of this study was, therefore, to discover what selected education policies in the context of education reforms mean for teachers, what teachers think is important in their work is affected by education reforms and how they (teachers) make sense of, and emotionally respond to the selected education policies (Marz et al., 2013; Ketelaar et al., 2012; van Veen & Slegers, 2009; Vahasantanen & Etelapelto, 2009) within the reform agenda in Zimbabwe.

### **1.3 Rationale for the research**

The rationale for this research is anchored in three key understandings: personal, professional and humanistic feelings. At the personal level, after noting the influence of teachers' identity on education delivery elsewhere in the world, I felt challenged to know what the situation is like regarding the Zimbabwean teachers. There has not been any published research, to the knowledge of this researcher that examined the influence of teachers' self-image and their teaching on education delivery in Zimbabwe. Research carried out elsewhere shows that education reforms have the potential to affect teachers' emotions (Schutz & Zembylas, 2009), thereby influencing teachers' self-construction and their teaching. Teachers' imaging of self has the potential to influence the way they teach, thus, leading to teachers performing their teaching practices positively or negatively, depending on the nature of feelings generated by their teacher identity construction. In this regard, this research is a personal journey to try and understand the 'workings' of teacher imaging owing to selected education policies in the context of education reforms in Zimbabwe, with a view to mitigating the potential negativity therein.

Professionally, as a university teacher in the field of teacher development and curriculum implementation, this researcher felt challenged to examine and understand how Zimbabwean teachers are responding to selected education policies perchance we may discover where our teacher-development programmes may be missing the mark, resulting in the development of

unfit-for-purpose teachers. The observation, as noted by some, that the quality of teaching is mainly to blame for poor results in most schools in Zimbabwe, indirectly challenges me as a teacher developer to check whether the said poor quality of education is a result of our teachers' being unfit-for-purpose, or whether it is a function of other variables in the education matrix. For that reason, this research becomes a journey towards an informed understanding of the influence of selected education policies' imaging of teachers and how that affects teachers' teaching practices. Could this not possibly explain teacher variability in education reform implementation? If so, how, then, can the results of the current research inform teacher development and education reform implementation?

Morally, the insinuation that learners' educational development in schools may possibly be at risk owing to teacher variability calls for our utmost effort to search and identify where our education is falling short. Utmost care must be taken to protect the rights of children to receive meaningful education the world over. Teaching is (or is supposed to be) essentially a moral act driven, apart from others, by our human feelings and desire to serve the humankind. This research, thus, serves as an inspiration to advocate for positive growth of learners in our schools. As teachers, we need to rigorously search for best ways to enable learners in our schools to learn.

The three stated key points are push factors that mandate this researcher to embark on this research. Understanding the influence of the selected education policies on teachers' identity construction plays a critical part in mitigating the problems that are negatively affecting the education system in Zimbabwe and elsewhere.

#### **1.4 Aim of the study**

The study examines the influence of selected education policies on teachers' identity construction and how these (teacher images) affect teachers' classroom practices. Although there is a sizable amount of research on educational discourses in Zimbabwe, there is none that looks at the influence of education policy-induced teacher identity construction on teaching practices. This research aims to fill this gap, thereby contributing to our understanding of how education policies shape secondary school teachers' imaging of self and how that, in turn, affects teaching practices in secondary schools. The varied nature of the Zimbabwean

educational environment from those in other countries studied by other researchers heightens the need for this study.

Although there has been a growing body of research on teacher identity construction and on emotions as an important factor in identity construction, “what is still missing is...the role of emotions in teachers’ professional lives / work” (van Veen & Slegers, 2009:235). This research, thus, aims at contributing towards this needed body of knowledge.

The aim of this research, therefore, is two-fold. Firstly, the research seeks to examine and understand the influence of selected education policy on teachers’ self-imaging when the reforms are implemented within a socially, politically and economically unstable environment. It would be interesting to find out on the dispositions and emotions (Skourdombis, 2018) generated by the selected education policies and how they influence identity construction. Secondly, the research examines how the constructed images affect teachers’ classroom practices.

### **1.5 Statement of the problem**

The introduction of education reforms in Zimbabwe from 2000 to date was intended to improve on the perceived poor quality of education delivery in educational institutions. The said selected education policies were introduced across the spectrum of the education system from pre-school right up to university level. This research, however, focuses on the influence that the selected education policies have on teachers’ imaging of self and their teaching in selected government secondary schools. The reforms were targeted at propping the quality of education which, some felt, has deteriorated significantly.

Research from elsewhere shows that, whilst in some cases education policies may positively influence the quality of learning in schools, in other cases they create negative emotions in teachers, thereby negatively influencing education delivery. In such cases, education policies fail “to engage with the classroom, the learning context, and the interface between teachers and learners” (Cohen et al., 2011:253), resulting in poor teacher-emotional response, which leads to failed implementation. Teacher emotions have been seen to be significant in teachers’ construction of self as teachers and, in turn, influence how they implement educational programmes. Teachers’ emotions have to be understood in relation to their sense of

vulnerability (Kelchtermans, 2005, 2009) and/or strengths. Fisher (1987, in Ozga, 2000:16) notes that, “an embittered teacher is a social danger”, which may lead to collapse of the education system unless positive teacher emotions are nourished. This threat-laden observation necessitates research into how selected education policies influence teachers’ emotions and, in turn, how these emotions shape teachers’ imaging of self and their teaching.

The current research, therefore, is a journey into understanding how the selected education policies shape teachers’ identity construction and how the constructed images, in turn, influence the said teachers’ classroom practices.

### **1.6 Research Objectives**

This research is guided by the following objectives, which are to:

- 1) examine how selected education policies in Zimbabwe influence the way government secondary school teachers image themselves and their teaching;
- 2) consider why government secondary school teachers in Zimbabwe image themselves and their teaching the way they do during the implementation of education reforms;
- 3) establish the influence of education policy-induced images on teaching practices; and,
- 4) evaluate how education policy’s imaging of teachers and their teaching influence teachers’ own construction of self and their teaching.

### **1.7 Questions to be asked**

- 1) How do selected education policies image teachers within the educational reform agenda of Zimbabwe?
- 2) Why do government secondary school teachers in Zimbabwe image themselves the way they do during educational policy reforms?
- 3) What explains the relationship between the policy-induced teacher images and their teaching practices?
- 4) How do education policy’s imaging of teachers and their teaching influence teachers’ own construction of self and their teaching?

### **1.8 Significance of the research**

The researcher notes that education is a costly venture and unless the enterprise is run effectively, that may lead to both economic waste and people’s underdevelopment. Given the developing countries’ (Zimbabwe included) economic dire-straits, it is imperative that the education enterprise is soundly organised and run to produce the intended results. Learners’

lives are at risk in this enterprise, hence the need for our concerted efforts to ensure its productivity. It is, thus, necessary that we carry out empirical research to validate our practices and activities in education, lest we keep hanging on to archaic practices and methodologies or preoccupy ourselves with untested speculations that may be doing harm instead of good.

The current research examines how selected education policies influence teachers' self-imagining and how that, in turn, influences their teaching practices. This research contributes to the body of knowledge on what it is that makes teachers image themselves and their teaching the way they do within the high stakes education reform agenda. The fact that the researcher could not find any published research on the influence of education policy on teachers' identity construction and the effect the constructed teacher images have on teaching practices in Zimbabwe justifies the carrying out of this research. The research is a journey aimed at contributing to our understanding of teacher identity construction variability owing to education policy within the high stakes education reform landscapes in Zimbabwe. Zimbabwe offers an extraordinary education reform landscape uniquely different from other countries researched on elsewhere. A combination of socio-political and economic instability makes it a unique site for this research. It resembles a country in a war situation. For that reason, the research can also contribute to the body of knowledge on the forces that shape teachers' imaging of self and their teaching practices during implementation of high stakes education reforms.

As noted by van Veen and Slegers (2009), there is still a gap in research between the relationship of emotion-influenced teacher identity constructions and teaching practices. Whilst there is a growing body of research that looks at teacher identity construction as well as the part played by emotions in shaping teacher identities, there has not been much regarding how the constructed teacher identities (especially during high stakes education reforms) intervene classroom practices. This research contributes in filling this gap.

Given the points noted above, the research can potentially influence education policy processes by providing empirical evidence on how education policy's framing of teachers can influence teachers' self-imagining either positively or negatively which, in turn, could also affect teachers' classroom practices. Results from this research could also potentially contribute to the reorganisation of in-service teacher development education. The current research is, therefore,

a search for complementarity among education policy formulation, education policy implementation, teachers' identity construction and teaching practices.

### **1.9 Contextual setting**

Clandinin and Huber (2005:4) define context as “the landscapes past and present in which [*a teacher*] lives and works...contexts inevitably shape our notions of who we perceive ourselves to be and how others perceive us”. The context of education policy is characterised by various debates and contested discourses (Bell & Stephenson, 2014) about the failing education system, the failing economy and malcontent teaching staff. It can be noted that education discourse “does ideological work, constitutes society and culture, is situated and historical, and relates to [*or*] mediates power”, and is “social practice in which people enter into relations with each other as they engage in the process of producing and interpreting meaning” (Jones, 2013:10-11). Context needs to be understood in terms of space and time. This research was carried out at three schools in an urban set-up. The research looked at the influence of selected education policy on teachers' imaging of self and their teaching practices in the period 2005 to 2019.

This research was carried out at three selected government high schools in Masvingo Urban (Masvingo District) located in Masvingo Province of Zimbabwe. Zimbabwe is a landlocked country in Southern Africa, sharing borders with Zambia to the north, Botswana to the west, South Africa to the south and Mozambique to the east. The country is divided into ten educational administrative regions. Figure 1 shows the ten education regions.



**Figure 1: Education administrative map of Zimbabwe**

Zimbabwe was formerly colonised by the British from 1890 and became independent on 18 April 1980. The education landscape of Zimbabwe could be divided into three categories that I would call the Honeymoon period (1980-1989), the Experimental period (1990-1999) and the Crisis period (2000-present). The first period (the Honeymoon period 1980-1989) at face-value seemed to indicate an inherited flourishing education system that promised to be an exemplar of an efficient education system for formerly colonised states. It should, however, be noted that the education system that the country inherited was exclusionist and was meant to cater for fewer numbers than the high numbers that had to be catered for after independence. In that case, it was a question of time before the system gave in unless the government that had taken over was politic enough to mitigate the situation. Owing to the phenomenal expansion in education experienced (greater numbers of learners and the many schools that were established) in the first period (Honeymoon period 1980-1989), the second period (Experimental period 1990-1999) did show signs of strain in the education system and the economy. The decline of services in education (just like in other sectors) during this period was in direct response to the decline in the economy. This period saw various attempts to revive the economy. The second period witnessed the introduction of the Economic Structural

Adjustment Programme (ESAP) in Zimbabwe which, sadly, failed to harness the decline in both the economy and, likewise, education delivery. As Kanyongo (2005:72) notes, “the situation became worse by the drying up of donor support and the government was forced to further cut costs”. The third period (Crisis period, 2000-present) has been characterised by an almost total collapse of the economy and with it the education delivery system. The socio-political and economic environment in the current period in Zimbabwe has been, and is, unstable, with services provision in limbo.

The varied nature of the research environment for the current research makes it an interesting case for empirical research on the influence of education policy on teachers’ imaging of self and how that affects their teaching practices.

### **1.10 Summary of literature review**

In this part I summarise critical literature in this research, to give impetus to this first chapter.

The purpose is to tease out the spectre of education reforms and teacher emotions.

#### **1.10.1 Critical literature**

Although there has not been any published literature on the influence of education policy-initiated teacher identity construction on teachers’ imaging of self as teachers and teaching in Zimbabwe, there is substantial international literature that examines the concept of teacher imaging, which is viewed as mental constructions shaped by the way we conceptualise ‘our world’ owing to our socialisation (Parnell, 2010; Sandefur & Moore, 2004; Dolloff, 1999). Teacher images, for example, can be influenced by our histories and social systems like media (Gerstl-Pepin, 2002; Goldstein, 2011) or education policies (Jansen, 2001; Ozga, 2000). McLeon (in Beijaard et al., 2005:71) notes that “images of self-as-person and self-as-teacher are critical to the practice of becoming a teacher [*and to teaching*] because they constitute personal context in which new information will be interpreted, and are the stuff of which a teaching persona is created”. Teachers’ identity is in flux and is “a unique embodiment of his/her stories to live by, stories shaped by the landscapes past and present in which s/he lives and works...stories to live by are multiple, evolving, shifting, and contradictory” (Beijaard et al., 2005:44-45). Identity is not a fixed attribute but rather “a relational phenomenon” which develops “in an inter-subjective field” and is on-going (Rodger & Scott, 2008:736). Teachers’

image construction can be influenced by education reforms as much as it can by political and economic forces.

There is a large body of literature on education policy and the teachers' work (e.g. Gardinier, 2012; Apple, 2003; Meier, 2002; Smyth et al., 2000; Shon, 2006) and empirical research on how teacher identity is influenced by education policy reforms. For example, Katsuno's (2012) study examined the influence of accountability reforms in Japanese teachers, Lee and Yin's (2011) studied Chinese teachers' emotionality owing to reforms, Kelchtermans et al.'s (2009) looked at emotional vulnerability of Belgian primary school teachers, Day's 2009 and 2011 (Schutz & Zembylas, 2009; Day & Lee, 2011) studies in England were on emotions' influence on teachers' sense of well-being and Woods et al.'s (1997) looked at the influence of high-stakes inspections on teachers' professional identity construction. Other researchers focused on the influence of high stakes education (Lipman, 2004; Stoll & Mayers, 1994; Beijaard et al., 2005; European Council, 2009), whilst some examined the effect of power cohesion (Dugan, 2003, 2012; Ozga, 2000) in reform concepts such as teacher accountability, teacher professionalism and education quality control/assurance. There is, however, still need for more research on how education policy reforms interact with identity construction (Katsuno, 2012) and how the constructed images influence teaching (van Veen & Slegers, 2009). The way constructed images of teachers influence their classroom practices continues to stand out as a complex issue and is a question of current times (Parnell, 2010). This research contributes in filling this gap. Findings of this research have implications for teachers' well-being in the context of high stakes initiated education policy reforms.

Zimbabwean education policy documents such as Performance Management System (PMS) and Result-Based Management (RBM), the practical education clocking register system and teacher supervision that act as strategies for high stakes education reforms will be analysed as initiators of teachers' imaging of self as teachers and their teaching.

### **1.10.2 Summary of the conceptual framework**

The study utilises the identity theory, a socio-psychological theory housed in the sociocultural approach (Burke & Stets, 2009) in researching teachers' imaging of self and their teaching in the context of high stakes education policy reforms in Zimbabwe. Social psychology is the

scientific study of how people's thoughts, feelings, intentions and goals are constructed within a social context by the actual or imagined interactions with others (McLeod, 2007). The science of social psychology began when scientists first started to systematically and formally measure the thoughts, feelings, and behaviours of human beings (Kruglanski & Stroebe, 2011). The intention is to understand the nature and causes of individual behaviour as instigated by social situations in which they find themselves located. The interactions in the social space, whether real or imagined, initiate behaviour. Human behaviour occurs in social context, regardless of the fact that there could be no person physically present. The social space could be occupied by invisible selves expressed by dialogic entities in the mind, mediated by situations. In other words, social psychology is intrigued by the dynamic relationship between individuals and the people, whether real or imagined, around them. As Lieberman (2010) notes, social psychology is interested in how social situations influence our health and happiness, the important roles of evolutionary experiences and cultures on our behaviour, that is, how all these influence, and are influenced, by the activities of the brain. The social psychological theory purposes to study the dynamic relationship between individuals and the people around them, with a view to understanding their individual characteristics, including their personality traits, desires, motivations and emotions, and the impact these have on their social behaviour profoundly influenced by the situation that make up their environment (<https://opentextbc.ca/socialpsychology/chapter/defining-social-psychology-history-and-principles/>, downloaded 12/10/2021). Evidently, social psychology is interested in studying social situations which, ultimately, create social influences. The fact here is that when individuals emotionally respond to the prevailing situation, the tendency is the desire to protect the self and the lives of those who are close to us, a case raising interest for social psychological theory.

As noted above, the social psychological theory is housed under the sociocultural approach. As Chirkov (2020:144) notes, the sociocultural theory “summarizes some of the basic assumptions from various theoretical accounts” provided by social and human scholars from different disciplines and at different times about the processes of the social and cultural regulation of human behaviour. As already noted regarding the social psychological theory, the theory notes that internalised representations “instigate actions, impose strong emotions, and structure worldviews” (Chirkov, 2020:156). For the purpose of this research though, I utilise the identity

theory to explain how selected education policy affects teachers' identity construction and their teaching practices. Teacher identity is constructed "through engagement with others in cultural practice" (Smagorinsky et al., 2004:21). It can change from time to time owing to both social interactions and in community of practice (Wenger, 2010, 1998; Wenger & Trayner, 2015).

Identity theory is a social psychological theory that looks at the psychology of 'actors' and 'attributes' their actions to their psychological processes (Burke & Stets, 2009). As shall be discussed further in the theoretical framework chapter, identity is taken to be the set of meanings that define who oneself is when one occupies a particular role in society, such as being a teacher (Whannell & Whannell, 2015; Stets & Trettevik, 2014; Stets & Serpe, 2013; Olsen, 2012; Burke & Stets, 2009). There are a number of theories that evolved in social psychology that explain how identity is constructed owing to social activities that are in flux.

There are a number of theories in social psychology that have been referred to in explaining how identity is formed and is continuously being shaped by social activities and institutions. Vygotsky's (1978, 1987) zone of proximal development theory (ZPD), Holland et al.'s (1998) figured worlds, Wortham's (2001) interactional positioning are some of the theories that have been used to explain the genesis and sustenance of identities. The latter theories shifted attention to the genesis and effect of emotions on identity construction, especially with post-structural researchers such as Stets and Trettevik (2014), Schutz and Zembylas (2009), and Day and Lee (2011). Theories such as relational agency (Edwards, 2005), sense-making approach (Marz et al., 2013; Ketelaar et al., 2012; van Veen & Slegers, 2009; Vahasantanen & Etelapelto, 2009), personal interpretive framework (Vanassche & Kelchtermans, 2014; Kelchtermans, 2013; Kelchtermans, et al., 2009; Kelchtermans, 1993, 2007a, 2009) and the dynamic systems approach (Haviland-Jones & Kalhibaugh, 2004) were developed to explain how identity is developed and how that affects the feeling entity, such as teachers. Wenger's (2010, 2007, 1998) community of practice has also been an important lens in discussing how teacher imaging is shaped by various social forces that interact in the operational sphere of teachers. Some researchers on teacher identity construction employ multiple theoretical perspectives (Varghese et al., 2005) to gain insight into the social forces that shape teacher-identity and how such forces influence teaching in the context of education policy reforms. In discussing teacher identity and its influence on teaching, this research looks at the education

policy theory and how it influences teacher identity construction and teaching. Theories such as sense-making (Marz et al., 2013; Ketelaar et al., 2012; van Veen & Slegers, 2009; Vahasantanen & Etelapelto, 2009) which is equivalent to Ketelaar et al.'s (2012) personal interpretive framework and the community of practice framework (Wenger, 2010, 2007, 1998; Wenger & Trayner, 2015) will be referred to in explaining the influence of the Zimbabwe education policy on teachers' emotions and, in turn, how these emotions influence teachers' imaging of self as teachers, and their teaching. The findings of this research can potentially extend our theorization on how teachers make sense of high stakes education reform directives in relation to their personal and professional views on how teaching should proceed.

### **1.11 Summary of research methodology**

This research was guided by the interpretive framework for data collection and analysis. The epistemology in the interpretive framework is inter-subjective knowledge construction (Taylor & Medina, 2013; Creswell, 2007, 2013), allowing the researcher to “stand in their shoes” (research participants), “looking through their eyes” and “feeling their pleasure or pain” (Taylor & Medina, 2013:4). Interpretive research is qualitative and seeks to understand issues from peoples' worlds because meaning is context-bound (Sapsford & Jupp, 2006; Gray, 2009). Qualitative research involves an “interpretive naturalistic approach to its subject matter” allowing researchers to make sense of phenomena in terms of the meanings research participants bring to them (Clandinin, 2007:4). Teachers' imaging of self as teachers and their teaching are relationally shaped (positive/negative) and can, therefore, be best researched through the interpretive framework.

The current research employs the narrative inquiry. Narrative can be both a method and phenomena of study (Pinnegar & Daynes, 2007; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Clandinin et al., 2006; Clandinin, 2007). Narrative inquiry is “stories lived and told” and can provide powerful, authentic evidence (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000:20) of the influence of education policy on teachers' imaging of self as teachers and their teaching. The narrative inquiry is suitable for researching on “human experience in which humans, individually and socially, lead storied lives” (Clandinin, 2007:37). The narrative methodology enables me to understand the images that teachers construct of selves within their communities of practice (Wenger & Trayner, 2015; Wenger, 2010, 1998; Alsup, 2006) comprising various “sites of struggles” (Day & Lee,

2011:4). Through narratives, participants are able to tell who they are, what they do, why they do what they do - in a way they reveal how they interpret (Ketelaar et al., 2012) and make sense of their lives as teachers (Geelan, 2003), thus revealing why they image themselves and their teaching the way they do in the context of education policy reforms, as well as how the constructed images influence their teaching practices. Teachers' narratives can reveal how their social, political, historical and economical situatedness shape their perceptions as teachers.

Data generation was through narrative interviews and teacher journals. Nine teachers purposively selected from three government secondary schools from Masvingo Urban (in Masvingo Province in Zimbabwe) constituted the participants in this research study. Three teachers from the three schools were selected to account for contextual trustworthiness and depth of information. The teachers selected were experienced teachers (10 years or more as teachers working in Zimbabwean secondary schools), so that they would have experienced the educational policy reforms unfolding within the Zimbabwe context. Narrative interviews, according to Bauer and Gaskel (2000), are interviews that elicit information about participants' internal conditions, thereby influencing their construction of who they are. Eliciting information is less imposing and, therefore, more 'valid' in rendering of the informants' perspectives (Bauer & Gaskel, 2000). In this study, I employed semi-structure narrative interviews with nine selected teachers. In addition to the conventional type, the semi-structured interviews also took on another form, that is, the journal-driven, wherein the teachers kept journals and made journal entries during the research data collection period. The journal entries were related to anything that the teacher experienced in relation to his/her teaching, including his/her emotions that reflect his/her imaging of him/herself as a teacher and of his/her teaching practices (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). These journal entries were, thus, initiators of the unstructured narratives. Teachers' narratives were analysed through content analysis (Clandinin, 2007; Bauer & Gaskel, 2000).

Document analysis is a method through which education policy's imaging of teachers and their teaching practices were explored. Education performance management system documents (PMS/RBM), the practical education clocking register system and teacher supervision employed during the said education reforms as ways of enhancing teacher accountability and professionalism, were analysed to elicit how teachers understood education policy's imaging of

teachers and their teaching practices. A document analytical framework was developed from literature (e.g. Jie, 2016; Beijaard et al., 2005; Jansen, 2001; Ozga, 2000; Taylor et al., 1997) to guide the document analysis process. Education policy initiated teacher images were then interfaced with research the participants’ own teacher images in the analysis and the discussion of findings section.

**Table1: Distribution of research questions, sources and methods of data generation and analysis processes**

Research question	Methods of collection	Process of collection	Analysis process	Analysis techniques
<p><b>RQ1.</b> How does education policy image teachers within the educational reform agenda of Zimbabwe?</p> <p><b>RQ2.</b> How do teachers image themselves within the educational reform agenda of Zimbabwe?</p> <p><b>RQ3.</b> What explains the relationship between the policy image of teachers and their teaching practices?</p> <p><b>RQ4.</b> How does policy’s imaging of teachers and their teaching influence teachers’ own construction of self and their teaching?</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">↑</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Narrative Interviews Journals</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">↑</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Audio recordings &amp; Journal entries</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p>	<p>Transcriptions by researcher Informants</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <p>verifications of transcriptions</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <p>Document analysis of narrative transcripts and journal entries</p>	<p>Content Analysis: Six stage analysis framework (Adapted from Furman, Langer &amp; Taylor 2010 framework)</p> <p>1 Reading through data (thoughts &amp; impressions)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <p>2 Reread (assigning initial codes)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <p>3 Checking congruence of initial coding &amp; peer debriefing</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <p>4 Establish connections between codes Develop themes</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <p>5 Negative case analysis</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <p>6 Organise final themes for reporting</p>

### 1.12 Trustworthy in the research

The credibility of this research is predicated on its focus to discover “an emerging reality” that will be described and analysed from the data recorded (Maree, 2010:81). For that reason, the research focuses on crystallisation of data from the different sources which allows for ‘variety of shapes, substance, transmutations, dimensions and angles of approach’ (Richardson, 2000) to give a holistic picture on education policy’s imaging of teachers (and its influence on teachers’ construction of self as teachers) and teaching in Zimbabwe. Hesse-Biber and Leavy

(2006:98; see also Scheurich, 1997; Smyth et al., 2000) say that in broadening the ways we collect data and using multiple data sources and collection methods, we are also increasing our avenues to build trustworthiness in our research. As a measure to minimise researcher bias, audio tapes were transcribed with direct quotations to allow participants' words to 'speak'. Multi-data sources also helped to cross-check interpretations to minimise researcher's 'over-reading' of given sets of data. Through content analysis, the researcher examined how education policy influences teachers' imaging of self as teachers and how the constructed images affect teaching. Validation of collection methods and procedures was achieved by pilot-testing of instruments and procedures prior to the actual data collection. Pilot-testing was done with a respondent in a similar setting outside the sampled location in Zimbabwe. In addition, after the initial report of results was produced referrals with the nine participants was done as is clearly outline in Chapter Four.

Regarding ethical issues, Davies (2007:44) says that ethics "relate to the topic you choose to study, the way in which you approach interviewees and other research participants and how you handle your data once you have gathered it." In other words, issues of ethics in research are meant to encourage 'fair play' where there is utmost respect for participants. To achieve this, the purpose and objectives of the research were explained to participants before data collection commenced. A signed letter of consent from each of the participants was kept by the researcher. Anonymity of participants was guaranteed. Reference to participants and institutions was strictly through pseudonyms. All respondents were assured of confidentiality and that the information they gave would be used solely for this research. Ethical clearance was obtained from the University of KwaZulu-Natal Research Ethics Committee prior to fieldwork, indicating that the research had been given full approval. The clearance letters can be viewed in Appendix A.

### **1.13 Delimitation of the study**

This research looked at the influence that selected education policy has on government high school teachers' imaging of self and their teaching. The research was carried out at three government schools that are located in Masvingo Urban in Masvingo Province in Zimbabwe, namely Blueridge, Goldridge and Highridge High Schools (pseudonyms). The nine research participants involved are all teaching at the three government high schools. This was meant to

avert school variability. The research participants, therefore, did not include teachers at private institutions, primary schools or rural schools.

Selected participants for the study were all either ten years or more as a secondary school teacher in Zimbabwe. Gender was not a factor in the selection of participants. Only qualified and experienced classroom practitioners were selected for this research, leaving out school heads and their deputies, who generally make up the school administration.

#### **1.14 Limitations**

This research was confined to the three stated government secondary schools located in Masvingo urban, leaving out other schools such as council, church and other private schools in the locality. The research did not also consider similar government high schools in other urban centres in Zimbabwe.

#### **1.15 Core terms in this research**

**Accountability** - Lipman (2004:97) says that “accountability is a panoptic order of surveillance, an exercise of power that works through constant and universal monitoring to ensure that people conform to required behaviour, teaching them to discipline themselves”.

**Community of practice** – Community of practice is a group of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly (Wenger & Trayner, 2015; Smith, 2009; Wenger, 2007c). A community of practice itself can be viewed as a simple social system (Wenger, 2010) that includes a myriad of practices. Over time, this collective learning results in practices that reflect both the pursuit of the common enterprise and the attendant social relations. These practices are, thus, the property of a kind of community created over time by the sustained pursuit of a shared enterprise, a community of shared practices (Wenger, 1998; Smith, 2009).

**Education reform** – Education reform is a concept used to describe changes in education policy, practice, or organization. It refers to intended or enacted attempts to correct an identified (or assumed) educational problem. As an expression of educational aspiration, its goal is to realize deep, systemic, and sustained restructuring of public schooling (Provenzo, 2008).

**Emotions** – Burke and Steps (2009:155) say that “emotions generally refer to the feelings individuals experience in situations”. Emotions are “complex judgments” which are, sometimes “quite sophisticated...such as judgments of responsibility” (could be in shame, anger, embarrassment etc.) or “judgments of comparative status” (e.g. contempt, resentment etc.) (Bullough, 2009:36). In other words, emotions are judgments that constitute our worlds as perceived by us. Denzin (2009:v) notes that teachers’ “emotions are felt as lived-performances staged in classrooms, hallways (*and*) playgrounds”, spaces in which teachers and students, as moral agents, enact their felt emotions of rage, love, shame, desires, despair and empowerment.

**Imaging** – Dolloff (1999:192) describes this phenomenon well and says, “When we remember people and things in our lives we can 'see' a mental picture of them. Sometimes we can even hear their voice, smell their favourite cologne. This mental picture is a constructed image of our experience”. Dolloff further notes that our constructed images lead to our beliefs of, “not only the individual, but also people in similar roles, in similar places, of similar features. We act in the world on the basis of these beliefs... how we see ourselves, our image of ourselves in the world”.

**Professional Identity** – Parker (in Rodgers & Scott, 2008:737) says that identity is the “evolving nexus where all the forces that constitute life converge in the mystery of self [*converge*]... In the midst of that complex field, identity is a moving intersection of the inner and outer forces that make me who I am, converging in the irreducible mystery of being human”. Professional identity in this research, then, is the imaging of self as teacher shaped by the various forces that seek to define or redefine an individual as an educator. Professional identity is dependent upon the contexts in which we immerse ourselves, i.e., education institutions, teacher training programs, study circles, family, religious discussions, political groups etc. (Beijaard et al., 2005; Britzman, 2003; Smagorinsky et al., 2004; Clandinin & Huber, 2005; Agee, 2004). It is, in fact, the interplay between internal and external forces seeking to define who a teacher is.

**Quality** – Regarding quality, Clandinin (2007:6) says that as a concept, it addresses three key questions, i.e., ‘What does the end user expect from the service?’, ‘When is the service

required by the customer?’ and, ‘Is the service free from defect?’ In other words, quality assurance is meant to guarantee that an object/activity/venture is carried out effectively and efficiently. In that regard, Quality Management System becomes the monitoring policy to ensure production of the said product.

**Reform** - As a noun, the word is used to describe changes in education policy, practice or organization and as a verb, the word ‘reform’ denotes intended or enacted processes to correct an identified weakness in the education system (Provenzo, 2008).

**Self** – The self as a concept is defined as,

the organised consistent conceptual gestalt composed of perceptions of the characteristics of the ‘I’ and ‘me’ and the perceptions of the relationship of the ‘I’ and ‘me’ to others and to various aspects of life...the self-concept thus refers to the ‘picture’ which the person has of himself [*or herself*] and the value he [*or she*] attaches to himself [*or herself*]- how he [*or she*] sees himself [*or herself*], what his [*or her*] characteristics are, how he [*she*] judges himself [*or herself*] in the areas of appearance, ability, talents, motives, goals, ideals and social interactions and relationships (Meyer et al., 1989:379).

Self, therefore, can be viewed as an organized representation of our theories, attitudes, and beliefs about ourselves (Beijaard et al., 2004). In linking the relationship between self and identity, Rodgers and Scott (2008:738) say that “Self...might be thought of as the meaning maker and identity as the meaning made”.

**Sense making** – Maitlis and Christianson (2014:57) say that “Sense-making is the process through which people work to understand issues or events that are novel, ambiguous, confusing, or in some other way violate expectations”. As noted by Gephart et al. (2010:284-5) “Sense making is an on-going process that creates an inter-subjective sense of shared meaning through conversation and non-verbal behaviour in face to face settings where people seek to produce, negotiate, and sustain a shared sense of meaning.” Generally, people are triggered to engage in sense making around the sources of threat, acting so as to restore their identity (Maitlis & Christianson, 2014).

### **1.16 Organization of the thesis**

The research examined the influence that selected education policy has on teachers' imaging of self as teachers and their teaching practices. For a systematic examination of issues, the thesis is organized into eight chapters. Chapter One discusses background issues regarding the 2005 – 2019 education reforms in Zimbabwe. The background situates the reforms within a wider sphere of reforms elsewhere in the world. The rationale for the research is outlined, leading to the statement of the problem. Objectives and questions guiding this research are also stated, followed by the significance of the research. The chapter also provides a brief critical review of literature and a summary of the conceptual framework. A synopsis of methodology issues is also given in this chapter. Definitions of critical terms for this research are also provided.

Chapter Two discusses literature that is central to understanding the spirit behind education policy reforms. Literature Review surveys both theoretical and empirical research on the influence of education policy reforms from other parts of the world, with implications on teachers' imaging of self and teaching practices. The review also looks at the coercive power of education policy on teacher activities. The reviewed research findings are then used to illuminate education policy reforms in Zimbabwe in the period 2005 to 2019. This was necessary to understand the influence of the selected Zimbabwean education policy reforms on teachers' identity construction within the context of, among others, literature from elsewhere that examines dispositions and emotions as shaper of teacher identity.

Chapter Three discusses the theoretical framework informing this research. The concept of imaging/identity construction is examined, making references to the identity theory (Burke & Stets, 2009), the personal interpretive framework (Ketelaar et al., 2012; Vanassch & Kelchtermans, 2014), the concept of dispositions and emotions (Skourdombis, 2018) and the sense making theory (Marz et al., 2013; Ketelaar et al., 2012; van Veen & Slegers, 2009; Vahasantanen & Etelapelto, 2009) and community of practice (Wenger, 2010, 2007, 1998; Wenger & Trayner, 2015) to explain how teacher identities are constructed. Since the ultimate goal in this chapter was to provide a platform to assess the influence of selected education policies on teacher identity construction, it was necessary to demonstrate the interface between the selected education policies and the concept of teacher imaging/identity construction.

Chapter Four discusses methodological issues, where the research design and data collection methods are explained. The chapter also discusses the sources of information and the techniques used for elicitation. Analysis techniques are also suggested in this chapter. Trustworthiness of the research and ethical considerations are presented in this research.

Chapter Five presents research findings and interprets the data on education policy's imaging of teachers and teaching practices. The presentation is thematically structured, informed by the literature review discussed in Chapter Two. The analysis takes the form of document analysis.

Chapter Six presents teachers' interpretations of how selected education policy views them and how that influences their own imaging of self and their teaching practices. Through the discussion of the research findings, the chapter helps to answer the research questions that were stated in Chapter One.

Chapter Seven discusses the research findings with the synthesis of the findings of the study, showing the implications of the results. The chapter brings together issues identified in Chapter Five and Six, to allow synthesis of issues under discussion.

Chapter Eight summarizes findings in relationship to research questions outlined in Chapter One. The chapter re-states the contribution of the research to knowledge in the studied field. The chapter also restates the significance of the study and recommends the way forward regarding issues raised.

### **1.17 Conclusion**

This research looked at the influence of education policy on teachers' imaging of self as teachers and their teaching. This chapter presented a background to the research problem. The rationale and the statement of the problem were also stated. Objectives, research questions and significance of the study were presented in this chapter. A synopsis of literature review and the conceptual framework were given. Research methodology was highlighted. The next chapter surveys literature in detail, to show how the available literature amplifies the research problem.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Overview**

This chapter examines literature on the influence of selected education policy on teachers' identity construction and how the reconstructed images affect teaching practices. The review of literature first examines the concept of quality in education, followed by the concept of education reforms as terrain for contestations. The discussion then proceeds to examine empirical research on education reforms from other parts of the world. Power coercion of education reforms on teachers is also discussed. Perhaps, as a way of putting the review of literature into perspective, it is useful to restate the questions of this research at this point. The research looked at the following questions.

- 1) How do education policy reforms in Zimbabwe influence the way government high school teachers image themselves as teachers and their teaching?;
- 2) Why do government high school teachers in Zimbabwe image themselves and their teaching the way they do during the implementation of education reforms?;
- 3) What influence the constructed teacher images have on teaching practices?; and,
- 4) How do education policies' imaging of teachers and their teaching influence teachers' own construction of self and their teaching?

The last twenty years witnessed increased implementation of education reforms in various parts of the world, for one reason or the other (Lee & Yin, 2011; Hargreaves et al., 2010; Fullan, 2009; Goldstein & Beutel, 2009; Vahasantanen & Etelapelto, 2009). The chief reason for these reforms has been dissatisfaction with the quality of education being proffered in education institutions. Education reforms are seen as ways of strengthening education delivery to ensure quality. The reforms are, therefore, necessitated by the view that the current output in education institutions do not measure up to the desired level. Generally, reform movements in public education have been framed by declaration of crisis, thus necessitating urgent remedy seen as the vision of hope (Provenzo, 2008). The framing of 'crisis' in education has been, in most cases, viewed as cause for the non-performativity of the economic sector which, in my view is, in fact, the epicentre of the crisis. In this way, the education reform movement tends to conceive the school in a contrived sense of the "producer of human capital needed by the

economy” (Smyth et al., 2000:6). Ideologically, then, the education reforms are framed through the human capital development theory and discourses that define it (education) as workforce preparation (Morrow & Torres, 2000), a process Ball (2007:122) calls, “colonisation of education policy by economic policy imperatives”. Schooling is perceived within the “global knowledge economy in which education is seen as a key institution that determines economic growth and serves as an expedient means to measurable ends” (Gardinier, 2012:659). No wonder some of the education reforms (for example, the Zimbabwean) advocate for result-based teaching, a development borrowed from international economic organisations like the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development and the World Bank. The non-productivity in the economic sector is, thus, seen conversely as evident failure of the education system, never mind that the economic demise may reside in other policies that may be outside the school. In such situations, education reforms are used to deflect responsibility for economic failures in a neoliberal state (even the collapse of education for that matter), from “the state to individuals” (Lipman, 2004:97). In this case, quality of education and accountability are pulled together, with the effect of absolving the government from being accountable to its citizens as it (government) focuses attention on learners’ testing and ranking of education institutes (Carroue, 2013). As Hasley (in Hargreaves, 1994 & Furlong, 2000) note, in moments of economic and / or political instabilities, education generally becomes the ‘wastebasket of society’, a policy receptacle into which the society’s unresolved and insoluble problems are unceremoniously deposited, with very few people prepared to do anything about the economy, but everyone (politicians, the media and the public alike) wanting to do something about education, the teachers and their teaching in particular. This is not to argue that the education system has no problems of its own but, rather, to note that some of the reforms are founded on debatable premises and with far reaching consequences. In other words, this kind of framing of education and economics has fuelled education reforms and has had effect on teachers’ imaging of their professional self and, in turn, this has influence on their teaching practices. It is this connectivity amongst education reforms, its consequential influence on teachers’ imaging of self and the residual effect this has on teaching and learning practices that this research seeks to understand.

Teachers’ identity construction has been a subject of research for a couple of decades now. The education landscape reveals that there is a growing amount of research on factors leading to

teachers' imaging of self. The past fifteen years have witnessed an increased research interest on teacher identity construction viewed through the emotions lens (Schutz & Zembylas, 2009; Day & Lee, 2011; Kelchtermans, 2009; van Veen & Slegers, 2009; Zembylas, 2007). Denzin (2009:v) notes that "emotions are felt as lived-performances, staged in classrooms, hallways, playgrounds" where "teachers and students, as moral agents, enact the felt emotions of rage, love, shame, desire, despair, empowerment". This cluster of research has begun focusing on education reforms as a shaper of emotions, heightening the view that they (education reforms), in fact, influence teachers' identity construction (Katsuno, 2012; Lee & Yin, 2011; Vahasantanen & Etelapelto, 2009; Oplatka, 2009). There is, however, still need for more research to explain how education reforms intervene with teachers' imaging of self (van Veen & Slegers, in Schutz & Zembylas, 2009). Moreover, there is very little empirical research on how the education-reform-inspired teacher images influence teaching practices. This research aims at contributing in filling these gaps, perchance providing empirical evidence for our understanding and further contributing to theories of teacher identity.

It is worth noting that, whereas there is some empirical research on the influence of education reforms on teacher identity construction from other parts of the world, there has been absence of such research in Zimbabwe. As stated earlier in this thesis, the education-reform-operating environment in Zimbabwe offers a unique research setting owing to its volatility (socially, politically and economically), perchance giving us other angles to explain education-reform-inspired teacher imaging and how the resultant images intervene teaching practices. For these reasons, it is interesting to find out how education policy reforms have shaped how teachers view themselves and how such views affect their teaching practices in Zimbabwean secondary schools.

As already noted, most education reforms in public education have been framed by declaring crisis in the education system (Provenzo, 2008). The selected education policy reforms were seen as solution to the declared crisis, justifying their implementation. In Zimbabwe, like in other countries, such justification has been predicated on quality of education offered in the school (Meuwissen, 2013; Henson, 2013; Ncube, 2013; Smyth et al., 2000). It is from this point of view that education reforms were propounded in different educational systems, Zimbabwe included. Inevitably, quality of the teacher and teaching has been put to question,

justifying various propositions for mitigating the crisis. Zimbabwe, like other countries that found themselves in a similar situation, crafted its own set of education policy reforms ranging from curriculum innovation, instructional and teachers' in-servicing and monitoring mechanism as ways of mitigating the perceived poor education delivery. This research, however, focuses on the teacher performance appraisal systems, including result-based teaching, the practical education clocking system and teacher supervision as they are applied at the research sight to mitigate the said poor quality of education in Zimbabwe.

A survey of literature on teachers' emotionality owing to education reforms shows that most of the recent reforms are standards-inspired (Kohn, 2011; European Council, 2009; Silver, 2004). Some researchers focused on how education reforms impact teachers' emotions, thereby resulting, for example, in their sense of vulnerability (Kelchtermans, 2011, 2009, 2005; Kelchtermans et al., 2009), well-being (Day, 2011, 2009) and self-efficacy (Conrinus et al., 2012) being affected. These teacher qualities are viewed as integral in understanding what it is that influences teachers' sense of self as professionals during education reform implementation. Other researchers focused on the emotional effect of high-stakes education reforms on teachers' self-image and whether the reforms create congruency (positive dispositions) or dissonance (negative dispositions) between teachers' professional self and policy directives (Katsuno, 2012; Hargreaves, 2005; Lipman, 2004). Some researchers studied the impact of high stakes inspections on teachers' professional identity (Woods & Jeffrey, 2002; Woods et al., 1997) and yet others focussed on curriculum-based education reforms' effect on teachers' imaging of self (Lee & Yin, 2011; Vahasantane & Etelopelto, 2009; van Veen & Sleggers, 2009).

The reforms have also been seen by others as a form of power coercion used by bureaucratic systems to control school activities (Dugan, 2003, 2012; Hartzell, 2015; Ozga, 2000). Invariably, the education reforms explored in these researches (as discussed later in detail in this chapter) are seen by researchers as subtle evaluations of the teachers' fitness-for-purpose and a demand for quality output. This has seen a call for teacher accountability and teacher professionalism in education, justifying enactment of the said education policies seen as corrective measures to avert the declared crises in education.

## **2.2 Call for quality in education**

The call for reforms in education in various parts of the world has been predicated on the assumption that the current mode and quality of education proffered in educational institutions was no longer consistent with the needs of the community. It is imperative, at this point, to state that the word ‘reform’ refers to a concept that has been used in education to denote proposed or enacted changes. As a noun, the word is used to describe changes in education policy, practice or organization (Provenzo, 2008). Provenzo further notes that as a verb, the word ‘reform’ denotes intended or enacted processes to correct an identified problem in the education system. The major goal of the intended or enacted education reforms is to bring about what the proponents view as deep, systemic, sustained and goal-directed restructuring of public education. This, according to education reform proponents, leads to improved school output. This move has given prominence to concepts such as, ‘effective education’, ‘effective teaching’, etc. Although these seem to be straightforward concepts at face value as education reformists would have us believe, the terms are value-laden and become problematic when one has to qualify them. The meaning remains illusory until we explain and are agreed on an answer to the question, ‘Effective at what?’ and are, in fact, agreed that the criterion is meaningful (Marz et al., 2013; Kohn, 2011). Unfortunately, teachers are more often never involved in the decision-making process that leads to education reforms and, therefore, may not share the same views with policy makers’ definitions of effectiveness. It is worth noting, however, that teachers being the frontline workers in education reform processes, they are a vital ingredient to the success of reforms. It becomes critical that policy makers recognise the importance of including teachers in the debates on education reforms. Teachers, in addition to bringing nuances and field experiences to the discussions on proposed education reforms, will also build legitimacy for the reforms when they are implemented (Coggshall et al., 2010). The point is that education reforms should ‘buy’ teachers into them to avoid tissue rejection (Obanya, 1987). Unfortunately, the sources of “many large-scale reforms are external policy, with the goal of adequate management of the school [*and its workforce*] within a national framework” (van Veen & Slegers, 2006:90). Research has shown that, more than often, teachers are only involved in implementing the reforms and not in their design (Hargreaves et al., 2010; van Veen & Slegers, 2006; Olson, 2002). As a result, they have very little control over the perceived improvement process. For teachers to imbibe the spirit of the reforms, they

need to feel as part of the improvement process with a stake in how the schools change (Eisner, 2000). Unfortunately, education reforms tend to use the top-down approach and such is the case with Zimbabwean education reforms. This research argues that as a community, we all need to see where exactly the ‘rains are beating us’ and agree on ways to rectify the problems. We need a shared vision guiding education reforms. The discussion seeks to show, through empirical research, the problematic nature of qualifying ‘effectiveness’ and ‘quality’ in education reforms in the absence of the said discussions and shared visions. The obtaining problem owes to different orientations of the involved players, especially policy makers and teachers, over what is quality education.

Education reforms have been partly fuelled by economic downturns in countries, leading to weakened social services provision. In such cases, governments tend to deflect criticism for the failing economy to education (Whitty, 2006), bringing to question the quality of teaching and learning in schools. The argument is reduced to ‘education graduates have failed the economy’, notwithstanding the fact that this could be symptomatic of failed government policies rather than the quality of education and teachers. The market-oriented setting that pervades education has initiated changes in society’s expectations towards schools, heads of those schools and the teachers, emphasizing accountability, competitiveness and control of school activities (Evans, 2008) and this is at the discretion of the government. This has seen increased surveillance of both schools’ and teachers’ activities. Many of these education reforms claim to be sound, hence constituting “educational improvement, although most of them are implemented with insufficient evidence for their positive effects” (van Veen & Slegers, 2006:85; see also Eisner, 2000). As noted above, teachers, the bona-fide stakeholders of the school, are often not involved in the decision-making processes that lead to these innovations (van Veen & Slegers, 2006), in spite of the fact that the education reforms are supposed to be a means of conceiving and enacting visions of the collective good (Provenzo, 2008).

The deep economic recession witnessed in Zimbabwe reached crescendo level around 2008, coupled with the hyperinflationary environment that adversely affected educational provision at all levels (ADEA, 2012). Unemployment was estimated at between 80 and 90% (Henson, 2013), and this rendered education valueless in the country. Some public education institutions unofficially closed down. Affected learners sought for alternatives to continue their education.

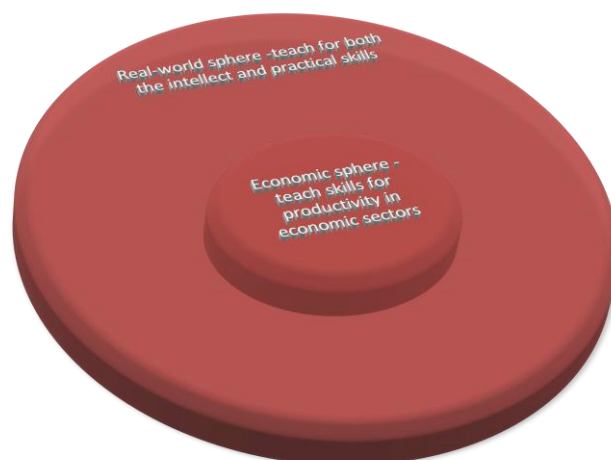
Those who could afford turned to private schools which, at the time, were charging very exorbitant fees and levies to mitigate inflation. Those who could not afford were catered for by teachers who turned to private lessons for survival since government was failing to remunerate them meaningfully. The low teacher salaries and high inflation led to the proliferation of teachers' 'moonlighting' by providing extra lessons to their pupils, for payment (ADEA, 2012:31). A local newspaper noted that "the malady plaguing the local education system is fed by under-funding from the state budget; high inflation which topped 525.8% continues to eat into grants provided by the State to schools. Low morale within the teaching profession has led to staff exodus from the teaching profession" (Financial Gazette, 8 December, 2003:72). It was within this environment that the quality of education and that of the teacher were being questioned, leading to education policy reforms being introduced in Zimbabwe.

The Zimbabwean education policy reforms examined in this research are closely linked to the findings and recommendations of the Presidential Commission of Inquiry into Education and Training (PCIET) (1999). Some of the commission's findings and recommendations became the basis for the reforms that are the subject of this research. In its findings, the commission noted that while many factors had been identified as "contributing to the poor performance of education the problem has to a great extent been attributed to unsatisfactory or variable teacher performance and commitment" (p.448). Teachers were vilified following this observation, notwithstanding the fact that there was still need for more research to understand the amalgam of the factors contributing to the malady. The quality of teachers was castigated, bringing to question teacher training viewed as paying "insufficient attention to methodologies of instruction" (ADEA, 2012:51-2; see also Meuwissen, 2013; Smyth et al., 2000; PCIET, 1999). The PCIET (1999:467) notes that "many parents and communities watched helplessly as some schools performed poorly". Teachers were also blamed for lack of dedication to their jobs, inadvertently affecting the academic performance of students (Ayodele in Ncube, 2013). The Minister of Education, Sports and Culture noted that "right now Form 4s, 5s and 6s are in trouble because they do not have skills" (Parliament of Zimbabwe, 21 November, 2013). As Ncube (2013:228) notes, all and sundry in the Zimbabwean community felt that the standard of teaching in public secondary schools was characterised by "lazy teachers" who were increasingly absent from duty. Perhaps it is fair to acknowledge that the quality of teachers is

integral to learners' progress, but certainly it is not the only critical factor. In a synthesis of over 800 meta-analyses relating to achievement, Hattie (2009) notes that the quality of teachers has a large impact on the learning of pupils (see also Barber & Mourshed, 2007). As Morris (2012) notes, there is no education system that can be better than the quality of its teachers. In fact, research shows that the most successful education systems are those "where teaching has the highest status as a profession" (Department of Education, 2010:3). However, teachers' work can also be intervened by other variables beyond the teachers' control, thereby affecting their performance. This thesis argues that the quality of education is a result of both inputs and outputs. It is unfortunate that education reforms debate focuses solely on the outputs (learners' marks and grades), creating the impression that by measuring the outcomes, you improve them (Edwards, 2013). We need empirical research to go beyond this simplistic discourse and begin to investigate the underlying variables and the different layers of intersecting factors, including the teacher's emotions, given the conditions and environments they operate in. Unfortunately, the discourse on the teaching profession in Zimbabwe has been characterized by complaints about teachers' quality and their teaching, with no empirical research to determine what is causing what. There is absence of research that "examines the emotions of teachers" (van Veen & Slegers, 2006:86) in relation to the current education policy reforms in Zimbabwe. The concern about the quality of teachers led to more overt specifications of the minimum standards that teachers have to meet (European Council, 2009). This culminated in the introduction of overt education reform management mechanisms to monitor teachers' work in Zimbabwe.

As already indicated earlier in this chapter, the qualification of 'effective teacher' and 'effective teaching' are problematic. Add to the matrix the concepts of 'quality control/assurance', 'teacher accountability' and 'teacher professionalism' as attendant to the education reforms enacted to improve the perceived poor quality of education. These are terms subordinated to the contestable notion of "what knowledge is of most worth" for learners (Apple, 2003:7-8; see also Marz et al., 2013:13). Teachers' support (or lack of it) of education reforms depends largely on whether there is congruency or dissonance between their definition, and that of policy makers, of what knowledge is worth. If notions differ, then agreement over the themes and methods of education reforms will be at variance. The global knowledge economy often portrays schooling "as a key institution that determines economic growth"

rather than a miniature community of practice where personal and professional relationships and growth are shaped (Gardinier, 2012:659). The marketization of education tends to reduce it to a list of skills that learners need to demonstrate to show their fitness-for-production in the economic world. Contrary to this, teachers prefer accountability systems that do not limit and distort instruction but, rather, support the development of both intellectual and practical skills and prepare learners for performance on real-world tasks (Wise & Usdan, 2013). Figure 2 shows the conceptualisation of the two views (policy makers' and teachers' essential knowledge spheres).



**Figure 2: Conceptual model of policy makers' and teachers' most worth knowledge spheres**

Essential knowledge framed through the economized education vision tends to be narrower than teachers'. The lack of a shared vision on what education should seek to do could be minimised by an all-inclusive discussion on the focus and methods of education reforms. Ironically, the PCIET's (1999) findings that catalysed reforms in Zimbabwe also noted the folly of ignoring the centrality of teachers in education reforms. The commission warned that "education programmes, let alone reform programmes, have not succeeded simply because

policy makers did not take into account the centrality of the teachers who implement the programmes on the ground” (p.48-9).

The education reforms in Zimbabwe in the period under review targeted the quality of service delivery in education and other service provider sectors. Quality control and assurance were proposed as corrective measures to assure the community. Within education, quality assurance can be conceived as “the totality of actions and processes through which the quality of education is monitored, maintained and developed” as well as delivered (PCIET, 1999:501). As an economics derivative, quality is defined in terms of customer needs and not anything else (Martin, 1999). Quality control presupposes that a product/service is going wrong but quality assurance prevents it from going thus (West-Burnham in Thurlow et al., 2003). For this to happen, a score of measures needs to be put in place to ensure a non-defective product, and in education this has been in form of teacher accountability measures and teacher professionalism, all of which are concepts that indicate teachers’ surveillance measures. Indeed Ministries of Education, Sports and Culture and Higher and Tertiary Education in Zimbabwe (2004:15) refocused and paid “greater attention...to quality assurance”. The point here is that quality in education is defined in conjunction with the educational needs of learners. The question, then, is, ‘Who defines learners’ needs and using what criteria?’ This question reverberates the question posed earlier, that is, ‘Who defines which knowledge is worth to be offered to learners?’ (Marz et al., 2013). One can note here that the drive behind reforms in Zimbabwe (and a number of other countries) has been the ailing economy and learners’ fitness-for-industry agenda. The economic world has a greater say in what is of immediate need for learners. The dangers of this are quite manifest in that teaching is likely to be reduced to a set of skills at the exclusion of other far important abilities. The current research, thus, examines how education policy reforms in Zimbabwe influence secondary school teachers’ imaging of self as teachers and their teaching. The research also assesses how the constructed images influence teaching practices.

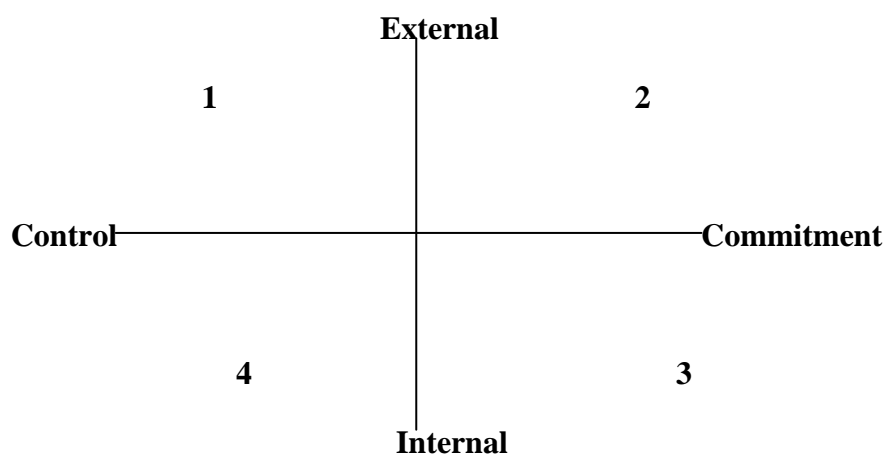
This section examined the concept of quality in education and how it instigates reforms meant to appease the ailing economy. The discussion also revealed the potential dangers and contradictions that reforms may run into owing to their vision of quality. The next section now focuses on the contestations embedded in education reform terrains.

### **2.3 Education reforms: A terrain for contestations**

The general conception of education reforms is to improve the output in education institutions. To achieve their goals, education reforms may target reform categories such as curricular as well as pedagogic or teacher efficiency (Kanyongo, 2005; Riddle, 1998). It is not unusual that reforms may focus on a combination of categories, for example, curricular reform and teacher efficiency measures. Owing to their focus on quality assurance, education reforms make a marked demand for teacher accountability (Hendel & Lewis, 2005). This express focus on output generates two problems for education reforms. The changing definition of professional performance can be (and usually is) in conflict with the “daily practices and professional orientations of teachers” (van Veen & Slegers, 2006:85), causing dissonance between policy makers’ and teachers’ views of how the education process ought to proceed. By professional orientation, I mean how teachers think they ought to work, which is quite critical in their imaging of self as teachers. Added to that is the accompanying amount of time required of teachers to do additional clerical work as demanded by teacher accountability measures. Owing to lack of control of the education policy reform process, teachers feel strained and vulnerable. This vulnerability emanates at least from three points, that is, the usually rigid regulations teachers have to work under, strict quality control measures that they are subjected to, and policy demands that are imposed on them without negotiations (Kelchtermans, 2006). These are not necessarily in-keeping with teachers’ views of self as professionals. Education reforms carry both “implicit and explicit assumptions about how teachers should work” (van Veen & Slegers, 2006). Implicitly, these reforms are a call for teachers to renegotiate their teacher identity (Vahasantanen & Epelapelto, 2009). This triggers intense emotional reactions (positive/negative) affecting their work as teachers. Empirical research, as discussed in the next sections, shows that more often teachers react negatively to reform demands because of the redefinition of their roles.

The bureaucratic governments’ conception of education through the economic and market lens results in the top-down approach to education reforms. What this entails is that “production and distribution of...services is planned, controlled and regulated by the administration” (Snoek, 2012:1). As a result, strict control of planning, the supervision of the execution of the plans and standardisation are seen as guarantees for reliable quality service delivery. The above views,

evidently, imply that Zimbabwean education reform implementations were guided by such thinking. This resulted in the adoption of the Performance Management System (PMS) and the Result-Based Management (RBM) where key result areas are articulated specifying time scales for the completion of the tasks. Education managers can, thus, be able to monitor easily ‘ticking’ the discrete elements during the course of teaching. Management of education in this paradigm is by control. External managers can easily monitor activities to ensure ‘quality delivery’ and can, thus, censure or reward the teacher as they see fit. External managers institute a local management team to monitor activities at the local level. Management by control, in this case, is viewed by the educational organisation as necessary to propel the innovation. Hannay et al.’s (2005; see also Beijaard et al., 2005) dynamic tension conceptual framework below explains how tension arises during reforms in educational organisations.



**Figure 3: The dynamic tension conceptual framework in educational change**

[Source: Hannay et al., 2005:8; Beijaard et al., 2005:258]

The framework shows potential tension that exists during education reforms in a school organisation. Quadrants 1 to 4 represent different possibilities that education reform implementation may take in schools. The different quadrants represent education change management which, in actual sense, is the exercise of power and control. Whereas quadrants 1 and 4 represent education reforms overtly managed by either an external agency or a local administration with no due regard for teachers’ feelings and commitment, quadrants 2 and 3 represent education reform management that coaxes teachers’ commitment. Quadrant 1 exemplifies an external/control approach where an outside agency manages the change process

and is top-down. This change management system adopts commercial quality management strategies emphasizing high productivity and efficiency seen as essential for quality output. Management of the change process here is characterised by a series of control measures for the teachers to ensure that they act within given parameters. The effect of this is a call for organizational professionalism that is not controlled by the practitioners but, rather, by “the organizational managers and supervisors” (Snoek, 2012:8; Evetts, 2009:23). Similarly, quadrant 4 (internal/control) represents a management controlled reform process, save that activities are monitored by a local administration in line with policy makers’ specifications. The result is more or less the same as those obtaining in quadrant 1. The two positions (quadrant 1 & 4) show management of education change that disregards teachers’ feelings, concerns and views, creating tension between the two (management & teachers). Generally, the buzz words in these change management systems are ‘effectiveness’ and ‘efficiency’.

Quadrants 2 and 3 represent change management systems that proceed by courting teachers’ commitment to the change process. Quadrant 3 (internal/commitment) exemplifies a change management system run by a local (internal) management which, however, coaxes teachers’ commitment to the reforms. The buzz word in this change system is ‘improvement’ that is seen as possible through teamwork. Contextual conditions, teacher empowerment, school culture and professional learning are taken into account (Beijaard et al., 2005). In quadrant 2 (external/commitment), the change management is controlled externally but is done in conjunction with capacity building for, and commitment of, teachers. The idea in quadrants 2 and 3 is management by commitment. In theory, teachers’ voices (and contributions) are said to be valid and should be taken aboard in charting and implementing education reforms. The conceptualisation of education reforms above shows that some education reforms miss the point that management by commitment, rather than by control, offers better success rate with on-going organisational growth where members ‘buy into the reform’ (Beijaard, 2005) through their involvement in the planning and implementation of the reforms. This observation points to the need for research to identify potential threats to teachers’ well-being during education reforms, with a view to mitigating dissonance during planning and implementation. Such research would make us (policy makers included) understand “what individual teachers have at stake” in the context of education reforms, showing what the reforms mean for them and how, what they conceive to be important in their work, is affected by the reforms (van Veen &

Slegers, 2006:87). Understanding teachers' potential vulnerability will better inform education policy reform processes, increasing their chances of courting teachers into supporting them. It is unfortunate that most education change models tend to ignore teachers' beliefs and feelings (Olson, 2002). Policy makers do not take time to meaningfully understand what teachers think about the reform, with a view to creating congruence between what teachers take to be their task in education and what they conceive to be the aims of the reforms on the one hand, and the views of policy makers on the other.

Looking at the 2005 to 2019 education reforms in Zimbabwe, it can be noted that the implementation is based on a combination of ideas explained in Hannay et al.'s (2005) model. As already noted elsewhere in this research, the education policies examined in this research were planned and implemented following the recommendations of the Presidential Commission of Inquiry into Education and Training (PCIET) in 1999. This, however, does not mean that education policy makers planned and implemented all the reforms as recommended by the commission. To mitigate what policy makers conceived as poor quality of education offered in public secondary schools in Zimbabwe, they embarked on a number of education policy reforms. These ranged from curricular, pedagogic, to teacher efficiency reforms. This research focuses on the influence of selected education policies on teachers' imaging of self as teachers by policy makers, through result-based and teacher monitoring mechanisms put in place during the implementation of education reforms in Zimbabwe. The planning and implementation of the Zimbabwean education policy reforms are highly bureaucratic, with no meaningful input from teachers. The implementation is supervised by an external agency (quadrant 1) in conjunction with a local administration (quadrant 4). These, as noted earlier, represent a top-down management system where teachers are obligated to follow directives and laid down procedures and instructions. The concerns of teachers are not given space and operations are managerially directed. So, planning and implementation are outside the teachers' control. Superficially, however, policy makers and local administrators can camouflage their administrative-derived power by creating a locally assembled team that 'helps' the Manager. This could be an assembly of heads of departments (HODs) which, hypothetically, is supposed to be the link between the School Manager and the rest of the teachers. However, the control of the external management system is always looming in the background, in form of external Education Officers and Inspectors who, from time to time,

visit the school to check that policy is being followed to the letter. The superficial notion of HODs acting as link between management and the rest of the teachers, as well as internally (quadrant 3) and externally (quadrant 2) organised workshops to ‘empower’ teachers, are seen as the coaxing method for teachers’ commitment. The Zimbabwean education policy reforms have this component in place. Close observations, however, reveal that rarely are teachers ever given their voices. There has been notable tendency in schools that HODs act as an extension of local management and have no influence over policy formulation and implementation. If anything, the HODs’ assembly simply ensures that policy is followed to the letter. PCIET (1999) notes, in its findings, that Zimbabwean primary school teachers complained about the long supervision chain that includes Teacher-in-Charge, Deputy Head, Head (local supervisors), District Education Officers, Regional Education Officers and Public Service Inspectors (external supervisors). In secondary schools, supervision line includes HODs, Senior Master/Mistress, Deputy Head, Head (internal supervisors), District Education Officers, Regional Education Officers, and School Inspectors (external supervisors).

So, in actual fact, commitment of teachers is not usually taken on board during planning and implementation of education reforms. Although at face value it would look like teachers are active team players, in reality these are passive and at times unwilling participants in the reforms. The education reforms in Zimbabwe adopted this evasive method. The enactment of non-negotiated teachers’ management mechanisms for efficiency is clear evidence to this. The question begging an answer in all this is where the approach leaves teachers’ emotions. As shown in the conceptual framework chapter, emotions of teachers are an important intervening variable in education reforms. However, because of threats of sanctions inherent in education policy reforms, teachers avoid displaying strong emotions against the reforms and embark on up-regulating (faking) positive and down-regulating (hiding) negative emotions (Taxer & Frenzel, 2015; Schutz et al., 2007; Zembylas, 2005), making them difficult to deal with. Suppressed and undeclared negative emotions manifest in teacher burnout and exhaustion (Chang, 2013; Tsouloupas, 2011) destabilizing teaching activities in one way or another. The current research employs the personal interpretive framework (Vanassche & Kelchtermans, 2014; Ketelaar et al., 2012) and sense making (Maitlis & Christianson, 2014; van Veen & Slegers, 2006) to examine the influence of quality assurance, teacher accountability and

teacher professionalism mechanisms on teachers' sense of well-being and self-imaging, with a view to finding out how this affects their teaching practices.

Perhaps I need to point out here that there is absolutely nothing wrong with a call for 'quality' or 'effective' education, so long it is not given a narrow definition. By that I mean that the concept of quality/effective education needs to be conceived within the growth of the whole rather than a set of skills for productivity in the industry. Could the collapse of many industries not be a shred of evidence pointing to the defect of the economised school leaver who lacks versatility in the ever-changing world? A school graduate who has not developed criticality, creativity, reflectivity and problem-solving skills in preference for result-based skills may lack innovation. The emphasis in the economized education reforms negates developing critical problem-solvers who are able to search for answers to new situations. Education policy's reform emphasis is on a set of skills for the industry, leading to teachers coaching students for examinations rather than holistic learner development. The work of teachers cannot (and indeed should not) be commodified, rationalised and highly standardised (Freidson, 2001 in Snoek, 2012) if education is to achieve its purpose. Will teaching and learning be really improved through the increased regulations, mandated standards, standardised tests for learners and outcome-based teacher evaluations (Wise & Usdain, 2013)? In my view, schools should not seek to replace professional training institutes but develop human capacities with potential and ability to solve germane, novel and recurrent problems. These observations do not, however, nullify the fact that there are some teachers in the teaching field who, in essence, are not teachers at heart (PCIET, 1999). They negate duty at alarming proportions. These are place-holders whose hearts lie elsewhere other than in teaching. In a survey on teaching as a career, Lemmer and Badenhorst (1997:112) note that some teachers "expressed regret and sadness over their destiny...they do not think much of this career or occupation...There is a feeling of being trapped". These warped, quasi-teachers (for they are not teachers in the true essence of the profession) see themselves as travellers or career-seekers in transit and, therefore, do not have any moral obligation to learners. True professionals measure their professional success by the service they perform (Crook, 2008) and this gives a moral overtone. Given the collapse of many industries in Zimbabwe, many unsuitable people found themselves physically in teaching but mentally they were elsewhere. However, this does not justify the enactment of education reform mechanisms that sound punitive for the dedicated

teachers and are possibly at the detriment of learners. Rather, weeding out the bad apples would be a more progressive way of mitigating the problem.

The assumption at the heart of standards-based reforms is that higher standards are a core component of school improvement and student success (Carroue, 2013). Students' high scores are seen as evidence that adequate teaching and learning is taking place in a school. As has already been noted earlier, the high marks can sometimes be a result of examination coaching rather than authentic teaching and learning. Using standardized testing as a measure of learners' skills and knowledge and of a teacher's ability to teach well results in a dilemma where the "policy adopts an image of a teacher as the banker of knowledge" (Parnell, 2010:10; Freire, 2001, 1993). This focus on output tends to falsify learners' abilities and teachers' capacities. The coercive power of policy reinforces the impoverished banking model teaching strategies as solution to accountability demands (Parnell, 2010). The standards movement can easily narrow teaching (Cochran-Smith, 2001), thereby unwittingly stifling the teacher's initiative. To effectively teach is to create a space in which the community of truth is practiced (Palmer, 1990). Good teaching cannot be reduced to a collection of techniques but derives from the teacher's integrity, initiative and creativity. Opposed to a contrived teacher competence put forward by education reformists, research on teachers' knowledge suggests complex models of teacher competence that include personal, intuitive and emotional attributes (Beijaard et al., 2005). For this to happen, the teacher needs to have a vocation (rather than being forced to do the work), and feel that he/she is serving others, hence deriving personal satisfaction from it (Estola et al., 2003). By vocation I mean teachers' moral commitment to their work to help their learners (Hansen, 1994 in Estola et al., 2003). Nurturing this moral commitment rests on three key pillars to the provision of quality education, that is, enacting an educator-led vision of education, defining and providing the quality tools that are mandatory and critical for quality work, and provision of quality teaching and learning environments (Carroue, 2013). Teachers cannot effectuate positive change in their work unless and until they share the vision of effective education (Sandefur & Moore, 2004). I ought to point out here that teacher quality comprises a range of skills, competencies and motivation (UNESCO, 2006) and not just one dimension.

As noted earlier in this research, education reforms in Zimbabwe were initiated by policy makers (top-down) without any meaningful involvement of the teachers. The vision of change is not educator-led, leaving the teachers susceptible to nostalgia and emotional destabilisation. Rapid, imposed educational change, coupled with public disparagement, has engendered a deep sense of instability in teachers (Goodson et al., 2006). The instability triggers uncertainties in teachers on their fitness-for-purpose, thereby initiating nostalgia and vulnerability that are residues of emotions. When teachers struggle in conditions of extreme uncertainty and emotional turmoil owing to accelerated educational reforms, they usually experience a deep sense of nostalgia for a 'golden age' (Goodson, 2003). By nostalgia, I mean teachers' longing for the past idealized as the golden period of teaching. This idealization can channel teachers' professional energy away from creative engagement with learners (Goodson et al., 2006), prompting defensive mechanisms. As Goodson et al. (2006) note, studying teachers' nostalgia is important in understanding what education reforms mean to teachers and how the change "threaten[s] patterns and purposes that teachers have cherished for decades...[leading to]disrespectful and dismissive treatment of teachers as mere instruments or targets of reform" (p.43). In their empirical research on teacher nostalgia, Goodson et al. (2006) studied school cases of Durant, Sheldon and Talisman Park secondary schools (in New York State & Ontario, Canada). Their research focussed on the sustainability of reforms using the nostalgia lens for a cross-section of teachers with varying teaching experiences and ages. Some of their major findings revealed that education change and the resultant nostalgia left teachers feeling resistant to mandated reforms, insecure about their own professional capacity, disenchanted with their learners and pessimistic about their schools' future. The findings in Goodson et al.'s (2006) research are critical to the current research, raising questions as to whether the education policies under review may have initiated nostalgia in Zimbabwean government high school teachers and with what impact on teaching and learning. Teacher nostalgia owing to education reforms is evidence of contestations between teachers' and policy makers' views on how education reforms should proceed.

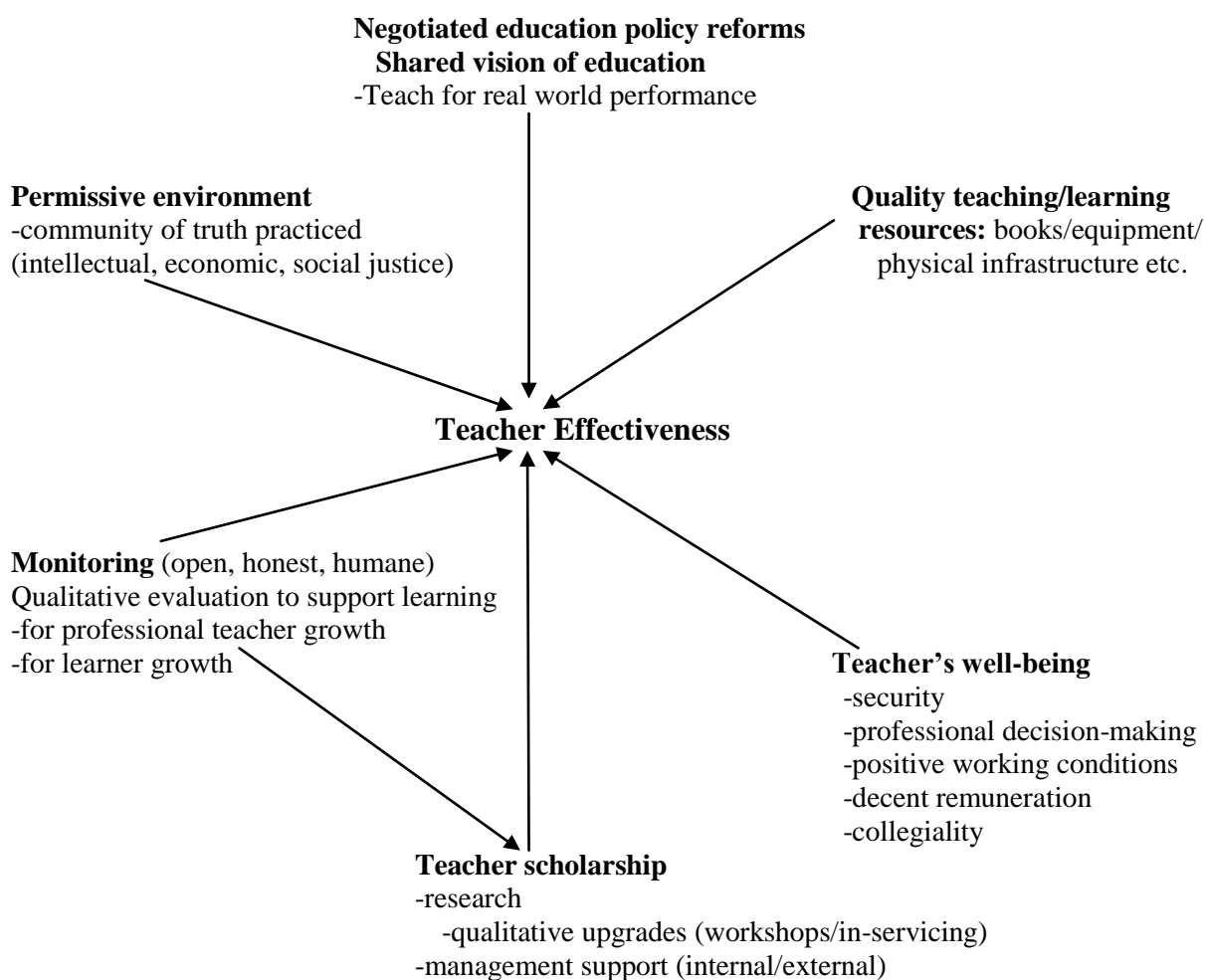
Implementation of education reforms reveals disparities between call for quality teaching and learning and the quality of tools at the disposal of teachers in schools. Quality of education is in fact the result of both inputs and outputs (Carroure, 2013). It is unfortunate that most education reforms focus exclusively on outputs, as if to imply that by measuring students'

results, you improve them. No sufficient attention has been paid to the quality of tools teachers need to use to achieve the said quality results.

In Zimbabwe, the economic recession reached the peak in 2008, making it difficult for the government to provide relevant and adequate materials for quality learning in schools (ADEA, 2012; Chetsanga, 2010; PCIET, 1999). This, coupled with drying up of donor support, resulted in shortage of books, science equipment and other essential learning resources (Edwards, 2013; Coltart, 2012; Kanyongo, 2005). There was general decline in infrastructure maintenance in most schools, making it difficult for teachers to achieve the set targets. It is important to note that “quality teaching and learning cannot take place unless the system is endowed with adequate RESOURCES to effect quality practice”, and for that reason, “the teaching force cannot be held accountable for poor performance” (Samuel, 2009:742). It is against this background that education reforms, unfortunately, frame teachers’ abilities as direct cause for learners’ low achievement. In any education system, provision of adequate and relevant resources to support learning is non-negotiable (Metcalf, 2013).

The provision of quality teaching and learning environment offer the third pillar for the provision of quality education. For quality teaching and learning to be possible, the operating environment needs to be permissive and motivating for both teachers and learners. Inadvertently, this suggests adequate and relevant teaching and learning materials which help build a permissive school atmosphere. Teachers’ working conditions and remunerations should also be attended to so that teachers and learners focus on their co-business with minimal disruptions. Poor salaries and working conditions foster low morale among teachers (ADEA, 2012; Kanyongo, 2005). Referring to teachers in Zimbabwe, the Minister of Education, Sport and Culture submitted to Parliament that “it must be understood...that teachers operate under very difficult circumstances....A teacher must live in a decent house or flat, and not a hovel” (Parliament of Zimbabwe, Thursday, 21 November, 2013). As noted earlier, the economic recession in Zimbabwe made it extremely difficult to create conducive teaching and learning environment where teachers could create spaces where community of truth could be practiced (Palmer, 1990). At the inception of the Government of National Unity (GNU) in 2009 in Zimbabwe, a policy circular was issued, directing that 10% of collected school levies be allocated to teacher incentives (ADEA, 2012) in an attempt to foster a permissive work

environment for teachers. Impoverished communities, especially in rural areas, desperate to retain their teachers, paid their “incentives in kind by giving chickens [*and other forms of commodities like sweet-potatoes, vegetables, maize, ground and round-nuts etc.*] to the teachers” (ADEA, 2012:31). Regrettably, this was scraped at the end of the Government of National Unity in Zimbabwe in 2013 although teachers’ salaries are still below the poverty datum line. Figure 4 summarises the essential ingredients for teacher effectiveness.



**Figure 4: A conceptual map of teacher effectiveness within education reforms**

The conceptual map summarises essential components that contribute towards teacher effectiveness. As already noted above, the education reforms should be negotiated and agreed upon by all stakeholders, with a view to creating a shared vision of the focus of education. The implementation process should be endowed with relevant tools that support teaching and

learning. A supportive teaching and learning environment should be fashioned for teachers to be able to organise learning episodes that promote and support the practice of the community of truth. Monitoring of activities should be open, honest and humane, with a focus on both teacher and learner growth. Monitoring should be a means towards building stronger teacher scholarship. All in all, teachers' well-being should be guaranteed to allow them to focus on creative engagement with learners.

It can be noted here that, as discussed earlier, education reforms in different countries have not paid close attention to pillars that are key to the provision of quality education. This has led to contestations between teachers, on the one hand, and policy makers on the other. There has not been shared visions of what is to be focused on in education reforms, neither has there been sufficient provision of quality tools nor permissive environment for meaningful teaching and learning to take place. The reforms have been at the discretion of policy makers who define sets of control mechanisms to manage teachers and the change process (top-down). As is the case in the Zimbabwean reforms, policy makers note that the education system has become “more accountable with the institutionalisation of the performance management system (PMS) [and result-based management (RBM)]” (Parliament of Zimbabwe, Thursday, 21 November 2013; see also Ministries of Education, Sports and Culture and Higher and Tertiary Education 2004). Evidently, the presupposition is that the institutionalization of the PMS and RBM lead to quality education, notwithstanding a host of other variables needing attention for this to happen. In short, the argument can be reduced to ‘close teacher monitoring leads to quality teaching and learning’. As already said in this thesis, teachers “prefer accountability systems that recognise that the best teaching prepares students for real-world performance...accountability system that does not limit and distort instruction, but that supports the development of intellectual and practical skill and performance on real-world tasks” (Wise & Usdan, 2013). Questions of ‘In whose interests are we working?’ and ‘Who is actually determining the what?’ (Kelchtermans, 2009) are central in teachers' well-being and determine a great deal of how they react to education reforms. The coercive power imbedded in education reform themes (Dugan, 2003) tend to court reactionary responses from teachers because the themes pose direct threats to the long-held image of teacher as classroom-decision-maker.

The current research submits that the discussion this far shows that education reforms ask teachers to change their long-time cherished philosophy of education. In that philosophy, teachers were trained to teach, and believed in teaching a whole child, teaching for life (education as life development) and for social justice. In place of these, education reforms require teachers to focus on developing skills in learners for immediate employment. Within education reforms, curriculum planning and implementation are narrowed to outcome-based, where teaching focuses on results, leading to result-based teaching. The net effect of this is to diminish the teacher's sense of mission and this leads to less emotional attachment of teachers to their learners. Education is, thus, seen as a commodity in the marketplace, a commodity that must meet the demands of the client (learners). For this to happen, specifications and itemisation of the desired commodity, quality control and assurance measures are seen as necessary and these replace teacher autonomy, teacher decision-making and teacher initiatives. In turn, this diminishes the teachers' sense of mission and sense of moral obligation to learners, because these (learners) are not human any more. They are an impersonal bunch of commodity purchasers – not human – hence there is no feelings attached but just business transactions with no sentimental values. The obsession with quality-results inherently leads to examinations coaching, examinations cheating, schools ranking based on results, inadvertently generating tensions/conflicts in the teacher's self (remain honest to the profession or cheat), teacher against teacher (as competitors), teacher against HOD, teacher against school head and school A against school B, because they would have degenerated into competitors for both material rewards and public approval. Given this situation, it is unavoidable for teachers to link/match the pace at which they will work to the remuneration they will receive because the said education reforms have reduced educational transactions to commodities and payments. "Education is increasingly subject to exchange value criteria" which views it in commodity form (Ball, 2007:126). In short, teachers have been reduced to 'guns for hire' and, therefore, will provide a service that they feel is commensurate with the remuneration offered. Within the current education reforms, "being the best as a teacher has become less of a moral imperative based on a sense of integrity and trust" (Day, 2002:421) but, rather, 'gymnastics' for survival. This thesis, thus, argues that the education reform landscapes have become sites for contestations between policy makers and teachers, with learners being the ultimate losers.

The current research examines the influence of selected education policies on teachers' imaging of self as teachers and their teaching in Zimbabwean government secondary school teachers. The next section looks closer at empirical research on the effect of education reforms on teachers' emotions from various parts of the world.

### **2.3.1 Empirical research on education reforms from other parts of the world**

There has been substantial research that looked at education-reform-induced teacher emotions from various parts of the world but there has been no such research in Zimbabwe and very little from Africa. The review of literature in this part looks at the contestations that are evidently inherent in education reforms implemented in various countries, with a view to illuminating what could possibly be happening within the Zimbabwean education reforms. As noted earlier, education reforms have been proposed by declaring crisis in education (Provenzo, 2008), thus necessitating the said reforms seen as solution(s) to the problem(s). In this view, education reforms are regarded as hope for the future. The crisis is, and the subsequent education reforms are, usually economic-inspired and, therefore, are framed on the basis of a country's desired economic productivity. For that reason, most of the reforms tend to be high stakes education reforms (Katsuno, 2012; Day & Lee, 2011; Schutz & Zembylas, 2009; Hargreaves, 2005; Smyth et al., 2000; Woods et al., 1997). Owing to the contestation of what knowledge is worth, as discussed earlier, the high stakes education reforms tend to adopt top-down management edicts (Vahasantanen et al., 2008). As a result, teachers experience the education reforms as something done to them, as opposed to something done in partnership with them (Sfard & Prusak, 2005; Buck, 2005; Woods & Jeffrey, 2002), and this triggers an amalgam of emotions. Empirical research reviewed here examines how teachers experience, and react to, reforms emotionally and how they negotiate their professional identity within the reform context (Hargreaves, 2005; Schmidt & Datnow, 2005). The empirical research allows us to understand how teachers react to reforms and what strategies they use for adapting/survival (van Veen & Slegers, 2006; Drake & Sherin, 2006), as well as determining their commitment to the reforms (Day et al., 2005).

In Japan, Katsuno (2012) carried out research on the impact of high stakes tests on six Japanese teachers from three elementary schools in a northern administrative region following education policy reforms that led to the introduction of national testing in 2007 in Japan. Describing the

background to the education reforms, Katsuno cites the Japan Business Federation's 2005 recommendations on education, which saw the introduction of quasi-market reforms to refocus education. This involved "sharply focussed intervention in which accountability...and outcomes became subject to management scrutiny at both the macro- and micro-educational levels" (Katsuno, 2012:2). This was, in fact, the first major review of the Japanese Fundamental Law of Education since 1947. Under the new legal framework, "economic demands... [were to be] translated into national education objectives" (p.2). Public perceptions prior to the reforms were that academic standards in Japanese schools had declined. The reforms were, therefore, seen as an answer to the declared crisis. The consequence of this was intensification of work for teachers that included target-setting and filling review documents, leaving them with "little time for lesson preparation and communication with students" (p.2). The process of incorporating education reforms into the working day of teachers requires more than just expertise and erudition, but it also involves "an enormous amount of often-frustrating additional work that is taken on by teachers" (Wexler, 2002:471), which can weigh heavily on them. In his findings and conclusions, Katsuno (2012) notes that the reforms increased pressure on teachers to improve the national testing results of their learners and this, in most cases, is done at the neglect of the fundamentals of whole development of learners, what one of his participants referred to as leaving teachers with "little room...for doing the real teaching" (p.5). This is enforced through "threat of sanctions for disobedience" (p.5). As a result, schools in Katsuno's research decided to introduce tests created especially to prepare students for the national testing. In other words, there is substantial time devoted to coaching students for national examinations than doing 'real teaching'. Owing to these education reforms, Japanese teachers' "self-image as humane professionals who are responsible for, and committed to the holistic development of the children in their charge" (Katsuno, 2012:2) is crippled and replaced by "ambivalence and anxiety" (p.6). The background to, and findings in, Katsuno's (2012) Japanese education reforms amplifies the Zimbabwean situation that led to education policy reforms of 2005 to 2019 that are subject of the current research. The economic crisis was seen as directly linked to the failing education system which needed some fixing, leading to education reforms. The outcome was a call for education institutions to be subjected to greater accountability in which market-based competition and stringent surveillance were introduced (Whitty, 2006; Evans, 2008). The current research looks at the influence of the selected

education policy reforms on teachers' emotions and how these affect their imaging of self and, in turn, their teaching practices.

The emotional state experienced by participants in Katsuno's (2012) research is also similar to van Veen et al.'s (2005) findings. Their research examined the influence of education reforms on teacher's emotions. The research was conducted in Netherlands and involved one secondary school teacher's changing emotional response to pedagogic education reforms. The reform involved changing from teacher-directed teaching methods to the Study-house format. Right at the outset, the teacher was happy and enthusiastic with the proposed reforms that were aimed at making the students more independent in their learning activities (van Veen et al., 2005). However, with increased workload that led to his failure to adequately support learners, the teacher experienced "emotions of anxiety, anger, guilt and shame" (p.917) for letting down his learners and that generated irritation at the management for what he felt was lack of support. In their conclusion, van Veen et al. (2005) noted that the teacher's sense of guilt was because he was no longer able to meet his moral objective of caring for his learners in providing them with a good education (Farouk, 2012). Farouk (2012) also carried out a similar research looking at events that led to teachers' emotional destabilisation owing to their feeling guilt due to what they thought was their lack of adequate support for learners with additional needs in their classes. The research involved 52 primary school teachers from 8 schools in London (England). The guilt felt by teachers reflects what they believed to be violation of their moral purpose as teachers, that is, their teaching and caring for learners. In a similar research that involved six Dutch secondary school teachers' emotional responses to education reforms, van Veen and Slegers (2006) report similar findings. Whereas three teachers with a "teacher- or content-orientation towards teaching" felt positive, the other three with "student- and learning-centred orientations towards teaching" developed negative emotional responses towards the education reforms (p.92, 95). Those who reacted negatively felt "anger towards the change" and "fear about the results of students", and this "seemed to worry and to frustrate" them since they were "not convinced" that the Study-house method really worked (p.94). One can deduce, from van Veen and Slegers' (2006) findings, that, teachers with teacher vocation develop humane relationships with their students. Education reforms that seem to threaten the close link

between teachers with vocation and their students tend to create negative emotions in the teachers.

The results in the empirical research reviewed above are quite evident of the various points for contestations during education reforms implementation. Education reform demands sometimes conflict with teachers' long held sense of mission (vocation) in which they hold a professional-teacher-image of a compassionate helper who ought to serve and care for his/her learners. A teacher with a vocation feels he/she is serving learners and derives personal satisfaction from fulfilling that obligation (Estola et al., 2003). In this sense, teachers "often so closely merge their sense of personal and professional identity that the classroom...becomes a main site for their self-esteem and fulfilment and so too for their vulnerability" (Editorial, 2005:895). The school, thus, becomes a "site of struggles" (Day & Lee, 2011:4) in which teachers wrestle with the personal, professional and reform demands. Based on these results, it is interesting to find out how Zimbabwean government secondary school teachers are emotionally coping with the selected education policy reforms under review. The question begging an answer is, 'When teachers react emotionally towards mandated education reforms, how do they, in turn, perceive themselves as teachers and how does that intersect with their teaching practices?'

Some researchers examined teacher emotional vulnerability to try and understand how, and with what effects, teachers react to education reforms. Kelchtermans (2011, 2009, 2005) notes that teachers' emotions should be understood in relation to their vulnerability (positive/negative) that constitutes a structural condition of the teaching job. These are teachers' emotional reactive positions resulting from their (teachers) embeddedness in, and interactions with, their professional environment (Kelchtermans, 2005). Teacher emotions reveal that "deeply held beliefs on good education are part of teachers' self-understanding" and, therefore, education reforms that "impose different normative beliefs may not only trigger intense feelings, but also elicit micro-political actions of resistance" (Kelchtermans, 2005:995). Apart from feeling positive about educational change, teachers can feel powerlessness, disappointment, frustration, disillusionment, fear, anger and guilt, feelings that were also reported in Katsuno's (2012) and van Veen et al.'s (2005) empirical researches discussed earlier. Vulnerability in teaching is "real and profoundly affects teachers' job satisfaction and the quality of their professional performance" (Kelchtermans, 2011:65).

During education reforms, teachers employ a personal interpretive framework (Vanassche & Kelchtermans, 2014; Ketelaar et al., 2012) to make sense of the reform process. By personal interpretive framework, I mean “a set of cognitions, of mental representations that operate as a lens through which teachers look at their job, give meaning to it” and act accordingly (Kelchtermans, 2009:260; Kechltermans et al., 2009:227). The personal interpretive framework performs as a lens through which education reform demands and directives are appraised, valued and are either accepted (congruence) or rejected (dissonance). This situational assessment resides in, and with, the teachers’ conception of self as professional. Three elements are key in negative teacher vulnerability, that is, teachers’ lack of full control of the conditions they have to work in (policy demands, quality control systems, non-negotiated regulations - imposed working conditions) (Kelchtermans, 2009), inability to convince all and sundry that effective teaching and learning is a team effort requiring teamwork from all stakeholders in education, and that although they (teachers) have dozens of decisions they believe to be important for teaching and learning, these are usually vetoed by reform control measures. All this is evidence of the various contestations residing in education reform processes. The current research examines whether such vulnerability occurs in Zimbabwean government secondary school teachers, owing to education reforms of 2005 to 2019. The research further examines resultant teacher images and how these influence teaching practices.

Kelchtermans (2011) reports on vulnerability of ten Flemish Primary School teachers in Belgium during education policy reform processes that merged girl and boy schools and the other (Kelchtermans et al., 2009) involving a principal and teachers from four primary schools on the changes in the composition of student population in schools. Owing to the influx of foreign nationals like Turkish or Moroccan descent (Kelchtermans et al., 2009), multiculturalism was taking centre stage, leading to intensification of teachers’ work. The researchers note, in both cases, that, decisions on the reforms excluded teachers’ voices and induced vulnerability in them. When policy makers’ decisions, with such impact on teachers and their work lives, are taken “over their heads”, that invokes intense feelings of disappointment, vulnerability and a sense of neglect in them (teachers) because they feel they are at the mercy of education policy makers, whose decisions they cannot control or legally contest (Kelchtermans, 2011:68). In such cases, teachers frequently experience the changes as “authoritative”, with “a compelling character”, leaving them with no choice “but to follow up

on them” (Kechltermans et al., 2009:221; see also Ballet & Kelchtermans, 2008). This thesis notes that education reforms’ implicit message in their call for change is to the effect that “the present practices are considered not to be the best...to prepare future generations” (Kelchtermans et al., 2009:218). For that reason, the call for change implicitly judges teachers’ current work and, thus, also questions their self-efficiencies, resulting in teachers’ vulnerability. Negative vulnerability in teachers induces in them a sense of powerlessness and they feel threatened and exposed as they are questioned by others (school heads, parents, Education Officers, School Inspectors) without them being able to defend or justify their actions (Kelchtermans, 2005). Sadly, even when teachers grudgingly implement the education reforms that are thrust upon them, they are still ‘forced’ to shoulder the results that come out of the reforms.

In other words, education reforms generate teacher vulnerability, thus influencing their professional identity. This points to a conclusion in which teachers evaluate education reforms and either emotionally agree (congruency) or disagree (dissonance) with them. Teachers will work enthusiastically towards realisation (fulfilment) of the said education reforms if there is congruence between the reforms and their professionally-directed goals, but will work dispassionately with a high propensity for revolts/rebellions (opposition and sometimes sabotage) when there is dissonance between their goals as teachers and education reform directives (Woods & Jeffrey, 2002). Given the said eventualities, the question is - whichever will be the case - what will be the net effect of teachers’ reactions on their teaching practices? The current research examines teacher identity construction to understand how Zimbabwean government secondary school teachers react to the 2005 to 2019 selected education policy directives owing to their sense of vulnerability. The research looks at how the education-reform-induced teacher imaging intervenes with teaching practices. Results of the research can help the researcher to make recommendations to mitigate negativities hampering the success of education reforms.

Another research that illuminates the significance of studying teacher emotions during education reforms was carried out by Lee and Yin (2011) in China. Justifying their research, the researchers note that most education reforms are planned and implemented “under the assumption that teachers lack knowledge and skills”, thus marginalising their voices,

perspectives and feelings (Lee & Yin, 2011:85), thereby affecting teachers' sense of self as professionals. Their research reports on the emotional impact of a large scale education reform in China that was instituted in stages from 2004, running up to 2008. This was the senior secondary school (SSS) curriculum reform in which the Chinese education system replaced the existing subject-based SSS curriculum structure with a three-level structure that comprised learning fields, subjects and modules. This was the 8<sup>th</sup> curriculum reform in China since 2001. The reforms were implemented in stages by a number of provinces at a time. In their findings, the researchers noted three layers of teacher emotional responses to the reforms (see also Vahasantanen & Etelapelto, 2009:2), that is, positive emotions from teachers who had noted shortcomings in the existing subject-based SSS curriculum. For these teachers, there was congruence between reform objectives and the teachers' professional-goal-directed emotions. For these, the instituted education reforms were a positive way of correcting what they had viewed as a defective curriculum. The second group was characterised by teachers who developed negative emotions over the reforms seen as time-consuming and cumbersome since there were new demands on materials and pedagogic approaches. In this group there were also experienced teachers who lost confidence and doubted their effectiveness, owing to the demands of the new curriculum. The effect of this uncertainty was destabilisation for the said teachers' emotional states, creating dissonance between their images as teachers and the reform demands. The third group of teachers had complex and mixed emotions. These exhibited moments of support and dislikes as well, of the education reforms. Teacher-vocation was one of the key factors generating negative emotions in the second and third groups. There was a sense of guilt, fear and a feeling of betrayal of their learners, whom they felt they had neglected as they implemented the new SSS curriculum. One can note here that by ignoring the emotional side of education reforms, "we not only miss the chance of improvement [*in education*] from teachers' voices and feelings, but also let teachers' emotions enter the change process by the back door, in damaging ways" (Lee & Yin, 2011:87). In simple language, unchecked negative teacher emotions may lead to 'negative implementation' of education reforms, a situation that is likely to fail the reforms before they are even implemented.

Lee and Yins' (2011) empirical research lends support to those reviewed earlier in which emotions were identified as critical in the success or failure of education reform implementations. It is important for the current research to benefit from both, the methodology

and thematic discussions with a view to assessing whether emotions are also a recurring issue in Zimbabwean high stakes education reforms. Interventions can only be meaningful when we fully understand the nature of the problems affecting education reform implementations.

Day (2011) and Day and Qing (2009) report on research results drawn from a larger four year longitudinal study in England involving 300 teachers working in 100 primary schools. The research examined the relationship between teacher-commitment and professional identity. The two sets of research assessed the relationship among teacher emotions, their self-efficacy and their well-being, to determine teachers' commitment to their professional work. In his background to the study, Day (2011:46) notes that educational policy changes enacted in the last 20 years in England targeted at improving teaching, learning and achievement, as well as school governance, all of which were "aimed at raising standards of literacy, numeracy and overall student results". Consequently, schools in England were "subject to demands for more transparency and accountability" (p.46). The move increased pressure on teachers without necessarily considering their well-being. Teachers' well-being can be understood as both a psychological and social construct which refers to "a dynamic state, in which the individual is able to develop their potential, work productively and creatively, build strong and positive relationships with others, and contribute to their community" (Day & Qing, 2009:15; Foresight Mental Capital and Wellbeing Project 2008:10). The point here is that centrally-determined education reforms have changed the conditions under which teachers work, and in some cases, how they teach (Troman & Woods, 2001), resulting in many teachers working "in environments that are hostile to their well-being" and this results in "lowering of morale" (Day & Qing, 2011:16). In addition to these problems are those limitations emanating from the results-driven agenda in which quality control and accountability measures are thrust on teachers, thereby usurping their decision-making powers. The move has affected teachers' sense of well-being negatively in most cases. As noted by the researchers in their findings, the results-driven agenda in English schools had negatively impacted on some teachers' morale and motivation to teach because it ran counter to the teachers' personal philosophy of teaching (Day & Qing, 2009).

Findings from both Day (2011) and Day and Qing (2009) reveal that educational change that generates negative emotions for teachers threatens their well-being. The way teachers feel

about their “professional identity will be associated with their sense of well-being and that is likely to relate to their sense of effectiveness” (Day & Qing, 2009:17). In this case, the classroom and the school become sites of struggles (Day, 2011) with, if emotions are negative, the potential to derail teaching and learning. As already discussed earlier, Kelchtermans (2011; see also Kelchtermans et al., 2009) sees this as teacher vulnerability, leading to teacher emotions. It is, therefore, important to remind policy makers, teacher educators and school heads that teacher effectiveness is the product of “the preparation and continuing support of both the head (cognition) and the heart (emotion)” (Day & Qing, 2009:17). The sense of well-being in teachers can only be achieved where the vision of change is shared or is educator-led and an environment where community of truth is exercised using quality and suitable tools, with the totality of monitoring focused on both teacher-scholarship’s and students’ growth. Based on research results discussed above, it becomes important to find out whether, and if so, how Zimbabwean selected education policy reforms of 2005 to 2019 affected teachers’ imaging of self as professionals and how the said images influenced their teaching practices. The review of research shows that performance-directed education reforms can offset teacher identity, resulting in troubled teacher image that may threaten the well-being of the teacher. Once this happens, it becomes inevitable that the troubled teacher image will have influence on teaching practices.

Woods and Jeffrey’s (2002) and Woods et al.’s (1997) researches on the effect of high-stakes inspections in England offer another window that shows how education reforms can affect teachers’ self-image and motivation. The managerial and outcome-based education reforms brought with them teacher control mechanisms seen as necessary to guarantee quality assurance. Within that move, consumerism has replaced care, whilst measurable quantities have also replaced immeasurable qualities in education inspections and assessments (Woods & Jeffrey, 2002). Unquantifiable qualities like emotions have been negated and, in their place, impersonal relationships have been implied (teacher-learner, teacher-inspector, teacher-administrator, relationships viewed as business transactions). The commodification of education has removed human faces and replaced them with commodities and services. What this has done to the classroom relationships is that teachers are being ‘forced’ to “work at the children” (and sometimes ‘on’ them as well to produce the desired results) rather than “working with the children” (Woods & Jeffrey, 2002:17; see also Sfard & Prusak, 2005; Buck,

2005) in a step by step progression. This smells of coaching and transmission (Freire, 2001, 1993) rather than developing critical thinking and problem-solving abilities. The education reform-inspired “audit accountability sidesteps the personal and local” (p.16), opting for the impersonal and global approach in which learners can be compared and possibly be placed in some form of rank for comparison purposes. In the process, this has destabilised two fundamental pillars in educators (humanism and vocationalism) that have for long cocooned teacher image/identity “in its dealings with everyday reality” (Woods & Jeffrey, 2002:7; Giddens, 1991:3). By humanism, I mean a set of values centred around “holism, person-centredness, warm and caring relationships” in which the teacher is “a whole and real person” who feels while teaching and sees learners in “holistic terms”, thus making emotional connections with them during class activities (Woods & Jeffrey, 2002:7). In this philosophy, positive teaching is built on, and around, child-centred principles in which human feelings and emotional attachments with learners are of necessity. As already discussed in the previous section, vocation refers to the teachers’ commitment to their work (p.8). In that philosophy, teachers were trained to teach, and believed in teaching, a whole child, teaching for real life (education as life development) and for social justice. In Crook’s (2008) words, true professionals measure their success by the service they perform. Teaching guided by humanism and vocation values mutual respect, warm and personal relationships and a high degree of trust between, and among, teachers and learners.

Research evidence suggests that high stakes inspections enacted in the current education reforms destabilize teacher identity, resulting in “traumatic” experiences for them (Woods & Jeffrey, 2002:12). Summarising their research findings on the power dynamics of high-stakes inspections, Woods et al. (1997:160) conclude that in spite of the fact that some of the inspectors may be polite, “inspections on our evidence, on the whole, are hierarchical, confrontational, unfeeling, narrowly technically minded and condemnatory...are bullying in their effects”, leaving the inspected teachers emotionally traumatised and feeling vandalised. Some teachers share “harrowing stories of shock, desperation, hopelessness and helplessness” (Stoll & Meyer, 1998:4; see also Leitsch, 2006:6-7) at their treatment by inspectors just as is with politicians. The destabilizing force behind high stakes inspection is the implied assumption that “teachers are inadequate” and, therefore, adopts the “ethos of telling” the teacher rather than interacting with him/her in a supportive manner (Woods & Jeffrey,

2002:12-13). In short, the message is that teachers have not been doing it right and the inspectors are showing them how things should be done. Central to this is an “assigned social identity – one that the policy-makers wished teachers to adopt, and one under-written by sharply contrasting values” (p.13) to those of teachers, informed by humanism and teachers’ vocation. As already shown in the conceptual map of teacher effectiveness (Figure 4) in the previous section, inspections that are condemnatory destabilise the teacher’s well-being and do not add anything to teacher-scholarship nor to learner-growth. As shown in Woods and Jeffrey’s (2002) findings, this kind of approach to inspections leads to a highly troubled teacher identity in which the personal, the social and the professional break out of their cocoon to stand each on its own in tension. Because the ‘new professional image’ thrust upon teachers through these high stakes inspections is alien to the teachers’ philosophy of who they should be, teachers’ existence lies in separation of the personal, the social and the professional, where the persona in each tries to live independent of the other(s). This is a strategy teachers adopt for survival.

Woods and Jeffrey’s (2002) research assessed the impact of high stakes inspections on 90 teachers in six primary schools in England. Participating teachers were in their mid-to-late-careers as teachers. In their findings, they report that, owing to high stakes inspections, teachers felt tense, behaved differently and bolted things down in their teaching. Teachers complained that high stakes inspections “reduced the complex, multiple qualities of...teaching to a series of measurable criteria” and made far-reaching comments about teachers based on 20-30 minute assessments (Wood & Jeffrey, 2002:11). In the process, learners have been reduced to “slots in a machine” that have to come up with the right answers (p.10). Teachers’ function is, therefore, to make the learners come up with those answers. In this way, as already noted earlier, teachers are being asked to “work at the children” rather than “working with the children” (p.17). Evidently, accountability in education reforms has become a substitute for trust. Based on the research outcomes outlined above, the current research looks at how teacher supervisions are conducted and how they affect government secondary school teachers in Zimbabwe. By and large, the research examines how these high stakes supervisions shape teachers’ imaging of self and how the resultant images influence teaching practices.

Another research that illuminates on the importance of researching on teachers' emotional response to education reforms was carried out by Hargreaves in Canada. Hargreaves' (2005) research involved 50 elementary, middle and high school teachers in 15 schools in Ontario, Canada. The research was on how teachers' emotional experiences of educational change varied over the course of their lives and careers. In his findings, Hargreaves (2005:975) reports that some teachers found it difficult "to control...negative emotional reactions and...experiencing insomnia". Some teachers took "a more pragmatic or assertively questioning stance" (p.975) in their attempt to reconcile the previously cocooned identity and the reform demands. The teachers who had witnessed earlier failed reform processes were "not as positive about teaching, as they once had" because they "saw no point in trying to anticipate change", so their approach was to "adapt and work with it" (p.975). Old teachers were more likely to resist change as they would question reforms, question their teaching arrangements and everything that was to do with the reforms, as compared to those freshly graduating from teacher training whose training was based on outcome-based teaching. The results show that what is at stake for middle to late career teachers is their fossilised ideas on how teaching and learning should proceed. Any change that threatens these destabilises their emotions and that affects their teacher identity. To convince such teachers to believe in the change agenda, the proposal should lay bare how the new approach will add value and build on what teachers already see as the moral purpose of teaching. Emotions of teaching are "deeply intertwined with the purpose of teaching...the relationships that make up teaching and the sense of self which teachers invest in their work" (Hargreaves, 1998:330). Their moral purpose of teaching, therefore, is a summary of their existence as teachers without which they see no purpose as professionals. Newly qualified teachers may find it easy to accept the proposed change because they do not have much to rival what is being proposed. However, as to whether they would totally agree and embrace the reforms is subject for further research, since what makes up teacher-vulnerability can be a collection of the 'teacher's inner-world' not necessarily limited only to teachers in their middle to late careers. In that case, it would be interesting to find out whether their (teachers') compliance is willing, unwilling or strategic (Vahasantanen & Etelapelto, 2009).

Hargreaves' (2005) findings clearly show that the change process in education needs to be guided by research so that it takes into account concerns of teachers and finds ways of harmonising these with education change-themes for teachers to support the reforms. The findings in this research amplify what other empirical research reviewed earlier concluded regarding the importance of emotions during the conception, and the subsequent implementation of education reforms. It is interesting for the current research to also find out whether government secondary school teachers' career stages influence teachers' emotional response to the 2005 to 2019 education reforms in Zimbabwe. Given that emotions are embodied experiences that contribute to the inner life-world of teachers (Langdridge, 2007), it becomes important for the current research to unravel and understand these 'inner life-worlds' that result in teachers' vulnerability during education reforms. The research should also establish the nature of teacher compliance with the reforms, as to whether it is willing, unwilling or strategic compliance (Vahasantanen & Etelapelto, 2009). The research needs to establish the resultant teachers' self-imaging and how that influences teaching practices.

Vahasantanen and Etelapelto (2009) conducted a research on how Finland vocational teachers negotiate their professional identity in the context of a major externally imposed reform that was introduced in 2006. The focus of the research was on teachers' orientations towards the reform which, in fact, would show their emotional response to the reforms. This was a curriculum-based education reform in Finland. Owing to the reform, teachers increasingly had to also work outside their institutions and to co-operate with workplaces where their students were attached. They were required to "cross boundaries between school and working life" (Vahasantanen, 2015:2), becoming border-crossers (Akkerman & Bakker, 2011), thereby increasing pressure on their workload. The reform also meant more duties related to organising induction workshops for workplace trainers to be able to assist learners on attachment as well as evaluations of those students. The demanding adjustments were necessitated by the new requirement in the education system that required students to do more learning at workplaces. Sixteen Finish vocational teachers were involved in this research.

In their findings, the researchers report three discernible teacher orientations towards the reforms, that is, "a resistant orientation, an inconsistent orientation and an approving orientation" each based on the teachers' individual self-positioning towards the education

reform (Vahasantanen & Etelapelto, 2009:2). As discussed earlier, teachers evaluate education reform demands against their own-held “understanding of the goals and meaning of education...[their] actual values, moral obligations [and] beliefs regarding teaching and learning” (Vahasantanen & Etelapelto, 2009:5; see also Goodson et al., 2006; Estola et al., 2003) and this blend informs their response to the reforms. Whether their reactions are outwardly-expressed or inwardly-felt, these will still affect teachers’ emotions (Schurtz & Zembylas, 2009) and, therefore, their well-being (Day, 2011) and that leads to any of the three orientations, namely; resistant, inconsistent or approving. In their findings, Vahasantanen and Etelapelto (2009) noted that those teachers with a resistant orientation were not satisfied with the reforms which were seen “as a threat to the teachers’ professional identity and role” (p.16). These teachers also saw the reform as “establishing new expectations” (p.16) with additional organisational demands in harmonising the school and workplace activities. They saw the reform as “a threat, and as having a negative effect on students’ learning” (p.18). As a result, they did not support the reforms owing to dissonance between their professional orientation and reform demands. Those with an inconsistent orientation had strong conflicting perceptions of the reforms. For these, the “current reform was good” but had “many disadvantages” (p.20). Evidently, for these to give full support for the reforms, certain alterations needed to be made so that the reform was palatable, otherwise in its original form they would be unwilling horses in its implementation. The group with an approval orientation was the only group that could safely implement the reform with zeal for its success, owing to congruency between their teacher orientation and reform demands.

Given the results highlighted above, the question begging an answer is, ‘What would be the attitude of the teachers during the implementation of the mandated education policy reforms given their orientation?’ ‘What kind of compliance approach will each group of teachers adopt during reform implementation?’ One can safely conclude that, save for those with an approval orientation who would employ willing compliance, the other two with a resistant and an inconsistent orientation would deploy unwilling and strategic compliance (Vahasantanen & Etelapelto, 2009), indicating lack of commitment to the reforms. This, in my view, is recipe for failure of the reform. The research results highlighted above give credence to the current research. This research evaluates Zimbabwean government secondary school teachers’

orientations to the 2005 to 2019 education reforms, with a view to ascertaining their emotional response to the mandated reforms. The research seeks to determine how the resultant emotions shape teachers' identities, resulting in what kind of compliance strategies during selected education policy reform implementation. After all has been said, it is important to find out how the reconstituted identities intervene teaching practices.

Review of literature has shown that education reforms affect teacher emotions either positively or negatively. However, most research reviewed above report negative teacher-emotional response to education reforms destabilising teachers' well-being causing vulnerability. The reviews show various contestations evident in education reforms, with a potential for affecting teaching practices. These contestations are a result of power struggles embedded in the reform agenda. The next section briefly looks at the coercive nature of reforms.

### **2.3.2 Power coercion in education policy reforms**

It is worth noting that the review of literature revealed that the force that drives high stakes education reforms comprises accountability measures which, in fact, are used as tools to ensure teacher-compliance (Parnell, 2010; Kelchtermans, 2009; Evans, 2008; Whitty, 2006). The concept of accountability comprises two forms, that is, vertical and horizontal accountability. Vertical accountability comprises traditional hierarchies, decisional authority, bureaucracies, policies and regulations, accounting, prescriptions and audit inspections (Wenger, 2010). This form of accountability works across levels of scale and favours tools that work easily across layers of practice. Its characteristics are mandates and quantifiable numbers as indicators of progress. On the other hand, horizontal accountability is associated with engagement in joint activities, negotiation of mutual relevance, standards of practice, peer recognition, identity and reputation, and commitment to collective learning (Wenger, 2010). This type of accountability values processes that are based on substance in the context of mutual negotiations focussed on quality and whole. As shown earlier under the review of empirical research, education reforms tend to rely on vertical accountability, with the assumption that "horizontal relationships lack accountability", thus needing overlays of vertical structures for rigour (Wenger, 2010:13).

Most of the discussions around education reforms take place in a power coercive framework in which a regime of vertical accountability formulas enacted directly challenge and undermine judgements of professional educators (DiBiase, 2015). The "power of coercion" in education

policy is aimed at producing “the desired outcomes of complete accountability” (Parnell, 2010:10), with very little foresight on the backlash of this drive. Power, as a concept, is the organizing feature (DiBiase, 2015) used by people in position to influence subordinates. Power coercion is used to punish subordinates for not meeting performance expectations or to deter subordinates from making decisions that policy makers think will negatively affect high stakes results (Hartzell, 2015). Power coercion covers the domination of man by man, both when it is disciplined by moral ends and controlled by institutional safeguards, and when it is that untamed and barbaric force which finds its laws in nothing but its own strength and its sole justification in its aggrandizement (Dugan, 2003). An example of power coercion disciplined by moral ends can be noted in concepts like teacher accountability, teacher professionalism, quality control/assurance and result-based management systems whose declared intention is improving the learners. However, as review of literature has shown that these coercive measures can be employed to the detriment of learning in schools when they destabilise teacher identity. To use Thomas’ (2011) metaphor, we are raising caged birds and demanding that they earn the right to fly. Owing to the said narrow vision of education in the reform agenda, we are forcing children to sit down, shut up, and do as they are told, and then we turn around and wonder why they cannot think for themselves. Power coercion inherent in the reform process frames teachers’ survival strategies to escape sanctions. In the process, this boxes teaching into formulas that produce high scores, notwithstanding the fact that the learners may not be as astute as one would have wanted. As already noted elsewhere in this chapter, these measures, apart from narrowing the vision of education, they are also imposing thereby offsetting teachers’ emotions. On the other hand, untamed and barbaric coercive power needs no camouflage because it is law unto itself and simply relies on its brutal force (Dugan, 2003; Research and Advocacy Unit [RAU], 2012; Nicolai, 2009; O’Malley, 2010, 2007). This is typical of states at war and those in volatile mood owing to social, political and economic instabilities.

As already noted elsewhere in this chapter, the high-stakes model is hierarchical and borrows from behavioural psychology the view that compliance of teachers can be secured through “punishment and reinforcement” (Parnell, 2010:7). In this case, threat of sanction for teachers is used to secure compliance with reform directives. Some policy makers use, in addition to threat of punishment for non-compliance, the carrot form, what Hartzell (2015) calls ‘reward

power', where result-based rewards are used to bait teachers into compliance (Dugan, 2003, 2012). It is unfortunate that high-stakes education reforms depend on a series of questionable assumptions about teachers' behaviour: that education professionals will not pursue improvement unless coerced by punishment and rewards, that the education system is in crisis and needs radical change that can only be driven externally (Parnell, 2010), and that improved test scores are an indication that quality learning is taking place. All this is evidence of power coercion behind mandated educational change. One would want to know how Zimbabwean government secondary school teachers respond to this framing. In addition, how do their responses influence their self-imaging and teaching practices? This typically shows the various contestations embedded in education reform processes.

The backlash of using power coercion in education reforms, whether couched in moral ends or openly as brutal force, can be severe. People generally do not like to be forced to do things against their will (Dugan, 2003). As already noted earlier, teachers might decide to narrow the curriculum and teach for examinations, resulting in an impoverished academic experience for learners (Parnell, 2010). This approach would certainly misrepresent learners' abilities and teachers' capabilities. Teachers may also engage in 'cat and mouse games' with management, characterised by lots of pretence at compliance when in actual fact they are doing things differently in the backyard. Unwilling and strategic compliance would usually be employed in a deceptive manner for the teachers to escape sanctions (Vahasantanen & Etelapelto, 2009). Display of emotions will be strategic, in which too strong emotions are not declared and are camouflaged by up-regulating (faking) positive and down-regulating (hiding) negative emotions (Taxer & Frenzel, 2015; Schutz et al., 2007; Zembylas, 2005). Power coercion in educational reforms invariably involves a negative-some game, that is, a situation in which either both parties (policy makers and teachers) lose or in which the winner's gain is less than the opponent's loss (Dugan, 2003). Performance-scripted teaching and learning withdraw teachers' and learners' freedom that should move and make them take risks to experiment, thereby developing the creativity and criticality of mind to deal with, and problem-solve, new challenges (Schmidt & Thomas, 2009). This situation comes about because the accountability movement focuses on 'fixing' the people while never considering the failure of the system itself (Woods & Jeffery, 2002). For example, when students' test scores are low, instead of also examining the students' personalities, the flaws that may be inherent in the tests themselves, or

when teachers cheat on standardized testing, instead of assuming those teachers to be lazy, self-serving and ‘bad apples’, we need to also consider what, in our system of accountability, could be driving them to these behaviours (Thomas, 2011).

Current research needs to ascertain the influence of power coercion on Zimbabwe government secondary school teachers’ imaging of self and how that affects teaching practices during high stakes education reforms. There is need to understand how power relations are negotiated and played out during high stakes education reform implementation.

#### **2.4 Conclusion**

The review of literature in this chapter looked at how education reforms conceptualise quality education through the high stakes education lens, as opposed to the teachers’ views. The review proceeded to look at the contestations arising from unshared vision of education reforms as well as teacher identities that resulted from the reforms. Power coercion embedded in high stakes education reforms was also discussed. The reviewed literature was then used to illuminate the current research. The chapter rounded off with a synopsis of the selected Zimbabwean education reform strategies employed to foster high stakes education in Zimbabwean government secondary schools in the period 2005 to 2019. The next chapter turns to the theoretical framework that informs the current research.

## ***CHAPTER THREE***

### **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

#### **3.1 Overview**

In this chapter I discuss the theoretical framework that informed this research. I explore how education policy influences teachers' identity of self as teacher and their teaching. Theoretical framing for this research brings together teacher identity and education policy to show how education policy instigates teacher identity. To begin with, I examine identity theory to understand the development of teachers' perceptions of who they are (Burke & Stets, 2009; Owens, Dawn, Robinson & Smith-Lovin, 2010) and how teacher emotions shape their imaging of self and teaching. Thereafter, I look at education policy, showing how selected education policy directives influence teachers' imaging of self and teaching.

Identity theory is a Socio-psychological theory that looks at the psychology of 'actors' and 'attributes' their actions to their psychological processes (Burke & Stets, 2009). The Socio-psychological theory is housed under the Socio-cultural theory. Identity in this research is taken to mean "the set of meanings that define who one is when one" occupies a particular role in society, for example, being a teacher (Burke & Stets, 2009:3). For instance, one of the personal characteristics that identify teachers as unique beings is their moral qualities as teachers. Seen from this point, teaching becomes a moral act that defines the identity position of teaching as comprising caring for learners. Education policy, by nature, says something about teachers and teaching. To understand how education policy influences teachers' identity construction and teaching, I examine how education policy instigates teachers' perceptions of self and teaching, as well as how it (policy) sets off teacher emotions. Examining education-policy-initiated teacher identity allows me to "highlight the power of emotions, personal beliefs and context" in shaping teachers' perceptions of self and their teaching (Olsen, 2012:1123). My interest is to understand teachers' interpretations of, and emotional response to, directives given by the selected education policies and how these eventually influence how teachers carry out their teaching. Education policy directives reveal how the said policy image teachers and teaching and how, in turn, that affects teachers' imaging of selves as teachers, and their teaching. The current research is, therefore, a journey that aims at understanding how education policy in Zimbabwe shapes teachers' perceptions of who they are and what emotions are generated therein, and how the said emotions influence teaching within the context of

reforms. Theorization of the implied relationship is that education policy initiates teachers' perceptions of who they are, thereby influencing their (teachers) emotions which, in turn, shape their reactions to education reforms (Gultekin, 2014; Birkland, 2015, 2011; Bell & Stevenson, 2006). This research is, therefore, a quest to understand how implementation of education policy arouses teacher emotions and how the said emotions influence teachers' imaging of self and teaching.

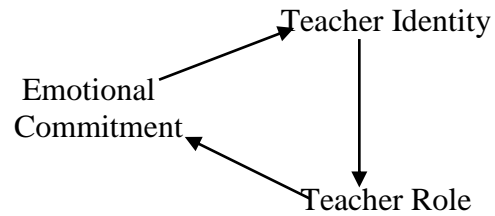
Approaching teacher identity from a socio-psychological perspective allows me to examine the social and psychological states that influence teacher identity during education reforms. The social nature of identity implies that teachers "are products of their social histories, and - through things like hope, desperation, imagining, and mindfulness - they move themselves from one subjectivity to the next and from one facet of their identity to another" (Olsen, 2012:1123). Studying teacher identity allows me to understand teachers as people with lived experiences that are personal and / or professional that influence their behaviours as social beings who are simultaneously empowered and constrained in relation to the groups, structures, and roles in which they participate (and even those in which they do not) (Olsen, 2012). Examining teacher identity theory allows me to navigate how teachers develop self within the flow of socio-historical activities that shape their beliefs. Olsen (2012:1124) notes that it pays to study teacher identity as a sociocultural product of historical development, as well as an agent that continually constructs and reconstructs self within "the give-and-take of actual educational practice". Such research, thus, encourages us to deal sensitively with teachers during education reforms, mindful that they are multifaceted and emotional beings whose professional development and how they execute their duties is almost always entangled with emotions.

### **3.2 Identity theory and its historical development**

In this section I define the term identity and discuss briefly the development of the theory from early conceptions to the current. Identity is a shared set of meanings that define individuals in particular roles in society, for example, teacher role identity (Stets & Trettevik, 2014; Stets & Serpe, 2013; Burke & Stets, 2009). Meaning is "a mediation response to stimulus; meaning mediates between perceiving a stimulus and responding to it" (Stets & Trettevik, 2014:34). When the stimulus is seeing oneself as a teacher, the meanings would be that individual's

reflections as to who one is, and how one is expected to act when one sees self as a teacher. In other words, meanings are responses by individuals when they “reflect upon themselves in a role” (Stets & Serpe, 2013:34). Teacher identity, therefore, refers to the images that a person who belongs to that community of practice (Wenger & Trayner, 2015; Wenger, 2010) perceives to describe self in that identity role. As teachers, there are specific characteristics that brand them unique as members of a community of practice that set them as distinct from other communities of practice. For teachers, such characteristics are vital in qualifying them to this community of practice. These characteristics become a source of pride as a member of that community of practice. Asking them to act in an otherwise manner can evoke feelings of betrayal to their profession. In short, where teachers feel that by carrying out education policy instructions they are likely to betray their beliefs as teachers, they may develop negativity to such policy directives. This may either affect their teaching or compromise their policy implementation.

Teacher identity, as a concept or analytical tool, helps me to understand how teachers as social beings construct and continually reconstruct understandings of, and for, themselves as teachers (Olsen, 2012). Three components are critical to teacher identity, that is, the social context of the individual, the emotional commitment to the identity and the associated role (Whannell & Whannell, 2015). The social context reveals that identities are shaped by social activities and are, therefore, relational. Role performance is influenced, and sometimes governed, by social structures. Whannell and Whannell (2015:46) theoretically modelled these components to show how they relate to, and influence, one another. As shown in the model in Figure 5, teachers’ perceptions of their role(s) as teachers (that is, how they perceive their self and what they think others see them as – social structures), influences their emotional commitment to their teacher identity. As shall be discussed later in this chapter, teachers’ emotional commitment to an identity depends on the verification or non-verification of identity, which creates either positive or negative emotions.



**Figure 5: Conceptualizing teacher identity**

[Adapted from Whannell & Whannell’s (2015:47) theoretical model for identity formation]

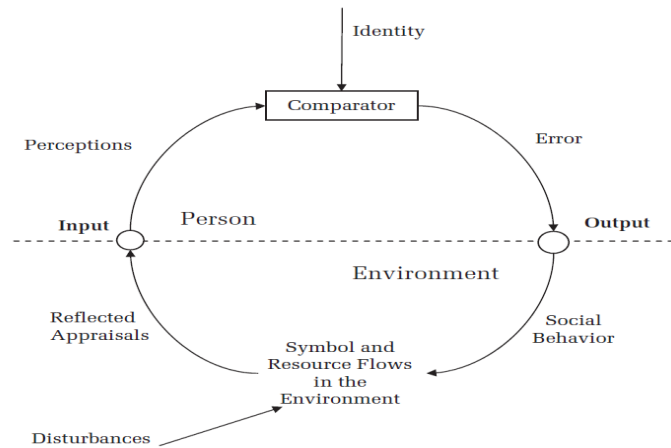
Teachers are “embedded in multiple role relationships in multiple groups”, which results in them holding multiple identities (Stryke & Burke, 2000:290 in Whannell & Whannell, 2015:45). The multiple roles and multiple identities may complement each other (creating positive emotions) or result in conflict of identities (creating negative emotions). What this implies is that where education-reform-initiated teacher identities are in conflict with the teacher’s long-held views of images of teachers and teaching, these results in non-verification of teacher identities and, therefore, generates negative emotions. Non-verification of identities, more than often, initiates identity competition, complicating relationships between teacher commitment, identity salience, identity standards and the teacher’s self-relevant perceptions (Whannell & Whannell, 2015). Teachers’ “academic emotions are closely tied” to teachers’ “self-appraisals of competence and control in the academic domain” and to the values and goals they attach to teaching and to learners’ achievements (Pekrun et al., 2002:103). This research examined the influence of education reforms on Zimbabwe government secondary school teachers’ perceptions of self as teachers and of their teaching.

Theorization on identity started way back at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Charles Horton Cooley (1902) and George Herbert Mead (1934) are the earliest theorists of identity. The theorists saw the ‘self’ as critical in identity theory. Whereas Mead focused on the self as a cognitive entity, Cooley viewed emotions to be at the centre of the self (Burke & Stets, 2009:152-158). The self as a cognitive entity (Mead, 1934) emphasizes on the ability of the self to think about oneself as others would, that is, considering the other’s views when acting in given situations. In spite of Mead’s focus on the cognitive, his four stages theory, that is, the impulse, perception, manipulation and consummation, gave rise to views in which the self is seen as a feeling entity (Burke & Sets, 2009; Mead, 1934). According to Mead, when individuals experience interruption in on-going activities, their impulses are raised. Impulses,

in turn, heighten perceptions about the on-going activities, initiating response options that would return the self to equilibrium. In his theorisation, Mead noted that the self (part of one's personality) comprised self-awareness and self-image that emerge through social interaction carried out through symbols (<https://www.sophia.org/tutorials/meads-theory-of-self-and-cooleys-looking-glass-sel>, downloaded 16/01/17). Mead argued that the self develops through social interaction involving the exchange of symbols whose interpretations involve taking the role of self as well as that of the other.

Cooley (1902), on the other hand, theorised that sentiments and emotions are at the core of the self. In Cooley's view, emotions are social since they emerge from imaginings that an individual (the self) experiences in response to how that self thinks others view oneself (the feeling self) (Burke & Stets, 2009). Cooley propounded the looking-glass self in which our reflections of the self leads to three aspects, that is, how we imagine we look like to others, how we think others evaluate our appearance, and what feelings/emotions are generated owing to the assumed external evaluations of the self (Johnson, 2017). Our proximate environment serves as 'mirrors' echoing images of ourselves (identities). Teachers' identities are, thus, imaginings of how they appear to others (education policy included), imaginings of what judgments others make of them and imaginings about how others feel about them (Isaksen, 2013). The looking glass self basically means that our self-image comes from our own self-reflection and from what we imagine others think of us. What this means is that behaviour changes based on how one feels people perceive oneself. Equally true is that we sometimes perceive others' impressions of us incorrectly (Johnson, 2017). Imagined self-images (identities) develop unintentionally (and sometimes unconsciously) and are in flux so long people are interacting. When a person develops a negative self-image (identities), this tends to lower that person's self-esteem, resulting in malfunctioning of the affected identities. If meanings generated from the self and those from the other are in harmony, this creates identity verification, resulting in positive emotions. Interruption (identity non-verification) in what teachers think they should do (unresolved conflict of images) generates negative feelings such as fear, anger, sadness, disgust and sometimes frustration, which could block implementing appropriate action (Burke & Stets, 2009; Lazarus, 1999, 1993, 1991a). Intense negative feelings could block "clear thinking" and implementation of "appropriate action" (Burke &

Stets, 2009:157). Burke and Stets (2009) theorized identity formation and explained it in an identity process as shown in Figure 6.



**Figure 6: Identity process** [Source: Burke & Stets, 2009:62]

Figure 6 comprises two main components, the person and the environment which are acted on by four components: input, identity standard, comparator and output. The person, by virtue of reflective appraisals of various symbols and resources that flow in the environment, develops an image of self or role identity. The environment contains symbols and resources. These comprise, but are not limited to, social institutions, training institutions, symbolic language etc. When the person, the feeling self, makes reflective appraisals of elements constitutive of the environment, various meanings are generated and these are labelled as input in Figure 5. Reflective appraisals constitute what Vanassche and Kelchtermans (2014; see also Kelchtermans, 2013; Kelchtermans, 2009; Muller, 2013) call the Personal Interpretive Framework that operates as lens through which the self, e.g. teacher, perceives their role situations, give meanings to, and act in accordance with, the meanings. The perceived meanings crystalize into perceptions (images) held by the feeling self over various issues. For teachers, the various meanings of a teacher and teaching are generated from, and shaped by, the symbols and resources that flow in the environment. Initial teacher training and subsequent upgrades can create highly stable teacher image. This becomes an identity standard that is likely to contain qualities such as being highly moral, caring, helpful, supportive and desirous to educate for life. Such qualities crystalize into teacher identity standard which the individual uses to define a teacher and teaching. Owing to the transient nature of social and even

professional life, new meanings about the teacher and teaching may filter into the social space. For teachers to process such information to either alter the teacher and teaching identity they hold, they need to compare the new information to their teacher identity standard for the purpose of either accommodating or dismissing of such new information. The comparator in Figure 5 above serves this purpose. It compares the new input perceptions to the identity standard for the purpose of verifying whether there is agreement or disagreement between the new image and that held as the standard, a process that Burke and Stets (2009) refer to as *verification* or *non-verification*. Where the new information or image is verified, then such is accommodated and allowed to adjust the originally held image. However, when the new image or information is not verified, it is rejected and, therefore, opposed as unsuitable for the image of teacher and teaching. Verification or non-verification leads to output and this can be in form of social behaviour. Non-verification constitutes ‘error signals’ in Figure 5 above. Error signals signify that the new image or information has not been accommodated into the identity standard owing to real or imagined threats to the identity standard. I will turn to these issues later to show how education policy can create such feelings during education reforms.

What all this reveals is that where teachers feel that education policy looks at them negatively, the teachers may either ‘reframe’ the policy so that it agrees with their preferred teacher image or they may ignore the policy and act otherwise. Studying the influence of education reforms (accountability measures) on teachers’ imaging of self from the interactionist perspective yields better understanding of why teachers react the way they do towards the reforms (Johnson, 2017). The current study examined the influence of education reforms of 2005 to 2019 on Zimbabwe government secondary school teachers’ imaging of self as teachers and their teaching.

To further understand how social interactions influence identity construction, I briefly explore the evolution of the concept ‘symbolic interaction’ (SI). Below, I examine briefly the contribution of Traditional structural interactionism (TSI) and Structural symbolic interactionism (SSI) to our understanding of teacher identity construction. Three components are identified as critical to understanding how identity develops in social settings, that is, the self, language (and other communicative symbols) and interaction. These, I will turn to a little later. The term symbolic interaction (SI) was coined by Blumer (Mead’s student) whilst

structural symbolic interactionism (SSI) was conceived by Stryker (Burke & Stets, 2009; Stryker, 2002). The common trait in symbolic interactionism is that to understand human identities, we need to “get at social actors’ subjective world and understand their reality as they do” themselves (Burke & Stets, 2009:34). In other words, for us to understand teachers’ views of themselves as teachers and teaching, we need to hear from them who they say they are, what they think selected education policy says about them and how, in turn, they respond to that. Traditional symbolic interaction (TSI) views society (social structure) as being in flux. Since the self is a product of social interaction, what this means is that, owing to the flux of society, the self would be disorganised, unstable and transient. In other words, identities would be unstable and temporary (with no permanence). This is contrary to the structural symbolic interaction (SSI) which sees society as “stable and durable, as reflected in the patterned behaviour within and between individuals” (Burke & Stets, 2009:34). Social structures are in form of social groups, what Wenger (2010; see also Lave & Wenger, 1991) calls ‘communities of practice’ that shape identities.

In proposing the term ‘community of practice’, Lave and Wenger (1991), sought for a model to explain situated learning (including identity construction), as a social engagement (Smith, 2009). The model conceptualizes learning (and identity construction) as occurring through “participation in a community of practice, involving four components: practice, meaning, identity, and community” (Nel, 2012:145). Communities of practice are groups of people who “share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly” (Wenger & Trayner, 2015:1). These are communities engaged in collective human endeavour in pursuit of an enterprise (Smith, 2009). In other words, the social and the individual “constitute each other” (Wenger, 2010:1). Communities of practice are everywhere (Smith, 2003, 2009), they are multiple, overlapping, some with stronger and others with weaker bonds that are defined by varied dimensions such as professional ethics, common beliefs, norms of interaction, participation etc. (Westheimer, 2008). These communities of practice greatly influence who qualifies to be members of that community of practice. Social structures define boundaries of the communities of practice and influence the kinds of selves people become. Teachers, as social actors who belong to a social structure, are oriented towards achieving their moral objectives as teachers. To understand how education policy can influence teacher identity, it is important to look at the ‘self’, ‘language’ and ‘interaction’

before bringing in education policy to theorize on education-policy-initiated teacher and teaching images. The concept of identity “is nested within the more inclusive concept of the self and the self-concept” (Owens, et al., 2010:478) to which I now turn to.

### **3.2.1 The self**

In this section, I closely examine the concept of ‘self’ to show how it contributes to identity formation. The self “originates in the mind of persons and is that which characterizes an individual’s consciousness of his or her own being or identity” (Burke & Stets, 2009:10). Schwartz et al. (2011:117) note that the “self is a mental concept, a working theory about oneself, stored in memory, and amended with use. It is a working theory about who one is, was, and will become”. The self, in identity theory, is both individual and social, resulting in multiple of selves owing to various social interactions people engage in (Owens et al., 2010). The self grows out of the mind and is shaped and developed out of social interactions. The self-concept may be viewed as the totality of a complex, organised and dynamic system of learned beliefs, attitudes and opinions that each person holds to be true about his or her personal existence (Whannell & Whannell, 2015). For the self-concept, the future matters because it defines who one will become in relationship to the overall imbued identity.

It is worth noting that the self is a complex phenomenon of the human mind born out of reflexive action stemming from various interactions with human agencies, symbols and resources that influx social space (Owens et al., 2010). Within the self is the ‘I’, which reveals the dynamic, novel and spontaneous qualities of the self as “the knower and actor” whilst the ‘me’ is constituted by “all the learned perspectives a person takes toward him – or herself and the attitudes that the ‘I’ assumes toward one’s own person” in view of a role (Owens et al., 2010:478-9). The mind controls the meanings that we assign to language/symbols and other environmental resources which, in turn, govern our responses to identity stimuli as already discussed under identity process in Figure 5. The various teacher identities that the ‘I’ perceives act as agents instigating behaviour within the different roles teachers find themselves in. It is, therefore, necessary to examine the relationship between education reforms directives, teachers’ perceptions of self as a teacher and emotional responses that ensue thereafter. This research notes that verification or non-verification of education-policy-initiated teacher images influences teachers’ response behaviours (emotions), thereby influencing teaching. This

research contributes to our theorization on how ‘teacher emotions’ marshal teacher actions during education reforms.

### **3.2.2 Language, signs and symbols**

In identity theory, language is viewed as important symbolic communication. Since each person is a producer and hearer of language (the multiple self), a person may communicate with self in form of dialogic internal processes through chains of reasoning and imagined possibilities dealing with both things present and things not present or imagined (Burke & Stets, 2009). Burke and Stets (2009:11) note that symbols derive their meanings from “social consensus” and are “arbitrary, varying from one culture to another”. Words (i.e. language) are important and are versatile symbols in human interaction, providing a means of both subtle and complex communication. As much as symbols can project visible meanings, they can also enshrine hidden meanings and intentions. In this vein, education policy instructions can have open and easily shared meanings but in other cases can also have veiled meanings that are subject to different interpretations, as much as they can generate varied teacher reactions to such education policy directives.

Meanings of symbolic language are socially defined and are shared. A person has an identity (an internalised positional designation) for each of the different positions or roles the person holds in society (Stryker, 2002). The internalised designations are in form of meanings that influence behaviour in the speaking-self. As already said above, the current research examines what it means for Zimbabwean government secondary school teachers to be teachers. The theorization on the relationship between teacher identity and education policy helps me to understand what meanings Zimbabwean government secondary school teachers attribute to selected accountability (symbolic interactions) measures enacted in Zimbabwe. Words are symbols that are used to communicate ideas (meanings) (Burke & Stets, 2009). In other words, the language of education reforms communicates meanings to teachers which, in turn, affect their perceptions and, in turn, their emotions. Bearing in mind that education reforms involve two self-contained processes (development and implementation – positions occupied by two separate human entities) it becomes interesting to assess how teachers, as implementers, understand what education policy mean for them. This research theorizes that education policy reforms instigate teacher identities, thereby creating positive or negative emotions. The

resultant emotions have a capacity to influence teaching, positively or negatively. The research, therefore, examines how education policy reforms (selected accountability measures) influence teachers' imaging of self and their teaching in Zimbabwean government secondary schools.

### **3.2.3 Interaction**

The concept of interaction (in identity theory) should be understood as taking place among identities rather than among persons, focussing on meanings of behaviours rather than the behaviours themselves (Burke & Stets, 2009: xii). Blumer (in Burke & Stets, 2009) notes that language provides symbolic interaction between persons occupying named positions (statuses). Language offers symbolic communication in which a person may communicate with self in form of dialogic thought, resulting in various meanings being assigned to interactions-in-situation. Meanings that teachers assign to situations are shaped by different identities they occupy, that is, person, role and social, as discussed in Whannell and Whannell's (2015) theoretical model for identity formation in Figure 5. What this implies is that meanings teachers assign to education policy are shaped by the three (person, role and social) identity positions. For me to understand the meanings that Zimbabwean government secondary school teachers assign to selected accountability measures (2005 – 2019), I needed to listen to, and analyse their, narratives regarding the meanings they attached to education policy. Education policy (accountability measures) are interactions-in-situation through which teachers interpret meanings (make sense of) and this process is intervened by the person, role and social identities. The process sensationalizes teachers' person, thereby creating emotionally-charged reactive emotions (mental and physical), owing to what meanings they assign to reform mandates. As such, it is important to theorize how education policy affects teacher agency, which helps in mitigating dysfunctional teacher identities in education.

### **3.3 Person, role and social identities**

As noted above, meanings that teachers assign to situations are shaped by different identities that they occupy, that is, person, role and social. The person identity involves seeing self as a unique and distinct individual different from others (Burke & Stets, 2009). Person identity emanates from the self-concept, resulting in person-based meanings. Role identity refers to internalized meanings of a role an individual applies to oneself. Meanings in role identity derive from both culture and the individual's interpretations of the role. To understand

teachers' interpretations and meanings they attach to their role identity, it is important to bring in the personal interpretive framework (Vanassche & Kelchtermans, 2014; Kelchtermans, 2013; Kelchtermans, et al., 2009; Kelchtermans, 1993, 2007a, 2009). The framework comprises mental maps of personal and professional self and their (teachers') beliefs about education and teaching, all crystallized into the teacher's prior knowledge (van Veen & Slegers, 2009), what Burke and Stets (2009) refer to as individuals' own understandings as to what teacher identity means to them. As noted elsewhere, personal interpretive framework enables teachers to perceive their job situations, give meanings to, and act on, the meanings that ensue (Vanassche & Kelchtermans, 2014). The reflections will, therefore, take on board person-based idiosyncratic convictions on what ought to constitute the role identity, which crystallizes in the self over time. A similar theory is the sense-making theory which notes that it is "an (inter)active and dynamic process by which individuals and groups make meaning from the environments" in which they operate (Marz et al., 2013:15). When symbols flow in the environment, "people work to understand issues or events that are novel, ambiguous, confusing, or in some way violate expectations" (Maitlis & Christianson, 2014:57). When education policy symbols flow in the environment, teachers try to make sense of education policy directives, resulting in either verification or non-verification of the resultant identities. On the other hand, social identity is based on a person's (teachers') identification with a social group, whose group meanings are shared amongst the members, what Wenger (2010; see also Wenger & Trayner, 2015; Lave & Wenger, 1991) calls communities of practice.

Identities from each identity position have identity standards that serve as the reference and guide behaviour in situations in which individuals act to control perceptions of who they are in a situation, to match the feedback they receive in the situation (Burke & Stets, 2009). When teachers are faced with education policy directives during reforms, they compare their self-in-action meanings as teachers (what they perceive education policy to be saying about them) and identity-standard meanings. If there are discrepancies between the two positions, there is identity-non-verification, what Burke and Stets (2009) call 'error signal' as discussed under the identity model showing the identity process discussed in Figure 6. Presence of error signals leads to negative arousal to which teachers are likely to develop negative feelings (self-in-action) towards education policy directives. Identity theory notes that there is "correspondence

between the meanings individuals apply to an identity while in a role and their behaviour” (Burke & Stets, 2009:115). The process of comparing identity-in-action and identity-standard meanings is what Burke and Stets (2009) refer to as identity verification, to which I now turn to.

### **3.4 Identity verification**

Using teachers as an example, identity verification can be viewed as a process that compares two teacher identity positions, that is, identity-in-action (teachers’ image perceived through the eyes of education policy) and identity-standard meanings (perceived through the teacher’s eyes). As discussed earlier under Burke and Stets’ (2009) identity process theorization, the comparator acts to compare the two identity positions, with the idea of reconciling the two. Identity-verification provides an emotional anchor that leaves one less vulnerable, as compared to identity non-verification which results in the agent (teacher) being highly vulnerable (Burke & Stets, 2009). According to identity theory, “individuals attempt to achieve identity-verification by enacting role performances that will keep perceived meanings of who they are in a situation consistent with the meanings held in their identity standard” (Burke & Stets, 2009:116). What this means is that teachers’ self-verification during education reforms provides emotional anchor, leading to less vulnerability when they encounter changes, but cases where teachers experience identity non-verification result in teachers’ emotional vulnerability (Kelchtermans, 2009, 2005). To extend the theorization, it can be argued that where education actors perceive education policy to be ‘forcing’ them to perform otherwise owing to its coercive force, this can lead to ‘silent protestation’ that manifests in the manner in which policy directives are implemented. Bearing in mind that in most of our education systems, education policy development is carried out by government agencies while teachers’ roles are limited to implementing other people’s ideas, there is a high likelihood of non-verification of education policy initiated identities.

Mutual identity-verification in a situation requires cooperative and mutually agreed-on arrangements of role performances (Burke & Stets, 2009). In cases where education reforms are not debated and agreed on with teachers (as implementers), mutuality may not be possible – how then will that affect teachers’ emotions and behaviour? What this means is that non-verification of teacher identities results in teachers’ dissatisfaction with the new mandated

roles, as they are seen as violating their highly salient teacher standard identities, e.g., as caring and morally responsible teachers. This can even lead to teachers' disengagement and burnout. From the point of view of identity theory, it is the verification of identities that makes people feel good in general and feel good about their selves especially. Conversely, if identities are not verified, people feel bad, stressed, and angry (Burke & Stets, 2009; Burke and Harrod 2005). Verification or non-verification of prominent identities has greater impact on emotions where valuation of self-worth, self-authenticity and self-efficacy are judged, resulting in emotional reaction which, in turn, can influence teaching practices. One key aspect leading to this is a wounded self-esteem, to which I now turn.

### **3.4.1 Perceptions and emotions**

Identity theory regards the self as a feeling entity whose impulses heighten perceptions in a situation and initiates response options to return the self to its on-going activity (Burke & Stets, 2009; Turner & Stets, 2005). Identity verification or non-verification affects teachers' perception of who they are as teachers, and in turn, initiates a myriad of emotions regarding education-policy-initiated teacher images and teaching. The word 'emotion' generally refers to "the feelings individuals experience in situations" (Burke & Steps, 2009:155) where they have to make judgments that constitute their worlds as perceived by themselves or by others. Emotions are psychological reactions to external stimuli (Gargante et al., 2013). Honneth (in Seidman & Alexander, 2008:47) notes that "emotions emerge as bodily state of excitement, or they emerge as the experience of being repelled by a failure [*or*] interrupted attempt to execute an action". Stets and Trettevik (2014:34) note that "emotions appear from meeting (or failing to meet) the behavioural expectations tied to an identity". Whilst teacher identity verification acts to initiate positive emotions, non-verification acts as an interruption in teachers' beliefs about education and its moral purpose. Perceived interruption in teachers' moral purpose as educators and un-reconciled teacher-identity-in-action (education policy) and teacher-identity-standard (teacher roles) generate negative feelings such as fear, disgust, sadness, frustration and anger (Vloet & Van Swet, 2010; Burke & Stets, 2009; Vloet, 2009; Lazarus, 1993). Non-verification of education-policy-initiated teacher identity can be a 'danger' to the practice of teaching.

Evidently, understanding teacher emotions has increasingly become necessary “because unpleasant...emotions have considerable implications for student learning, school climate and the quality of education in general” (Schutz & Zembylas, 2009:3). Intense negative feelings can either block implementation of education reforms or activate various defence and coping mechanisms in teachers (Burke & Stets, 2009). Evidently, it is important to theorize how emotions can possibly influence teacher identity and teaching. It is for these reasons that this research examines Zimbabwe government secondary school teachers’ emotional responses to the 2005-2019 education policy directives, to understand how possibly these heightened teachers’ self-imagining and teaching practices. I now turn to education policy as instigator of teacher identity.

### **3.4.2 Self-esteem**

Self-esteem refers to an evaluation of the self that is made by the self after successful identity verification (Burke & Stets, 2009). As James (in Burk & Stets, 2009:24) notes, “self-esteem is a function of both our achievements and our aspirations”. It arises as a confirmation of what we believe to be worth. In short, it is a self-attitude we hold about ourselves that gives us “a feeling of value or goodness” (Burke & Stets, 2009:79). Self-esteem acts as a buffer to stress and, therefore, safeguards actors in identity roles from negative vulnerability (Cheltermans, 2009). It is a source for further effort in pursuance of the preferred role identity.

Self-esteem comprises three major categories arising from positive evaluation in a role, that is, self-efficacy (a sense of competency), self-worthy (a sense of being worthy and valuable) and self-authenticity (the feeling that one is being true to self). It is high self-efficacy that pushes one to try more things, giving one opportunity for further success in the role. Conversely, low self-efficacy tends to demoralise one, leading to very low effort and output in the role. Clearly, self-esteem is an equally important component in explaining the salience of understanding the role of identity in role execution in the education system.

What this means is that successful implementation of education policy may largely depend on successful verification of teacher role identity. Successful teacher identity verification can energize teachers, leading to more enterprising teaching, whilst non-verification may lead to low output, with potential for disruptive behaviour. It is for these reasons that the research

sought to theorize on how policy can possibly influence teacher identity construction with, a potential to affect teaching.

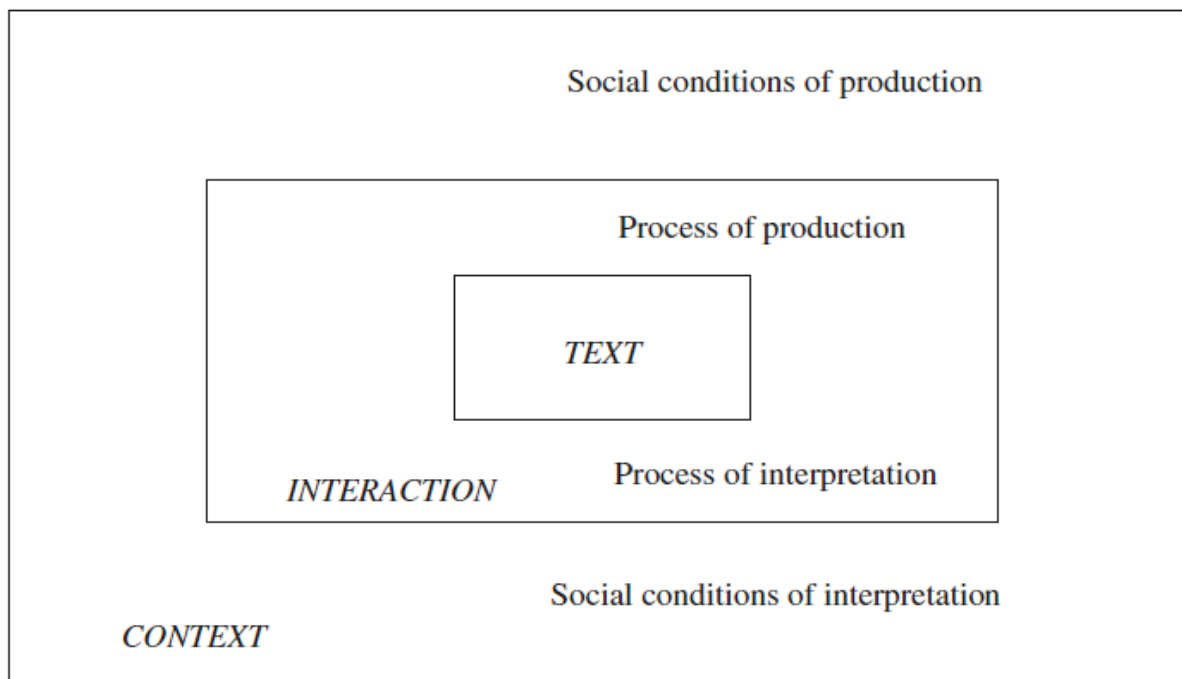
### **3.5 Theorizing education policy as teacher identity instigator**

In defining ‘policy’, Callewaert (in Jones, 2013:3) says that it is “a set of laws or guidelines” within a ‘governing text’. For education policy, these are laws or guidelines that are designed to direct how specified educational activities ought to be carried out. In other words, policy is the “operational statements of values” or the “authoritative allocation of values” that a government or its assigned agent pronounces to guide educational activities (Kogan, in Jones, 2013:3). Ozga (2000:113) further amplifies that policy involves not only policy directives but “negotiated, contestation of or struggle between different groups who may lie outside the formal machinery of official policy-making”. Ozga’s view is premised on the realisation that in some cases, and these are the majority, education policy development is treated as a separate process from policy implementation. In this case, there is an entity that conceives policy and another that will implement the decisions of the conceivers. What these views of policy imply is that policy-processes are much more than ‘meet the eye’. They ensconce underlying struggles within a policy-community, indicating likelihood of differing opinions.

In trying to shed more light on the ‘messy nature’ of education policy, Bell and Stevenson (2014) raise a series of questions such as, ‘What is the problem? How is it being defined, and by whom? Whose voices are dominant in determining how the policy is presented and defined to wider audiences? Whose voices appear to be side-lined, silent, or indeed silenced?’ These are fundamental questions that assume varieties of voices that may or may not be agreed on ways of going about educational issues. The authors’ concerns raise serious issues that vindicate Ozga’s (2000) ‘contestations’ and ‘struggles’ in the process of education policy. If this is the character of policy process, then clearly teacher identity, one way or the other, is affected by education policy, thereby influencing teaching. Education policy can, thus, be considered to be the realisation of contested meanings that arise during the policy process (Bell & Stevenson, 2014).

The contextualization of education policy as text and the dialogic nature of the process can be elaborated by referring to Fairclough’s (1989) model of education policy discourses as text.

The model below shows three critical components that intersect during the education policy process, that is, context, interaction and text.



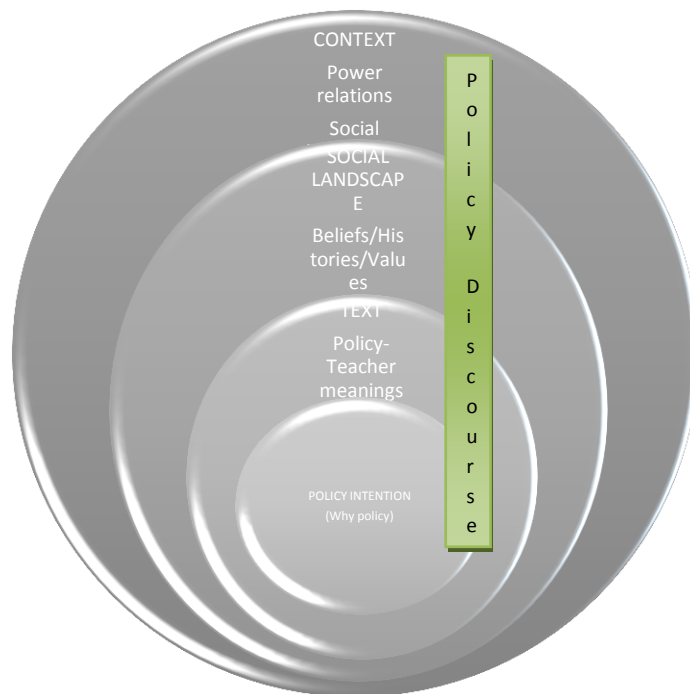
**Figure 7: Fairclough's (1989) model of discourse as text, interaction and context**

[Source: Fairclough, 1989:25; see also Jones, 2013:14]

The model shows that the education policy process takes place in a specific context which is invariably affected by the social conditions of production. These are conditions that are created by social activities in a locality that influence and affect education policy decisions that take place in a given social space. These conditions do affect what nature of policy will eventually come out. Apart from the social conditions of production, Fairclough notes that social conditions of interpretation also influence how the policy text would be understood by implementers. Interpretation of education policy text takes place in social space, influencing how texts are understood. Social discourses in social communities affect how individuals interpret and understand education policy texts. In other words, production and interpretation of policy text shape what kind of education policy eventually comes out and how that policy will be understood by the parties involved. The various interactions of both policy developers and implementers is a significant factor that involves various dialogues resulting in various

struggles that eventually shape teacher identities thus influencing teaching. Fimyer (2014) notes that seeing education policy as text regards it as representations which are encoded in a very complex manner that reveals, in subtle ways, the struggles, the compromises, authoritative public interpretations and reinterpretations of education policy decoded in complex ways via social actors whose interpretations are embedded in, and controlled by, their histories, experiences, skills, resources and context.

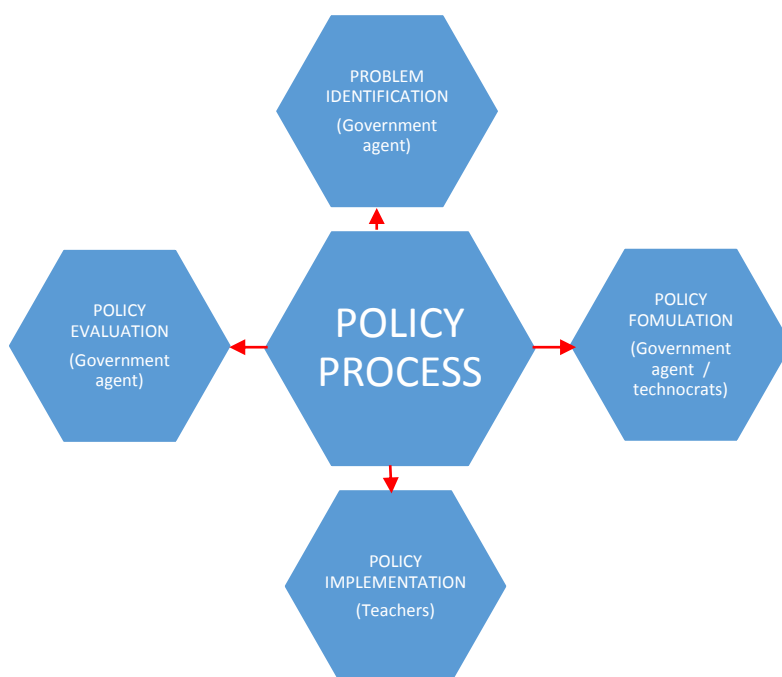
Ball (1994a:21) notes that education policy is not only a text, but also a power relations process whereby power is exercised through “a production of truth and knowledge as discourses”. Discourses are “practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak. [...] Discourses are not about objects; they do not identify objects, they constitute them and in the practice of doing so conceal their own intention” (Foucault, 2002a:49). Ball (1994a) further notes that discourses are not only about what can be articulated and thought in a policy, but are also about who can speak, when, under what conditions and with what authority. The author says that as participants in the education policy process, we do not speak a discourse but, rather, it speaks us. We are the subjectivities, the voices, the knowledge intervened by power relations that a discourse constructs and allows. As such, we are spoken about by education policies and we take up positions constructed for us within policies contrary to our own positions. As noted earlier in this chapter, when education policy initiates teacher identities, these are either verified or not verified during the verification process as discussed earlier under the section, 3.4 Identity verification. Non-verification of education policy initiated identities, as discussed earlier, results in teacher emotions. In Figure 8, I map the social space pervaded by education policy discourses as they cut across various sectors of our lives, ranging from education policy purpose right up to the context of education policy.



**Figure 8: Mapping education policy environment**

The varied struggles implied in the education policy process are a pointer to multiple teacher identities that are constructed and that have a potential to influence teaching. Teachers’ reaction to the constructed identities can trigger a variety of emotional responses whose impact on the well-being of teachers and teaching need to be ascertained, per chance these impact on teaching.

Education policy can also be viewed as a cycle of decisions where the education policy is made and remade, especially during implementation (Jones, 2013). Acceptability and non-acceptability of education policy could depend on its comprehensibility as well as the provision and allotment of resources that are made for its implementation. More than often, the education policy process is characterized by separation of functions, where one organ is tasked with the responsibility of policy development whilst the other is the implementing agent. In such cases, there is differentiation in allocation of power, resulting in a top-down implementation process (Ding, 2016). Figure 9 clarifies the point. The Zimbabwean education process follows this format.



**Figure 9: Education policy process model**

Figure 9 above presents how education policy development is carried out in some countries. Zimbabwe falls into such a category where policy developers are separate from policy implementers. In such a set-up, a government agent tasked with education policy development has the responsibility of articulating the problem and then designing the policy, only to pass over the developed policy to implementers for implementation. Teachers are neither involved in the articulation of the problem that education policy seeks to address nor in the actual design of the policy document. Such a process relegates teachers to implementers of ‘other people’s ideas’. Evidently, in such a situation education policy interpretations will be varied, with contestations on the meanings. As discussed above, this is what Jones (2013:8) means when he says policy is “made *[and]* re-made during implementation”. Interpretation of education policy documents would be malleable to different interpretations. The provision and allotment of resources is an added dimension that may result in struggles during education policy processes. Education policy directives and ideals are more or less likely to succeed or be interpreted in varying ways dependent on “the processes by which policy comes into being, is funded, resourced, serviced, tested and policed” (Jones, 2013:8). The success of education policy

largely depends on its being shareable and the amount of consensus it builds amongst education policy players. What this means is that the education policy process must, of necessity, build bridges amongst all entities involved so as to achieve ‘buy-in’ from all sectors involved, to ensure that all parties involved work in unison. As already noted above, the definition of the education problem, the suggested intervention plan and resource support for implementation should be shared and agreed upon by those involved. Herein is where education policy fails. Based on the theorization on how education policy initiates teacher identity, it becomes interesting to find out how education policy directives in Zimbabwe affect teaching. The curiosity is heightened by the fact that the education policy environment in Zimbabwe is highly unstable socially, politically and economically. Below I examine the dimension of teacher identity brought about by ‘economizing’ and ‘marketization’ of education that gives a value to what education policy may value as ‘critical education’.

### **3.6 Education: A terrain for struggles**

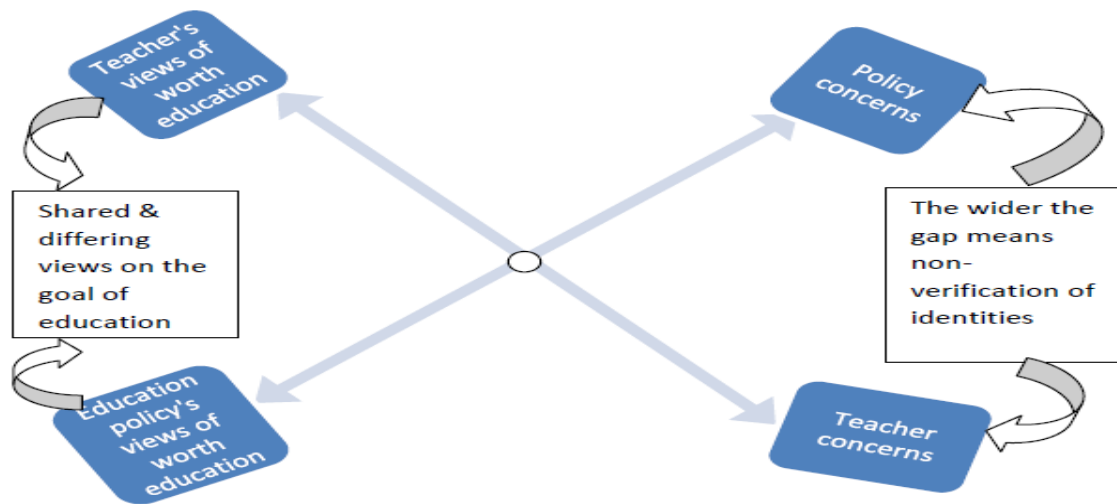
Another point for struggles in the education policy process is summarised in the question, “What is education for?” (Bell & Stevenson, 2006:3). This question has, in the modern society, continuously riddled the education policy process, especially in the neoliberal states. There are two competing views on what constitutes worthy education. One view is the human capital theory which sees the purpose of education as creating skilled manpower fit for productive work, whilst the other view is the citizenship and social justice that advocates for good citizenship entrenched in values of fairness and creativity, which is generally advocated for by teachers and teacher training programs. Ozga (2000:14) notes that in the neoliberal state, “policy makers tend to emphasize the economic function of education...while teachers align themselves with education as a vehicle for equalizing opportunities and/or enriching experience”. In a way, education policy developers “can and do constrain the way we think about education in general and specific education policies in particular, through the language in which they frame policy” (Fimyer, 2014:9). Fimyer further notes that education policy’s use of “discursive repertoires drawn from business, marketing and finance” (p.9) is one of the ways by which education policy accomplishes the process of economizing and marketization of education. “Franchising, credit accumulation, delivery of learning outcomes, the possession of skills and competences, skills audit .... Become part of everyday discourse and begin to structure the way people think about education” (Fimyer, 2014:9). The increasingly dominant

role of numbers and statistics in education has reduced it to a list of skills but this, as Ball (2003:250) notes, has been at the cost of “great truths [*that*] seem to slip through our fingers”. What this reveals is the political-value-laden nature of education policy. Opposed to the economizing and marketization of education, the teachers may feel that education should be for growth of learner creativity and problem-solving abilities rather than ‘fitness for employment’. Clearly, such an approach to education creates a gap between education policy’s view of ‘worthy’ education and teachers’ long-held images of good and sound education and teaching. More than often, in such cases teachers of the ‘swollen state’ are regarded as “ill-adapted to be either agents of the reformed state or entrepreneurial service provider in a marketized civil society” (Furlong et al., 2000:161).

What fan the gap between education policy developers’ and implementers’ are the differing views of the purpose of education, hence the manner in which it should be conducted. Education, in the ‘swollen state’, is treated as panacea for weak economies and is often blamed for economic non-performance. Education policy is seen as a stance developed in response to a problem and, therefore, is directed towards a particular objective (Nudzor, 2009), that is, making the economy productive. The tendency has been to see, and indeed treat teachers as education policy ‘subjects’ rather than ‘actors’, thereby disenfranchising them in the education policy process. Such has been the case in Zimbabwe, where education has been tasked with the responsibility of propping up a faltering economy. As noted in Chapter One, the background to the education policy directives under review in this research is that learners were performing poorly and the blame was on teachers. The raft of education policy measures were meant to correct what was viewed as the problem.

In this research, I argue that successful implementation of education policy requires a seamless collaboration amongst policy development, implementation and evaluation. Absence of seamless educational processes results in chaotic and sometimes acrimonious education policy processes, thereby giving rise to proliferation of teacher identities, some of which may not be verified, leading to emotional maladjustment of teachers. In Figure 10 below, I discuss how differing conceptualization between education policy developer and implementers on the purpose of education can influence teacher identity and, in turn, affect teaching.

Figure 10 suggests that differences in the view of the purpose of education between policy developers and teachers result in differing perceptions of what is ‘worthwhile education’ to be pursued in schools.



**Figure 10: Conceptualizing education: shared and differing meanings**

Figure 10 presents two perspectives on what is worth education for learners in schools. One perspective presents education policy’s view of what constitutes important education in schools, whilst the other one is teachers’ view, teachers who also have their own view on purpose of education in schools. In cases where there are shared and agreed-upon meanings, that presupposes that education policy and teachers are agreed on what is worth education and, therefore, there is likelihood of verification of identities generated. However, if there are differing views on what constitutes good education, that creates differences between education policy’s and teachers’ meanings. The greater the differences, the more likely it is that there would be non-verification of identities, leading to teacher emotions.

As earlier discussed, education policy developers may see a direct link between learning in schools and economic performance. What this implies is that when the economy is not performing, that is an indicator that schools are failing to deliver. As already noted above, this is the human capital view which sees a direct link between education and economic performance. This view argues that education should produce learners who are fit for employment. Carter and O’Neill (in Ball, 2007:122) say that in this regard, education policy

reforms seek to improve the national economy by tightening the connection between schooling and employment so as to increase productivity, what these researchers call the “ideologies of the market”. As noted by these authors, the education they advocate for aims to enhance student outcomes in employment-related skills and competencies, and this leads to the replacement of task specification by target setting. What this leads to is the attainment of more direct control, by government or its agent, over the curriculum content and assessment through target setting, accountability and competitiveness (Carter & O’Neill in Ball, 2007). When education is seen from a human capital position, the focus is on improving the national economy by tightening the connection between schooling and employment and this, in schools, would be expressed through learning outcomes in employment-related skills and competencies. On the contrary, teachers may not share this view of education. As noted earlier, teachers may view the mandate of education to be the equalization of opportunities and/or enriching experiences (Ozga, 2000). When there are disagreements such as implied above, education policy uses its implied coercive power to enact policy decisions and for implementation of such policy, notwithstanding teachers’ feelings and concerns. As implied elsewhere in this research, the selected education policy initiatives in Zimbabwe were top-down. A government agent articulated the problem where learners were said to be performing poorly. To address the problem, education policy developers designed policy that was meant to correct the problem. This led to a raft of measures, among which the Result-Based Management System (RBM), Lesson Evaluations and Clocking Registers were seen as some of the ways to mitigate poor results. From a theorist’s point of view, one would want to find out how these policies influence teachers’ identities and teaching.

Discussions about teacher identity formation and how education policy development takes place shows that education policy affects teacher identity, thereby influencing teachers’ self-imaging and teaching.

### **3.7 Theoretical foundation for methodology considerations**

The chapter discussed teacher identity formation as well as how education policy instigates teacher identity and, in turn, affects teacher emotions, which may then influence teaching. Birkland’s (2011) view of education policy development, being what government does in providing solution to an existing or assumed educational problem that comes before it for

considerations clearly calls for a closer examination of what the selected education policy does to teachers. The discussion on the concept of education policy and the various meanings that different education policy players generate necessitates this research, in an effort to understand the forces shaping the resultant education policy and how these are understood by teachers. In this research, I was interested in finding out how teachers understood, and whether they were agreed with, government's view that there was an educational problem to be solved by the enacted policy (Birkland, 2015). One of the key issues in this research was to establish teachers' emotional response to education policy and how these emotions influenced teaching. The evolving question in this research was how teachers responded to government's view that learners' poor performance in schools was a result of "unsatisfactory ... teacher performance and commitment" (Presidential Commission of Inquiry into Education and Training, 1999:448). It was for these reasons that I undertook document analysis of the selected education policy so as to understand the meanings that education policy documents projected. For an informed analysis of policy, I designed a model guided by Taylor et al.'s (1997), Ding's (2016), Beijaard's (2005) and Ozga's (2000) policy analysis frameworks. It was equally important to find out, from teachers, the meanings they attached to the selected education policy, how they reacted to the said meanings, and with what effect on their teaching.

For a closer examination of the selected education policy, it was necessary to carry out document analysis to understand the policy texts enacted within the various educational discourses that prevailed. The texts had to be understood within the social, political and economic milieu prevailing. It was equally important to find out, from teachers, what meanings they made of the selected education policy. To get to the embedded meanings teachers generated from the education policy, it was necessary to listen to teachers' narratives regarding how the selected education policy intersected with their teaching. Clandinin (2012:23) says that we "think narratively". Narratives allowed me to understand teachers' meanings as social actors in a non-obtrusive way. To understand how and why teachers' identities are influenced by education policy, it was necessary for me to listen to, and make sense of, teachers' "own accounts and perspectives" (de Vos et al., 2011:313) regarding the selected education policy. Looking for teachers' personal experiences in actual school settings through narratives offered me practical and specific insights into how they perceived and responded to the selected education policy (Creswell, 2012). Teachers' narratives enabled me to understand how teachers

interpret and make sense of education policy and, in turn, how that affects teaching. As observed elsewhere, for teachers to make sense of education policy, they employ their personal interpretive framework constituted by their past, present and future, all culminating in beliefs about education and their roles as teachers. It was for that reason that teacher narratives and journaling were seen to be the suitable data collection procedures.

Narratives carry traces of human (teachers) lives that we want to understand (Andrews et al., 2013). Looking for teachers' personal experiences in actual school settings through narratives and their personal journals offered me practical and specific insights into how they perceived selected education policy (Creswell, 2012). Narratives are particularly useful where different teachers' voices are at stake (Bauer & Gaskell, 2000). Teachers' "stories are the result of a confluence of social influences on a person's inner life, social influences in their environment, and their unique personal history" making them rich sources to understand what influences their imaging of self and their teaching during education reforms (Clandinin, 2013:17; Clandinin & Rosiek, 2007:41). Teachers' narratives and personal journals enabled me to observe issues from their subjective points of view. The theoretical discussions carried out in this chapter informed the methodology that I employed in this research to which the next chapter turns.

### **3.8 Conclusion**

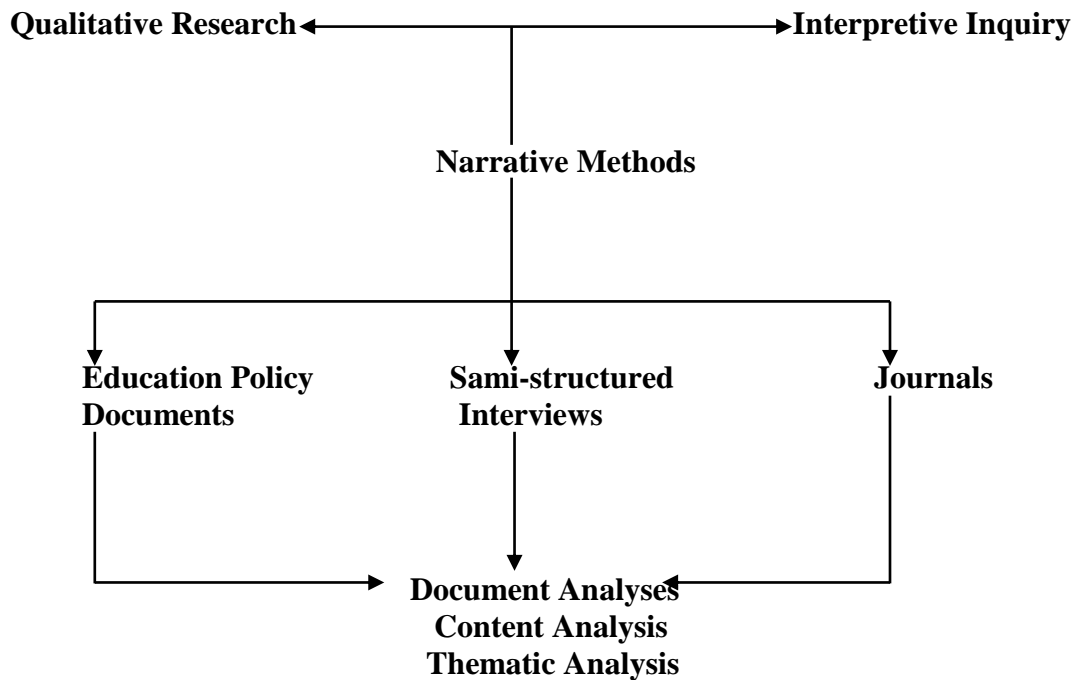
The chapter looked at the Socio-psychological theory as a theory informing this research. Socio-psychological theory looks at social activities as influencing psychological process, thereby initiating teacher identity construction. The identity theory was discussed to understand how teachers' identities are formed and are, by-and-large, also shaped by education policy. Several ways through which education policy influence identity construction were discussed. Identity verification was discussed to show how the process affects teacher emotions. The chapter theorized that teacher emotions influence teaching practices. Based on these views, the chapter suggested methodological procedures suitable for data collection, aspects to which I turn in the next chapter.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

#### **4.1 Overview**

Whereas the previous chapter examined the theoretical framework for better understanding of teacher identity and how education policy influences teachers' imaging of self and teaching, the current chapter looks at the research paradigm, the research design, methods and procedures used for collection of data and analysis techniques. In this chapter, I explain and justify the selected research design and methodology. The chapter also discusses research participants and selection procedures. Data generation and collection procedures that I used in the current research are also discussed. Challenges faced during data collection are highlighted. Trustworthiness of processes and procedures is discussed, to give credence to results and the discussion. The chapter winds up, with discussion on limitations of this research as well as ethical considerations that guided the processes and procedures employed. I summarise the main activities of this chapter diagrammatically in Figure 11.



**Figure 11: Summary of research design and methodology**

The current research examines how education policy's imaging (through selected accountability measures) of government secondary school teachers in Zimbabwe influences the

way these teachers image self as teachers and, in turn, how the said reimaging affects their teaching practices. The research is guided by three main objectives, that is, to find out on:

- 1) how education policy in Zimbabwe influences the way government secondary school teachers image themselves and their teaching;
- 2) why government secondary school teachers in Zimbabwe image themselves and their teaching the way they do during the implementation of education policy;
- 3) what influence the constructed images have on teaching practices; and,
- 4) how education policy's imaging of teachers and their teaching influence teachers' own construction of self and their teaching.

The discussion now turns to the philosophy that guided the current research.

#### **4.2 Qualitative research**

The phrase 'qualitative research' is an "umbrella term" (Atkinson et al., 2001:7) that houses a number of research paradigms that share fundamental philosophical beliefs on social phenomena and how they can be studied productively. Qualitative research in social science is an approach "for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem" (Cresswell, 2014:32). Qualitative research concerns itself with the whole rather than a part. The philosophy that informs qualitative research sees humans as social beings whose behaviours, actions and meanings are socially generated and directed. What this implies is that, for one to understand human beings and their actions one needs to understand the forces that influence one's actions and this can best be done within the social environment of the actors. Qualitative research sees reality as a social relativism and, therefore, that is dependent on interpretation of social relationships. For qualitative researchers, there is no truth "out there" because reality is subjective and can only be constructed through the empathetic understanding of the research participants' meanings of their life worlds (Fouche & Schurink, 2011:309). The purpose of qualitative research, therefore, is social inquiry that focuses on the ways people interpret and make sense of their experiences as they relate to their worlds (Cresswell, 2014; Holloway & Wheeler, 2002). For that reason, qualitative research involves an "interpretive naturalistic approach" to its subject matter, allowing researchers to make sense of phenomena in terms of the meanings research participants bring to them (Creswell, 2013:44; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011:3; Clandinin, 2007:4). In this research philosophy, the researcher is concerned with understanding rather than explaining phenomena.

From a qualitative point of view, authentic understanding of the meanings that humans place on social activities and situations is dependent on an insider rather than outsider perspective because meanings are social constructs and, therefore, closely linked to the social actors and their environment (Fouche & Schurink, 2011). Experiences of people are essentially context-bound, that is, they cannot be free from time and location. This makes it necessary for researchers to understand participants' social worlds and realise that participants' values and interests become part of the research process (Holloway & Wheeler, 2002).

Qualitative research is a "situated activity" that locates the observer/researcher in the natural environment of the phenomena under investigation (Creswell, 2013:44). The view in qualitative research is that for us to comprehensively understand phenomena, it is not enough to say 'what' and 'how many' exist, but rather to go further and ask the 'why' question. It is for this reason that qualitative researchers study people in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or "interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings" participants bring (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011:3; Clandinin, 2007:4). As can be noted here, participants use their own personal interpretive framework to make sense (meaning) of situations. On the other hand, researchers are also entities that are neither value-free nor neutral, but bring their own values to bear on the process of co-constructing meanings with research participants. Qualitative research's aim is to understand what forces - the why question - shape human thinking and the meanings they generate in response to situations. To understand why teachers image self as teachers and their teaching in the context of education policy reforms, the teachers' operating environment becomes important for understanding meanings that they make of social situations. As shall be discussed under the interpretive research paradigm below, reality (meaning) is relational and socially constructed and, therefore, dependent on the communities of practice to which the social actors belong. What this means is that since I was researching social phenomena, I needed a deeper understanding of why teachers react to the selected education policy the way they do, taking into account the socio-political, historical and economic forces shaping participants' meanings.

As noted elsewhere, this research examined Zimbabwe government secondary school teachers' response to selected education policy directives in the period 2005 to 2019. Teachers' views of what policy's perceptions are towards them and their teaching, and how that subsequently

influences their own self imaging as teachers and their teaching practices, are socially and relationally shaped (positive/negative) and can, therefore, be best researched from a qualitative research standpoint. Teachers are social beings who are affected in one way or the other (positive/negative) when there are changes in the social systems to which they are directly connected. The focus of this research was to understand how the selected accountability education policy measures ‘play out’ on Zimbabwe government secondary school teachers’ identity construction and how that process, in turn, influences teaching practices. It was for these reasons that I chose the qualitative approach within the interpretive paradigm to which I now turn.

### **4.3 The interpretive paradigm**

As noted elsewhere in this study, the current research explores how selected accountability education policy measures influence Zimbabwe government secondary school teachers’ imaging of self as teachers and, in turn, how that affects their teaching practices. Since the phenomenon under study is located in social systems, it was necessary to approach the study as a qualitative research within the interpretive paradigm. Research paradigms are guided by their ontological and epistemological beliefs which are, in fact, concerned with what is commonly referred to as a person's worldview (Thomas, 2010).

Paradigm refers to a collection of logically related assumptions, concepts, or propositions that orient thinking and research (Bogdan & Biklen, 2010; Mack, 2010; Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006). A paradigm is, thus, “a comprehensive belief system, world view, or framework that guides research and practice in a field” (Willis, 2007:8). Taylor and Medina (2013) note that from a philosophical perspective, a paradigm comprises a view of the nature of reality (ontology), whether it is external or internal to the knower, a related view of the type of knowledge that can be generated and standards for justifying it (epistemology), and a disciplined approach to generating that knowledge (methodology). In other words, a research paradigm consists of theoretical ideas and technical procedures which are rooted in a particular worldview that a social scientist adopts in studying social phenomena (Bhattacharjee, 2012; Cole, 2011; Mack, 2010; Holloway & Wheeler, 2002). The term ‘paradigm’ originated from the Greek word “paradeigma which means pattern” and was first used in research by Thomas Kuhn in 1962 to denote “a conceptual framework...a research culture with a set of beliefs,

values, and assumptions” that a community of researchers has in common regarding the nature and conduct of research (Thomas, 2010:292). Barrell and Morgan (1979), in Bhattacharjee (2012) identify four main research paradigms, some of which adopt the objective view whilst others opt for the subjective view of meaning. Some are concerned with radical change, whilst others are concerned with social order. In Figure 12 I reproduce Barrell and Morgan’s presentation of the four paradigms.



**Figure 12: Four research paradigms in social science**

[Source: Barrell & Morgan, 1979 in Bhattacharjee, 2012:19]

Paradigms are important in research since they help us in making sense of and reconciling people’s perceptions of social phenomenon (Bhattacharjee, 2012). Radical structuralism paradigm sees the world as consisting of radical change in which the researcher either seeks to understand, or enacts change, through the objective approach. Radical humanist paradigm perceives radical change through subjective perspectives of the participants involved. The functionalist paradigm views the world as characterized by social order which can be understood by using objective approaches, thus alienating the researcher from the meaning-making process. The interpretivist paradigm believes that the best way to study social order is through subjective interpretations of research participants’ realities, resulting in co-construction of meanings between research participant and researcher. Since the selected education policy directives under study in this research are of a social nature, it was necessary for me to adopt the interpretivist paradigm to understand how the said education policy directives influence how teachers image self as teachers and how, in turn, that affects their teaching. I now turn to

the interpretivist paradigm to show how this helped me in understanding the phenomenon under study.

In this research, as noted earlier, I employed the interpretivist research paradigm to understand how selected education policy measures influence teachers’ self-imaging and their teaching practices. Interpretive research is a theory of social practice that emphasizes the “relational interdependency of agent and world, activity, meaning, cognition, learning and knowing” (Somekh & Lewin, 2011:174). Meaning is socially constructed by the active human agent who interprets activity by employing his/her personal interpretive framework to come to terms with social phenomena. Interpretive research regards knowledge and meaning as acts of interpretation (Gephat in Thomas, 2010) necessitating understanding of issues from subjective experiences of participants. Figure 12 summarises the ontological and epistemological views guiding the interpretive paradigm.

<b>Ontological assumptions</b>	<b>Epistemological assumptions</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assumptions about how we see the world</li> <li>• Reality is inter-subjectively created</li> <li>• Reality is based on individual interpretations and is thus subjective</li> <li>• Individuals interpret and generate their own meanings of events</li> <li>• Events are unique and therefore not generalizable</li> <li>• There are multiple viewpoints to an incident</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assumptions about the best way to study the world</li> <li>• Meaning is socially created</li> <li>• Researcher and participant are linked in creating meaning</li> <li>• Meanings are created through personal experiences</li> <li>• Knowledge arises from particular situations and therefore is not reducible to simplistic interpretations</li> </ul>

**Figure 13: Interpretivist paradigm’s ontological and epistemological assumptions**

[Source of ideas: Bhattacharjee, 2012:18; Cole, 2011:225; Mack, 2010:8; Thomas, 2010:295]

Figure 13 presents the interpretivist paradigm’s ontological view which sees reality as subjective, depending on the histories shaping individuals’ interpretations of social events around them. Ontology simply means one’s view of reality, that is, what nature of reality and existence, whilst epistemology is how one acquires knowledge, that is, the theory of knowledge – what counts as valid knowledge (Creswell, 2013; Mack, 2010; Thomas, 2010, Holloway & Wheeler, 2002). Ontological assumptions that underpin interpretive research argue that reality is constructed inter-subjectively through meanings developed socially and

experientially (RWJF, 2008). Reality is not “out there” (Fouche & Schurink, 2011:309), it is “socially constructed” (Mertens, 2005:12) and, therefore, relies upon the “participants’ views of the situation being studied” (Creswell, 2003:8). The epistemology in interpretive research argues that the relationship of the researcher and participant is integral in constructing meaning. It is through dialogical processes that a more informed and sophisticated sense-making of the social world can be generated (Akkerman & Meijer, 2011; de Vos et al., 2011; RWJF, 2008). What this means is that there are multiple viewpoints to an incident, depending on how individuals interpret the social event in question. There is, thus, no absolute or objective reality because our worldview is shaped by a variety of social forces that frame our perceptions. Epistemologically, what this implies is that meanings of social events are socially constructed through shared meanings. As noted earlier, as researchers we cannot separate ourselves from what we know, hence we bring our meanings to the research field. The investigator and the object of investigation (research participant) are linked, such that who we are and how we understand the world is a central part of how we understand ourselves, others and the world around us (Green, 2010; Cohen, 2006). As Cole (2011:225) notes, “within social communities, multiple realities are shaped by social, political, cultural, economic, ethnic, gender and disability values”. In other words, there is no absolute reality out there because meanings are socially constructed and are depended on individual experiences that eventually shape our perceptions.

In the interpretive paradigm, research participants afford researchers opportunity to “stand in their shoes, look through their eyes, feeling their pain” for them to understand the participants’ responses to social issues (Taylor & Medina, 2013:4). This justifies my decision to employ the interpretive paradigm to understand teachers’ responses to directives in selected education policy. Education policy reforms are social phenomena whose meanings to people depend on how individuals or groups interpret their meanings. According to interpretivism, the study of social phenomena requires “an understanding of the social world that people have constructed and which they reproduce through their continuing activities” (Blaikie, 2007:124). The author further notes that as social beings, social actors are constantly and consistently involved “in interpreting and reinterpreting their world – social situations, other people’s actions, their own actions and natural humanly created objects” (p.124). The interpretivist paradigm was, thus, important for me to understand how and why Zimbabwe government secondary school

teachers react the way they do towards the selected education policies in the context of education reforms.

For the research findings to answer the questions that I had, as set out in Chapter One, I needed qualitative data that helped me to answer the *why* questions. The qualitative approach, in particular, the interpretive paradigm and its qualitative methods, ensured adequate dialogue between me as a researcher and teachers as research participants, as well as generation of teachers' personal narratives on education policy and teaching, as well as their personal journals about their work. Fostering the said dialogues was critical in that this dialectical process afforded me an informed and sophisticated understanding of the teachers' social world and the forces that shape and reshape teachers' work environment and the meanings they make of it. The qualitative methods allowed me to exercise an empathetic understanding of teachers' everyday lived experiences situated in their historical settings (Thanh & Thanh, 2015; de Vos et al., 2011).

#### **4.4 Narrative methods**

In this research, I adopted the narrative research design to guide data collection and analysis. By design, I refer to "the entire process of research" from conceptualizing the research problem, stating the research questions, data collection and its analysis, right up to the interpretation of the findings for answers to the puzzlements that were expressed at the beginning of the research (Cresswell, 2013:22). Since the purpose of this research was to find out the influence of selected education policy on teachers' identity construction (or reconstruction) and how that affects teaching, the narrative method was seen to be the most suitable design for the research. It was for these reasons that qualitative narratives were opted for, for data generation and analysis.

Narrative inquiry is "the study of experience understood narratively" (Clandinin & Huber, in press, p.1). The narrative inquiry, or "the study of experience as story...is first and foremost a way of thinking about experience" (Connelly & Clandinin, 2006:375), making it the best way for understanding teacher identity as consequence of teachers' responses to education policy directives. As Clandinin (2013) notes, stories are ubiquitous, and teachers as social beings, "are surrounded by many stories" (Shaw, 2017:209) that reveal their personal evaluation of education policies. McAdams (2008, in Butina, 2015:191), one of the first narrative identity

researchers, says that narrative identity is “an individual’s internalised, evolving and integrative story of the self.... Stories we construct to make sense of our lives are fundamentally about our struggles to reconcile who we imagine we were, are, and might be in the social contexts of *[the] community [and] the work place...*”. Studying the influence of education policy on teacher identity and teaching practices through narrative methods allowed me to understand teachers’ experiences within their worlds. The narrative approach, in a significant way, provided me with “access to the personal experiences” (Elci & Devran, 2015:38) and interpretations by teachers regarding the influence and effect of selected education policy on their teacher identity and teaching practices. Implementing education policies is a social event that creates various teacher emotions, thereby influencing their views of who they are, with a capacity to affecting their teaching practices. The narrative approach allowed me to understand teachers’ actions better since narratives provided me with access to their “personal and professional identities” (Butina, 2015:191). Narratives were “especially useful to capture the situated complexities of teachers’ work and classroom practices” (Chan, 2017:25). The narrative turn (Bruce et al., 2016) that I adopted in this research, helped to legitimize teachers’ stories as important sources of empirical knowledge that helped me to understand why teachers react and behave the way they do during education policy reforms.

What makes the narrative turn ubiquitous is the collaboration between researcher and participants in social interaction in milieu (Clandinin & Huber, in press). Owing to this design, participants’ experiences were understood within the three dimensional spaces of “temporality, sociality and place” (Puplampu, et al., 2020:1; Clandinin & Huber (in press, p.3; Clandinin et al., 2016). Temporality implies that events being studied must be understood within their temporal transition since society is in flux. This observation points our attention toward the past, present and future of people, places, things and the events under study (Clandinin & Huber, in press; Puplampu et al., 2020). Sociality pays attention to “personal conditions and at the same time, social conditions where personal conditions include feelings, hopes, desires, aesthetic, reactions and moral dispositions of both inquirer and participant” (Clandinin et al., 2017:24), whilst social conditions refer to “the milieu, the conditions under which people’s experiences and events are unfolding” (Clandinin & Huber, in press, 4). What this implies is that in trying to understand teachers’ reaction to selected education policy under review, I needed to take into account their personal reactions to education policy directives

enacted within specific social environment. These are teachers' emotional responses to what they (teachers) view education policy to be saying about them and their teaching. What this means is that teachers' sense making of promulgated education policy is, apart from other forces, influenced by the social environment around them. The third dimensional space of time refers to "the specific concrete, physical and topological boundaries of place or sequences of places where the inquiry and events take place" (Clandinin & Huber, in press: p.4; Puplampu et al., 2020:7; Clandinin et al., 2016:24). The physical location and its cultures do certainly impact on the meanings that teachers make of the education policies they are asked to implement.

The narrative approach afforded me several benefits in carrying out this study. For one, humans are "natural storytellers and as such it [*was*] easy to elicit stories" from teachers (Butina, 2015:191). Secondly, gathering in-depth data from teachers was easily accomplished since narratives provide thick descriptions of the phenomenon under study. The narrative approach also made it possible to gather in-depth participants' meanings as teachers revealed themselves in the stories they provided. Most importantly, as I elicited for further information, clarification of issues were made in participants' narratives. The narrative approach was also helpful in that it enabled me to observe complex patterns and layers of identity construction and reconstruction as shaped by social and identity discourses instigated by implementation of selected education policy. As a researcher, looking for teachers' personal experiences regarding selected education policy reforms, it was important for me to observe and 'experience' these (teachers' experiences) in the participants' "actual school settings" where the narrative research offered me "practical, specific insights" (Cresswell, 2012:502). Examining selected education policy 'texts' and teachers' narratives helped me identify "what does and doesn't get said" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011:422) in education policy, including understanding of the embedded forces that compel teachers to act in a certain manner. My role as a researcher, then, was to assess and interpret (including the implications) selected education policy within the prevailing social, political and economic milieu in the country, as well as facilitating and promoting participants (teachers') voices for me to understand the meanings they make of the reforms. In this regard, the narrative was "a core means of learning in, and from, [*teachers*'] community of practice" all shaped by context and relationships (Somekh & Lewin, 2011:74). As noted earlier, the narrative stories that I collected tell of individual

teachers' experiences and, therefore, shed light on their identities and how they see themselves in relation to selected education policy directives (Cresswell, 2013).

As shall be discussed later, in narrative analysis, my purpose was to unfold the ways in which individuals teachers make sense of education policy instructions in the context of their lived experiences. Narrative methods were, thus, viewed as the best way of accessing teachers' reasons for reacting the way they did to selected education policy reforms. In the next section, I now turn to how the participants for this research were identified and selected. The section gives the demographic information of the participants.

#### **4.5 Research participant selection**

This research looked at the influence that selected education policy has on government high school teachers' imaging of self and their teaching. The research was carried out at three government high schools that are located in Masvingo Urban in Masvingo Province in Zimbabwe. The high schools are Highridge, Goldridge and Blueridge High Schools (pseudonyms). This was meant to avert school variability. A total of nine research participants who took part are all teaching at the three government high schools. The research participants, therefore, did not include teachers at private institutions, primary schools or rural schools.

**Table 2: Participants' profiles**

<b>Educator's Name*</b>	<b>Teaching Qualification</b>	<b>Highest Ed. Qualification</b>	<b>Teaching Experience</b>	<b>Gender</b>
Shumba	Diploma in Education	Master of Education	24 years	Male
Victoria	Diploma in Education	Bachelor of Education	15 years	Female
Enuoh	Graduate Certificate in Education	Bachelor of Arts	22 years	Female
Hawk	Graduate Certificate in Education	Bachelor of Arts	23 years	Male
Brown	Diploma in Education	Bachelor of Education	23 years	Male
Moyo	Graduate Certificate in Education	Bachelor of Arts	21 years	Female
Chengeto	Diploma in Education	Bachelor of Education	12 years	Female
Andy	Graduate Certificate in Education	Bachelor of Arts	10 years	Female
Tawanda	Diploma in Education	Bachelor of Education	18 years	Male

**\*Pseudonyms are used for both participating schools and teachers for ethical reasons**

Selected participants for the study were all qualified and experienced teachers with ten years or more as a secondary school teacher in Zimbabwe. It was necessary to work with experienced teachers who had a better appreciation of educational issues and were conversant with the education policy documents that were under review. Although gender was not a factor in the selection of participants, there was a near-even distribution, with five of them being female and four males. The teachers who took part in this research taught subjects across the curriculum. Some taught languages and literature whilst others taught History, Geography, Mathematics and Clothing Technology.

Only qualified and experienced classroom practitioners were selected for this research, leaving out school heads and their deputies, who generally make up the school administration. It was felt that owing to their positions, school heads and their deputies are likely to be affected by the said education policy differently, owing to the coercive power invested in their positions. School heads and their deputies are part of the administrative team that supervises and ensures

compliance of teachers to education policy directives. The coercive power invested in these positions curtails school heads and their deputies from acting otherwise. They are the local supervisors whose duty it is to ensure that teachers comply with policy directives. They are likely to enjoy the power invested in their positions, making them unlikely sources of authentic evaluations of the selected education policy documents.

Owing to the desired characteristics of participants outlined above, purposive sampling was employed. Silverman (2010:193) notes that “purposive sampling demands that we think critically about the parameters of the population we are studying and choose our sample case carefully on that basis”. I employed purposive sampling because it allowed me to select “information-rich cases” in relation to the phenomenon I was interested in (Palinkas et al., 2016:533). As Cresswell and Clark (2011) note, this selection procedure allowed me to work with individuals who are knowledgeable about the selected education policy and are able to say how the said education policy influenced their self-imaging as teachers, with a view to saying how that affected their teaching. In addition to knowledgeability, it was equally important to select participants on the basis of “availability and willingness to participate, and the ability to communicate experiences and opinions in an articulate, expressive, and reflective manner” (Palinkas et al., 2016:534) to allow me a comprehensive understanding (Ames et al., 2019) of the phenomenon under study. I also employed purposive sampling because it is cost-effective and time-effective (BRM @ <https://research-methodology.net/about-us/ebook/>, downloaded 30/10/21) in a qualitative research.

Consistent with qualitative narrative research demands, the purpose of the study and the nature of the participation required of participants were explained (Puplampu et al., 2020). Their consent to participate was duly given by means of written consent through which their rights were clearly outlined. The consent letter was drafted in the medium of English Language since all had consented to using the language. I also sought for permission to use an audio recorder to record discussions and their narratives and this was duly granted by all participants. As part of my relational responsibilities as a researcher, I attended to their emotional needs by “ensuring them confidentiality” (Shaw, 2017:213). I assured them that their “identities would be kept private and their real names [*or real names of their schools*] would not be used” (Puplampu et al., 2020:3) anywhere in the research report. Instead, pseudonyms would be used

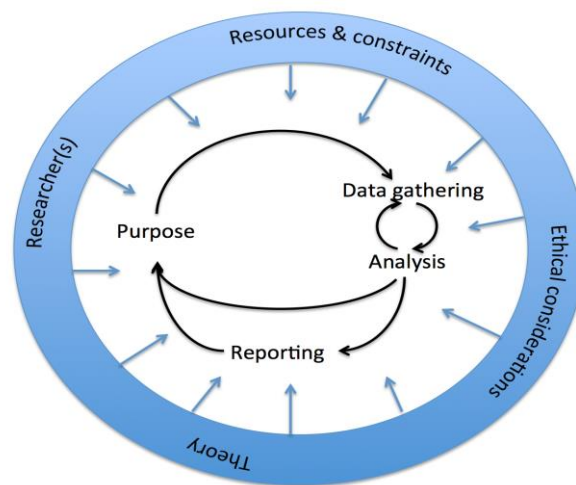
to refer to both participant and the school where he or she taught. I also informed the participants that in qualitative research, in discussing the findings researchers use “quotes from the conversations to justify their analysis and that these quotes are sometimes used in presentations” and in the final publication (Puplampu et al., 2020:3). To this, participants gave their consent.

Subsequently, participants were met individually following agreed dates, times and places. Some of the meetings took place at participants’ workplaces in their offices, whilst others took place at their homes as had been agreed in each case. Face-to-face semi-structured interviews were held with participants each at a time to listen to, and to record, teachers’ narratives regarding the phenomenon under study. Using the one-to-one situation, I asked participants to tell their stories. The semi-structured interview format was used to initiate participants’ stories. On average, two interview meetings were held with each of the nine participants. I used an interview schedule with an initial nine primary questions to focus participants’ narratives on the phenomenon of interest for this research. Probing questions were left for the narrative moment as each case dictated. During the actual narrative moments, I engaged my participants “with care and respect” (Shaw, 2017:213) to ensure their well-being, giving primacy to their voices. In addition to narratives, participants also kept journals in which they made entries on professional issues as these occurred in their work environment, affecting their emotional well-being. Journal entries for each participant were initiated by notable experiences that occurred in their work environment, affecting their well-being. The journals were kept for a month after which they were collected for analysis.

Apart from narratives and journals, selected education policy documents were also reviewed to understand their nature and what they projected to me as a researcher. It was prudent that I looked at the documents with a view to understanding their implications to me. Such information was important for me in understanding how the said documents influenced teachers’ self-imaging and teaching. Reviewing documents is an equally important data collection procedure in research (Butina, 2015). The documents were purposefully selected for analysis to identify patterns, themes and meanings inherent in them (Wright & Kim, 2020). The three documents under review were the Result-Based Management System, Clocking Registers and Lesson/Teacher Evaluation.

#### 4.6 Data generation

To decide on data generation procedures, I needed to think through the whole process to ensure that relevant data would be collected. Figure 14 below helped me synthesize the whole process to ensure that my choices in data generation and collection would result in collection of relevant data for this research. As Brandford (2013) notes, my purpose in this research needed to permeate through the whole process guiding the choices I had to make. I had to synchronize the purpose, the theory guiding the research, data generation and collection procedures, as well as analysis techniques to end up with answers to the research questions that were outlined in Chapter One. Ethical issues had to be taken note of to ensure that these would not curtail data generation and gathering, as well as reporting the results. Figure 14 presents the synchronized approach that informed my research.



**Figure 14: Synchronizing research purpose, data gathering, analysis and conclusion**  
[Source: Brandford, 2013:37]

As hinted earlier, three methods were used to generate data for this research. Semi-structured interviews were used to initiate participants' narratives. In addition, participants also kept journals where they recorded issues to do with occurrences that affected them in their work environment. Selected education policy documents were also subjected to document analysis. Document analysis was, thus, important for the analysis of data collected through the three methods.

#### **4.6.1 Document analysis**

As indicated earlier, selected education policy documents were analysed through document analysis to understand the meanings they carried. Strydom and Delport (2011:377) say that documentary analysis “involves the study of existing documents...to understand their substantive content or to illuminate their deeper meanings”. Document analysis requires that “data be examined and interpreted in order to elicit meaning” (Brown, 2009:27) to gain understanding of what they communicate. Documents are social facts which are “produced, shared and used in socially organised ways” (Atkinson, 1997:47, in Brown, 2009:27). They contain text (words) and images giving directly expressed and implied meanings that may be understood differently by different people, hence affecting their well-being in various ways. Document analysis allowed me to examine meanings within specific prevailing contexts in which participants in the research operated. Through document analysis, I was able to skim (superficial examination), read (thorough examination) and interpret the selected education policy documents to understand the embedded coercive force that images teachers in certain ways.

Through document analysis, I wanted to understand the “information relayed and the underlying values and assumptions” (Cohen et al., 2011:253) to explain how selected education policy possibly influenced teachers’ imaging of self as teachers, and their teaching. The advantage of document analysis is that documents are stable, exact, authentic, unobtrusive and non-reactive making them a reliable source of information. Bearing in mind that the education policy process involves “sites of struggles” (Day & Lee, 2011:3), information from the selected education policy documents assisted me in suggesting how the overt and the covert meanings influence teachers’ imaging of self as teachers, and their teaching. Documents are socially constructed and, thus, require careful analysis and interpretation to understand the meanings embedded in them. Reviewing the selected education policy documents allowed me to understand their meanings within the context of the social, political, economic and other relationships (Cohen et al., 2011) that influence how teachers make sense of them.

For a more systematic analysis of selected education policy documents, I designed a document analysis framework based on ideas from researchers such as Ding (2016), Taylor et al. (1997), Beijaard (2005) and Ozga (2000). The document analysis framework below, in Figure 15,

guided the analysis of the selected documents. Identified images from document analysis of selected education policy documents were then interfaced with research participants’ own education-policy-initiated teacher imaging of selves as teachers, and their teaching.

<b>Name of Policy Document</b>	<b>Initiator</b>	<b>Declared Purpose</b>	<b>Context</b>	<b>Policy Text</b>	<b>Policy-Discourses</b>	<b>Interpreted Meanings</b>
<i>Result – Based Management System</i>						
<i>Clocking Registers: 1. Clock-in-clock-out 2. Movement</i>						
<i>Lesson / Teacher Evaluations</i>						

**Figure 15: Education policy analysis framework**

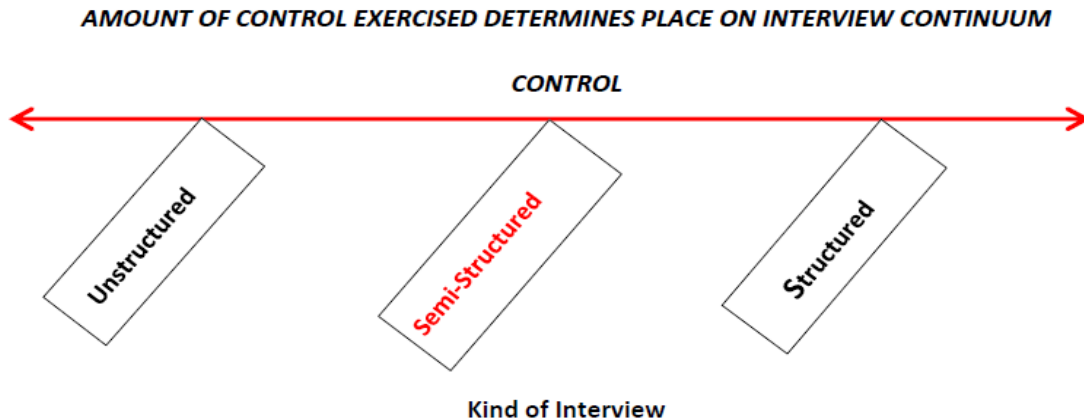
To interpret and understand the meanings of education policy, I needed to consider who initiated the policy and for what purpose. I also needed to understand both declared and undeclared purposes for the selected education policy, as well as the overt and covert meanings, all of which influence teachers’ imaging of selves as teachers, and teaching. In analysing selected education policy documents, it was important to understand “the context within which research participants operated” (Brown, 2009:29). The context is integral to meanings that are generated from documents. Mackenzie (<http://www.mathcs.duq.edu/~packer/IR/IRmain.html>, downloaded 30/10/21) notes that in documents, things are not always what they seem because of ideological undertones embedded in them, ‘silences’ and underlying coercions that compel teachers in subtle ways to act in certain manner. Informed document analysis should seek to uncover what is ‘hidden – the silences’ to understand even the undeclared intentions. As stated elsewhere and as shall be discussed later in this research, the operating environment for the said education policy was socially, politically and economically tense. What this means is that policy discourses in the environment influenced the meanings that teachers had of the purpose of the said education policy. The analytic procedure adopted entailed appraising and synthesizing data contained in the selected documents, with a view to identifying the meanings and insinuations they had on teachers and teaching during education policy implementation.

Document analysis was quite consistent with the interpretive paradigm adopted in this research, with texts needing to be read and made sense of to identify possible meanings that education policy implementers may make, influenced by the environment around them. The content analyses employed allowed me to organise information into themes to help me answer research questions that I outlined in Chapter One. Documents, as a data generation method, were employed in conjunction with the journal and semi-structured interviews for triangulation for convergence and corroboration of findings (Brown, 2009). I now turn to the semi-structured interview that I employed to solicit for participants' narratives.

#### **4.6.2 Semi-structured interviews**

As noted earlier, in choosing data collection procedures I had to be guided by the purpose of the current research. In this research, my purpose was to find out teachers' experiences with the three selected education policy directives. In short, I wanted to find out how teachers made sense of the three enacted education policy directives. I, therefore, needed to find out how the said policies affected participants' emotions as teachers and their attitudes to teaching. Brandford (2013) notes that the interview is best suited for understanding people's perceptions and experiences. Flick (1998, in Brandford, 2013) says that human practices are only accessible through observations; interviews and narratives merely make the accounts of practices accessible.

Interviews are discussions, "usually one-on-one between an interviewer and an individual, meant to gather information on a specific set of topics" (Harrell & Bradley, 2009:6). There are three major gradations of interviews (structured, semi-structured and unstructured) forming a continuum. Harrell and Bradley (2009) offer a useful interview continuum. Below, I present an adapted interview continuum in Figure 16. The semi-structured interview employed in this research is highlighted in red. An example of a core-question and related probe-questions that were employed in this research are given in the interview continuum.



- Can you describe your reactions to RBM, Clocking Register & Lesson Evaluations
- PROBE: What are their purposes in education?
- PROBE: How have they influenced your work?
- PROBE: How have they transformed the well-fair of learners in schools?

**Figure 16: The Interview Continuum**

[Adapted from Harrell & Bradley, 2009:34]

Figure 16 presents the interview continuum in which the degree of control of activities determines the position of the interview type in relation to the other types. Out of the three interview types, I preferred to employ the semi-structured interview and this has been highlighted in red. The figure presents sample questions that formed part of the interview schedule that I used to initiate participants' narratives.

Barclay (2018) notes that the semi-structured interview is a qualitative research method that combines a pre-determined set of open questions (questions that prompt discussion or narratives), with opportunity for the interviewer to explore further particular themes or responses. It is a 'conversation with a purpose' held between a researcher and participant for the purpose of the researcher gaining knowledge of the research participant's reaction to the phenomenon of interest. This data collection method allowed me freedom to probe or elicit, and/or even encourage (Barclay, 2018; Bauer & Gaskell, 2000) participants to elaborate issues of interest in their narratives. By using the semi-structured interview, I allowed participants freedom to express their views in their own terms.

Harrell and Bradley (2009) note that the semi-structured interview is often employed in policy research owing to its appreciable degree of autonomy. Through the semi-structured interview, I

gathered detailed information on topics of interest. This method of data generation allowed me to find out what participants “think [and] feel” (Butina, 2015) about the said education policy. Semi-structured interview allowed me to listen to “teacher stories [as] stories lived and told by teachers” themselves (Geelan, 2003:64).

To allow successful data gathering through the semi-structured interview, prior preparation had to be done meticulously. To begin with, once authority was granted from the Ethical Committee of the University of KwaZulu-Natal and from The Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education in Zimbabwe, together with clearance from Masvingo Education Region and the heads of the three schools involved, I then proceeded to make arrangements with participants on the convenient dates, times and venues for one-on-one semi-structured interviews. Venues for narrative interviews had to be those most suitable for each of the participants, where they would feel encouraged and stimulated to tell their stories about their experiences with the three selected education policy directives. After designing the interview schedule, I arranged with a selected teacher in the research field where I was going to authenticate through pilot-testing my schedule. I held one interview with Champion (pseudonym) following my interview protocol. The interview took 45 minutes. Analysis of the interview helped me to adjust my interview protocol in preparation for the actual data gathering process.

Prior to collecting data in the field, I met with each participant to familiarise and also make final briefing on the purpose of the research (Bauer & Gaskell, 2000) as well as briefing on ethical issues. As part of my obligation as a researcher, I did not reveal to each of the participants who else was taking part. Participants were given the opportunity to choose venues they felt comfortable with. Some chose their offices at their work places, whilst others preferred their homes. Meeting times were also agreed with each participant. Each participant was to be visited three times but data collection was done on the second and third time. Use of voice recorder was agreed upon with individual participants and this was subsequently used for the recording of all interview narratives.

#### **4.6.3 Journals**

The third method that I employed in data collection was the journal method. Teachers were asked to keep a record in form of journals in which they documented experiences that ‘awed’

them in their work environment in the course of a month. As already stated earlier, participants gave their consent for their journals to be used in the research (Bashan & Holsblat, 2017). The “significant challenge prompt” (Lutz & Paretti, 2019:4) to initiate journaling for participants was for the participants *to observe, think about and record ‘thought-provoking’ occurrences affecting their well-being as teachers*. The journals were collected for analysis after a period of a month.

Journaling is one means of collecting data in qualitative research, especially in the behavioural sciences, and is considered to be an effective way to obtain information about a person’s feelings (Cohen et al., 2007). Journals have the potential to show what occurs “during implementation of any program or change and the participants’ perception of these occurrences” (Bashan & Holsblat, 2017:4). Journals enable participants to record data in their own time when a particular trigger occurs (Brandford, 2013). Journals allow data to be captured by participants themselves as they live through certain experiences within their work environment. In other words, journals allowed participants to record events that occurred and their emotional responses, all within “their natural setting...minimizing the delay between the event and the time it is recorded” (Kabir, 2016:258). In this research, journaling meant “describing a recent experience and unpacking salient aspects...that affect” (Lutz & Paretti, 2019:2) participants as teachers, their teaching and learners’ learning.

As Connelly and Clandinin (1990), in Bashan & Holsblat (2017:2) note, journals are “written by participants...in practical settings [*constituting*] a source of narratives” about participants’ experiences with the phenomenon under review. In this research, journals comprised an important insightful part of documenting teachers’ emotional response to education issues during the period of this research. Journals can “effectively capture descriptions of individual experiences as they [*participants*] adapt to new organizational roles and settings” (Lutz & Paretti 2019:2), providing significant insights not always achieved through other ways of data collection (Phelps, 2005). Journals provided me with an opportunity to hear teachers’ voices as they experienced changes in the teaching and learning environment.

As Cohen et al. (2011:552) note, “humans make meaning and think in terms of ‘storied texts’ which catch the human condition, human intentionality, the vividness of human experience fully”. Journals added to participants’ narratives about events that were taking place in their

environment, revealing their emotional responses to educational reforms taking place within their work environment. Narratives from participants' journals were collated with their semi-structured interview-initiated narratives, for analysis and discussion.

#### **4.7 Challenges faced in data generation**

Given the number of participants involved in semi-structured interviews and the number of activities that take place in schools, there was always a possibility of challenges arising during data collection. Given the number of activities taking place in schools, some of the interviews had to be rescheduled owing to school programmes requiring teachers to attend to one thing or the other. In two situations, the scheduled interviews could not take place and had to be rescheduled because the concerned participants were required to participate in a hurriedly organised workshop for the completion of RBM forms that were required for onward transmission to the Education Region offices. In one situation, an interview had to be rescheduled owing to the arrival of Education Inspectors. Teachers were, thus, busy putting together and submitting records for auditing. As a result, the interview that had been scheduled had been affected had to be rescheduled for a later date.

Other than the rescheduling of the meetings, all the desired interviews were eventually done successfully. After the data were collected, transcriptions were carried out to allow analysis of the collected data. Journals kept by participants were collected after a month, for analysis.

#### **4.8 Data analysis techniques**

After education policy documents were identified for analysis, I applied the designed Education Policy Analysis Framework presented earlier in Figure 15, for a systematic analysis. Thematic analysis was employed for the selected education policy documents. Thematic analysis is “a form of pattern recognition within the data, with emerging themes becoming the categories for analysis” (Brown, 2009:32). This analysis process demands a careful, more focused reading and re-reading and review of the collected data to identify emerging views. Coding was done for systematizing data for discussion of findings. Themes and coding were informed by various elements underpinning the education policy documents. The meanings from the education policy documents were informed by the various elements as outlined in the analysis framework presented in Figure 15. The elements ranged from the initiator of the policy, its purpose, its context, policy texts and education discourses around education policy.

To ensure objectivity (seeking to represent the research materials fairly) and sensitivity (responding to even subtle cues) (Brown, 2009) in interpreting selected education policy, texts were quoted from policy documents to support generated meanings.

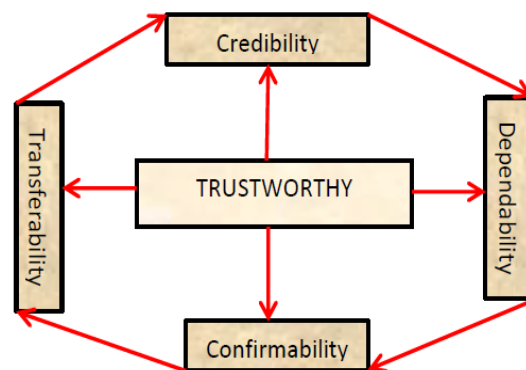
Regarding participants' narratives, once the dates, times and venues were agreed on data collection commenced, notwithstanding rescheduling that had to be done in some cases owing to other school activities beyond participants' control. The semi-structured interview was used to initiate participants' narratives. A total of eighteen narratives were recorded as had been agreed to with all participants. Recording of narratives allowed me to listen to each narrative again and again to capture each participant's exact words, meanings and implication, reducing the burden of having to remember from memory participants' narratives. Once narratives were collected, I transcribed the eighteen narratives for analysis. Chase (2005), in Clandinin & Huber (in press, p.6) identifies five diverse approaches for analysing narratives: that is, the psychosocial developmental approach, the identity approach with a focus on how people construct themselves within institutional, cultural and discursive contexts, a sociological approach with a focus on specific aspects of people's lives, a narrative ethnographic approach, and an auto-ethnographic approach. In the current research, I employed the identity approach to analyse participants' collected narratives. In interpreting the narratives, I relied on participants' narratives, with their voices authenticating constructed meanings (Chase, 2010). Once the transcription was completed, the analysis process involved reading and re-reading transcripts and journal entries to identify units of significance, assigning thematic values to them. The process was circuitous but continued to develop in me "deepening understandings and tensions" (Bruce et al., 2016:2) that underpinned the narratives. In data analysis, I needed to look at narrative threads, tensions and themes (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000) to understand the meanings that participants attached to the selected education policy documents. I conducted cycles of analysis "to identify patterns and themes" (Saldana, 2015). In my reading and re-reading of transcripts and journal entries, I "highlighted language and excerpts" (Wright & Kim, 2020:8) related to participants' emotions and identity construction emanating from their experiences with the selected education policy documents. To authenticate the findings, it was necessary to use participants' own voices, directly quoted from their narratives and journals. This was critical in 'fencing' off my biases as a researcher to allow participants' voices to

‘speak’ to the results of this research. I now turn to how trustworthy in this research was established.

#### 4.9 Trustworthy in the research

In qualitative research, establishing trustworthy is important to authenticate research results. The concept of trustworthy, as used in qualitative research was proposed for the first time by Guba and Lincoln in the middle of 1980s (Maher et al., 2018; Cypress, 2017; Bhattacharjee, 2012; Tobin & Begley, 2004). Trustworthy refers to “quality, authenticity and truthfulness of findings.... It relates to the degree of trust, or confidence, readers have in results” (Cypress, 2017:253). Trustworthy is a criterion for judging the quality of a research design and methods employed in a research.

Guaranteeing trustworthy in research demands a rigorous research process. Rigour is simply defined as “the quality or state of being very exact, careful, or with strict precision or quality of being thorough and accurate” (Cypress, 2017:254). Rigour points to the strength of the research design and the suitability of the method employed to answer research questions. Rigour in research “belongs to the process...and therefore validates the claim of the outcome” (Maher et al., 2018:3). To borrow Fallman and Stolterman’s (2010) phrase, rigour relates to ‘fitness for purpose’. To ensure trustworthiness, I was guided by Guba and Lincoln’s (Cypress, 2017) criteria summarised into four questions about truth value, applicability, consistency and neutrality. From these, the authors fashioned four criteria to ensure rigour for trustworthiness; that is, credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. I present these in Figure 16 showing their contributions towards realising trustworthy in research.



**Figure 17: Trustworthy in qualitative research**

Credibility in qualitative research describes the research as authentic and accurate in measuring what it set out to measure, offering “a true reflection of the social reality of the participants” (Maher et al., 2018:3). In credibility, the persistent question is whether the research “data and findings are suitable” for the researcher’s claim(s) (Ghafouri & Ofoghi, 2016:1915). There are various strategies that a researcher can adopt to ensure credibility of the research. To increase trustworthiness through credibility in this research, I made referrals “to the participants to confirm the findings” (Ghafouri & Ofoghi, 2016:1916). This was in addition to verbatim quoting (Bhattercherjee, 2012) that I employed in analysis of data. In using audio tapes that were later transcribed, I allowed participants’ words to ‘speak’ and validate the results. Another measure that I took for credibility was data triangulation, achieved through use of various data collection methods. As discussed earlier, to this end I employed semi-structured interviews for participants’ narratives, journals and document analysis of selected education policy documents, all meant to unearth the influence of selected education policy on teachers’ imaging of selves as teachers, and their teaching. As an interpretive researcher, this approach allowed me to understand “the how and why of the participants’ understanding and actions” (Maher et al., 2018:5) regarding the selected education policy directives during education reforms in Zimbabwe.

Dependability, as a criterion for trustworthiness in qualitative research, demands that the research process be described in sufficient detail to facilitate another researcher to repeat the work (Maher et al., 2018). As an interpretive researcher, to increase dependability for the research, I provided details about the phenomenon of interest and the social context in which it is embedded so as to allow readers to independently authenticate their interpretive inferences (Bhattercherjee, 2012). Confirmability, on the other hand, refers to the extent to which the findings reported can be independently confirmed by others to safeguard against my subjectivity as a researcher (Maher et al., 2018; Bhattercherjee, 2012). My positionality as a practicing teacher-developer posed the risk of bias in my analysis. To minimize that, as already indicated under credibility and elsewhere in the research, participant referrals (Ghafouri & Ofoghi, 2016) and quoting participants verbatim helped me to improve on confirmability of the results. Transferability implies that findings in the present research are the same as findings in the same situations (Maher, 2018; Ghafouri & Ofoghi, 2016). To ensure transferability, it was necessary to provide detailed descriptions of the context and process so that readers can

independently assess whether, and to what extent, reported findings could obtain in other identical situations with identical research participants and context (Bhattercherjee, 2012).

#### **4.10 Ethical issues**

Ethical consideration is a prerequisite in qualitative research. Ethics refers to the protection of human cases “through the application of appropriate ethical principles” (Arifin, 2018:30). Ethics is now a “primary requirement before starting any research involving human participants” (Perez et al., 2017:20) to ensure that researchers “do no harm” (Dooly et al., 2017:351; Aluwihare-Samaranayake, 2012:65; Somekh & Lewin, 2011:25). Ethical decisions are the result of “a weighing up of a myriad of factors in the specific complex social and political situations” in which research is conducted (Somekh & Lewin, 2011:25) like is the case with Zimbabwe, which has been socially, politically and economically unstable. Principles are frequently drawn up to protect participants’ rights and these generally include informed consent, confidentiality and anonymity, as well as pre-publication referrals. Ethical issues also include voluntary participation and withdrawals should participants choose to discontinue. The concern of ethical issues becomes more salient “when conducting face to face interview with vulnerable group of participants” who may potentially become stressed while expressing their feelings during interview or narrative sessions (Arifin, 2018:30). As a requirement by the Ethics Committee at University of KwaZulu-Natal, I applied for ethics clearance, which was duly granted following my presentation of data collection protocols.

One of the key components in ethics is to obtain informed consent. Consent should be given freely, with participants fully aware of what is being asked of them. Intended participants must be competent to give the consent. What this means is that the age of the participant must be such that they can give their own consent (or have an adult giving consent on their behalf) according to law, and that the language used in seeking for such consent is clearly understood by the participant to allow them full knowledge of what would be required of them. Consistent with ethical requirements, the purpose of the study and the nature of the participation required of participants were explained (Puplampu et al., 2020; Perez et al., 2017). Their consent to participate was duly given by means of written consent through which their rights were clearly outlined. The consent letter was drafted in the medium of English Language since all had consented to using the language. All consent documents containing details of participants or

their schools were kept in a locked drawer “with no access to anyone” (Arifin, 2018:30) other than myself. Regarding how participants’ voices and experiences were captured (Aluwihare-Samaranayake, 2012), I sought for permission to use an audio recorder to record discussions and their narratives and this was duly granted by all participants. To this end, each interview was conducted individually in a private and quiet room, either in the participant’s office or private room at their homes, without access to outsiders (Arifin, 2018). Equally important is to note that transcription of data was also conducted using earphones in my private and quiet reading room. The tapes and transcribed data were also kept locked in a safe drawer in my reading room at home.

As part of my relational responsibilities as a researcher, I attended to participants’ emotional needs by “ensuring them confidentiality” (Shaw, 2017:213). I assured them that their “identities would be kept private and their real names [*or real names of their schools*] would not be used” (Puplambu et al., 2020:3) anywhere in the research report. Instead, pseudonyms are used to refer to both participant and the school where he or she taught. I also informed the participants that in qualitative research, in discussing the findings researchers use “quotes from the conversations to justify their analysis and that these quotes are sometimes used in presentations” and in the final publication (Puplambu et al., 2020:3). To this, participants gave their consent. In addition, to increase confidentiality in this research, I made referrals for “the participants to confirm the findings” (Ghafouri & Ofoghi, 2016:1916), thus validating the results. Pre-publication referrals offered “an opportunity for the participants to comment upon and...add to the report” (Somekh & Lewin, 2011:26), thus correcting differences in interpretation.

#### **4.11 Limitations of the study**

This research was confined to the three stated government high schools located in Masvingo Urban, leaving out other schools, such as council, church and other private schools in the locality. The research did not also consider similar government high schools in other urban centres in Zimbabwe.

#### **4.12 Conclusion**

This chapter looked at qualitative research and the interpretive paradigm that were employed, with a view to show their suitability for this research. The narrative design was discussed, with

a view to showing reasons why it was chosen for this research. Selection of participants through purposive sampling was discussed and justified. Data generation and collection procedures were also discussed. Trustworthy and ethical issues in this research were also reviewed. The next chapter now focuses on results from document analysis of the selected education policy documents.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SELECTED EDUCATION POLICIES' RE-ENGINEERING OF EDUCATION, THE TEACHER'S IMAGE AND TEACHING**

#### **5.1 Overview**

The purpose of the chapter is to examine how the selected education policy documents view education, the teacher and how teaching ought to proceed. The chapter, therefore, analyses the following education policy documents: the performance management forms (PMS & RBM), the Practical Education Clocking Registers, and the Teacher Supervision document, to determine how the said policy documents have re-engineered the meaning of education, the image of the teacher and how teaching ought to be carried out. In using the verb, *re-engineering*, I mean to argue that the selected education policies contrive to recast the concepts *education*, *teacher* as well as *teaching* and *learning*. The task of the chapter, therefore, is to determine how teacher imaginings are likely to evolve from the said education policy documents. As noted elsewhere, literature reveals that teacher imaginings produce images which become the bases for teacher agency (Sailors, 2018), thereby controlling and sometimes curtailing teacher obligations, enforcing compliance as directed by education policy. The “affective structure” (Moore & Clarke, 2016:669) projected in education policy subtly re-images teachers and teaching practice/s, and in this case, towards performance scripted boundaries (Skourdoumbis, 2018). This has tended to heighten classroom observation (teacher surveillance) at the “risk of poor inspection” (Page, 2017:2). The process exerts pressure on the part of teachers to meet performance targets, but this, at the cost of teacher anxiety, stress and fear of dismissal (Head, 2016). The selected policies were deployed as part of education reforms in Zimbabwe to curtail the said poor education quality in schools.

The selected policies are part of a raft of measures that were (and are still) used to manage education in Zimbabwe. For a systematic analysis of the selected education policies, I organised the chapter into the following subheadings: 5.1 Overview; 5.2 Reconfiguring education, teachers, teaching and learning in the era of PMS and RBM; 5.2.1 Education; 5.2.2 Teachers and teaching; 5.2.3 Learning; 5.3 Imaging teachers through the Practical Education Clocking Registers prism; 5.4 Teacher supervision – performance for real or play-acting?; 5.5 The teacher's image at the altar of sacrifice; 5.6 Conclusion. The analysis of the selected education policy documents in this chapter aims to show how they influence teachers'

imaginings, leading to their imaging of self as teachers. Chapter Six looks at teachers' imaginings of what they believe the selected education policies are saying about them and teaching.

The heightened effect of the three selected education policies was anchored in the ideas that evolved in the last 20 years, where education in schools has been directly linked to economic productivity, thus tasking teachers to raise educational standards (Ball et al., 2012). The reform discourse sought to directly connect education to economic productivity. In this regard, the faltering economy was seen as an indicator of a failing education system. The education reforms, thus, refocused the concept of education targeting skills development for economic productivity (human capital), as opposed to the more traditional education for social justice. To accept or contest the idea of 'falling education standards' discourse used to justify the reforms was, and is, dependent on one's view of what education should do on, and for, the learner – develop outright skills for economic production (human capital) in schools or capacitate learners with creativity, criticality, reflectivity and problem-solving abilities (social justice). Inherently, what this means is that whichever view one adopts, in subtle ways, that view ultimately defines how the concept of education should be understood, as well as how teaching and learning should progress. That ultimately 'paints' the teacher who is seen as suitable to carry out the mandate of teaching. Whereas a great deal of education policy research has been preoccupied with factors affecting education reforms, there has been less attention on how such reforms influence teacher imaginings, shaping how they then see self as teachers and teaching. It is for this reason that the current research examines how the PMS and RBM, the Practical Education Clocking system and Teacher Supervision influence how teachers view self and teaching. This research contributes in filling this gap.

## **5.2 Reconfiguring education, teachers, teaching and learning in the era of PMS and RBM**

The impetus for reforms in Zimbabwe has been the perceived poor education standards and the cause has mainly been "attributed to unsatisfactory...teacher performance and commitment" (PCIET, 1999:448). Education institutes were accused of producing graduates who failed to fit into the world of work. In 2013, the then Minister of Education, Sports and Culture reiterated the same sentiments that "Education is in a crisis .... Blame quality of teaching in Zimbabwe" (Henson, 2013). Invariably, teachers "were...blamed for lack of dedication to their jobs" and

this was seen as having “inadvertently affected the academic performance of students” (Ncube, 2013:227). Evidently, what attracted the introduction of the performance appraisal system (PMS to RBM) and the Clocking Registers system, and the revamping of Teacher Supervision, which are the policies under review in this research, was the “allocation of blame” personified in the “incompetent [*or simply lazy*] teacher” (Ball, 2007:125). Education discourses prevailing in the social space sought to couple the failing education system with the failing economy. The net-effect was to change the way that education was to be viewed, organised and delivered, thereby changing the “meaning of education and what it means to be educated and what it means to learn” (p.128). The enactment of the said policies was seen as fostering national economy by “tightening the connection between schooling, employment [*and*] productivity” through “enhancing student outcomes in employment-related skills and competences” (p.122). The context was, thus, awash with discourses that coupled education with ideologies of the market, radically changing the view that teachers had of education.

The PMS and RBM, as well as the Practical Education Clocking system, are pieces of education policies that were initiated by the Public Service Commission as means of improving service delivery in Zimbabwe. As discussed elsewhere in this research, it is important to note that the education policy process in Zimbabwe tends to separate agenda-setters (policy makers) from policy implementers (teachers in this case), creating uncertainties during implementation. Uncertainties fuel teachers’ imaginings about education and teaching, resulting in teachers’ self-imaging that influences their teaching. It is for this reason that I examined the said education policy documents to understand what meanings are likely to be generated from them. In my view, as teachers make sense of the policies, the meanings they generate are guided by their imaginings about what they think education policies are saying about education, about them as teachers, and about teaching and learning. It is to this task that I now turn to determine how the language in the PMS and RBM documents is likely to affect and influence teacher identity.

The concept of Performance Management was introduced in Zimbabwean education in 1995 with the aim of implementing performance-based salary increments and bonuses. To understand the insinuations that the PMS and RBM make regarding education, teachers and teaching as well as learning, I examined implications from the language employed in the policy

documents. As discussed in the theoretical framework in Chapter Three, language is an important symbolic communication that operates through chains of reasoned and imagined possibilities dealing with both things present and things imagined (Burke & Stets, 2009). Words (i.e. language) are important and versatile symbols in human interaction, providing meanings that can be both subtle and complex. In other words, when dealing with education policy, it is important to closely analyse the language used in policy documents so as to identify their implications. Mackenzie (<http://www.mathcs.duq.edu/~packer/IR/IRmain.html>, downloaded 30/10/2021) notes that in documents, things are not always what they seem to be because there are ideological undertones embedded in them, that is, ‘silences’ and underlying coercions that compel teachers, in subtle ways, to act in certain manner. Informed document analysis should seek to uncover what is ‘hidden – the silences - to understand even the undeclared intentions.

As discussed in Chapter Four, the interpretive paradigm employed in this research notes that for getting to meanings of education policy and how participants and researchers make sense of the said policy, it is important that they understand the context because the related discourses within the operating environment do shape meanings. The interpretive paradigm is a theory of social practice that emphasizes the “relational interdependency of agent and world, activity, meaning, cognition, learning and knowing” (Somekh & Lewin, 2011:174). Meaning is socially constructed by the active human agent who interprets activity by employing his/her personal interpretive framework so as to come to terms with social phenomena. Interpretive research regards knowledge and meaning as acts of interpretation (Gephat, in Thomas, 2010) necessitating understanding of issues from subjective experiences of participants.

What attracted the introduction of the performance appraisal system (PMS and/or RBM), the Practical Clocking Registers system, and the revamping of Teacher Supervision, which are the policies under review in this research, was the “allocation of blame” personified in the “incompetent [*or simply lazy*] teacher” (Ball, 2007:125). Education discourses prevailing in the social space sought to couple the failing education system with the failing economy. The net-effect was to change the way that education was to be viewed, organised and delivered, thereby changing the “meaning of education and what it means to be educated and what it means to learn” (p.128). The enactment of the said policies was seen as fostering the national economy

by “tightening the connection between schooling, employment [and] productivity” through “enhancing student outcomes in employment-related skills and competences” (p.122). Interpretations of the said education policy in Zimbabwe were, and are still, influenced by the prevailing discourses in the country, such as ‘poor education results’, ‘education is in a crisis, blame quality of teaching in Zimbabwe’ (Henson, 2013), ‘hyperinflation’ and ‘low salaries and poor working conditions’ for teachers, all of which affect how the said education policies are understood and implemented. The context was, thus, awash with discourses that coupled education with ideologies of the market, radically changing the view that teachers had of education. It can be noted that education discourse “does ideological work, constitutes society and culture, is situated and historical, and relates to [or] mediates power”, and is “social practice in which people enter into relations with each other as they engage in the process of producing and interpreting meaning” (Jones, 2013:10-11). Given this kind of environment characterizing education, it is interesting to think about what meanings are projected by the selected education policies.

Table 3 presents texts quoted from three documents, that is, the *Guidelines to the Completion of Appraisal Form* document designed to guide teachers on how to complete the PMS or the RBM form. Texts quoted from the said documents help to unravel possible meanings that can be read from the symbolic language employed in the policy documents. Table 2 tabulates the name of policy document, declared purpose, the page or point reference number from where the text is quoted from, and the interpretation thereof.

**Table 3: Document analysis results**

Name of document	Declared purpose	Page &/or point	Policy text	Interpreted meaning
Guidelines to the completion of appraisal forms	To help the appraiser & appraisee to set detailed work plans on precisely what is expected of the subordinate	Point 2  Point 3   Point 5   Point 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Key Result Areas (KRA) are “those elements in the job description that are critical to accomplishing one’s job”</li> <li>➤ Each KRA set should be “<b>Specific, Measurable...</b> [focusing] on <b>Results</b> (not activities) and be <b>Time framed</b> (SMART) specifying the exact date by which the objective will be achieved”</li> <li>➤ “...how will the objective be measured to ensure it was achieved?”</li> <li>➤ “...do not over or underrate one individual’s performance based on your personal feelings.”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Shift of education to ‘critical elements’</li> <li>-Focus on key result areas that can be measured</li> <li>-Focus on <i>results</i> not <i>activities</i></li> <li>-Specificity on objective achievement date</li> <li>-objective measurability</li> <li>-spectre of appraiser’s personal prejudices against appraisee</li> </ul>
PMS	Improve efficiency & effectiveness	Page 1  Page 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ To “measure progress”</li> <li>➤ For “measuring the overall performance of the officer”</li> <li>➤ “Objectives must be: Specific; Measurable; Achievable; Result Oriented and Time Framed (SMART).”</li> <li>➤ “Ratings should be completed without eraser, tipexing or rubbing. Where there is need to change the rating, both appraiser and appraisee should sign against amendments.”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-measurement to show <i>efficiency &amp; effectiveness</i></li> <li>-measurability of objectives</li> <li>-efforts to curb influence of appraiser’s feelings towards appraisee <i>shows a high possibility of contamination of ratings</i></li> </ul>
RBM	Focus is on Output Performance	Page 2       Page 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ “Output Description”</li> <li>➤ Sequential structure – “KRA Description” → “Goal Description” → “Objective Description” → “Outcome Description”</li> <li>➤ Appraisee rating is “on Output Performance”.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-focus is describing teacher output leading to measurable learning outcome: <i>learner results; product outcome</i></li> <li>-appraisee rating tied to learner results</li> </ul>

As projected in Table 3, the overall tone in the *Guidelines to the Completion of Appraisal Forms* document reveals the significance attached to the Key Result Area (KRA). The *Guidelines to the Completion of Appraisal Forms* document notes that Key Result Area (KRA) means “those elements in the job description that are critical to accomplishing one’s job” (*Guidelines to the Completion of Appraisal Form*, Point 2). This document can be viewed in Appendix F. The overall tone reveals the primacy of KRAs in the work of a teacher conversely underplaying everything else in the process of teaching. In addition, the PMS form adds that the purpose of the KRAs is to “measure progress” in education as much as they are for “measuring the overall performance of the officer” (PMS Form, p.1). The PMS form further notes that the purpose for this measurability is to improve teacher efficiency and effectiveness (PMS Form, p.1). This is done to clearly articulate “Output Descriptions” in which “KRA Description, Goal Description, Objective Description [and] Outcome Description” (RBM Form, p.2) take centre stage. The focus, in this case, is describing teacher output, leading to measurable learning outcome, that is, improved learner results, making teaching and learning product-oriented. When one looks at the overtly expressed aim for the introduction of the appraisal system, the idea was, and is, still plausible and quite positive. It is ideal for teachers to be efficient in discharging their duties. Viewed from this angle, teachers need to be efficient in discharging their duties to develop useful capacities in learners. The image of an ‘efficient and effective’ teacher in discharging his or her duties couched in this text would sit well with the long-held image of a good teacher that teachers carry from the days of their training, so long there is a shared meaning of the terms ‘efficient and effective’ – an issue that I will further explore in section 5.2.2 titled ‘Teachers and teaching’. In this regard, there would be teacher-image verification, encouraging teachers to work to fulfil that image. This would galvanize teachers into work-ethics consistent with their teacher identity. It is (and should be) the dream of teachers to be evaluated as purposed on assisting learners for them to make it in their education. As discussed earlier in the Theoretical Framework in Chapter Three, identity-verification provides an emotional anchor that leaves one less vulnerable as compared to identity non-verification which results in the agent (teacher) being highly vulnerable (Burke & Stets, 2009) and feeling insecure. Identity verification, in this case, would keep teachers’ perceived meanings of who they are and what they represent in a situation “consistent with the

meanings held in their identity standard” (Burke & Stets, 2009:116). Teachers prefer to see themselves as hardworking and purposeful people driven by their desire to help learners.

There are two other declared purposes to the introduction of the performance appraisal system stated in the first page of the PMS form. The second declared purpose is to “measure progress” and the third is to create the “basis for measuring the overall performance of the officer for the period under consideration” (The Public Service of Zimbabwe, 2000:1). These two purposes are premised on quantifying teachers’ work, subjecting it to a measuring scale which could project an image of a teacher at the ‘altar of sacrifice’.

Point 3 in the *Guidelines to the Completion of Appraisal Form* document, as shown in Table 3, notes that each KRA set should be “**Specific, Measurable**... [focusing] on **Results** (not activities) and be **Time framed** (SMART), specifying the exact date by which the objective will be achieved”. The same view is also expressed in the PMS Form in which objectives must be “specific; measurable; achievable; result oriented and time framed” (p.2). Evidently, the focus is describing teacher output that enables measurable learning outcomes. Clearly, measurability and specificity are key components of the ‘results movement’, where specificity of KRAs and objectives is seen as a factor that will allow measurability for efficient monitoring of teaching and learning to achieve high test scores. What this does is to underplay teaching and learning that cannot be easily subjected to statistical measurement. This view is buttressed by the instruction that KRAs must be focused “on **Results**” and “not activities” (*Guidelines to the Completion of Appraisal Forms*, point 3). The KRAs need to be time-framed for continual monitoring. The fact that emphasis is placed on ‘results’ and not on ‘activities’ smells of “technicism [coupled with] standardization” which pose challenges to the teacher and learner autonomy (Hennessy & McNamara, 2013:6). In my view, the underplayed ‘activities’ provide a rich seam for incidental and independent learning that promotes learner autonomy. NANGO (2018:1) notes that the RBM is a “management strategy aimed at achieving improved performance and demonstrable results”. As the author further notes, this management system focuses on “achieving results, improving performance...monitoring and reporting on performance” (p.1). What this amounts to is imaging of teachers as entities whose activities are tightly controlled by education managers, thereby destroying teacher autonomy.

The meaning of education is equally altered to mean those aspects that can be technically measured (human capital) as opposed to holistic education inclusive of social justice education. The long held view of education, and this is what most teachers believe, is that it should be a process of developing creative, critical, reflective and problem-solving minds able to deal with novel situations. Whereas education policy framed from the PMS/RBM perspective looks at education as a function of the economy and, therefore, perceives the function of education as creation of 'human capital', teachers, on the other hand, perceive education as directed to the growth of citizenship and social justice (Bell & Stephenson, 2006). With teachers being 'forced' to work towards the human capital model at the expense of what they believe, their emotions are destabilized owing to non-verification of the projected teacher images from the said education policy documents. However, owing to the coercive force imbedded in education policy, for teachers to survive, they have to find coping strategies which could include implementing education policy anyhow, with no conviction or the zeal for the work. Clearly, there is a difference between how the said education policy perceives what is worthy education for the country and what teachers see as important education for the learners.

The *Guidelines to the Completion of Appraisal Form* document instructs on the rating of a supervisee. The document warns that the appraiser should "not over or underrate one individual's performance based on your personal feelings" (*Guidelines to the Completion of Appraisal Form*, point 9). The PMS form reiterates this feeling thus: "ratings should be completed without eraser, tipexing or rubbing. Where there is need to change the rating, both appraiser and appraisee should sign against amendments" (PMS Form, p.2). Clearly, the severe warning is meant to curtail the effect of the human prejudices that can contaminate the rating, violating professional ethics. The rating itself should be based "on Output Performance" (RBM Form, p.8). The fact that the three documents cited above are at pains trying to curb contamination of the rating process raises the spectre of contamination of the rating system. Ironically, the forms, albeit in subtle ways, acknowledge that the rating system has a high risk of contamination where the rating may not necessarily be a true reflection of the appraisee's (the teacher in this case) abilities. The caution attests to the fact that the system is open to human prejudices pitting the rating system at the mercy of personal feelings. Depending on what rating one gets, there is certainly an emotional response to the rating. As insinuated

earlier, rating of teachers in the performance management system raises the spectre of contaminated ratings based on who the supervisor likes or dislikes. Some researchers (e.g. Kondrasuk, 2011; Zvavahera, 2014) have reported biases in ratings. The rating system can, thus, create unethical practices where some teachers become bootlickers to gain unwarranted favours from supervisees. This is, however, at the risk of emotional instability for teachers. What this also suggests is that teachers are being tested to which they ought to score to survive as teachers. An image of a teacher at the ‘mercy’ of an education policy evaluation system is likely to create disharmony between education policy projected teacher image with that which teachers harbour of selves and their roles as teachers. This is likely to lead to non-verification of education policy-initiated teacher image, creating disharmony in teachers.

Evidently, the PMS and the RBM altered the view of what is important education for Zimbabwean learners. In the next section, I now briefly turn to how the said education policies have redefined what education should be viewed as.

### **5.2.1 Education**

As noted earlier, the declared purpose for adopting the PMS and later the RBM, as shown in Table 3, was to “improve efficiency and effectiveness” (PMS, p.1) by focusing on both teacher and learner “output performance” (RBM, p.2). The ultimate goal was to describe teacher output leading to measurable learning outcomes. The focus of KRAs, as discussed earlier, is to prop up learner results. However, the definitions of ‘effective teacher’, ‘effective teaching’ and ‘effective learning’ in the era of the performance management system are subordinated to the notion of “what knowledge is of most worth” (Apple, 2003:7-8; see also Marz, et al., 2013:13) for a country. In Chapter Two, Figure 1, I presented the conceptual model showing differing views between education policy makers and teachers on what is important education in an economized country like Zimbabwe. On the one hand, the PMS and RBM define what is critical education as that which fosters skills for economic productivity in the economic sector. In a way, that articulates how teachers ought to carry out teaching for learners to end up with the desirable economic skills. On the other hand, teachers prefer education that is situated in the real-world sphere, where education should foster both intellectual and practical skills. Teachers’ support (or lack of it) of the education deemed essential by the performance management systems depends largely on whether there is congruency or dissonance between

teachers' and policy makers' perceptions of what knowledge is worth for the country. Bearing in mind that the introduction of the performance management system (PMS/RBM) was meant to refocus education to directly mitigate economic non-performance, the definition of what is important education in Zimbabwe also changed from what teachers previously shared as important in education, compared to what policy makers saw as critical education for economic revamping. As Brown (2015) notes, the perception of education as a vehicle for economic development has led to governments becoming increasingly interested in educational performance and outputs. The coupling of education and the economy resulted in the marketization of education and this tended to reduce it to a list of skills that learners need to demonstrate as proof of their fitness-for-production in the economic world.

Stated crudely, the meaning of education was altered to mean those aspects that can be technically measured (human capital), as opposed to holistic education inclusive of social justice education. The long held view of education, and this is what most teachers believe, is that it should be a process of developing creative, critical, reflective and problem-solving minds that are able to deal with novel situations. Whereas education policy framed from the PMS/RBM perspective looks at education as a function of the economy and, therefore, perceives the function of education as creation of 'human capital', teachers, on the other hand, perceive education as directed to the growth of citizenship and social justice (Bell & Stephenson, 2006). The adoption of an economic productivity-focused education ultimately affected the content and the manner of its delivery. Literature shows that contrary to the 'human capital' perspective, teachers prefer accountability systems that do not limit and distort instruction but, rather, support the development of both intellectual and practical skills and prepare learners for performance on real-world tasks (Wise & Usdan, 2013).

Essential knowledge framed through the economized education vision tends to be narrower than that desired by teachers. The lack of a shared vision on what education should seek to do could be minimised by an all-inclusive discussion on the focus and methods of education reforms. Ironically, the PCIET's (1999) findings that catalysed reforms in Zimbabwe also noted the folly of ignoring the centrality of teachers in education reforms. The commission warned that "education programmes, let alone reform programmes have not succeeded simply

because policy makers did not take into account the centrality of the teachers who implement the programmes on the ground” (p.48-9).

Analysis of the performance management system, as shown in Table 2, agrees with literature that shows that the origin of the performance management system introduced in the 1950s and 1960s by Peter Drucker is a concept of ‘Management by Objectives’ (MBO). The concept was introduced in the field of business management (Madhekeni, 2012:123; UNESCO, 2008:5), with the aim of achieving defined and measurable results. PMS and RBM are, therefore, concepts that are borrowed from the economic world and are synonymous with production. The approach is top-down and relies on regular monitoring and evaluation of activities to ensure a high degree of accountability by the workforce. Top-down management generally leads to impositions rather than negotiations. Proponents of this management system argue that it is “a powerful tool” that can be used by decision-makers, policy-makers and managers to track progress of an implemented program (Madhekeni, 2012:122). As has been noted earlier, the performance management system is touted as important in developing employees’ competencies for improved output (Bhatia, 2010), and this, in the process, is thought to eliminate “performance deficiencies” (Dressler, et al., 2011:306, in Mashavira et al., 2014:457). As shown in the analysis of the performance appraisal system, its introduction in education was thought to improve teacher output which, in the process, would foster learner performance skills. Paying tribute to the performance appraisal system, the then Minister of Education, Sports and Culture in Zimbabwe, declared to Parliament that the “Education system has become a more accountable organization with the institutionalization of the performance management system” (Parliament of Zimbabwe, Thursday, 21 November 2013). As the National Research Council (1991) notes, the science of performance appraisal is directed toward creating a measure that accurately assesses the level of an individual’s job performance and to create an evaluation system that advances one or two operational functions in a given organization. The need for RBM was heightened in developing countries because it is seen as clarifying results to be achieved and connects budget allocation to output-outcome delivery and requires meritocracy in the management of human resources (Pazvakarambwa, 2013). However, the analysis of the performance management system (PMS/RBM) revealed differing perceptions between education policy-makers and teachers regarding the implementation of the

system in education, raising questions about the resultant images of teacher and teaching in Zimbabwe.

The ultimate aim of both the PMS and RBM was/is to “demonstrate a link between performance and pay” (National Research Council, 1991:13), although up to the present this has remained problematic and unconvincing. The analysis now turns to how the performance management system shapes teacher and teaching images.

### **5.2.2 Teachers and teaching**

It can be noted that the PMS and RBM, as shown in Table 2, redefine the teacher and teaching. In the previous section, I clearly demonstrated how the said performance management system redefined the concept of education to mean economic performance skills that would fit learners for economic productivity. By the same token, an effective teacher would be one who develops the needful skills. Effective teaching, according to this perspective, would be seen as application of teaching methods that result in learners developing the said needful economic skills, notwithstanding the fact that the said learners may be lacking creativity, criticality, reflectivity and problem-solving abilities. Given the fact that the concept of education performance management era has been re-engineered, likewise the images of teacher and teaching have also been altered in very subtle ways. In this case, an effective teacher is one who simply develops production skills in learners, with the risk of teaching being reduced to coaching for learners to exhibit the desired skills. Clearly, the performance management system as presented and discussed in Table 2 shows that the said education reforms redefined ‘education’, ‘teacher’ and ‘teaching’. Ball (2013:57) notes that, “performativity is a culture or a system of ‘terror’. It is a regime of accountability that employs judgments, comparisons and displays as means of control, attrition and change” in which performance of individuals “serve as measures of productivity or output”.

The language of education policy documents under review shows that education policy-makers “have increasingly turned to market logic” in which “business and market logics are used to manage education, teaching and learning” (Edwards & Means, 2019:5-7). In the market logic perspective, measurements and results become central as opposed to creativity, criticality, reflectivity and problem-solving abilities. These are not mentioned anywhere in the performance management forms because they are developed through learning activities, an

aspect side-lined as shown in point 3 of the *Guidelines to the Completion of Appraisal Forms* document which notes that each KRA set should be “**Specific, Measurable...[focusing] on Results** (not activities)”. The idea of performativity as regards teaching and learning is a situation in which teachers are teaching learners *key skills* (‘specific’ and ‘measurable’) necessary for economic productivity. As literature shows, meeting the demands of a market-driven education system poses challenges to “teacher autonomy and pedagogy”, leading to their de-professionalization (Hennessy & McNamara, 2013:6). This does not augur well with the long-held and cherished teacher identity. This would create dissonance between teacher images filtering from the said education policy and those from teachers, which would result in non-verification of the education policy-projected teacher image by teachers. For teachers to deal with the dissonance, they will either conform to the new teacher image projected by education policy or resist through ways that manifest in their teaching practices. Where the reaction is negative, teachers are likely to begin viewing themselves in different ways, including feeling that they are unfit for what is expected of them as teachers and, if they alter their teacher image to be consistent with teacher imaging projected from the performance appraisal system, they may feel that they have betrayed their moral obligation in which they ought to give what they regard as useful and helpful education to their learners. Research has shown that “teacher autonomy and commitment are central to the establishment of motivating educational experiences that foster the development of creativity and critical thinking” (Hennessy & McNamara, 2013:6). Imaging education as reducible to quantitative measurement is contrary to teachers’ views of developing creative minds that are receptive to on-job training. What this does is to raise the spectre of “marginalization” of teachers, that is “to put or keep [*teachers*] in an unimportant or powerless position” (Merriam-Webster, 2019, in Edwards & Means, 2019:7). This is likely to create negativity in teachers’ self-imaging, thereby affecting how they will teach.

It is interesting to think of how teachers are likely to react to education policy’s differing way of defining education as well as the teacher and teaching. As discussed in the theoretical chapter (Chapter Three), in Zimbabwe, teachers are not actively engaged during education policy development but are merely brought in as implementers. The development of the said policies did not take into account teachers’ views. Teachers were not involved in the formulation and adoption of the policy, only to be called to implement other people’s ideas

during education reforms. Like other researchers in Zimbabwe, Gutuza (2016:389) says that “teachers as one of the key stakeholders in the education system were not involved during the policy formulation of *[the]* RBM”. To be asked to implement other people’s ideas is an act of marginalization to which teachers may react negatively. Teachers may feel that education policy sees them as valueless workers whose views are unimportant in the planning of education policy and the teaching of learners. This contradicts the image that teachers have for long associated themselves with, in which the teacher is seen as compassionate and ready to go beyond the call of duty to help learners develop the required abilities. In this case, the resultant image of a teacher is not verifiable against teacher role standard in which the teacher is seen as a helper and a professionally moral-purposed agent aimed at helping learners to develop creativity, criticality reflectivity and problem-solving skills.

The interpretations that teachers would make of the performance management system would be influenced by the prevailing education discourse. The net-effect is a change in the way education is viewed, organised and delivered, thereby changing the “meaning of education and what it means to be educated and what it means to learn” (Ball, 2007:128). The enactment of the said policies was, and is, seen as fostering national economy by “tightening the connection between schooling, employment *[and]* productivity” through “enhancing student outcomes in employment-related skills and competences” (p.122). From this angle, the performance appraisal system images teachers as ‘automated technicians’ who should simply drill learners on the articulated skills to ensure that learners pass the examinations. This way of imaging teachers is contrary to the teacher as a moral agent, whose aim is to develop critical thinking and problem-solving abilities, allowing learners to deal with novel situations in life. The skills-auditing to achieve results presents a contrary way of imaging the teacher, which is different from what teachers believe should constitute teachers and teaching. On this, Hennessy and McNamara (2013:6) note that performativity “has emerged as a dominant goalpost in modern schooling, *[and this has been]* at the cost of more critical educational encounters”. Evident in the culture of performativity is that the value of education is represented through grades, points and quantifiable targets downplaying education for life. For teachers to cope with the new images of teachers and teaching, teachers may simply disengage and approach teaching as ‘forced duty’ to which they no longer apply themselves.

The other downside of skills audit is the meritocracy system (Pazvakarambwa, 2013), what Hartzell (2015) calls the ‘carrot system’ and which Dugan (2012) says is the ‘reward power’ in the management of human resource. Meritocracy in the performance appraisal system is an attempt to “demonstrate a link between performance and pay” (National Research Council, 1991:13). What this does is to create a ‘guns for hire’ teacher image where teachers are given incentives for producing learners who excel in ‘skills assessments’ like tests or examinations. In Zimbabwe, this has been the norm, with learning institutions giving incentives to educators who produce ‘good results’. The common practice for institutions in Zimbabwe has been to have a gradation of paying such incentives where, if it is at Advanced Level, if candidates score As in a subject, the incentive payment would be the number of As in the subject multiplied by the agreed rate of payment for an A (e.g. Number of Candidates with As X the rate). Those getting Bs would have their own payment scale. The same process would be used for Ordinary Level as well as some tertiary institutions. With this meritocracy system necessitated by the skills audit, the RBM has created competition among teachers and educational institutions, with the ultimate results of cases of even cheating in schools. Various ways of cheating have been reported in the Zimbabwean education system, including leakage of examinations. Ranking of schools using national examination results has increased the pressure on teachers to change from who they really are because non-production of high test scores is threatened with various forms of censure. What the meritocracy system does is also to weaken teachers’ collective bargaining power as teachers are incentivized differently. Those not producing high scores suffer from emotional stress as they view themselves as ‘unfit for purpose’.

As discussed earlier in 5.2, based on the rating scale employed in the performance appraisal system as shown in Table 2, it is logical to note that the system eventually organizes teachers into different groups where those deemed not to be producing high test scores naturally form an alliance, whilst those deemed to be productive also form their own group. Sometimes these groups can rival each other. This extends to even school partnerships. Those schools deemed to be highly productive will form their clusters separate from those not producing the high test scores. The question is, ‘how has all this pressure influenced teacher and teaching identities?’ As suggested earlier, some teachers may disengage and simply approach teaching as duty, with no passion for it. Teachers would see the image of a teacher as demeaned and may suffer from

emotional stress. Others may even opt to leave the teaching profession if they fail to reconcile the education policy-projected teacher image to their own views.

Analysis of the language of the PMS and RBM shows that the focus is on what teachers ‘should do on or for learners’, which smells of the transmission model where drilling is imminent. The performance appraisal system focuses on teachers, as if they are the *prima facie* of education, rather than the learners. As Ball et al. (2012:3) note, education policy “is done by and done to teachers; they are actors and subjects, subject to and objects of policy. Policy is written onto bodies and produces particular subject positions” for teachers. Given the socio-political, cultural and economic environment under which the education policies under review were developed and are enacted, ideological and philosophical debates and contested discourses (Bell & Stephenson, 2014) about education, teaching and learning tend to initiate an amalgam of images about education, teachers and teaching, thereby influencing how teachers view themselves and teaching.

What is evident from the document analysis is that education policy can influence teacher imaging in various ways. Some of the evolved teacher images act positively, creating positive emotions that reinforce the teacher’s self-imaging, whilst others attract negative emotional responses leading to non-verification of education policy-initiated teacher images. The question begging an answer is, how do these education policy-initiated teacher images influence teaching in class? In the next section I now turn to the implied connection between learning skills and the economic market.

### **5.2.3 Learning**

The focus of the performance management system, as discussed earlier in the chapter, was to prop learner results. Just like the definitions of ‘effective teacher’ and ‘effective teaching’ have been reengineered, ‘effective learning’ in the era of the performance management system is subordinated to the notion of “what knowledge is of most worth” (Apple, 2003:7-8; see also Marz et al., 2013:13) for a country or community. The analysis of the PMS and RBM forms show that the performance management system has tended to narrow the focus of education to skills production. As already observed, the focus is on developing and fostering skills for economic production. In other words, schools speed up learners’ process to become workers. The focus is human capital development rather than social justice. As Brown (2015) notes, the

skills that people acquire are a form of capital, human capital in which skills are the capacities that contribute to economic production.

As has already been discussed, the focus on key result areas reduces education to developing the key skills that are regarded as important for production. Performance-scripted teaching and learning withdraw freedom from teachers and learners, the freedom that should move and make them take risks to experiment, thereby developing the creativity and criticality of mind to deal with, and problem-solve, new challenges (Schmidt & Thomas, 2009). This situation comes about because the accountability movement focuses on ‘fixing’ the people, while never considering the failure of the system itself (Woods & Jeffery, 2002). For example, when students’ test scores are low, instead of also examining the students’ personalities, the flaws that may be inherent in the tests themselves, or when teachers cheat on standardized testing, instead of assuming those teachers to be lazy, self-serving and ‘bad apples’, there is need to also consider what, in our system of accountability, could be driving them to these behaviours (Thomas, 2010). In short, non-achievement of learners could be a result of a number of problems in the education system, not necessarily the teacher. After all, what is to be focussed on is actually contestable.

With learning having been reengineered, that also reimages the teacher’s identity. More than anything else, for learners to be said to be learning, teachers will simply focus on drilling learners for the required skills. As researchers observe, when teachers’ self-image as teachers does not sit well with that projected by education policy (identity non-verification), in their coping strategies, teachers may decide to narrow the curriculum and teach for examinations at the exclusion of creativity, critical thinking, reflectivity and problem-solving abilities, resulting in an impoverished academic experience for learners (Chang & McLaren, 2018; Parnell, 2010). Owing to the said narrow vision of education in the reform agenda, we are forcing children to sit down, shut up, and do as they are told, and then we turn around and wonder why they cannot think for themselves. In the process, we box teaching into formulas that produce high scores, notwithstanding the fact that the learners may not be as astute as one would have wanted. These are what Ball (2013:22 & 26) calls “the new ideologies [*that*] put doctrine ahead of pupils’ interests [*effectively decimating the*] pedagogy of hope which needs to involve both teachers and students clarifying what is hoped for and the ownership of these hopes”. The

performance management systems have “reduced teaching and the teacher to a bundle of skills and competences which can be measured”, in contrast to “teachers who make judgement in relation to principles rather than in relation to performance indicators” (p.33). To rehabilitate the image of the teacher and teaching, we need “to stop the constant flow of derision” (p.33) in which we blame the teacher and teaching for the ills of the economy. Below I now turn to the clocking system as another way of imaging teachers.

### **5.3 Imaging teachers through the Practical Education Clocking Registers prism**

The other piece of legislation that was introduced for the management of education in the education sector in Zimbabwe was the Practical Education Clocking Register. This piece of legislation was introduced in the education sector in the year 2000. As has already been noted elsewhere in this research, the impetus for reforms in Zimbabwe has been the perceived poor education standards, with the cause being squarely “attributed to unsatisfactory...teacher performance and commitment” (Presidential Commission of Inquiry into Education and Training [PCIET] 1999:448). In 2013 the then Minister of Education, Sports and Culture echoed the same sentiments that “Education is in a crisis ... Blame quality of teaching in Zimbabwe” (Henson, 2013). Invariably, teachers “were...blamed for lack of dedication to their jobs” and this was seen as having “inadvertently affected the academic performance of students” (Ncube, 2013:227). As noted earlier, the said policies were implemented in a socially, politically and economically unstable environment. What this means is that the education discourses prevailing affected the interpretations that teachers made of such education policies.

Although under-researched and reported, available literature claims that teacher absenteeism in schools is a problem that hampers the progress of learners (ADEA, 2015; Cilliers et al., 2014; International Crisis Group, 2014). As argued elsewhere in this thesis, the quality of the teacher is one of the significant variables affecting the quality of teaching and learning in schools. The absence of teachers to conduct lessons is a sure sign that learning in schools is seriously affected. Until very recently, there has been near absence of empirical research on the phenomenon. However, recent education reforms in various countries acknowledge teacher absenteeism to be a problem and this resulted in the institutionalization of the register system in Zimbabwe so as to specifically manage teachers.

Teacher absenteeism simply means that a teacher is unavailable to conduct lessons with his or her class. There are varieties of reasons proffered to explain teacher absenteeism from schools. Some researchers claim that lack of adequate personnel management by school heads, poor working conditions and low teacher remuneration (ADEA, 2015) are some of the causes for teacher absenteeism. Research notes that some school heads are themselves frequently absent from their stations, making it difficult to enforce work ethics, while other school heads are bribed by absent teachers to avoid sanction (ADEA, 2015; International Crisis Group, 2014). Research by ADEA (2015) reveals, by way of examples, that 75% rural and 67% urban teachers in Tanzania and in Zambia, 44% and 14% respectively, confirmed involvement in secondary employment to augment their meagre salaries, thereby resulting in their being absent from class at times. The same research reports that teachers in Zambia have developed a ‘work as you earn’ stance towards teaching, leading to them creating secondary income generating activities. In this case, poor remuneration is seen as causing teacher absenteeism. Whatever the reasons of teacher absenteeism, the effects are negative on the progress of learners.

There have been research reports on various initiatives that are proposed to mitigate teacher absenteeism from schools. Cilliers et al. (2014) report on efforts in Uganda, where automated monitoring via cameras and punch cards have been tested but proved to be expensive and subject to sabotage. ADEA (2015) also reports on the use of simple text messaging involving heads of institutions and local parents reporting teacher absenteeism. The system was, however, subject to under-reporting, collusions and threats of reprisals. The same initiative was reported to be successful in India, where it was coupled with bonus payments for attendance (Hanna & Ryan, 2012; Banerjee et al., 2007). In Gambia, a mobile phone platform is used, whilst in Rwanda, the Kiguzo Attendance Tracking System known as the ‘Ndi Hano’ (I am here) project uses tablets to report absenteeism for both teachers and students (ADEA, 2015). The Republic of South Sudan in 2011 adopted the use of VSAT satellite Internet capabilities for the same purpose, whilst Somalia has made use of what are known as Community Education Committees (CECs) that comprise teachers and parents, to monitor absenteeism. This is also similar to what is used in some of South American countries like Chile, Honduras and El Salvador (ADEA, 2015). Other researchers have proposed the use of the cheaper local monitoring managed by the school head (Cilliers et al., 2014), notwithstanding the weaknesses the system has as already noted. In other countries, however, there has been resistance over the

use of such measures. For example, in South Africa, teachers’ unions have opposed the use of electronic clocking system (ADEA, 2015; Phakathi, 2014). The teachers’ union’s feeling was that the check-in-check-out system would “unnecessarily policy teachers and ‘de-professionalize’ them” (Phakathi, 2014). In Zimbabwe, whether real or imagined, reports in education reveal that absenteeism exists in education justifying the introduction of the Practical Education Clocking system.

As already noted elsewhere in this research, the Practical Education Clocking system was introduced in Zimbabwe in 2000. Two types of registers are used to manage teachers in schools. In some institutions, the two registers are separated, whilst in others they are combined. The registers are used in schools to account for teachers’ whereabouts during work hours. They are a tracking system seen as necessary for curbing unnecessary absence from duty. I present the combined registers that are used in the school for teacher clocking in Table 4.

**Table 4: Combined Practical Education Clocking Registers**

School Term: .....												Year: 20...					
NAME	DATE.....			DATE.....			DATE.....			DATE.....			DATE.....				
	IN	OUT	Signature	IN	OUT	Signature	IN	OUT	Signature	IN	OUT	Signature	IN	OUT	Signature		
DATE	AWAY DURING WORKING HOURS (NAME)			REASON			TIME OUT			TIME IN			SIGNATURE				

The use of the register system in the Zimbabwean education system is supervised by the school administration at the local level but is checked from time to time by external managers to ensure teachers’ adherence to the logging requirement in schools. The purpose is to document cases of teachers who would be absent from their teaching duties. In a circular issued by the Public Service Commission of Zimbabwe, “heads of stations...are requested to ensure that

teachers are at stations conducting their professional duties” and that the “working hours (0745 hours to 1600 hours) are observed” (Financial Gazette, 1 October 2015:3). The circular instructs that “the check in and out...registers [*should be*] up to date and easily accessible” (p.3). In Zimbabwe, teachers’ unions, such as PTUZ, have voiced their strong opposition to the way the issue is being handled (Financial Gazette, 8 December 2003:72). The current research, however, is primarily focused on how the Practical Education Clocking Register system influences the teachers’ imaging of self as teachers and their teaching. Ultimately, understanding the images of teachers evoked by the clocking register system should help me to understand how the evolving images influence teaching and learning practices.

The first one is the Log-in-log-out (also known as the Clock-in-clock-out) register. This register indicates the school term and year when it was/is being used. It is a daily register for teachers to log-in and out on all the days when they report for duty. It is a document where the officer reports that he or she is present at work. The officer enters his or her name, the time when he or she reported for duty, the time when he or she knocked off and a signature to legitimize the entries. The register is made available at the time when teachers are due to report for duty in the morning and when they are knocking off at the end of their working day. The Ministry of Education demands strict adherence in using the register system. If a teacher were to forget to clock-in, he or she is deemed to have been absent from work. The second register is the Movement register used during the working hours between the time when the teacher clocks-in and the time when he or she clocks-out. When the officer has to be out of the work premises during work hours, the officer enters in the Movement register the date, his or her name, reason for leaving the work place, time out, time back and appendage signature to validate the entry. Even then, the teacher should seek permission from the school head to go out of the work premises before completing the Movement register. Both registers are security items that must be managed and kept by the school Head or the Deputy Head. In some cases, the school Head can assign a senior member to manage the use of the registers. When Education Officers and Public Service Managers visit schools, they audit the use of these documents to ensure that the policy is being adhered to. In cases where a teacher has not clocked-in and clocked-out, the school administration is required to have full explanation, usually with documented evidence, explaining the absence, otherwise the teacher might be booked for disciplinary action. According to the Public Service Commission directive, the

movement must be sanctioned by the head or his/her designate before the teacher moves out of the premises.

### **5.3.1 Competing values: The spectre of mistrust**

To understand the influence that the Practical Education Clocking Register system has in shaping teacher identity and teaching, it is important to note that it is not so much about the ‘texts’ in the policy document but, rather, the effect of the subtly embedded coercive power in it. The justification for the use of the clocking system is couched in the accountability metaphor. The concept of accountability comprises two forms, that is, the vertical (top-down) and the horizontal (lateral) accountability. The clocking system adopts the former. Vertical accountability comprises traditional hierarchies, decisional authority, bureaucracies, policies and regulations, accounting, prescriptions and audit inspections (Wenger, 2010). Most of education reforms are framed through power coercive frameworks in which a regime of vertical accountability formulas enacted directly challenges and undermines judgements of professional educators (DiBiase, 2015).

Power, as a concept, is the organizing feature (DiBiase, 2015) used by people in positions to influence subordinates. Power coercion is used to punish subordinates for not meeting performance expectations or to deter subordinates from making decisions that policy-makers/management think will negatively affect high stakes educational results (Hartzell, 2015). Power coercion covers the domination of one entity by another, both when it is disciplined by moral ends such as the need for ‘teacher accountability, teacher professionalism, quality control and result-based management’ or controlled by institutional safeguards (Dugan, 2003). An example of power coercion disciplined by moral ends can be noted in concepts like teacher accountability, teacher professionalism, quality control/assurance and result-based management systems whose declared intention is improving the learners. The clock-in-clock-out and movement register system uses the threat of sanction to secure compliance. The policy-makers view the “power of coercion” in education policy as aimed at securing “the desired outcomes of complete accountability” (Parnell, 2010:10), with very little foresight on the backlash that it may have on teachers, teaching and learning. The backlash of using power coercion in education reforms, whether couched in moral ends or open as brutal force, can be severe. People generally do not like to be forced to do things against their will (Dugan, 2003).

Coercive measures can be employed at the detriment of learning in schools when they destabilise teacher identity. To use Thomas' (2010) metaphor, we are raising caged birds and demanding that they earn the right to fly.

In view of the clocking system, teachers' emotions can be destabilized in different ways. The nexus between accountability and the clocking system projects teacher identity in very negative ways. The unmistakable image is that of teachers as potential cheats and unresponsive to learners' needs. It is for this reason that a policy must be put in place to whip them into line. In other words, the communication to teachers is that unless they are forced to, teachers may not work. The other images are those of teachers as irresponsible, dishonest and heartless people who only work under close monitoring. This brush paints all teachers as such, until proven otherwise. For teachers to prove otherwise, the Practical Education Clocking Registers must exonerate them by way of teachers having entered their credentials for the day. Such imaging of teachers can be destabilising and may attract damaging responses. Non-verification of policy-projected teacher images results in teachers' emotional vulnerability (Kelchtermans, 2009). From the point of view of identity theory, it is the verification of identities that makes people feel good in their work in general, and feel good about their selves as teachers especially. Conversely, if identities are not verified, people feel bad, stressed and angry (Burke & Stets, 2009), resulting in varied response options. In choosing coping strategies for the destabilised images, teachers may engage in 'cat and mouse games' with management at times, characterised by lots of pretence at compliance when in actual fact they are doing things differently in the backyard. Unwilling and strategic compliance would usually be employed in a deceptive manner for the teachers to escape sanction (Vahasantanen & Etelapelto, 2009). Display of emotions will be strategic, in which too strong emotions are not declared and are camouflaged by up-regulating (faking) positive and down-regulating (hiding) negative emotions (Taxer & Frenzel, 2015; Schutz et al., 2007; Zembylas, 2005). Non-verification of policy-projected teacher images can severely curtail teaching and learning when teachers sulk on day ends. After all, clocking-in-clocking-out does not guarantee teacher commitment. Teachers may be present but not really doing anything productive. There is a sense in which one feels that introducing a system that micro-manages teachers' attendance may diminish the professional trust between teachers and education managers.

The other downside to the Practical Education Clocking system is the recognition that many teachers work hours over and beyond their formal duties to keep abreast of the curriculum requirements and in support of students with challenges (ADEA, 2015). Teachers have to research, plan and mark learners' work, activities that cannot all fit in the legislated work time. They need to spend many hours on these activities way beyond the legislated working time to cope with the work they have to put in. For policy (school management included) to image them in negative ways, as discussed above, teachers would feel a sense of betrayal. To reconcile the two contrasting teacher identities, teachers may then decide to 'work to rule' which in essence would not be enough to support meaningful education. This is what Dugan (2003) calls the negative-some game in which either both parties (policy makers/education administrators and teachers) lose, or in which the winner's gain is less than the opponent's loss.

Clearly, tracking systems used to monitor teachers can be sources of destabilized teacher images and can affect the teacher's self-image and teaching. Teachers may, as a result, disengage and suffer from burn-out, with some opting to leave the profession. In fact, the process tends to de-professionalize teachers, making teaching unattractive. I now turn to Teacher Supervision and Evaluation as other forms of teacher management with capacity to destabilize the identity of teachers and teaching.

#### **5.4 Teacher supervision: performance for real or play-acting?**

Just like the Practical Education Register system discussed earlier, teacher-imaging embedded in teacher supervision and evaluation emanate from the coercive force implied rather than the wording in the actual documents. The authority resides in the legislature that legislate the documents. Teacher supervision and evaluation are two processes that are sometimes confused one for the other. Teacher supervision is an instrument that is used in education to manage, and possibly audit teaching and learning. The term 'instructional supervision' refers to a cycle of activities between a supervisor and a teacher, "targeted at improving classroom performance" (Ampofo et al., 2019:11). It is a set of activities between a supervisor and a teacher that are aimed at improving the teaching and learning to benefit the students (Nasreen & Shah, 2019; Milton Public Schools, 2015; Marzano et al., 2011; Toch & Rothman, 2008; Hoy & Forsyth, undated). Properly done, the purpose of supervision by the school head or his or her designate is neither to make judgments about the competencies of teachers nor to control them but,

rather, to work cooperatively with them to improve instruction (Hoy & Forsyth, undated). The key concern informing teacher supervision is to achieve both the school's and students' achievements by helping teachers to deliver adequately in their role performance (Ampofo et al., 2019). A supervisor is in fact a "change agent who is accountable to arrange required resources for the teachers" (Nasreen & Shah, 2019:195) and helps them with suggestions on how to deploy the materials to improve students' learning.

Writing on education, Range (2013) notes that teacher effectiveness is the most important factor in student learning, thus making teacher development top priority. The supervisor assumes many roles in the educational process, the most important one being that of an informative and critical consultant, with the aim of improving educational outputs, helping to fulfil teachers' needs, and overcoming the various problems associated with classroom practices that the teacher might have (Aldaihani, 2017). The instructional supervisor is an expert and helper whose intervention makes teaching and learning more effective through collaborative intervention (Nasreen & Shah, 2019). The supervisor enables the novice teacher to become responsible, self-directed and confident. In other words, teacher supervision is a process in which a more experienced educator observes a junior member, with a view to providing coaching and supporting advice to build the supervised teacher's teaching repertoire (Range, 2013). Seen from this pedestal, teacher supervision is a process that seeks to improve teachers' instructional practices, notwithstanding cases of ineffective supervisions prevalent in education. When professionally carried out, teacher supervision leads to teacher growth and more engaging classroom practices owing to the improved teacher's repertoire. Teacher supervision is, therefore, a formative process. Teacher evaluation, on the other hand, is assigning merit to teachers' performance and, therefore, tends to be summative and prone to just assigning grades to observed teachers without openly focusing on process improvement (Range, 2013; Marshall, 2013). In evaluation, the evaluator gathers information/evidence and applies reasoned professional judgment in determining whether one, more or all aspects of the teacher's observed work, exceeds, merits or does not meet set standards as deemed and defined in the institutional or ministerial statutes.

Unfortunately, the history of supervision traces back to industry literature of bureaucracy where close supervision was a classic response to production and control (Hoy & Forsyth,

undated). Clearly, it was a management's tool then to manipulate and control subordinates. Unfortunately, there are reports of school heads that employ supervision as a tool for manipulation and control of subordinates (Hoy & Forsyth, undated). As such, teachers can view teacher supervisors as "another layer in the bureaucratic structure designed to watch and control their actions" (Hoy & Forsyth, unpublished, p.3). Good teacher supervision, then, is guided by the desire to improve the quality of teaching and learning in class. However, in some cases, supervision and evaluation practices have become "superficial, capricious, and often don't even directly address the quality of instruction" (Toch & Rothman, 2008:1), hence becoming ritualistic (Range, 2013; Marshall, 2013; Marzano et al., 2011). School heads, in such cases, are falling prey to "fulfilling the letter of the law" and in the process "missing the opportunity to use the process as a tool to improve instruction and student achievement" (Flannery in Toch & Rothman, 2008:3). In response, teachers put on what Marshall (2013) calls a dog-and-pony show, where they showcase their best lessons which are far from being snapshots of their actual teaching practices.

When supervision and evaluations are done, a narrative report of the observed lesson is produced. The report informs, in a narrative form, on how the lesson opened, the sequence of activities that occurred, and how the teacher introduced each activity (Farrell, 2013). In the case of supervision, the account should contain as much information as possible but should not contain any evaluation or rating of the lesson or teacher. If it is an evaluation report, however, scoring and ratings are done in summative form. In Zimbabwe, supervisions and inspections have been used as tools for monitoring education reforms. The coupling of teacher supervision with inspections results in teachers painting them as purposed, to achieve one and the same thing, that is, teacher compliance.

Internal supervisions at school level are carried out by heads of departments, deputy heads and school heads, or the head's designate. External supervisions and evaluations are carried out by Education Officers and Schools Inspectors. There are also cases where Public Service Inspectors go to schools to monitor school activities. Again, the instrument that is used for the purpose of teacher inspections is the Narrative Report. A sample of the form can be viewed in Appendix C.

Notwithstanding all the paraphernalia in teacher supervision, evaluation and inspection, the idea of the coercive force is unmistakable. Given the nature of the operating environment as discussed earlier, these pieces of policy then carry covert coercive force that images teachers one way or the other. The three activities (teacher supervision, evaluation and inspection) are seen as policing documents meant to curtail teacher activities, that is, to clip their wings to keep them in some position. Teacher supervision might be seen as communicating an image of a professionally weak teacher. Teachers may perceive clinical supervision as meant to find fault (Veloo et al., 2013), making them wonder whether they are indeed weak. Conversely, teachers may put in a show for the supervisor, what Marshall (2013) calls a dog-and-pony show where they showcase their best lessons which are not snapshots of their typical teaching. What this can potentially do to the teacher is to make them feel guilt after the show, resulting in destabilized teacher images. Such imaging would be contrary to the teacher's own imaging of self as a moral agent. Because there is no identity verification between the two images, teachers end up looking for coping ways which might include even open rebellion, or simply disengaging and closing themselves off. In evaluations, the emotional response might lead to open conflicts, with contestations over the rating of teaching. Inspections might also attract cases of disengagement and open conflict, owing to teacher emotionality caused by the projected teacher images that do not reconcile with who teachers believe themselves to be. All these images, by and large, can potentially influence how teachers then view themselves as teachers and how they will carry out their teaching activities thereafter.

### **5.5 The teacher's image at the altar of sacrifice**

The various analyses and interpretations that were carried out in this chapter have shown that education policy under review does influence teachers' imaging of self, with a capacity to emotionally affect and alter how teachers see themselves and teaching. The innuendo in the performativity movement forces some teachers to "set aside personal beliefs and commitments and live an existence of calculation [*which*] portends inner conflicts, inauthenticity and resistance" (Ball, 2003:215). Indeed the performativity creates a plethora of images that can result in some generating emotional stress. When teachers see themselves as unfit for purpose, they may disengage, thereby affecting their teaching. Learners may be sacrificed, with some teachers taking an 'I don't care attitude' as a coping strategy. Whichever way, teachers may not remain the same owing to the various images of teachers that are projected from the said

education policy. Some may even choose to leave the teaching profession and look for other opportunities where they can emotionally fit well. Reengineered teacher images and the new ways of approaching teaching may even act as life-changing occasions for some teachers, who may disengage and simply degenerate into automated beings, who no longer have passion for their profession. Their moral agent image may be lost in devastating ways, resulting in them altering their teaching into a lifeless activity. Close monitoring of teachers' movements is likely to change teachers' approach to work, in which they begin to compare their remuneration to the work they have to put in.

It is regrettable to note that education policy can make or break educators' spirit, causing emotional instability. Their actions, thereafter, will be guided by the nature of their emotional response to the projected teacher images by education policy. What this means is that there is need to closely examine the impact that education policy may have on teachers and how their reactions could possibly affect their work ethics. There is also a sense in which it becomes more beneficial to include teachers in all stages of policy process so as to secure their approvals and allay their concerns as much as guaranteeing their buy-in.

## **5.6 Conclusion**

The chapter set out to examine how the three selected education policy documents used to manage education influence teachers' perceptions of who they are which, in turn, affect their teaching practices. The three policy documents examined are the Performance appraisal (PMS & RBM), the Practical Education Clocking Registers and Teacher Supervision, and the Evaluation and Inspection system. The chapter established that indeed education policy does image teachers in certain ways, both overt and covert. It has been suggested that altering teacher image could also affect their teaching. Given the complexity of the problem, it was suggested that teachers should be involved throughout the policy process in order to secure their buy-in for smooth implementation. All this needs to be done within the existing context. The next chapter reviews teachers' narratives to understand their views and responses regarding the selected education policies enacted in the Zimbabwean education system.

## **CHAPTER SIX**

### **TEACHERS' IMAGININGS AND RE-IMAGINGS OF, AND FROM, SELECTED EDUCATION POLICY**

#### **6.1 Overview**

This chapter presents findings from participants on how their imaging of self as teachers and their teaching is influenced by how they perceive selected education policy to be imaging them and their teaching. As argued elsewhere in this research, it is important for a researcher in the education policy field to understand how teachers' identity is affected by how education policies frame teachers and their teaching. I need to note, at this point, that teachers' reaction to what they perceive education policy to be saying about them is based on their 'imaginings'. Their imaginings influence their responses to what they perceive education policy to be saying about them. Teachers' imaginings are based on, and are influenced by, discourses in their environment. By using their personal interpretive framework, teachers generate meanings from the enacted education policies. Research findings discussed in this chapter are based on data that were collected from participants' individual narratives and journals.

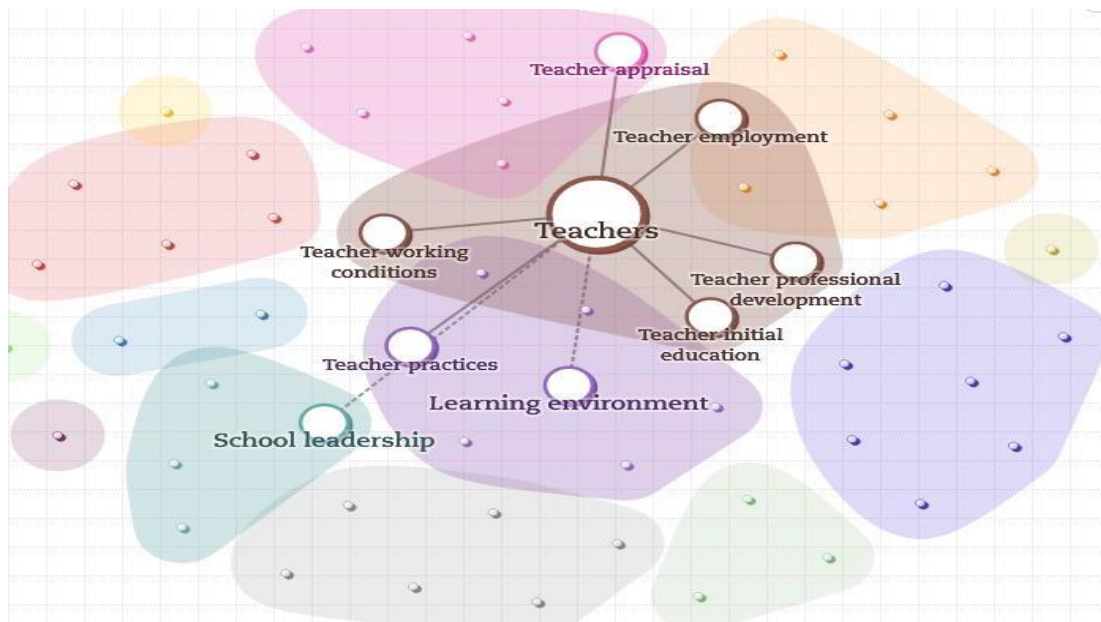
As discussed in Chapter Four, the semi-structured interview was used to initiate participants' narratives about the phenomenon of interest. Brandford (2013) notes that the interview is best suited for understanding people's perceptions and experiences. In total, eighteen interviews were carried out with the nine participants to collect their views on the phenomenon of interest. All participants' narratives were audio-taped and these were transcribed for analysis. In addition, the nine participants kept a journal each, for a month, in which they recorded critical events, what Lutz and Paretti (2019:4) call "significant challenge prompt", that affected them (either positively or negatively) in their work as teachers. The journals were collected after a month for analysis. Data from participants' narratives and journals were subjected to thematic analyses for a systematic discussion of results. Thematic analysis is "a form of pattern recognition within the data, with emerging themes becoming the categories for analysis" (Brown, 2009:32). The analysis process was painstakingly slow, with 'forwards and backwards' movements, as I tried to thematically categorise participants' thoughts and views regarding the phenomenon under study.

Based on the analysis of findings from participants' narratives and journals, analysis and interpretation of results were organised under the following subheadings: Overview,

Discourses shaping meanings of/and from education policy, Teachers as subject to and object of education policy, From professionalism to compliance, The process-product conundrum, and Conclusion. To understand participants' meanings of the education policy under review in this research, it was pertinent to appreciate the discourses making up the participants' context, to which I now turn.

## **6.2 Discourses shaping meanings of, and from, education policy**

In analysing collected narratives, it was important to understand “the context within which research participants operated” (Brown, 2009:29). The context is integral to meanings that are generated from education documents. Regarding context, Dewey (in Dohn et al., 2018:1) notes that it is “the taken-for-granted spatial and temporal background and selective interest of the agent, upon which the agent of thought stands out”. Context is not “a neutral layout of things or properties near the focal object” (p.4) but, in a way, shapes meanings. Context plays a determinate role in meaning-making as it is splashed around the object. To understand the meanings that participants attached to the language and symbolic meanings of the selected education policy, it was important for me to appreciate the context that shaped participants' meanings. In discussing the context in Chapter Five, I noted that the operating environment was socially, politically and economically unstable. As noted earlier in Chapter Four and Chapter Five, the interpretive paradigm employed in this research argues that to get to meanings of education policy, we need to understand the context because the related discourses within the operating environment do shape meanings. The interpretive paradigm is a theory of social practice that emphasizes the “relational interdependency of agent and world, activity, meaning, cognition, learning and knowing” (Somekh & Lewin, 2011:174). Meaning is socially constructed by the active human agent who interprets activity by employing his/her personal interpretive framework to come to terms with social phenomena. As noted earlier, the interpretations that teachers make of education policies are shaped by the various discourses that pervade their operating environment. Interpretive research regards knowledge and meaning as acts of interpretation (Gephat, in Thomas, 2010), influenced by the discourses around the social phenomenon. It is in this vein that I note that teachers' identity is influenced by various discourses located in their environment that makes up their social space. In Figure 18, I borrow OECD's (2020) diagrammatic presentation of the varied discourses making up teachers' social spaces.



**Figure 18: Discourses shaping teacher identity** [Source: OECD, 2020]

Some of the educational discourses prevailing in the social space in which this research was carried out sought to couple the ‘failing education system in Zimbabwe’ with the failing economy. The net-effect was to change the way education was viewed, organised and delivered, thereby changing the “meaning of education and what it means to be educated [*as well as*] what it means to learn” (Ball, 2007:128). The enactment of the said education policies attempted to foster national economy by “tightening the connection between schooling, employment [*and*] productivity”, through “enhancing student outcomes in employment-related skills and competences” (p.122). The context was, thus, awash with discourses that coupled education with ideologies of the market, radically changing the view that teachers had of education. Hawk, one of the participants in this research, noted that, “the environment is generally hostile to the teacher in a number of ways”, whilst Tawanda, another participant, also weighed in, saying that the way teachers “carry out their duties is affected by the environment”. According to another participant, Victoria, teachers’ activities were affected by “socio-economic situation especially in our country”. What is evident from these research participants is that teachers’ working conditions were rapidly deteriorating owing to the collapsing economy characterised by hyperinflation. Politically, teachers were also viewed as supporting opposition politics, thus they were chided and derided as being unpatriotic. Various

discourses shaped teachers' interpretations of the enacted education policy. Such discourses, as noted by the majority of research participants, included teachers' eroded incomes, lack of teaching and learning resources, deteriorating working conditions, inadequate working spaces and high teacher-pupil ratios, among others. Moyo, a participant in this research, noted in her narrative that the "prevailing situation has greatly affected how teachers and learners behave". Almost all research participants were agreed that the prevailing environment was the opposite of what used to be when they joined teaching.

The policy context, therefore, was characterised by various debates and discourses that generated contestations (Bell & Stephenson, 2014) about the failing education system, the failing economy and malcontents in teaching staff. It can be noted that education discourse "does ideological work, constitutes society and culture, is situated and historical, and relates to *[or]* mediates power", and is "social practice in which people enter into relations with each other as they engage in the process of producing and interpreting meaning" (Jones, 2013:10-11). Given this kind of environment characterizing education, it is interesting to imagine what meanings participants projected regarding the selected education policy. As noted above, some of the discourses that shaped the participants' narratives included, though they were not limited to, hyperinflation in the country, falling standards in education, a poorly resourced education system, poor working conditions for teachers, 'uncommitted' teachers, social instability, polarization in society, skills-oriented education with special focus on results and market logic as educational skills determinant. As noted earlier in Chapter Three, education policy is not only a text, but also a power-relations process where power is exercised through "a production of truth and knowledge as discourses" (Ball, 1994a:21). The author further notes that discourses are not only about what can be articulated and thought about in a policy, but are also about who can speak, when, under what conditions, and with what authority. The author further says that as participants in the education policy process, we do not speak a discourse but, rather, it speaks us. We are the subjectivities, the voices, the knowledge intervened by power relations that a discourse constructs and allows. As such, we are spoken about by education policies and we take up positions constructed for us within policies contrary to our own positions, or, alternatively, we resist the images of us that are constructed by education policy. Discourses are "practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak. [...] Discourses are not about objects; they do not identify objects, they constitute them and in the

practice of doing so conceal their own intention” (Foucault, 2002a:49). Participant Hawk noted that “the environment is generally hostile to the teacher, hostile in a number of ways. Firstly, you talk of resources which are just minimal especially when you look at textbooks and their ratios to the learners”.

Evidently, the discourse shapes teachers’ views of what they think education policy say about them and how they, in turn, view selves as teachers and their teaching. In this way, teachers will feel that they are subject to, and object of, education policy, to which I now turn.

### **6.3 Teachers as subject to and objects of education policy**

In this section, I examine teachers’ positioning owing to the selected education policies that were enacted. The purpose of the analysis is to understand what participants viewed as the attitude of the selected education policies regarding teachers, teaching, learners and learning. Education policy, whether overtly or covertly stated, has a way of imaging teachers. By ‘listening’ to the voices behind the selected education policies, one can tell what attitude the policy has towards teachers who it (policy) may see as both subject to, and object of, education policy. Teachers can be subject to education policy because their actions and decisions are curtailed by the policy to ensure that they are in-line with what the policy expresses. Teachers are also subjects of education policy because the policy simply prescribes what teachers should do and how they ought to do that. By closely listening to teachers’ narratives, one can tell what teachers think education policy says about them.

The manner in which education policy process evolves in a country can be a pointer to what its attitude towards teachers is. In other words, education policy has a way of speaking to teachers and about them. This research looks at how teachers respond to what they think education policy is saying to them and about them. Teachers’ imaginings about what they think education policy is saying to them and about them tells a story about how they see themselves, based on what they think is education policy’s view of them and their teaching.

It is worth noting that the education policy process in Zimbabwe is carried out in two phases, with the first representing agenda-setters who develop education policy and the second being education policy implementers whose function is to implement policy already developed by agenda-setters. The lack of cohesion in the policy process (agenda-setters vis-a-vis policy

implementers) creates differing opinions of what education is and what the teacher and teaching entail. In such cases, there is differentiation in allocation of power, resulting in a top-down education policy implementation process (Jie, 2016). This, in itself, points to power struggles between policy-makers and teachers as implementers, with each occupying one of the two differing positions as is shown in the section 6.3.1 titled ‘Absence of teachers’ views in policy development’.

In view of the above, meanings that education policy has of both the concept of education and of teaching does, in subtle ways, reveal what images of teachers and teaching the selected education policy has of both teachers and teaching. When education policy frames the meaning of education as closely linked to economic productivity (human capital), conversely it underplays the social justice function of education. That becomes a counter-imaging of education and it rivals teachers’ views on the purpose of education, shaped by their teacher-moral image that was nurtured from their days of teacher training. Teacher images are also buttressed by teachers’ communities of practice (Wenger & Trayner, 2015; Wenger, 2010). The hidden side of education policy is that it creates rival images to those initiated into teachers during teacher training. To be educated, according to the selected education policy, is to develop a kit of skills necessary for economic production. In the same vein, to be a teacher is to be able to develop, in learners, skills to fit them for economic productivity. As shall be shown and argued later, the image of the teacher, in this case, is technicist (Hennessy & Mcnamara, 2013), an image contrary to that which teachers have of selves as moral agency. The severity of teachers’ emotional response to education policy’s reimagining of teachers and teaching, as shown earlier and shall be argued later, will depend on the level of teacher commitment to their role standard. High commitment to their teacher role standard heightens variance with policy imaging of teachers and teaching.

### **6.3.1 Absence of teachers’ voices from policy development**

The question of “What is education for?” (Bell & Stevenson, 2006:3) clearly presents differing orientations between education policy-makers and teachers as they conceive the purpose of education differently. This question has, in the modern society, continuously riddled the education policy process, especially in neoliberal states. Equally important to note here is that the same question had been problematic during the formulation of the selected education

policies under review in this research. There are two competing views on what constitutes worthy education. Couched in the views are implied alternatives for teachers on how to educate learners. One view is the human capital theory, which sees the purpose of education as creating skilled manpower fit for productive work, whilst the other view is the citizenship and social justice view that advocates for good citizenship education entrenched in values of fairness and creativity, which are generally advocated for by teachers and teacher training programs.

Participants' narratives from semi-structured interviews and journals revealed that teachers were experiencing disharmony between their views of education, their image of teachers and what teaching implies as opposed to how education policy imaged them and their teaching. Referring to the selected education policy under review in this research, participant Shumba, a participant, noted that,

From crafting of these education acts and implementation...the teacher is not consulted. It [*education policy*] is an instruction that comes from the Ministry of Education...as a person who is supposed to teach the students, who is supposed to implement the reforms...I am supposed to be consulted.

Shumba has worked as a high school teacher for twenty-four years. Clearly, participant Shumba feels that the introduction of the education policy reforms under review side-lined teachers. The education policy process was, as Shumba observed, “forced” on teachers “to implement”. Participant Hawk, another participant, corroborated the same view that reforms were “parachuted from above in a top-down approach treating teachers as mere recipients of policy than active participants”. Hawk has been teaching in high school for twenty-three years. Most respondents were agreed that teachers were not consulted regarding the said education policy development process. What is clear from the participants' narratives is that teachers were not consulted during the said education policy. Participants, however, believe that teachers are an important factor in the education matrix. Shumba's observation that “as a person who is supposed to teach the students, who is supposed to implement the reforms...I am supposed to be consulted” is indicative of participants' view that the omission of the teacher from policy development is a misnomer. The omission of teachers from policy development is a subtle statement about the role of teachers as mere implementers of other people's views.

The exclusion of teachers from education policy development and relegating them to implementers can better be understood when one notes that the genesis of the three education policies examined in this research, the performance management system (PMS & RBM), the practical education clocking registers, and teacher supervision, were predicated on the assumption that the reforms were problem-solving strategies (Bell & Stevenson, 2014) for the said 'poor performance of education'. Teachers were cited as responsible for the poor performance and, therefore, were part of the problem that had to be fixed. The said education policies needed to 'fix' teachers and teaching hence including them in the policy development stage would be contradictory. From this perspective, then, selected education policies were sending signals of how they imaged teachers. From their imaginings, teachers read this exclusion to mean that they are seen as unimportant, and that they are blamed for failing the learners and, therefore, are regarded as lazy and unprofessional. Teacher-participants existed in an environment in which they had continuously heard the 'blame the teacher for poor learner performance' narrative and that shaped their interpretation of their exclusion from education policy development. To them, their exclusion means that they are regarded as the problem needing fixing.

Education policy has implications to the survival of society, with a potential to make or break education. The policy process is, therefore, serious business in which decisions must be understood within the context of learners. The seriousness of it is shown in that policy makers see it as panacea for the flailing economy. From education policy's view as discussed above and earlier in Chapter Five, once schools refocused their teaching to serve the interests of industry, economic woes would disappear. The demand is for the school to produce 'skilled manpower' that will out rightly revive the economy to productivity. This is the human capital view of education, which is contrary to the teachers' view that education should be for democracy and social justice. In participant Hawk's view, the education policy approach "militates against the profession" of teaching and, therefore, he sees it as not user-friendly. The full import of both participants Shumba's and Hawk's observations is that education policy has a low opinion of teachers. There is an implied sense in which education policy looks at teachers as failing to discharge their duties successfully. In that regard, education policy aims to redirect what teachers should teach and how they should teach that which education policy defines as important education. Because education policy has defined what it sees as important

education, inherently, it also has an image of the preferred teacher to execute the designed curricular. Consciously or unconsciously, Shumba's and Hawk's reactions are protests against education policy's imaging of teachers and teaching.

Regarding education policy development, Shumba clearly stated that,

We would want teachers to be involved in the planning. We would want the Ministry to first of all supply the equipment that is used. We would want the teacher to be given the respect and the salary that he deserves before you look at the performance because there are so many things that affect teaching as a profession.

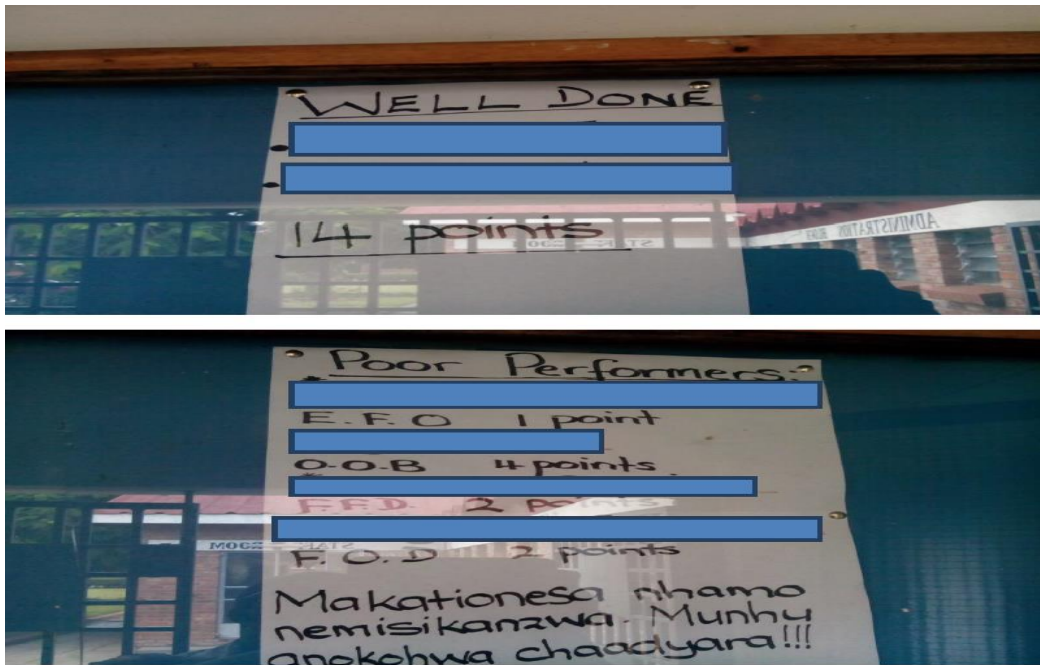
Ball (2013:3) notes that neoliberal governments are "keen to displace the participation of teacher associations, trade unions and local authorities from the policy process", creating disharmony between policy development and policy implementation.

It can be noted here that education policy's view is that schools should quicken the process of transforming learners from learning to training for them to be fit for economic productivity, but in the process bypassing the functions of training institutes such as vocational training institutions and polytechnic colleges, whose duty it is to refine and channel school leavers, through training, into different sectors of the economy. Shumba lamented that in trying to develop skills for economic development "we have created nurses who steal even thermometers and take them home to run their small clinics". His meaning was that teachers are not specialists in some of the professional areas. They are not 'jack of all trades' to meaningfully shape learners to fit into various employment areas. Schools must focus on developing creativity, criticality, reflectivity and problem-solving skills, whilst training institutions focus on skills development for specific areas. Clearly, this reveals differing opinions between education policy and teachers on the function of the school. When teachers are directed by education policy on what and how to teach, that indicates how teachers have been reduced to actors of education policy rather than facilitators of learning, an aspect to which I now turn.

### **6.3.2 Teachers as actors of education policy**

When teachers are directed to implement education policies that they did not participate in developing, let alone policies they may not believe in, the implementation process reduces

them to ‘actors’ than facilitators of critical learning. In an educational environment where teachers’ survival hinges on results, teachers are left with no choices but to become ‘performers’ or ‘technicians’ who must ensure that learners achieve the desired outcomes by whatever means. What matters in the ‘skills audit’ is whether learners can exhibit the required skills upon demand. With ‘skills audit’ (as demanded by the Result-Based Management system) wielding an axe over teachers’ heads, teaching and learning processes are reduced to examination coaching rather than developing creativity, criticality, reflectivity and problem-solving skills in learners. As discussed in Chapter Five, the Result-Based Management system demands that teachers focus on skills development in learners for them to be able to perform ‘key tasks’. This focus has made ‘skills’ the focal point in education, with the ultimate result of education being reduced to a competitive game in which learners, teachers and schools become competitors vying for the tug, ‘the best’. Instead of collaborations in education, each learner, teacher or school competes against the other for the top rank. Participant Brown revealed (and this was corroborated by all participants) that to foster good results, schools give incentives where, at Advanced Level, every ‘A’ pass a student scores in a subject, the teacher is paid ten dollars, ‘B’ is paid eight dollars, ‘C’ is paid six dollars, ‘D’ is two dollars and ‘E’ is one dollar. For Ordinary Level, the incentive is paid at six dollars for every ‘A’ pass, four dollars for every ‘B’ scored and two dollars for ‘C’. To underline the significance placed on results, schools use various ways to encourage high passes, whilst at the same time disparaging poor results. To show the importance attached to results, Figure 19 presents a noticeboard posting I witnessed at one of the research schools during data collection. Names of high and low performers in the previous examinations were actually displayed in the posting on the noticeboard. For ethical reasons, I have suppressed the names to protect the identities of the individuals who were listed.



*\*You gave us serious problems because of your notoriety. A person harvests what he/she sows.*

**Figure 19: Noticeboard posting of ‘outstanding’ and ‘poor’ A’ Level results**

In the posting, actual names were written, together with the number of points the individual scored. Two candidates had scored fourteen points, whilst four had scored between one and four points. In my view, results are supposed to be a private issue, but these were made public as a way of psyching up the learners in session, to buttress future results. As noted earlier, such an approach reduces teaching and learning to skills development. Teachers become pre-occupied with drilling learners for results as is demanded by the RBM system.

Evidently, in such environment, schools, learners and teachers alike vie for top results, notwithstanding the fact that the results may not be a true reflection of the learner’s creativity, criticality, reflectivity and problem-solving abilities. School Managers have become very passionate over results, to the extent of making efforts to transfer, from their schools, none performing teachers. Participant Brown reported on a situation at his school in which there was conflict between a teacher and the school head “because the teacher doesn’t offer an examinable subject and as a result the Head and the school authorities are pro-results, academic results and as a result they see this as a useless teacher and they have been trying to get rid of the teacher”. Referring to his school, Brown revealed that “At this [his] school, the authorities

can overlook everything else as long as you are producing good results. You become the darling of the authorities.” Clearly, through the RBM, teachers are painted as either good and hardworking or as unproductive and useless. This has effect on the teacher’s imaging of self as a teacher and one’s own teaching.

To foster high passes, teacher appraisals are used in the education system in Zimbabwe. Referring to the RBM system and how it is used to rate teachers, Hawk dejectedly commented that:

The RBM is results oriented.... The impact is that administrators have used those RBMs as an instrument to chastise or to control teachers. Generally, this is done by giving teachers low scores. Yes, sometimes victimized by being given low scores and it impacts negatively on the teacher’s day to day activities.

Clearly, participants see the intention of the RBM as twofold: to prop results as well as to secure teacher compliance. Most participants were quite apprehensive about the RBM system. For instance, Shumba noted that “it breeds unprofessional teachers in the sense that once education is examination-oriented, you get your 98% through examination coaching or cheating but with learners knowing very little”. Consequently, as Shumba noted, “Ministry officials will visit your school and you are issued with a certificate of recognition, and the newspapers will be awash with schools ranks in spite of malpractices involved”.

One of the serious backlashes of the ‘results movement’ has been leakage of examinations, a phenomenon that is disturbing in Zimbabwean education system. Just like others, participant Andy noted that,

Leakage of examinations was a result of emphasis on results causing some teachers and schools to use unorthodox means to achieve high scores. The result-based orientation driving our education has increased pressure for both teachers and learners to produce, or seem to produce good passes.

For some, “Leakage of examinations is purely economic. Teachers are poorly remunerated” (Hawk’s narrative) making them susceptible to corrupt activities to gain a dollar. As implied above, participants’ narratives revealed that leakage of examinations serves two purposes then,

that is, for the teacher to get rewards for ‘good’ results as well as to escape censure for being an ineffective teacher. To achieve this, teachers have to counter their initial ‘teacher as a moral agent to teacher as producer of results’, notwithstanding the fact that the learners may be lacking in creativity, criticality, reflectivity and problem-solving skills. Such teachers entertain a ‘teacher for hire’ image where results are tied to remuneration. In other words, teachers ‘act’ for remuneration because production is inspired by the desire to be incentivized. Such environment reduces learners to receivers of learning rather than being creators of knowledge, because once skills are defined, the primary focus is drilling learners to be able to demonstrate those skills upon demand. As Ball et al. (2012:3) note, “policy is done by and done to teachers; they are actors and subjects, subject to and object of policy”. Unfortunately, in this regard, policy is ‘not done by teachers’ but, rather, is ‘done to teachers’. Yes, they are ‘actors’, albeit passive actors who only implement policy designed elsewhere. I now turn to how the said image of teachers reduces learners to receivers rather than initiators of knowledge.

### **6.3.3 The holistic – technical divide**

Earlier, I noted that when education policy views the purpose of education differently from how teachers perceive it, as much as they also differ regarding qualities of a good teacher, that tends to create variance between education policy’s and teachers’ imaging of teachers as well as teaching. The emotional response that is involved when teachers try to reconcile the two images determines the nature of response that teachers will engage in. If teachers feel that the way education policy views them is unfair and violets their role identity, they may embark on various ways of responding to the non-verification of their role identity. Teachers were not meaningfully engaged in the development of the said education policies that negatively affected them and so, in turn, this destabilized their imaging of self as teachers. Lack of consultation tends to bubble-burst teachers’ long-held image of a socially respected member of society. The non-verification of their role identity dents their ego, with consequences whose severity will depend on the degree of emotions generated.

Referring to the RBM forms, participant Moyo noted that the “forms are not even understood” and, therefore, “I am not even interested in filling them because they are not of any benefit to me”. Moyo further noted that “no one is even able to explain why we are doing it”. Participant Andy’s narrative also reveals an attitude similar to Moyo’s when she asked, “I do not really

know what these RBM forms are for or what benefit I will have from them. What are they really for?” Hawk’s view is that the RBM,

applies most suitably in industries and not in education because in industry they are given targets that by a certain period you should have produced perhaps hundred cups but developing human mind is not like that.

Heaney (2015:298) summarizes the problem expressed by the participants more succinctly regarding focus on market skills in education when he notes that,

Meaningful qualitative roles (such as that of the teacher who transmits customs and traditions) are decoded when their qualitative function is subordinated to quantitative ones, such as transmitting or contributing to forces of decoding (here, we need think no further than the teacher who transmits skills to students ultimately reducible to students becoming capable of successfully – profitably – participating in capital flows).

It is this viewing of education and how to teach that participants are opposed to. In the view projected by the RBM, learners and learning are reduced to ‘sites of human capital’ rather than laboratories where creativity, criticality, reflectivity and problem-solving capacities are developed.

The RBM, like its predecessor the PMS, makes provision for rating the teacher once all has been done. In its guidelines to supervisors on performance rating, the performance management form makes an unsettling warning that supervisors should “not over or under-rate one individual’s performance based on your personal feelings” (The Public Service of Zimbabwe, 2000:6). The statement is ominous in the sense that the policy document ironically sees a possibility of this happening. As noted in Chapter Five, the warning raises the spectre of abuse of the rating system. Participants’ observations regarding ratings show varied degrees of effect on the supervisee. For instance, one common problem that was noted by participants is typified by Shumba’s revelation that the rating, in some cases, is quite subjective. Shumba says that after you rate yourself, for example with a five (5), “the Deputy Head says I don’t think you deserve this. After all, the Head gave himself a five (5). It wouldn’t be proper for you to get a five (5)”. The contestation in this approach to rating does not necessarily lie in the mark

given but, rather, in the reasoning that is used to deny the supervisee the mark. This problem was cited in a number of analysed narratives. To this, participant Andy noted that the process “created friction between the supervisor and the supervisee”. Participant Chengeto also weighed in, noting that the rating in the performance system was being used to settle scores between Heads and other teachers. Regarding the same, Hawk noted that,

Administrators or heads of schools have used those RBMs as an instrument to chastise and control teachers. Sometimes the teacher is victimized by being given low scores and it impacts negatively on the teacher’s day-to-day activities.

Brown also corroborated Hawk’s observations, noting that at his school there was an incident between the school head and a teacher who the head felt was not contributing to the school pass rate since he had not been taking any examination classes. Brown revealed in his narrative that,

That’s the sports teacher and he came only for that...There seems to be bad blood between the teacher and the head...He does not have an examinable subject and as a result the head or the authorities are pro-results, academic results and as a result see him as a useless teacher and they have been trying to get rid of this teacher.

The revelation above clearly shows that education policy can be implemented variably in schools, resulting in teachers’ varied imaginings regarding what the policy is saying about them. Notwithstanding the fact that this is a case of policy manipulation by the school head, the victimized teacher holds both the head and the policy used to victimize him accountable. In his/her imaginings, he/she reflects on himself/herself as unfit for teaching and, therefore, feels bad about it. Evidently, the said education policy is open to being “used to secure [*teacher*] compliance with reform directives” through threat of sanction for teachers (Parnell, 2010:7). The performance management system, in this regard, can destabilize teachers’ views of selves as professional people. The performance rating system can create open hostility between management and some teachers whilst, on the other hand, creating subservience by some teachers to management. In a way, this alters teachers’ imaging of selves as teachers based on the imaginings they have of what education policy may be saying about them. Apparently,

learners are reduced to receivers of learning rather than initiators, an aspect to which I now turn.

#### **6.3.4 Learners as receivers of learning**

The use of the RBM in education, coupled with how teacher supervision is done, reduces learners to passive receivers of skills necessary to pass examinations. During the piloting of data collection instruments, participant Champion, as was later corroborated by other participants during the actual data collection, noted that, instead of “education being holistic, it now narrowly focuses on results. Instead of teachers teaching learners for life, they now coach for examinations”. Participant Moyo noted that “with the skills that we are equipping learners with these days, they cannot survive on their own”. As also noted by other participants, learners are not creative enough to engineer things on their own. Consequent to skills-drive, schools organize workshops for teachers and learners on how to ‘coach for, and tackle’ examinations. Participant Brown revealed that “at the beginning of Term One, we have one [*workshop*] for Ordinary Level and another for Advanced Level...where we would discuss the syllabuses, examination papers et cetera”. At the time of data collection, Brown was setting an Ordinary Level District Paper for English Paper 2 mid-year examination. He revealed that the National Association for School Heads (NASH) picks teachers who serve as national examiners to set such papers and to be facilitators of the said workshops. Other participants corroborated Brown’s revelation, with some of the participants also revealing that they take part as resource persons in the said workshops. Brown further noted that, “The purpose of the workshops is to help schools with no teachers participating as national examiners to be familiar with examination assessment”. Participant Victoria added that the workshops “are meant to improve the pass-rate”.

In pursuit of high passes in national examinations, I noted that many teachers are running private classes, after-school classes for the day, to drill their learners for examinations. In one of my visits to participant Tawanda’s home, I noted that he had an Ordinary Level Mathematics class that he taught in the evening and during weekends, for a fee. Tawanda has actually converted his kitchen into a make-shift classroom with chairs, tables and movable chalkboard. What has pushed the proliferation of teachers ‘moonlighting’ by providing extra lessons to their pupils is two-fold: to augment the low teacher salary (ADEA, 2012:31) and to

escape being labelled as ‘useless teacher’ when learners get low passes or fail in the national examinations. As noted in the Financial Gazette of 8 December (2003:72), “the malady plaguing the local education system is fed by under-funding from the state budget; high inflation... [and] low morale within the teaching profession”, resulting in altered teacher images.

As noted earlier in Chapter Five and in this chapter, emphasis on results alters the way teachers view education, selves as teachers and teaching. What this does is to transform teachers from being professionals to being compliant as a strategy for surviving in the changing education environment. In this regard, teachers have been reduced to technicians (Hennessy & Mcnamara, 2013) preoccupied with developing ‘skilled-learners’ for economic productivity (human capital) rather than holistic education. In such a case, as Heaney 2015:298) succinctly notes,

Meaningful qualitative roles (such as that of the teacher who transmits customs and traditions) are decoded when their qualitative function is subordinated to quantitative ones, such as transmitting or contributing to forces of decoding (here, we need think no further than the teacher who transmits skills to students).

In the case above, learners and learning are viewed as “sites of human capital” (p.301) rather than laboratories where creativity, criticality, reflectivity and problem-solving capacities are promoted. The examination orientation in education has re-ushered “rote pedagogy and an over-emphasis on testing because the culture of efficiency - audit-culture – is very ingrained in the system at multiple levels” (Change & McLaren, 2018:10).

What this means is that learners are apparently reduced to receivers of learning, what Freira (1972) calls the ‘banking theory of education’ reducing the process of teaching to coaching, to which I now turn.

### **6.3.5 Learner coaching for measurability**

In this section, I look at how the performance management system influenced teaching and learning, thereby affecting teachers’ self-image and teaching. In Chapter Five, and earlier in this chapter, I examined the concept of performance management system with a view to understanding how the policy conceives education, teaching and learning. As noted elsewhere, RBM is “a management strategy aimed at achieving improved performance and demonstrable

results [*for improved*] performance...monitoring and reporting on performance” (NANGO, 2018:1). The focal point of this policy is the Key Result Areas (KRAs) which are meant to achieve results through improved teacher performance. The PMS was introduced in Zimbabwe’s education in 2000 but was replaced with the RBM in education in the year 2012. Whereas the PMS focused on the teachers’ performance activities, the RBM shifted focus to learner results.

Participants noted that the RBM was being implemented variably in schools, with a clear focus on results. Participant Shumba commented that the RBM “put primacy on results and nothing else”, thus requiring the teacher, during planning, “to state the [*targeted*] pass-rate”. As earlier noted in Chapter Five and elsewhere in this research, the RBM form directs that teachers must articulate Key Result Areas. Each *KRA* set should be *Specific, Measurable* focusing on *Results* (not activities) and ought to be *Time-framed* (SMART), specifying the exact date by which the objective will be achieved (The Public Service of Zimbabwe, 2000). What this does, as earlier noted in this research is to reduce the teacher to a technician who cares less about developing creativity, criticality, reflectivity and problem-solving abilities in students as *prima facie* of education. To this Hennessy and Mcnamara (2013:6) note that performativity “has emerged as a dominant goalpost in modern schooling, [*and this has been*] at the cost of more critical educational encounters”. What this points to is that for teachers to survive censure, they narrow down teaching to coaching learners on the articulated measurable skills. To this, participant Shumba commented that he was not in agreement with the exclusive focus on results, noting that, “in addition to a good pass rate, I would want to create a useful citizen who would develop the country”. It is apparent that participant Shumba’s meaning of ‘good pass’ is that achieved through learners’ excelling in creativity, criticality, reflectivity and problem-solving abilities. This echoes participant Eunah’s “education must be holistic [*where*] teachers teach for life than simply coaching for examinations”. Referring to the heightened focus on results, participant Hawk observed that “teachers will hurriedly do their work with the objective of meeting the targets”. Hawk further notes that such changes will “negatively impact the student whom I believe would not understand the things done hurriedly to meet targets”.

The contradictions between teachers’ beliefs about teaching and learning garnered through their teacher-training and long-term experiences in teaching for creativity, criticality,

reflectivity, problem-solving skills and social justice on the one hand, and teaching for measurable skills (human capital) on the other hand, has attracted negative emotions for teachers. What that points to is a destabilized teacher-image that is none verifiable with teacher role identity. In trying to deal with negative emotions over non-verification of teacher role identity, teachers may reform their perception of their role identity and pursue result-based teaching. Teacher acquiescence to neo-liberal agendas can, therefore, be seen to exist at the expense of meaningful learner engagement and development (Hennessy & Mcnamara, 2013). The authors further note that “as examination grades increase, the value of what we are testing, and educational challenge presented therein may be concurrently in decline” (p.9), indicating that the new focus of education sacrifices the learner. Education policy’s reconfiguration of education has conformed teachers to “teach to the test ideology” (p.9), thus creating impoverished education that fails to provide space for creativity, criticality, reflectivity and problem-solving abilities. It can be noted that,

Within cultures of performativity, where knowledge is perceived as measurable and often explicitly defined, the propensity to question, challenge and critically evaluate knowledge is arguably limited...depriving the young of a sense of agency or the chance to think for themselves (Hennessy & Mcnamara, 2013:9-10).

Changing the teacher’s view of self as teacher has corresponding effect on the teacher’s approach to teaching. In their research findings in Hong Kong, Change and McLaren (2018:13) noted that teachers “enjoy teaching when they are able to creatively design and teach content, and apply constructivist approaches that they were trained in”. The authors cited above further note, from their research, that teachers tend to believe in promoting critical thinking in their learners. The question that may beg for answers is, ‘If teachers do not believe in teaching for measurable results, why are they engaging in extra-lessons for measurable results?’ In my view, the instinct for survival can alter teachers’ sense of self as teachers to ‘swim with the tide’, to ensure there is food on their tables. In such cases, teachers may sacrifice their own persons as teachers to act anyhow so long they are guaranteed employment.

Emphasis on high test scores has had its backlash in that there has been an increase in examination leakages. Participant Hawk noted that “leakage of examinations is purely economic. Teachers are poorly remunerated.” Shumba further noted that the desire for teachers

to escape sanction for poor results pressurizes them to “peeping into the examination paper” to coach learners before the actual examination. Eunah noted that those who “leak examinations would want to improve their pass-rate to safe-guard their names”. According to Shumba, this is all happening for teachers to evade being labelled ‘lazy teacher’. To this, Shumba noted that,

The examination orientation makes teachers lazy in the sense that you can simply sport. It also breeds unprofessional officers in the sense that once teaching is examination oriented you get your 98% then the ministry officials visit your school. You are given a certificate of some sort. The following day newspapers will list the school that excelled in the examination and you are given some few cents for producing 98%.

Obviously, education policy that places high priority on results has created varied teacher emotions. With destabilized teacher identity, for some it might lead to maladjustment as is revealed in Chengeto’s narrative where some teachers at her school went through emotional stress when they were asked to write reports explaining why their Advanced Level students had failed. In such cases, the teacher loses confidence in self as a teacher and even in the methods that he or she may have employed.

Commenting on schools’ pursuit of high scores for good ranking, Shumba revealed an unsettling situation that is occurring in schools due to results-driven education. He revealed that some schools are now screening learners. He noted that, in some of such schools learners in low performing classes,

...are screened into low-performing classes and are registered for national examinations as private candidates. You now have school heads and teachers who are not professional. The whole school is unprofessional. The society is no longer professional. What are we doing? We are producing crooks and criminals instead of bringing in quality.

What Shumba’s narrative revealed here is a situation where schools declare only high performing learners as school candidates so that they get better ranking. Private candidates are not considered in calculating school ranks following the release of national examination results.

In their research, Chang and McLaren (2018:13) note that due to the pressure of an examination- driven education, parents “invest in shadow education to instruct their kids during out-of-school hours”. This has become a common phenomenon in Zimbabwe. McLaren (2015a) sadly notes that owing to high-stakes testing and value-added assessment, these have pushed students, teachers, parents and administrators to be subsumed by neoliberal logic which tends to submit all in its path to a process of monetization and transformation into a commodity. Unintentionally, teacher reimagining that is influenced by the selected education policy can sacrifice learners and learning. Changes that occur in teachers’ reimagining of self as teachers based on teachers’ imaginings of what education policy is saying about them, will, one way or the other, affect learners’ learning. Where teachers react negatively to education policy’s teacher imaging, this is likely to negatively affect learners and learning. There is need to think seriously about the purpose of education and what it means to be educated, and concomitantly and crucially, is the question about who should decide these things (Ball, 2013). As the author further notes, the above demands a shift from an education system driven by economic necessities to a social justice-driven one. What this has led to is the process-product conundrum to which I now turn.

### **6.3.6 The product-process conundrum**

In this section, I examine the challenges that the PMS/RBM poses for teaching. Whereas the focus of the product approach in education emphasizes the end-result as the focal point, conversely, the process approach places greater importance on the developmental aspect of learning, anchored in the constructivist philosophy of learning. This section explores the product-process conundrum to show the effect of selected education policy on teaching and learning in schools.

As noted in Chapter Five, guidelines on completing the PMS and RBM forms (point number 3 in the guidelines document in Appendix 3), instruct that teachers must articulate Key Result Areas (KRAs). Each KRA the teacher sets should be *Specific, Measurable* “focusing on **Results** (not activities) and be **Time-framed** (SMART) specifying the exact date by which the objective will be achieved” (The Public Service of Zimbabwe, 2000 & 2010). By giving prominence to results, this piece of education policy compels teachers to focus on producing high passes, notwithstanding the fact that learners might not have sufficiently developed

creativity, criticality, reflectivity and problem-solving skills. As shown elsewhere in this research, the teachers' work and his/her worth is measured against the result that his/her learner gets at the end. As earlier noted in section 6.3.2 titled *Teachers as actors of education policy*, Brown revealed that "At this [*his*] school, the authorities can overlook everything else as long as you are producing good results. You become the darling of the authorities." The 'take home' here is that teachers are only safe when they produce learners who get high test scores in the final examinations. As noted elsewhere in this research, the dangers of too much emphasis on the result are too great to ignore. For instance, as noted earlier, one of the most serious backlashes of the 'results movement' has been leakage of examinations, a phenomenon that is disturbing in Zimbabwean education system. Whilst for some, leakage of examinations is "purely economic" for teachers to gain a dollar since they "are poorly remunerated" (Hawk's narrative), for others it is to escape censure when they are labelled as "lazy teachers" who are ineffective and unfit for purpose (Shumba's narrative). To this, participant Andy noted that,

Leakage of examinations was a result of emphasis on results causing some teachers and schools to use unorthodox means to achieve high scores. The result-based orientation driving our education has increased pressure for both teachers and learners to produce, or seem to produce good passes.

Clearly, emphasis on the product increases pressure on teachers and learners to exclusively focus on end results at the expense of the process of teaching and learning. When teachers 'act' for remuneration purposes, they adopt a 'teacher for hire' image where results are tied to remuneration. Therein resides the problem of emphasizing the product at the expense of the process in education.

The process approach in education demands that the emphasis be placed on the process in which the activities involved will result in incidental learning. This view of education is anchored in the constructivist philosophy in which the aim is to develop an autonomous learner. Ironically, the 'activities' underplayed in the Performance Management system and the Result-Based Management presuppose the process approach, in which authentic learning moments are created to foster both learner and teacher autonomy. Learning processes create moments in which learners engage in critical evaluations, thereby sharpening their creativity and reflectivity as they problem-solve. To this, participant Shumba noted that he was opposed

to exclusive focus on results noting that, “in addition to a good pass rate, I would want to create a useful citizen who would develop the country”. Clearly, participant Shumba’s meaning of ‘good pass’ is that achieved through learners’ abilities in creativity, criticality, reflectivity and problem-solving which echoes participant Eunah’s “education must be holistic [*where*] teachers teach for life than simply coaching for examinations”.

As noted elsewhere in this research, the fact that the PMS and RBM focus on product at the expense of the process reduces the teacher to a technician who cares less about developing in learners creativity, criticality, reflectivity and problem-solving abilities as *prima facie* of education. To this, Hennessy and Mcnamara (2013:6) note that performativity “has emerged as a dominant goalpost in modern schooling, [*and this has been*] at the cost of more critical educational encounters”. Ironically, the ‘activities’ underplayed in the form presuppose the process approach and that creates learning moments that foster both learner and teacher autonomy.

#### **6.4 From professionalism to compliance**

Education policy’s subtle use of coercive power forces teachers to comply with its prescriptions rather than act professionally. Once education policy defines what it regards as ‘important education’, it enacts a raft of prescriptions it sees as key to achieving the desired goals. One of such prescriptions that were put in place in Zimbabwean education is the Practical Education Clocking Register system. The registers are of two types, that is, the log-in-log-out and the movement registers as discussed in Chapter Five. As has already been noted elsewhere in this research, the impetus for the said education reforms in Zimbabwe was the perceived poor education standards, with the cause being squarely attributed to unsatisfactory teacher performance and commitment (PCIET, 1999; Henson, 2013). The register system was, thus, introduced to curtail teacher absenteeism and non-attendance to learners, which were seen as contributory to learners’ poor results.

As discussed in Chapter Five and elsewhere in this research, the register is a tracking system seen as necessary for curbing unnecessary teacher absence from duty. The log-in-log-out is a reporting system in which the teacher indicates the time when he/she reports for duty in the morning and when he/she knocks off from work at the end of the day. The movement register is used during work hours should the teacher want to leave the work station to attend to

something outside the station but returning to the station thereafter. In completing this register, the teacher is required to indicate the reason for wanting to go out of the station and this has to be approved by the school head or his/her designate before the teacher can actually leave the station. Upon return, the teacher is required to indicate the time they came back. In apparent reference to the clocking registers, participants' narratives revealed their deep-seated emotions regarding the policy. For instance, participant Shumba expressed his reservations that "the Ministry of Education no longer trusts us [*teachers*] because when you talk of logging-in-logging-out we have been criminalized". According to Brown, the registers are "the most hated things by the teachers as they are seen as designed to curtail and control the freedom and movement of teachers". For Victoria, the register system should not be used in schools "because it makes you feel like you are a prisoner. A teacher has to have freedom". Participant Hawk felt that by using the register system, "teachers are being labelled as unfit for their work and consequently they feel abused". In reference to the clock-in-clock-out and the movement register, Hawk sardonically referred to them as "control registers for teachers". The long and short of it is that this piece of education policy images all teachers as potential cheats, who, if unchecked, will not work. In this regard, education policy views teachers as heartless, unfeeling and immoral beings that are lazy and unyielding beings who are not moved by the plight of learners.

Clearly, participants' narratives reveal how teachers view the said education policy. Participants felt that the education policy undervalued the teacher and, therefore, imaged them negatively. As noted by participants, teachers' response to the negative image is to resist. Sadly, part of teachers' resistance affect learners as some of the teachers will "fill in the registers but still not attend the lessons even when they are here" [Participant Andy's narrative]. When there is threat of punishment for non-compliance, some teachers will pretend to comply with the directives when in fact they are acting differently. Unwilling and strategic compliance would usually be deployed in a deceptive manner for the teachers to escape sanctions (Vahasantanen & Etelapelto, 2009). In this case, the display of emotions will be strategic, in which too strong emotions are not declared but, rather, are camouflaged by up-regulating (faking) positive and down-regulating (hiding) negative emotions (Taxer & Frenzel, 2015; Schutz et al., 2007; Zembylas, 2005). Clearly, power coercion in education reforms invariably courts a negative-some game in which either both parties (policy makers & teachers)

lose or in which the winner's gain is less than the opponent's loss (Dugan, 2003). Elsewhere, the use of registers has been controversial. For instance, Phakati (2014) notes that in South Africa, teachers' unions opposed the use of clocking registers because they felt that it unnecessarily polices teachers and de-professionalizes them. As noted above, teachers' views of how they think education policy views them affect how they will perceive selves as teachers and teaching.

In addition to the Practical Education Register system, another area that participants' narratives noted as problematic is teacher supervision. Analysis of participants' narratives revealed that all participants for this research were of the view that, as a principle, teacher supervision was necessary in the academic world. However, most of the participants were quick to note that the way supervision was done brutalized teachers. Gleaning through the narratives, it is apparent that teachers feel that supervision in the pre-accountability was different from that in the current market-logic-driven accountability. In his narrative, Tawanda says that "supervision should help us improve on the teaching of the subject so it should not be fault-finding". Tawanda narrated one occasion when, as he walked into a class for a lesson, he found the school head seated at the back for teacher supervision, with no prior warning. Tawanda feels the school head was simply witch-hunting. Given such an unannounced visit, Tawanda notes that "you begin to ask yourself what is wrong and you feel that maybe I am not worthy to be at this school". Participant Eunah agreed with Tawanda that when properly done, teacher supervision is good because it aims to bring about quality education. Eunah, however, noted that given the current environment in the country, teacher supervision is unlikely to work positively. She noted that, "The moment...the teacher is demoralized...especially about the remuneration, he or she is not prepared to offer what he or she can do". Eunah noted that when authorities demand for quality, there is need also to attend to teaching materials availability, in addition to remuneration.

Referring to teacher supervision, participant Andy made a comparison between supervision in the past against what transpires in the current hyperinflation environment. She was nostalgic about the past in that, "By that time it was serious business unlike now where the Head of Department says, 'I know I am supposed to supervise you but I have busy schedule'". Participant Shumba also added that the current results-movement stifles teacher supervision by

the Head of Department who may note that, “Why would you think teacher X is not a good teacher and write a negative report on...that teacher when that teacher has scored 98% pass in national examinations?” Apparently, the problem implied in participant Shumba’s observation is to do with teacher supervision entrenched in holistic teaching but taking place in a results-oriented environment. The result-based movement has created this problem owing to variability in the definition of ‘a good teacher’. Participant Moyo had a totally different view. She noted that, “I am not even interested in being assessed because you are not normal whenever you are being assessed...you try by all means to do the best although it is not normal”. What participant Moyo reveals here is that there is a lot of pretence in teacher supervision because the whole lesson is artificial. It does not represent what usually happens in class. It can be noted that teachers’ imaginings on why they are supervised affects their teacher identity.

Clearly, teacher supervision can either make or break a teacher. Tawanda’s narrative reveals how even a well-intended process can destabilize the teacher’s emotions. Unannounced visits can initiate the teacher’s self-perspective, causing maladjustment. As noted by Moyo and Andy, the process is very artificial and can lead to the teacher’s self-introspection where they try to justify their actions. Participant Shumba’s observation of the contradiction in teacher supervision within the results movement is a case in point, where the supervisor may choose to see education as production of market skills than holistic education.

Participant Victoria’s narrative offers an interesting reaction to teacher supervision. She categorically stated her mind regarding teacher supervision. In apparent reference to Education Officers who had just visited her school in the first week of term opening, participant Victoria noted,

I do not want to lie. When I saw them coming, I just wondered what really their agenda was. Why were they visiting us on the first day of the term? So, somehow I was affected negatively. Of course I wanted to go for my lessons but somehow I just felt...I needed space. I am not saying they are not supposed to inspect us but I feel it was just demotivating...Instead of me going for my lessons I was confused. I...concentrated on asking other teachers what they were really looking for.

Clearly, visits by external supervisors had an emotional impact on participant Victoria. She became highly emotional and characterized by uncertainties. She was unsettled and could not bring herself to conduct her lessons effectively because of anxiety. The nature of imaginings that she went through is evident of the devastated teacher identity. Participant Victoria further noted that some of the teacher supervisions are subjective. She noted that some of the supervisors “look for faults. Most of the time they talk of the negatives instead of positive things”. She further noted that for supervision to have meaning “we should address issues like resources”. Participant Victoria also reiterated the spectre of ‘good teacher’ conundrum, whether to be understood from a teacher-as-moral-agent or as one that produces high test scores. This contradiction highlights high stake reforms (human capital) against teaching for social justice.

Participant Chengeto narrated her ordeal regarding supervision. She talked of an incident when an Education Officer visited her school and members of her department were asked to bring their documents for inspection. She talks of the teachers in her department queuing for hours at their Head of Department’s office with their documents. She says she was last in the queue. When her turn came the Education Officer indicated that he was tired and, therefore, would take a break and come for her the following day. She notes that whereas on the previous day the Education Officer only checked teaching and learning records, on the second day the Education Officer decided to observe a lesson. She talks of a fall-out between her and the Education Officer on a procedure in the lesson observed on the day. Apparently, according to her, the cause for the fall-out was disagreement on procedure, resulting in a nasty report on participant Chengeto, which was copied to various management levels right up to the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Education. Participant Chengeto says she felt very aggrieved and responded to the nasty report citing specific procedures in her subject area, which, according to her, turned out much later that the Education Officer was not quite familiar with procedures in that particular subject area. Participant Chengeto revealed that in her opposing report she also copied all levels of management right up to the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry explaining her position. In narrating her story, participant Chengeto was visibly very emotional. Obviously, such experiences in teacher supervision raise emotions to levels where one questions self whether fit for purpose or not.

Participant Hawk also narrated an occasion when Education officers visited his school and carried out teacher supervision and audits, only to have Public Service Inspectors also coming in the same week demanding for the same documents, in addition to other issues. Hawk noted that in his view, Public Service Inspectors are not education subject specialists and, therefore, he feels that they needed not request for teachers' schemes, record of marks, registers and other such documents. Hawk says he had an altercation with one of the officers, resulting in him demanding to know Public Service Inspectors' mandate. Hawk says he demanded from the inspector, "What is your role?"

Commenting on supervision, Ampofo et al. (2019:11) note that 'instructional supervision' should be "targeted at improving classroom performance". It should aim at improving the teaching and learning process to benefit the students (Nasreen & Shah, 2019; Milton Public Schools, 2015; Marzano et al., 2011). The purpose of teacher supervision is neither to make judgments about the competencies of teachers nor to control them but, rather, to work cooperatively with them to improve instruction (Hoy & Forsyth, undated). The key concern informing teacher supervision is to achieve both the school's and students' achievements by helping teachers to deliver adequately in their role performance (Ampofo et al., 2019). A supervisor, in essence, should be a "change agent who is accountable to arrange required resources for the teachers" (Nasreen & Shah, 2019:195) and help them with suggestions on how to deploy the materials to improve students' learning. However, the market logic and accountability discourse has tended to give teacher supervision new impetus to be consistent with marketized education focus. Clearly, these are moments that destabilize teachers' identity. It is apparent that education policy can influence teachers' imaginings about self as teachers, thereby affecting their teaching practices. In addition, duplication of roles between Education Officers and Public Service personnel in schools ironically reflects on the enigma of specifying teaching time between Education Ministry generated policies and those from the Public Service Commission, to which I now turn.

#### **6.4.1 The enigma of specifying work-time for teachers**

In trying to mitigate teachers' absenteeism from their work stations, the register system was instituted in schools, but creating contradiction in teachers' operating time. As discussed in Chapter Five and elsewhere in this chapter, the auditing of workers' availability at the work

station was partly borrowed from industry, where the concept of ‘earn as you work’ had been in operation. The clocking register system to curb absenteeism in Zimbabwean education was also influenced by international discourse in which some countries employed different ways to combat teacher absenteeism which had become endemic. For instance, Uganda had been trying to operationalize an automated monitoring system via cameras and punch cards (Cilliers et al., 2014), India used the text messaging system involving heads of institutions and local parents (Hanna & Ryan, 2012), Gambia employed the mobile phone platform while Rwanda deployed the Kiguzo Attendance Tracking System known as the ‘Ndi Hano’ (I am here) (ADEA, 2015). South Sudan adopted the use of VSAT satellite internet capabilities to monitor teachers, whilst Somalia, Chile, Honduras and El Salvador used the Community Education Committees to monitor teacher attendance (ADEA, 2015). Some of these teacher-monitoring systems are expensive to run, whilst others are subject to manipulation. Given these complexities, Zimbabwe opted to use the clocking system which is inexpensive but requires teachers to fill in the clocking registers on days without end, notwithstanding the weaknesses the system may have.

Most participants felt that the register system unnecessarily antagonized teachers. This piece of education policy was also seen as contradictory to Public Service Regulations to which teachers are part of. Hawk noted that Public Service Regulations stipulate that workers are required to report for duty at eight o’clock (0800 hours) in the morning and knock off at four o’clock (1600 hours). Through a policy circular, the Public Service Commission instructed that “heads of stations...are requested to ensure that teachers are at stations conducting their professional duties” and that the “working hours (0745 hours to 1600 hours) are observed” (Financial Gazette, 1 October 2015:3). The circular instructed that “the check in and out...registers [*should be*] up to date and easily accessible” (p.3) for inspection. However, schools start their day’s activities much earlier than eight o’clock. Most schools start at about seven o’clock (0700 hours), which means teachers are required to log-in before school activities start. Participants, however, noted that administrators insist that teachers knock-off as stipulated by the Public Service Regulations in spite of the fact that they would have reported for work much earlier. Another problem noted by participants is that teachers work far beyond the hours stipulated in the regulations. For instance, as noted by participant Shumba, the ministry was “being very unfair because when they talk of filling in the time we arrived and the

time when we leave, they forget that when we accompany learners to sporting activities or seminars we will be at work for longer periods and nobody cares about that.” Participant Victoria also noted that teachers work far beyond the stipulated time “where they even mark and plan their work deep into the night”. Victoria added, sadly, that the enactment of some of the policies “seem[s] as if they [*the Ministry*] want the teacher to be in a corner...they want the teacher to be controlled...teachers are resisting.” Participant Moyo noted that the said education policies have tended to degrade the image of the teacher and this has resulted in participant Victoria’s claim that “teachers are resisting”.

Participant Victoria’s school is a sessional school and, therefore, technically has ‘two schools’ sharing teachers and facilities in a day. What this means is that half of the school begins in the morning up to afternoon and then the other group comes in the afternoon up to the close of day at 1700 hours, with other such schools ending their day at 1800 hours. Victoria narrated the complication with the register system in a sessional school where some teachers cross sessions, making it difficult for them to get even a breather.

Evidently, the above situation is untenable and enigmatic regarding teachers’ operating time. The contradictions in education policies specifying teachers’ work hours can result in burn-out, giving them new identities. The situation above can result in teachers getting frustrated and emotional, affecting their teaching (Burke & Stets, 2009; Lazarus, 1999). When the emotions become intensely negative as shown in participant Victoria’s “teachers are resisting”, they may block “clear thinking”, resulting in teachers either blocking implementation of education reforms or activating various defensive mechanisms (Burke & Stets, 2009;157). As Schutz and Zembylas (2009:3) note, “unpleasant...emotions have considerable implications for student learning, school climate and the quality of education [*they will offer*] in general”. The enigma in specifying teachers’ work time serves to brutalize teachers’ emotions, thereby off-setting their images as teachers and teaching. Through teachers’ imaginings, they question their teacher imaging and teaching, giving them a sense of being de-professionalized, an aspect which I now turn to.

#### **6.4.2 De-professionalizing teaching**

As has been noted in earlier sections in this chapter, education reforms can uphold teacher professionalism or break it. When reforms violate teachers’ long-held views of what education

should mean, that sets off their imaginings of the teacher-figure, teaching and learning. If, in their imaginings, they feel that the new reforms contradict their long-held views of what it means to be a teacher as well as how teaching and learning should progress, yet being forced to act otherwise, they, thus, feel that they are being de-professionalized.

For long, teachers have regarded themselves as professional. However, with a raft of enacted education policy measures, they have been quick to analyse policies to evaluate what the policies are saying, but more importantly “the silences” (Jie, 2016:4) that are well intended. The changes have served to de-professionalize teachers and teaching. Going through memory lane, participant Hawk reminisced that in the past “the ministry was being run professionally [*through*] workshops [*in*] which we also used to contribute”. His comment was in apparent reference to the exclusion of teacher participation in recent education policy development as discussed earlier in this chapter. Participant Shumba summarized his emotional response to the said education reforms taking place with an “I feel belittled”, further noting that “I am demoralized because you are not giving me the respect that I deserve”. His comments indicate that issues to do with education policy reforms are emotional issues that border on ‘respect and disrespect’ of teachers’. On the same note, participant Hawk commented that “it belittles the teachers, especially with the experience” that they have in educating learners. In his research in Zimbabwe, Gutuza (2016:389) noted that “teachers as one of the key stakeholders in the education system were not involved during the policy formulation of RBM”. To be asked to implement other people’s ideas is an act of marginalization to which teachers may react in different ways. As already observed, in such cases teachers feel that education policy sees them as valueless workers whose views and opinions are of no consequence in the planning of education reforms. Embedded in participants’ comments cited above are power struggles between policy-makers and policy implementers. Participant Victoria’s observation that the use of the clocking system “makes you feel like you are a prisoner. You have to have freedom. It seems as if they want the teacher to be in a corner. They want the teacher to be controlled...teachers are resisting” summarizes the power struggle embedded in the said education reforms. Teachers feel that the ‘accountability discourses’ framed through the market logic are subtle ways of de-professionalizing teachers and teaching. The reforms are seen as only serving to ‘box’ teachers into compliance (Parnell, 2010; Kelchtermans, 2009, Evans, 2008; Whitty, 2006). The concepts ‘professionalism’, ‘accountability’ and ‘quality’

have taken new meanings in which judgements of professional educators (DiBiase, 2015) are substituted for answerability to government through compliance with education policy. The subtle power coercion deployed to secure compliance of, and by, teachers, is camouflaged in the traditional forms of teachers' moral obligation to their learners. However, the 'skills audit' enforced through the RBM contradicts the teachers' moral obligation in which teachers would focus on developing creativity, criticality, reflectivity and problem-solving skills in learners.

The RBM is market-driven, as evidenced by its business language that regards learners as customers and education as a market commodity. The register system, likewise, is a concept borrowed from industry and is closely linked with the 'earn as you work' philosophy. Meeting the demands of a market-driven education system poses challenges to "teacher autonomy and pedagogy", leading de-professionalization of teachers and teaching (Hennessy & Mcnamara, 2013:6). The language of education policy under review shows that education policy makers "have increasingly turned to market logic" in which "business and market language are used to manage education, teaching and learning" (Edwards & Means, 2019:5-7). The majority of current accountability measures "strip teachers of this freedom, effectively de-skilling them" (Wright & Kim, 2020:109) by bypassing the teacher-level of input and in the process sometimes directly contradicting what teachers believe to be best for learners (Littlewood & McAdie, 2007).

Education policy measures under review in this research serve to 'de-professionalise' teachers, projecting them as unskilled manpower that cannot be left to make own decisions about their teaching. Evidently, the education policies under review in this research are open to being "used to secure [*teacher*] compliance with reform directives" through threat of sanction for teachers (Parnell, 2010:7), and this clearly serves to de-professionalize teachers and teaching. What this amounts to is reimagining teachers and teaching in which if there is non-verification with teachers' role identity, there will be teachers' dis-engagement, an aspect to which I turn in the next section.

### **6.5 Teacher reimagining and (dis)engagement**

For clarity's sake, I probed participants further to know how (if at all) the selected education policy influenced teachers' imaging of self as teachers and how that affected teaching. I wanted

to hear from their perspective whether there was reimagining of the teacher, and if so, with what consequences for teaching and learning.

In apparent reference to the changes brought about by the selected education policies, participant Shumba noted that, “There has been a quondam change in the way teachers are perceived...and teaching as a profession...by parents...as well as government.” Evident from participant Shumba’s observation is that the re-engineering of education from holistic to a set of market skills is in itself an act of re-orienting the image of a teacher. He further noted that due to “these reforms we may have different kinds of teachers”. Referring to pass-rate related incentives that were being offered in schools, participant Shumba felt that this creates “a mercenary teacher of some sort”, who will simply try to get high passes by hook or crook in order to get incentives. Such teachers have lost the ethics of the teaching profession, that is, teaching as a calling. Such teachers, as discussed earlier in the chapter, leak examinations with the intention of getting high grades, even undeservedly. In addition to these are also those who organize out-of-school classes, what Chang and McLaren (2018:13) refer to as investing “in shadow education to instruct their kids during out-of-school hours”, such as was witnessed at participant Tawanda’s home, where he had turned his kitchen into a makeshift classroom for out-of-school classes. This phenomenon is widespread in Zimbabwe owing to the prominence placed on high test score results and for teachers to augment poor remuneration for teachers. Clearly, this new image of a teacher points to disengagement from a teacher-as-moral-agent image to what participant Shumba called the ‘mercenary teacher’ motivated by the drive to get monetary rewards. Chang and McLaren (2018:10) comment that examination-oriented education has re-ushered “rote pedagogy and an over-emphasis on testing because the culture of efficiency - audit-culture – is very ingrained in the system at multiple levels.” In this case, classroom activities are impersonal since relationships are monetized, with teachers viewed as service providers and what they offer seen as commodities and learners as customers. Teachers offering extra tuition have become competitors vying for customers – the student - for an extra-dollar. High-stakes testing and value-added assessment has pushed students, teachers, parents and administrators to be subsumed by neoliberal logic which tends to submit all in its path to a process of monetization and transformation of education into a commodity (McLaren, 2015a). This suggests that reorienting education leads to teachers reimagining, with consequences on teachers’ engagement or disengagement from learners or classroom activities.

At another level, as reported by participant Shumba and corroborated by other participants, some teachers and school heads connive to cheat by not declaring the correct status of their examination candidature in their schools, where low performers are registered for examinations as private candidates. Teacher commitment to those learners listed as ‘private candidates’ can be questioned. This can lead to teacher disengagement from such classes, affecting teaching practices and teacher commitment to the learners. Clearly, the selected education policy reforms have created considerable tensions, what Ball (2003), in Hennessy and Mcnamara (2013) refers to as values schizophrenia leading to teachers’ distorted identities. This occurs where teacher “commitment, judgment and authenticity within practice are sacrificed for impression and performance” (Hennessy & Mcnamara, 2013:13). What this has done is to alter the image of teachers as much as it has also affected their teaching. Owing to the results-pressure, teachers have lost their transformative roles of liberating education, in which teaching ought to be based on dialogues, where personal experiences are considered as texts and starting points for the acquisition and development of knowledge (Benade, 2008).

Referring to the effect of surveillance policies such as the Practical Education Clocking system, participant Moyo noted that the policy “degrades the image of the teacher”. The teacher is painted as a suspect, a person who cannot be trusted and, therefore, needs close monitoring to ensure he or she reports for duty. Teacher audit, conversely, images a teacher as a person who will not work unless forced. The neoliberal state believes that unless teachers are forced to act professional through a raft of education policy directives, they will act otherwise. The deficit discourse that education policy projects leads to teacher reimagining, where they see themselves as inadequate. This, coupled with deteriorating working conditions, leads to teacher “disengagement and/or resistance as tools to engage or reengage” (Wright & Kim, 2020) education policy as ways to try and resolve their devastated teacher images. Participant Moyo noted that “I am not interested in someone who is not confident in me”, a clear sign of disengagement. In addition, teacher supervision has tended to create actors rather than actual performers who excel on day-to-day classroom routine. In such cases, the new ‘discourse of professionalism’ that education policy employs “initiates a mentality of self-regulation by which the teachers themselves become the mechanism for legitimizing the surveillance, marketization and commodification of their work practices” and within this process is the “corrosion of character” (Hennessy & Mcnamara, 2013:13). The authors further note that in

such cases, teachers are faced with the dilemma of conformity to education-policy-initiated teacher images, or rebel in praxis.

The discussion has shown how education policy reimages teachers and teaching and, also that when teachers' emotions are affected positively or negatively, that can lead to educators' reengagement or disengagement. Performance-scripted teaching and learning withdraw teachers' and learners' freedom that should move and make them take risks to experiment, thereby developing the creativity and criticality of mind to deal with, and problem-solve, new challenges (Schmidt & Thomas, 2009). This situation comes about because the accountability movement focuses on 'fixing' the people, while never considering the failure of the system itself (Woods & Jeffery, 2002). For example, when students' test scores are low, instead of also examining the students' personalities, the flaws that may be inherent in the tests themselves, or when teachers cheat on standardized testing, instead of assuming those teachers to be lazy, self-serving and 'bad apples', we need to also consider what, in the education system of accountability, could be driving them to these behaviours (Thomas, 2011).

## **6.6 Conclusion**

The chapter analysed and interpreted results from participants' narratives from semi-structured interviews and journals. The analysis revealed that the selected education policy influences teachers' imaging of self as teachers, and teaching. Analysed narratives revealed that the performance system employed in education affects teachers' emotions, thereby influencing teaching and learning. The clocking registers employed were viewed as policing mechanism by participants. The analysis revealed that teachers' imaginings of what education policy is saying to, and about them, has influence on the way teachers teach. Teacher supervision was seen to have both intended and unintended effects on teachers' identity construction and teaching. The next chapter discusses the results in relation to the research questions that were stated in Chapter One, to show how the findings answered the said questions.

## **CHAPTER SEVEN**

# **TEACHERS' RESPONSES TO THEIR IMAGININGS OF HOW EDUCATION POLICY IMAGES THEM AND THEIR TEACHING**

### **7.1 Overview**

In this part of the research, I discuss the full import of the analysed data on selected education policy's influence on teachers' imaginings, shaping who they eventually view themselves as. Teachers' imaginings are a function of their psychological processes shaping their interpretations of social phenomena. In Chapter Two and Chapter Four, I discussed how teachers employ their personal interpretive frameworks to make sense of phenomena in their environment. By personal interpretive framework, I mean "a set of cognitions, of mental representations that operate as a lens through which teachers look at their job, give meaning to it" and act accordingly (Kelchtermans, 2009:260; Kechltermans et al., 2009:227). Participants' and/or researchers' personal interpretive frameworks act as lens through which education reforms are appraised, valued and are either accepted (congruence) or rejected (dissonance) of which dissonance leads to negative dispositions and emotions. As discussed under Literature Review and the Theoretical Framework, three elements are key in negative teacher vulnerability, that is, teachers' lack of full control of the conditions they work in (quality control systems, non-negotiated regulations and imposed working conditions) (Kelchtermans, 2009), inability to convince all and sundry that effective teaching and learning are a team effort requiring teamwork from all stakeholders in education, and that although they (teachers) have dozens of decisions they believe to be important for teaching and learning, these are usually vetoed by education policy reform measures. As argued elsewhere in this research, the purpose of qualitative research is social inquiry and, therefore, focuses on the ways people interpret and make sense of their experiences as they relate to their worlds (Cresswell, 2014).

It is for these reasons that qualitative researchers study people in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or "interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings" participants bring (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011:3; Clandinin, 2007:4). According to interpretivism, the study of social phenomena requires "an understanding of the social world that people have constructed and which they reproduce through their continuing activities" (Blaikie, 2007:124). The author further notes that social actors are constantly and consistently involved "in interpreting and reinterpreting their world – social situations, other people's actions, their own actions and

natural humanly created objects” (p.124). To understand teacher agency in education policy reforms, it is important to understand how the reforms affect teachers’ dispositions, to which I now briefly turn. Teachers’ dispositions are shaped and influenced by their imaginings of what they think education policy, whether covertly or overtly, is saying about them as teachers and their teaching.

Teacher ‘imaginings’ is a conceptual process that explains how the mind generates meanings off, and from, phenomenon, based on reasoned analysis and assumptions from psychological processes. Imagination produces images when there is no perception, and can be false (Shields, 2016). Imaginings are deemed to be more likely influenced by impressions and, thus, more easily corrupted by external images (Sailors, 2019). As the author further notes, imagination and imaginings are a significant part of the human experience and is an integral part of what it means to be a human or teacher for that matter. The imagination is a playground where anything is possible, for it allows us to engage in realities that cannot be captured through our senses alone and allows us clear insight into the remote, the absent, the obscure (Dewey, 1910, in Sailors, 2019). What necessitates imagination is either the desire for something different or an aversion to the given state of things caused by the blocking of successful activity (Dewey, 1916, in Sailors, 2019). Where teachers’ moral role identity is blocked by education-policy-initiated identities, the process sets teacher imaginings in motion as they search for identity equilibrium. Imagination remains largely a reproductive rather than a productive activity, a servant rather than a master of meaning (Sailors, 2019). What this means is that teacher imaginings are generative, multiplicative and propagative, resulting in multiple possibilities. The imagination represents the ability to envision the possible or implied in all things (Judson, 2016) and this sets teachers’ dispositions in motion.

Dispositions are “a theoretical concept and a working tool to assist in understanding the particular orientations (thinking and action) of people” (Skourdoumbis, 2018:4). Bourdieu, in Skourdoumbis (2018:3) further notes that dispositions are made of “incorporated knowledge (usually tacit) and reflect primary experience of the social world”. Teachers’ dispositions are a conglomeration of their temperaments, their moods, their tempers and their personalities that direct their reactions towards the object of interpretation. Dispositions are,

...inscribed in the relationship of *familiarity* with the familiar environment, the unquestioning apprehension of the social world which, by definition, does not reflect on itself and excludes the question of the conditions of its own possibility” (Skourdoumbis, 2018:4; Bourdieu, 2004:3).

What this means is that teachers’ decisions and actions are part of their broader personal ethnography which describes their characteristic preferences which they are disposed to and would wish to pursue, given their own choices. Villegas (2007, in Skourdoumbis, 2018) says that dispositions are tendencies for individuals to act in a particular manner, under particular circumstances, based on their beliefs. Teachers’ dispositions, however, are never completely disassociated from the transcending rules, norms and constraints that are set to govern teachers’ teaching activities because their actions (or lack of them) are never fully divorced from educational, social, economic, political, cultural and historical structures to which teacher action is always subordinated. By ‘structures’ I mean the various patterned and layered arrangements of social realities. Structure operates at two levels, the macro incorporating the various political, economic, historical and other social structures purposed to organize society, and the micro which includes the networks between individuals and/or organizations (Skourdoumbis, 2018).

Education policy discourse on teacher performance linking student achievement to teacher effectiveness, as was expressed by participants in this research, often discounts socio-political and economic influences (Fisher-Ari et al., 2017), and their contribution to the final learner abilities. As already argued elsewhere in this research, what this does is to link education policy making with particular objectives by proselytizing a micro-economic version of human capital theory, new managerialism and designing educational performance indicators (Skourdoumbis, 2018; NANGO, 2018; Hennessy and Mcnamara, 2013). The language of education policy has “increasingly turned to market logic”, in which “business and market logics are used to manage education, teaching and learning” (Edwards & Means, 2019:5-7). As discussed in Chapter Five, the introduction and use of the PMS and RBM created a notion in which education was conceived in the realm of business enterprise in which success was dependent on the quality of service. In this notion teachers are seen as line workers whose input and its quality can be only as far as managerialism is exercised to its fullest. What this

has done is to shape teaching practices, but along the way distorting the educative processes generating an amalgam of teacher dispositions. Evaluations of teacher performance in this thrust rely upon particular technologies and mechanisms of appraisal shaping education and teaching practices along the way (Skourdoumbis, 2018).

## **7.2 Teachers' imaginings of education policy's imaging of education**

Analysis of the appraisal management system in Chapter Five and participants' views in Chapter Six revealed that there were marked differences on the perception of what education ought to be. In Chapter Six, I analysed the perspectives of nine participants on their views on the use of the appraisal system. The analyses revealed that the appraisal management system was seen by participants as closely tied to, and controlled by, economic market imperatives. The analyses of the PMS and RBM revealed that the purposes of the two policy documents were to improve teacher efficiency and effectiveness by capacitating them to work towards results that could be measured in form of the output results. The analyses of the policy documents in Chapter Five revealed that measurability of the outcome was quite central and seen as the driver of teaching and learning. Education was broken down into 'key result areas' from which measurement of progress could be obtained. The analyses further revealed that the critical focus of the performance management system was 'on results', with specific time frame outlined for achievement of the objectives. The analyses also revealed that the PMS and the RBM were framed within the economic market discourse in which the approach was aimed at reinvigorating 'teacher professionalism and accountability' through stringent 'quality control measures' to improve the perceived poor quality of education. Analyses of participants' views revealed that most participants were opposed to this commodification of education, which they said applies 'most suitably in industries and not in education' because the human mind cannot be produced like goods.

What is evident from the above is that there is contestation between education policy and teachers on "What is education for?" (Bell & Stevenson, 2006:3). To put it in another version, the question is "What knowledge is most worth" for learners? (Marz et al., 2013:13; Apple, 2003:7-8). Participants in this research, just as those in Heaney's (2015:298) research were, and are, destabilized by the contradictions when,

Meaningful qualitative roles (such as that of the teacher who transmits customs and traditions) are decoded when their qualitative function is subordinated to quantitative ones, such as transmitting or contributing to forces of decoding (here, we need think no further than the teacher who transmits skills to students ultimately reducible to students becoming capable of successfully – profitably – participating in capital flows).

‘Meaningful qualitative roles’ are consistent with the traditional teacher image to which all the nine participants subscribed, as evidenced by their nostalgic reference to the need to teach holistically and teach for life. All the participants decried the systematic violation of the teachers’ role by the new education policies that are reviewed in this research. All participants acknowledged the new requirement where their ‘qualitative function’ has been subordinated to quantitative ones, requiring them to transmit ‘skills to students’, ultimately reducing learners to ‘participate in capital flow’. Through teachers’ imaginings owing to the contradictory views of education noted above, teachers’ dispositions are set off with varying consequences to teachers’ own imaging of self as teachers and teaching. Participants were agreed that the ‘prevailing situation has greatly affected how teachers and learners behave’. As noted in the theoretical chapter, education policies engineer various teacher feelings triggering emotions that can have telling effects on their practice of teaching. Some participants noted that some teachers have become emotional and ‘do not want to talk about these forms’, in apparent reference to PMS/RBM forms. This evidently portrays devastated teachers’ self-concept, causing maladjusted teacher identity. Teachers, sadly, noted their being side-lined from education policy development, resulting in “policy [*not being*] done by [*them but*] done to teachers; they are actors and subjects, subject to and object of policy” (Ball et al., 2012:3). In this view, teachers are at the mercy of education policy which has played out teachers’ voices from the policy development process, forcing them to take up various teacher identity role positions. Teacher-identity-role positions that teachers eventually take are influenced by their imaginings of what policy is saying about them as teachers and their teaching. Teachers can either accept the new identities propagated by the enacted education policy, or rebel against them by posing counter-teacher-identities.

As a way of responding to education-policy-propagated teacher and teaching identities, some teachers have altered their positions to those that are in harmony with the policy projected images. By reorienting their teaching to ‘coaching’ for examinations, such teachers have evidently altered their imaging of self as teachers and their teaching. As was observed during data collection and analysis, some teachers, just like parents, “have invested “in shadow classes education to instruct their kids during out-of-school hours” (Chang & McLaren, 2018:13). As was discussed in Chapter Six, Tawanda, just like a couple of other teachers, set up after-school classes to coach his learners for examinations. Ironically, although teachers claimed that they were against the technicist teacher image, by setting up examination coaching classes, evidently that confirms them embracing the new teacher image propagated by education policy. By default, teachers in this category have accepted a technicist teacher image to which they claimed to be opposed. There are two ways of explaining this apparent contradiction. Faced with relentless criticism from both government and parents that teachers are failing learners and, therefore, responsible for the flailing economy, some teachers have sought to find relevance by conforming to the teacher identity relevant for skills production. I need to note that, although most participants said they were against teaching that focuses on skills development and violating holistic education, their narratives still revealed that when their learners produced high test scores they felt vindicated that they worked hard. One participant, for example, was all smiles as he revealed that being an examination Item Writer for ZIMSEC, his school and learners were benefiting greatly since he was able to coach the learners on examinations in his subject. He revealed that his learners were scoring good results in his subject. The participant further revealed that he had since been given an additional responsibility as examination/test item writer for his district. The majority of participants also revealed that they run workshops meant to coach learners and inexperienced teachers on how to manage examinations in their subject areas. Most of such workshops are examination-focused to develop learners’ examination skills.

The majority of participants expressed a view that the problem of examination leakages was a result of result-based emphasis in the education system. Two issues were noted for this, that is, teachers want to escape the censure that is meted out on the teacher whose learners would have failed, and secondly, the teacher are driven by the desire to get rewards that go with good

passes in one's subject area. As discussed in Chapter Six, schools have put in place incentives to reward teachers whose learners get high scores. As noted in the previous chapter, what this does is to reduce teachers to an image of 'guns for hire', as noted by one of the participants. This is explained by the number of teacher who organized after-school classes to coach learners. For learners to register for such classes, they have to pay directly to the teacher for the service. As for those who leak examinations, after imagining the censure that comes with poor results, their images are altered to become dishonest and they opt to cheat to escape punishment. As noted by one participant, according to the performance management system, a good teacher is 'one who produces good results whether by hook or crook' so teachers tend to teach for examinations to get the incentives that come with good passes. To this, Hennessy and Mcnamara (2013:6) note that performativity "has emerged as a dominant goalpost in modern schooling, [and this has been] at the cost of more critical educational encounters". McLaren (2015a) notes that high-stakes testing and value-added assessment have pushed students, teachers, parents and administrators to be subsumed by neoliberal logic, which tends to submit all in its path to a process of monetization and transformation into a commodity.

The situation that obtains, as shown above, clearly shows that some teachers, owing to their imaginings of what education policy says about them, have since developed and adopted revised teacher identity that guarantees their survival in the age where education means developing skills. The reason for the altered teacher images is to achieve congruence between education policy-initiated teacher identity and their own constructed teacher images for their survival in the age where skills audit is the in-thing. What this means is that education policy-initiated teacher identity has influenced teachers' imaging of self as teachers. The new identities created are meant to safeguard the interests of the teachers. On the other hand, teachers who resist the new teacher identities suggested by education policy may develop negative dispositions in which negative emotions may be experienced. As revealed by some participants, when this happens, teachers resist the new identities by way of sustaining their old teacher image in which they approach teaching from a holistic point of view, upholding the teacher as moral agent to assist learners develop creativity, criticality, reflectivity and problem-solving skills. Emotions from teacher identity non-verification can escalate into open conflict, with government agents (policy-makers or school administrators) accusing teachers of disregarding policy directives. Analysis of participants' narratives revealed that there were

cases of open conflict between teachers who did not produce high test score results and school administration that is result-driven. Such teachers, through their imaginings, either view school administrators as unresponsive to learners' needs beyond the examination or simply view themselves as inadequate and not fit 'for purpose'. The dispositions generated from teachers' imaginings affect the way they respond to what they think education policy or school administration is saying about them. Whatever their imaginings are, that will affect their teaching practices. Learners will pay the ultimate price.

### **7.2.1 Educating for human capital as constraint to democracy and social justice**

Analyses of data in Chapter Five and Chapter Six revealed that education reforms were necessitated by the need to increase economic productivity in Zimbabwe. Education policy reforms were meant to foster production skills in learners for them to fit into the world of work. In view of this desire, education policy reforms were guided by the human capital view that sees the purpose of education as creating skilled manpower for economic productivity. This approach subordinated education to economic production, resulting in the adoption of the language of the industry being used to define the desired outcomes. As earlier noted, the knowledge economy portrays schooling as "a key institution that determines economic growth" (Gardner, 2012:659) rather than seeing it as miniature community of practice where personal and professional relationships grow. Most participants felt that the education policy reforms examined in this research side-lined teachers since they did not take into account teachers' views. Participants argued that the reforms were just forced on teachers in a top-down approach in pursuance of economic productivity, thus reducing education to a list of skills.

The focus on economic production was seen by participants as narrowing the curriculum. The view expressed by participants was that education should focus on holistic teaching in which many possibilities are created for learners. Participants were advocating for education that promoted democracy and social justice in which learners develop creativity, problem-solving and critical skills allowing them to deal with novel situations as they arise in life. Participants felt that the current education environment was hushed and lacked democracy, with teachers' voices being stifled. In this regard, participants preferred accountability systems that do not limit and distort instruction but support growth of intellectual and practical skills that prepare learners for performance on real-world tasks (Wise & Usdan, 2013). Nurturing this moral

commitment for teachers rests on three key pillars to the provision of quality education, that is, enacting an educator-led vision of education, defining and providing the quality tools that are mandatory and critical for quality work, and provision of quality teaching and learning environments (Carroue, 2013). Teachers cannot effectuate positive change in their work unless and until they share the vision of effective education with other stakeholders (Sandefur & Moore, 2004). As observed by participants, the attitude portrayed by education reforms has been to treat teachers as education policy 'subjects', thereby disenfranchising them in the education policy process. The enacted education policy, therefore, portrayed an alternative image of a teacher needed in the new thrust of the education system to solve economic stuttering. In the new thrust, education is, thus, reduced to 'skills development' (the market logic), making teachers technicians (Hennessy & Mcnamara, 2013) preoccupied with developing, in learners, skills for economic production (human capital) rather than holistic education that promotes individual creativity, criticality, reflectivity and problem-solving abilities. Through their imaginings, some participants argued that altering their teacher image to carry out education policy mandates wholesome sounds like they are accomplice to condemning their learners to something they do not believe in. Some of the participants speculated that the collapse of some economic sectors could be attributed to the type of education that is offered to learners. Their argument was that framing education in economic terms only succeeds in boxing the learners for those industries that we have in mind without equipping them with skills 'to think outside the box', an aspect requiring creativity, criticality, reflectivity and problem-solving abilities. Participants' views were that by drilling for results, we are producing 'copycats' rather than critical thinkers. Participants with this line of thinking clearly displayed their emotional side as they advocated for a return to holistic teaching.

What this means is that teachers who firmly believe in holistic education have failed to adjust to the new demand for teachers, hence have become misfits. Participants were of the opinion that this state of affairs has forced some teachers to leave the profession in their droves for other countries, with others opting to leave teaching all together. In explaining how they themselves are managing given the contradictions they explained, most of them explained their 'twosome' approach in which they partly drill their learners to satisfy the new demand but also holistically teach their learners. This indicates how teachers try to deal with their dispositions from non-verification of teacher role identities. Lack of teacher involvement in policy

development tends to bubble-burst teachers' long-held image of a socially respected member of society. As noted elsewhere in this research, meeting the demands of a market-driven education system poses challenges to "teacher autonomy and pedagogy", leading to their de-professionalization (Hennessy & Mcnamara, 2013:6).

Clearly, the educative process is to some extent subverted by socio-political and economic policy concerns, diverting teacher attention towards a narrow set of education policy and standards-directed outcomes (Skourdoumbis, 2018). Once the focus of education and teaching are on performance, the educative process diminishes to acquisition of specific skills. What this has done is to privilege results-outcome, diverting attention from broader aims of education, some of which are "student development and growth", both of which rely upon "the expertise of teachers to guide and foster student learning" (p.10-11). Teacher monitoring mechanisms, to which I now turn, also affect the way teachers image self as teachers, and teaching practices.

### **7.3 Teacher surveillance, teacher autonomy and teacher identity**

In Chapter Five and Chapter Six I discussed the introduction and subsequent use of the Practical Clocking Register system in education as an accountability measure supposedly to increase teacher attendance to lessons. In analysing data, it was noted that there was a growing feeling that poor learner performance was partly attributed to unsatisfactory teacher performance and commitment (PCIET, 1999; Hansen, 2013). As noted in the analysis, the practical clocking system was modelled along the production industry in which the worker reports the time when one reports for duty and the time when one knocks off. In industries, the purpose is to account for production time to ensure that it is fully utilised. The policy circular on the clocking system sets teachers' working hours as beginning from 0745 to 1600 hours (Public Service Commission, 2000). The policy circular instructs that heads of stations are "to ensure that teachers *[are]* at stations conducting their professional duties" (Financial Gazette, 1 October 2015:3). This is meant to curb teacher absenteeism. Teacher absenteeism simply means that a teacher is unavailable to attend to his/her class duties. The clocking system was meant to curb this problem.

As discussed in Chapter Five and Chapter Six, the clocking register system is framed in teacher accountability discourse. Accountability through the clocking registers can either be vertical (top-down) or horizontal (lateral). The clocking system in Zimbabwe adopts the vertical and

comprises traditional hierarchies, decisional authority, bureaucracies, policies and regulations, accounting, prescriptions and audit inspections (Wenger, 2010). The clocking system in Zimbabwe is framed through power coercion, in which a regime of vertical accountability formulas is enacted directly, challenging and undermining judgements of professional educators (DiBiase, 2015). Participants in this research noted that clocking registers are used in schools to account for teachers' whereabouts during work hours. They are a tracking system seen as necessary for curbing unnecessary absenteeism from duty.

The analysis of participants' narratives revealed that most of the participants were of the opinion that the clocking system was a process of unnecessarily policing teachers. The basis of the clocking system is that government does not trust that teachers can actually act professionally and responsibly unless otherwise forced to. To this, participants observed that it 'makes you feel like a prisoner'. They felt that as a teacher, one has to have freedom but it seemed as if government 'wanted them to be in a corner'. Participants further noted that the government wanted to control the teacher, which 'teachers are resisting'. The unmistakable image of a teacher evolving in this case is that of a potential cheat who is unresponsive to learners' needs. The other images are those of teachers as irresponsible, dishonest and heartless people who only work under close monitoring. The brush in this regard paints all teachers as such until proven otherwise. For teachers to prove otherwise, the Practical Education Clocking Registers must exonerate them by way of teachers having entered their credentials for the day. Given the imaginings that teachers make of the meaning of education policy, teachers are likely to suffer from emotional vulnerability (Kelchtermans, 2009) resulting from non-verification of teacher role identity. It was in this spirit that most of the participants felt that the spirit behind the log-in-log-out 'is not good [*because*] you are witch-hunting'. Participants felt that the message was clear that 'teachers are not professional [*and*] need to be supervised to a point of clocking to say they are now in or out'. The perceived negative view of teachers by education policy is the reason why most of the participants noted that clocking registers were, in fact, 'control registers for teachers' which curtailed teacher autonomy.

The clocking system works on a false assumption that when teachers are present it means that they are working. As participants noted, teachers can be present but not working. People generally do not like to be forced to do things against their will (Dugan, 2003). Use of coercive

measures can be employed at the detriment of learning in schools when they destabilise teacher identity. To use Thomas' (2010) metaphor, we are raising caged birds and demanding that they earn the right to fly. The other downside to the Practical Education Clocking system is the recognition that many teachers work hours over and beyond their formal duties, to keep abreast of the curriculum requirements and in support of students with challenges (ADEA, 2015). Teachers have to research, plan and mark learners' work, activities that cannot all fit in the legislated work time. They need to spend many hours beyond the legislated working time to cope with the work they have to put in. For policy (school management included) to image them in negative ways, as discussed above, teachers would feel a sense of betrayal. In a way, the clocking register system antagonizes teachers, whose call of duty compels them to work deep into the night, well beyond the simple call of duty. Emphasis on clocking registers upsets teachers' emotions, thereby destabilizing teachers in different ways. One of the ways teachers may respond to education policy initiated identity is that some teachers may decide to work according to the time stipulated in the policy. Within this frame of mind, once it is time to knock off, teachers would stop working and, therefore, would not want to carry any work home to work in the night. For teachers to react to the dissonance between their own imaging of teachers as a moral agent as opposed to the education policy initiated images, they engage in passive resistance which severely affects the progress of learners. Evidently, the nexus between accountability and the clocking system project teacher identity in very negative ways. Such imaging of teachers can be destabilising to the teacher's self-image as teachers and may result in damaging responses. Non-verification of policy-projected teacher images result in teachers' emotional vulnerability (Kelchtermans, 2009). What this does is to develop self-criticism in view of the suggested teacher inadequacies as suggested by education policy. Teachers with high levels of self-criticism are "at risk for developing negative affectivity when they perceive that they are not meeting...the high standards" (Besser & Priel, 2010:170) as demanded by education policy.

It can be noted here that unwilling and strategic compliance would usually be employed in a deceptive manner for the teachers to escape sanction (Vahasantanen & Etelapelto, 2009). Display of emotions will be strategic, in which too strong emotions are not declared and are camouflaged by up-regulating (faking) positive and down-regulating (hiding) negative emotions (Taxer & Frenzel, 2015; Schutz et al., 2007; Zembylas, 2005). Non-verification of

policy-projected teacher images can severely curtail teaching and learning when teachers sulk on day ends. After all, clocking-in-clocking-out does not guarantee teacher commitment.

#### **7.4 Teacher identity through teacher supervision**

Teacher supervision, in its most traditional form, has always been about teacher improvement. Ampofo et al. (2019:11) note that instructional supervision refers to a cycle of activities between a supervisor and a teacher “targeted at improving classroom performance”. In this regard, the focus is to improve the teaching and learning moments to benefit learners (Nasreen & Shah, 2019; Milton Public Schools, 2015; Marzano et al., 2011). The purpose of teacher supervision is neither to make judgments about the competencies of teachers, nor to control them but, rather, to work cooperatively with them to improve instruction (Hoy & Forsyth, undated). The key concern informing teacher supervision is to achieve both the school’s and students’ achievements by helping teachers to deliver adequately in their role performance (Ampofo et al., 2019). A supervisor, in essence, is a “change agent who is accountable to arrange required resources for the teachers” (Nasreen & Shah, 2019:195) and helps them with suggestions on how to deploy the materials to improve students’ learning. What this means, then, is that the supervisors are better knowledgeable than the supervisee, to allow meaningful contribution of teacher supervision. However, the culture of “efficiency – audit culture – is very ingrained in the system”, altering the spirit of teacher supervision, as noted by participants. The market logic and accountability discourse has tended to give teacher supervision new impetus for consistency with marketized education focus.

Analysis of participants’ views on teacher supervision in Chapter Six revealed that there has been change in the way teacher supervision is being done, especially the spirit behind teacher supervision. All the participants were agreed that, as a principle, teacher supervision was necessary in the academic world. However, most of them were quick to point out that even when supervision was done in the correct spirit that did not mean that the process did not emotionally affect them. By its nature, teacher supervision did affect the supervisee, though with varying degrees. Focus of teacher supervision in the pre-accountability and pre-high stakes education reforms has been different from teacher supervision framed by the market logic discourse. Some participants felt that supervision should help teachers to improve on the teaching of the subject so it benefits both teachers and learners and, therefore, should not be

fault-finding. What this means is that the focus of teacher supervision ought to be the teaching and learning process rather than the teaching person, with a view to making the process productive and beneficial to the learners. In most of participants' teacher-supervision accounts, it was clear that in some cases the motive that drove teacher supervision was fault finding. The majority of participants felt that teacher supervision was subjective, with some supervisors concentrating on faults rather than positives, contrary to the spirit of supervision, a process of building the teacher's craft for enterprising learning engagement. For example, there were narrated cases of heads of schools coming to observe lessons unannounced. Participants felt that in such cases, the supervision seemed to be driven by the desire to 'catch' the teacher off-guard. It is like the supervisor wants to catch the teacher unprepared and, thus, blame the teacher for negligence and lack of preparedness. Clearly, this approach to teacher supervision is framed in the high stakes reforms agenda in which the ultimate cause of learners' failure is the quality of teaching and learning. This is not to say teachers should ever go for lessons unprepared, but that there must be a difference between teacher supervision and auditing teaching. Teacher supervision should prop up the teaching and learning process, whilst auditing should judge what is taking place and what is not for the purpose of justifying the end product. In this case supervision is translated as "keeping an eye on", rather than "to improve teaching and learning situations" (Sudarjat et al., 2015:148). Once teacher supervision is viewed as 'keeping an eye on' teachers, then there is an element of mistrust that hinges on managerialism in a neoliberal system. This is opposed to supervisor as "a change agent" who is accountable to arrange required resources to support teacher growth (Nasreen & Shah, 20019:193). Teacher supervision should be encapsulated in three broad areas, namely, teacher growth in profession knowledge, professional practice and professional engagement (Skourdoumbis, 2018). Any instructional supervision that misses these three broad areas would have missed the mark. Anything in the name of teacher supervision that does not offer support for teacher growth is but a fault-finding audit that thrives on blame-game in which learners' lack of progress is blamed on teachers.

Findings as discussed in Chapter Six clearly show that for teacher supervision to remain focused on its mandate, it must be framed in the correct spirit and should be supported by the environment in which it is carried out. Some participants noted that the current operating environment for teachers makes it difficult for teacher supervision to work as desired.

Participants noted that in an environment where teachers' working conditions are poor, teachers are unlikely to approach supervision positively. Supportive materials were also noted to be a problem, given the volatile social, political and economic conditions characterizing Zimbabwean education. There is also hardly any collaborative support from other stakeholders who should support teaching and learning. Demand for quality teaching and learning was also seen as impossible when other stakeholders are not pulling their weight, e.g. materials availability, high teacher-pupil ratio and teachers' working conditions were mentioned as issues needing urgent attention. By nature, teacher supervision is a tension-filled exercise requiring a positive approach from both the supervisor and the teacher, and should take place in a supportive environment. Most participants were agreed that teacher supervision tends to be artificial and can lead a teacher to self-introspection, trying to justify one's actions. It is for that reason that some participants expressed reservations on the effectiveness of teacher supervision. The view was that there is departure from what normally takes place on a day-to-day basis, with a lot of pretence characterizing the whole process. What creates the problem expressed above is approaching teacher supervision as teacher audit, a 'keeping an eye on the teacher' view, rather than treating it as an informative process to improve teaching and learning. The 'keeping an eye on' approach reduces supervision to a policing tool in which it is carried out to 'catch teachers' who may not be performing. In this case, the spirit is not about helping teachers to grow but, rather, to bring to book those not desirable in the education system. As stated above, once supervision is seen as an audit tool, teacher cooperation becomes difficult. Naturally, teachers become defensive and may choose not to cooperate. Veloo et al. (2013:35) note that "good supervision involves activities that aid, direct and inform teachers of what should be done or have been done and not merely finding faults in the teachers' teaching".

The coupling of teacher supervision and high stakes reforms has also presented a serious problem. Some participants noted how the focus on results has also disempowered the would-be supervisors. As noted elsewhere in this research, emphasis on results has 'forced' teachers to produce the results through different means, including, in some cases, unorthodox means that include drilling and examination cheating. In this case, a supervisor guided by the results movement may choose to concentrate on skills to produce high scores, at the exclusion of holistic education, an aspect that may not sit well with teachers who believe in developing

creativity, criticality, reflectivity and problem-solving skills in learners. In the same vein, it becomes equally problematic for supervisors to supervise teachers who have been producing high test scores (whether by hook or crook). Such teachers may be regarded as good teachers, possibly being labelled the best in their subject areas. Such teachers may develop an ego, making it difficult for teacher supervision, since the school already regards them as good teachers who are doing well in their work. This problem generally affects internal supervision more than external. It can be noted that teachers' imaginings on why they are supervised influences their teacher identity, thereby affecting their teaching. Teachers' imaginings open many possibilities, destabilizing teachers' imaging of self as teachers affecting their teaching.

As observed elsewhere in this research, the purpose of teacher supervision is for supervisors to work cooperatively with teachers to improve instruction (Hoy & Forsyth, undated). The authors further note that the goal of supervisors is not simply to help teachers solve immediate problems, but also to engage with teachers in the study of the process of teaching and learning. In cases as discussed above where teachers have been producing high scores, their attitude could be that they have nothing new to learn and, therefore, may have a negative view to supervision. The other side of the same situation is that the would-be supervisor may not feel comfortable to supervise such teachers, possibly owing to an 'all-knowing attitude from such teachers'. This explains participants' concerns that in such cases teacher supervision has not been easy, with Heads of Departments sometimes excusing themselves, claiming to have their hands-full with their own work that they could not create time for teacher supervision.

Some participants also narrated cases where they had both Education Officers and Public Service Inspectors coming to the same school in the same week, with both groups wanting to supervise and inspect the same teachers. This tends to present a picture of uncoordinated work itineraries that, at best, can be termed chaotic, reaffirming the claim by participants that the raft of policies are ways of policing them. What this does is to create teacher supervision fatigue and exhaustion, confirming participants' teacher prisoner-image where teachers are at the mercy of education policy. What this confirms is that the process in such cases has "little to do with improving teaching quality or enhancing student empowerment" (Heaney & Mackenzie, 2017:2). The authors further note that "control *demand*s supervision...for rewards and punishments to be always possible" (p.8). Through teachers' imaginings, the image of

helplessness frustrates teachers, creating a low opinion of self as teachers and that affects their teaching processes, as already discussed.

### **7.5 Teachers' imaginings of self as teachers and their teaching**

Teachers' imaginings of education policy in the context of education reform agenda create varied teacher dispositions. As discussed earlier in this chapter, imaginings is a conceptual process that explains how the mind produces meanings of social phenomena through psychological processes. According to Shields (2016), imagination produces mental images that are sometimes false. Imagination is the creativity of the mind that is, however, based on what one thinks obtains or is reason why certain things happen the way they do. Imagination is initiated by either desire for something different or an aversion to the given state of things caused by the blocking of successful activity (Dewey, 1916, in Sailors, 2019). Imaginings are a source for dispositions which are in their own right "a theoretical concept and a working tool to assist in understanding the particular orientation (thinking and action) of people" (Skourdombis, 2018:3). Dispositions are tendencies for individuals to act in a particular manner under particular circumstances based on their beliefs (Villegas, 2007, in Skourdombis, 2018).

For teachers, the struggle revolves around making sense of their work as teachers operating in particular environments. Questions such as: 'What does it mean to be a teacher in these difficult times? What kind of a teacher am I? What knowledge, skills and values are desirable? What pedagogies work best to achieve what is desired? What alternatives are there?' (Down, 2006), become critical and overarching for teachers operating in the kinds of environments that obtain in the 21<sup>st</sup> century societies. The contradictory nature of whether to educate for economic expedience or for democracy and social justice sets teachers' imaginings revolving as they try to balance that with their own personal beliefs. In trying to resolve this contradiction, teachers have to also contend with the question of what pedagogies would work best to achieve the desired end. Although some teachers may desire to teach for democracy and social justice, the pressure from learners and parents, as well as government, cannot be ignored at this point. What this means is that teachers must either chose between the two perceptions of education or strike a balance in which the learners fulfil their dreams. Through their imaginings, teachers must contend with these contradictions. Their choices on how to teach

will depend on the decisions they eventually make regarding what they see as constituting worth education for their setting. Within this process is the question of what kind of teacher one eventually becomes, given what obtains on the ground. Central to their decisions is what kind of teacher identities they finally choose to go along with.

Where teachers decide to establish “the market as the patron of educational reform”, they would then have to contend with “the politics of fear [*and*] vulnerability” (Down, 2006:38) that goes with it. As discussed earlier, within this paradigm teachers are consistently threatened with sanction if they fail to produce high test scores in their learners. The teacher’s image, in this case, is unstable and operates on the brink constantly threatened with punishment. The teacher’s identity becomes fragile and vulnerable, lacking conviction, fragile and vulnerable because it would not be constructed out of a strong conviction that the teacher is doing what is right, also fragile and vulnerable because when they drill learners for examinations, teachers are aware that they are propping a system in which the undeserving are certificated as high performers. Disparity between educating for the market and for democracy and social justice can result in reimagining teachers and teaching. Market logic-inspired education reforms result in teachers feeling powerlessness, disappointment, frustration, disillusionment, fear, anger and guilt (Katsuno, 2012), especially where working conditions are poor, coupled with poor salaries, all of which foster low morale among teachers (ADEA, 2012). In such a case teaching becomes a duty rather than a calling. Referring to teachers in Zimbabwe, the then Minister of Education, Sport and Culture submitted to Parliament that “It must be understood...that teachers operate under very difficult circumstances” (Parliament of Zimbabwe, Thursday, 21 November 2013). As Griffiths (2014:117) notes, teaching is “an extraordinarily complex activity” especially as it takes place in “teaching contexts [*that*] are in a continual state of change”. The pressure from education reforms exerts greater effect on the teacher’s identity, simultaneously altering teaching and learning.

It can be noted, at this point, that beyond the physical environment that affects the work of the teacher, the psychological terrain is even much more devastating for teacher identity. As Giroux (1985:20, in Skourdumbis, 2018:106) notes, the rhetoric of a failing education system has caused education reformers to implement policies “that further erode the power teachers have over the conditions of their work, while simultaneously proposing that administrators and

teachers look outside their schools for improvements and needed reforms”. The fact that the neoliberal state has continuously charged that teachers and their schools are responsible for learners’ lack of progress, the public, having heard the message from “so many sources, it has begun to believe it” (Wright, 2020:105). By nature, when teachers are blamed for failing students, through their imaginings, they begin to re-evaluate themselves with a view to either exonerating themselves or taking the blame and seeing selves as unfit for purpose. The malfunction of teacher imaging of self as teachers and their teaching has been heightened by side-lining teachers’ participation and contribution to education policy development, side-tracking them to implementers of other people’s ideas. Education reforms, having painted the teacher in a rogue colour, suggest that teachers and the school should look outside their school for solutions. The solutions are in the form of external supervisions and inspections which, as discussed earlier, further devastates teacher identity and influences teaching. In this case teacher supervision and inspections are modelled along the high stakes reform agenda in which the teacher is placed at the altar of sacrifice. This is a case of blaming the victim for being a victim. Teachers’ supervision and inspections were seen by policy makers as part of the solutions, among others, to fix the flailing education, failing teachers and in-effective teaching. Clearly, non-negotiated education reforms influence teachers to re-image self as teachers and their teaching.

Commenting on teacher supervision and inspections as outlined above, Roberts-Holmes (2015) and Head (2016) note that the processes exert pressure for teachers to meet performance targets, creating a lot of anxiety, stress and fear of dismissal on the part of teachers. The process affects teacher dispositions highlighting the representation of teachers in education policy (Skourdoumbis, 2018). As Moore and Clarke (2016:669) further note, the affective structures found in education policies and standards are “recast as a particular managerial *discourse*”, which is about re-imaging teaching practices towards performance-oriented pedagogical boundaries. What this means is that through teachers’ imaginings, teacher dispositions are initiated, with the result that teachers’ imaging of self as teachers and their teaching is affected.

The discussion above has shown that there are a couple of reasons why teachers feel vulnerable during high stakes education reforms. Teachers’ lack of full control of their work environment

tends to frustrate them. Lack of meaningful decision making and autonomy in teaching and learning frustrates teachers. Their decision can be vetoed by education policy-makers. Teachers' inability to convince all and sundry that teaching and learning also depend on other sectors, including the very government that labels them as ineffective, ought to play critical and supportive roles. When teachers feel boxed and helpless, self-criticism sets in. Besser and Priel (2010) say that individuals with high levels of Self-Criticism are "at risk for developing negative affectivity" when they think, as education policy would have them believe, they are not meeting the standards. The dichotomy between teachers' pedagogical beliefs, together with their known theories of teaching and learning, and the suggested rote teaching and learning proffered by the high stakes education reforms (Kavanagh & Fisher-Ari, 2017), further heightens teacher's self-criticism, resulting in teacher vulnerability. Clearly, teacher reimagining is influenced by how education policy reform agenda frames them. What reimagining of teachers does is to affect teaching processes, offsetting learners' learning, to which I briefly turn in the penultimate section of this chapter.

#### **7.6 Teachers' dispositions as determinant of learners' learning**

In this part of the research, I hone-home the effect of teacher reimagining on the learner and learning. Analysis and discussion of results in Chapters Five and Six, as well as in this chapter, revealed the different ways selected education reforms affect teacher identity, as noted by participants. Teachers' dispositions have ripple effects on classroom engagements.

The ultimate influence of teacher reimagining instigated by education policy reforms is noted for its cascading effect on teaching and learning. As already shown elsewhere in this research, as social beings, teachers' imaginings generate dispositions that affect their (teachers') agency. Kavanagh and Fisher-Ari (2017:1) note that "education policies manifest in specific and profound ways in teachers' daily, lived experiences, shaping...teachers' identity, beliefs and efficacy". The perspectives of nine participants that were examined in this research catalogued how the examined education reform climate socialized and oppressed teachers from various layers of influence "resulting in permeated macro-transgressions" (p.1) that, in most cases, negatively impacted their (teacher) identities. Most participants noted that the education policy measures under review led to 'teachers grumbling affecting their morale and participation in the classroom as well'. They further noted that 'most teachers were no longer dedicated like

before because it is no longer the teaching they used to know and that the focus on the learner is no longer there’.

Analysis of findings regarding the focus of results-driven curriculum revealed that the tendency is to narrow the curriculum offered to learners in schools. Performance Management System and the Result-Based Management tend to shift the focus of teaching and learning, reducing them to a set of skills that must be achieved. Rather than supporting pedagogical exploration or creating conditions for the empowerment of students and teachers, such policies support what Heaney and Mackenzie (2017:1) refer to as “the precarisation and casualization” of both. In this regard, the function of teachers is reduced to transmitting skills to students (Heaney, 2015), instead of developing creativity, criticality, reflectivity and problem-solving abilities. OECD

(<https://gpseducation.oecd.org/revieweducationpolicies/#!node=41728&filter=all>, downloaded 30/10/2021) notes that, the single most important factor in schools that impacts student learning, is teaching. What this shows is that the work of the teachers is increasingly being repositioned towards narrow conceptions of pedagogy and performance, aligning the educative experience with the ability to compete in the knowledge economy (Skourdoumbis, 2018). In this case the narrow curricula impede adaptive teaching practices (Parsons et al., 2018) curtailing what teachers can do as part of the educative process (Skourdoumbis, 2018). As a result, through teachers’ imaginings, their dispositions are affected, leading to teachers’ vulnerability. As argued elsewhere in this research, teachers are confronted with the choice of conformity or resistance in their practice (Hennesey & Macnamara, 2013). If teachers choose to comply, learners and learning are reduced to “sites of human capital” (Heaney, 2015:301) rather than classrooms being viewed as laboratories where teachers and learners experiment and develop creativity, criticality, reflectivity and problem-solving. Alternatively, teachers may resist the imposed narrow curriculum, with the risk of being censured, leading to open conflict and altering teacher identity along the way. Devastated teacher identities will certainly affect learners and learning as teachers may simply disengage or engage in ‘silent’ resistance.

Contested teacher inspection, teacher supervision and PMS/RBM ratings can easily lead to teacher emotional vulnerability, causing teacher despondency. In such cases, teachers find themselves flooded by mandates “that require them to perform tasks” that do not merit their

expertise (Wright, 2020:106). In this age of audit, education policy conceptualizations of teacher performance dispositions and effectiveness curtail the educative teaching dispositions of teachers, but in the process distorting the educative process (Skourdoumbis, 2018). The educative potential of teaching is about creating a capacity for making meaningful connections between intellectual and technical, with respect for learning as a “dynamic, reconstructive, complex and personal process” that should be largely free of external influences that are geared towards audit processes (p.11). OECD (2019:5) notes that students need support “in developing not only knowledge and skills but also attitudes and values, which can guide them towards ethical and responsible actions”. In the same vein, learners need opportunities to develop their creativity to propel them towards a more fulfilling future. Education reforms that curtail teacher performance disposition, as shown by participants in this research, endanger learners’ progress. Teacher performance dispositions centre on what a teacher can actively do in a classroom to enhance student achievement (Skourdoumbis, 2018). Teacher performance dispositions regenerate the teacher moral agency in which there is a reconstruction of the moral teacher identity that reconfigures teaching practices that reinforce a transactional relationship between teachers and learners.

Teacher monitoring through the clocking registers instituted by education policy reforms have led to negative dispositions to which teacher vulnerability was noted. This has led, in some cases, to open conflict between teachers and administrators. In other cases, this has resulted in teachers embarking on silent resistance. As noted in analysing and discussing findings, when teachers feel they are being forced to implement programs they do not believe in, one way or the other they find ways of ‘pushing back’. Learners are the ultimate losers when teachers react to teacher reimagining by education policy, as teachers sometimes use the learners as cannon-fodder to prove that imposed reforms do not work. With teachers losing their teacher autonomy in the classroom through accountability measures, which serve to de-skill them, the self-fulfilling prophecy becomes fulfilled in that teachers would sacrifice learners with very little conscience. This perception is vindicated by participants’ reports that ‘teachers are resisting’ and are ‘fighting back’ against education policy mandates. Some participants reported that some teachers log-in but would still not go to class to teach. Other ways of resistance are to approach teaching with a view to proving that education mandates that do not consult teachers are bound to fail. For some of the teachers, owing to their negative dispositions to education

mandates, they have completely abandoned the moral teacher image, making teaching and learning careless business in which they care less about the outcome. As OECD (2019:109) notes that, “many accountability measures strip teachers of [*their autonomy*] effectively de-skilling them”, with occasions of directly contradicting what teachers believe to be best. Teachers who try to stand in the way of the standardized curriculums and assessments are viewed, and indeed labelled, as incompetent (Giroux, 2010). Clearly, reducing teachers to just implementers with no input in policy development creates an amalgam of negative teacher images which prove to be counter-productive to learner progress. All things being equal, teachers would prefer situations where, rather than learners being acted upon by the education system, they “become active participants and change agents in the system alongside teachers and...are learning to be responsible for their own learning” (OECD, 2019:13). As the author further notes,

Students need support in developing not only knowledge and skills but also attitudes and values, which can guide them towards ethical and responsible actions. At the same time, they need opportunities to develop their creative ingenuity to help propel humanity towards a bright future (OECD, 2019:5).

Clearly, education policy-initiated teacher identities affect learners and learning. Observations above call for teachers and policy developers of the moral and ethical importance of “a person-centred education that eschews prescribed curricula and standardized learning” (Skourdumbis, 2019:5) in preference for professional judgment of teachers in crafting educative potential tailored to suit specific learners. From this perspective, education is no longer about teaching students something but, rather, helping them to develop “a compass and the navigation tools” (OECD, 2019:5) for learners to find their own ways in an increasingly complex, volatile and uncertain world. Where teachers develop a negative self-image, this influences the ways in which they interact with learners, thus affecting learning.

## **7.7 Conclusion**

In this chapter, I discussed how education policy reforms influence teacher identity and, in turn, how that affects learners and learning. The discussion revealed that the performance management systems employed tended to narrow the curriculum, resulting in impoverished curriculum for learners. The role that the policy assigned to teachers redefined teacher imaging

of self as teachers in ways that affect learners' learning. The practical education registers were viewed as policing documents that victimized teachers, resulting in devastated teacher images. The discussion revealed that teachers either conformed to, or rebelled against, education policy directives influencing the way they view themselves as teachers and their teaching. Teacher supervision was seen as affecting teachers' dispositions, resulting in teacher identity reconstruction, thereby affecting teaching and learning. By and large, education reforms were seen to influence how teachers perceived self as teachers, affecting their commitment to teaching and to their learners. The next chapter now focuses on conclusions and implications of the research.

## ***CHAPTER EIGHT*** **SUMMARIES, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **8.1 Overview**

In this chapter, I summarize research findings in relationship to research questions that were stated in Chapter One. Based on the findings as discussed in Chapters Five and Six, as well as the summaries made in this chapter, the research makes a conclusion in relationship to the statement of the problem presented in Chapter One. In this chapter, I also outline the contributions this research makes with regard to how education policy influences teacher imaging and teaching. Strengths and limitations of the research are briefly outlined, followed by implications of the study in relation to education policy, teachers and teaching. Suggestions for future research are also given in this chapter. The chapter synchronizes the whole research, with a view to further understanding of how, if any, education policy influences teachers' perceptions of self as teachers and with what effect on their teaching and learners' learning.

### **8.2 Summary of findings**

In this part of the research, I summarize research findings in relationship to research questions that were set out in Chapter One. My focus is to show how the results eventually answered the stated questions, to allow me to make a conclusion as to whether or not selected education policy within the Zimbabwe education reform agenda influences teachers' imaging of self as teachers and their teaching practices. To understand the meanings that education policy-makers insinuate and how teachers interpreted them, one needs to take cognizance of the environment that shapes meanings.

In discussing the background environment to the enactment of the said education policy, the analysis revealed that the narrative of 'poor results' in Zimbabwean education was a precursor to a raft of education reforms, supposedly meant to prop the quality of education. The rhetoric of failing education and that teachers and their teaching are to blame has been marketed to the unsuspecting public that has begun to believe it, further eroding teachers' control over their work as teachers (Skourdumbis, 2018; Wright, 2020). As feeling-beings, when teachers are blamed for failing students, through their imaginings, they begin to re-evaluate themselves, with a view to either exonerating themselves or taking the blame and seeing selves as unfit for purpose. As noted elsewhere in this research, many accountability measures enacted in education stripped teachers of their autonomy, effectively de-skilling them and contradicting

what teachers value as teaching. When teachers analyse phenomena using their personal interpretive framework, the process incorporates teacher imaginings that are based on how individuals make sense of the said phenomenon. Imaginings is a process of imaging and, therefore, sets off dispositions.

### ***8.2.1 How do selected education policies image teachers within the education reform agenda of Zimbabwe?***

Analysis and discussion of results in Chapters Five, Six and Seven revealed that education policy makers see a direct relationship between education and the economy. As such, the failure of the economy is linked directly to the nature of the teacher. A neoliberal educational view is that the functionality of the economy reflects directly the teacher and school output. In other words, the quality of the teacher is seen as the most significant factor in learner achievement. In other words, when education policy-makers spread the ‘failing education narrative’, in subtle ways they are imaging teachers as ineffectual, “incompetent [*or simply lazy*] teachers” (Ball, 2007:125). In short, the failing education system is a direct reflection on the impoverished pedagogy offered by teachers. This explains the utterances like, ‘Education is in crises. Blame quality of teaching in Zimbabwe’ (Henson, 2013), ‘poor education standards attributed to unsatisfactory teacher performance and commitment’ (PCIET, 1999), ‘teachers were blamed for lack of dedication to their jobs’ (Ncube, 2013). Couched in these evaluative statements are, in fact, teacher images in which they are seen as ineffectual, ineffective or simply lazy and uncaring.

As discussed elsewhere in the research, what the neoliberal and neo-colonial government aims to achieve by painting teachers in this way is to absolve itself from blame for collapse of the economy owing to some of its policies and, therefore, abrogate its responsibilities to society. Interestingly, the ‘teacher is to blame narrative’ will not dwell much on other stakeholders who would be equally to blame if indeed the standards are poor and that includes government itself. The failing learner narrative conversely paints an image of failing teachers who need ‘some fixing’ in the name of education reforms. To fix the flailing economy, therefore, means ‘fixing’ the negative-some image of the teacher through education reforms such as the result-based teaching to streamline the pedagogy, clocking registers to fix the errant teacher who has ‘propensity to cheat’, and teacher supervision to audit and monitor classroom activities. In short, education policy images teachers negatively.

### ***8.2.2 Why do government secondary school teachers in Zimbabwe image themselves the way they do during education policy reforms?***

The process of teachers' imaging of self as teachers is a function of teacher imaginings instigated by social phenomena. Analysis and discussion of findings in Chapters Five and Six revealed that identity construction can be influenced by our imagination regarding what we think is being said about us. Imagination and imaginings are a significant part of the human experience and an integral part of what it means to be human (Sailors, 2018; Heath, 2008). Imagination remains largely a reproductive rather than a productive activity, a servant rather than a master of meaning, regardless of whether the meanings prove true or false at the end (Sailors, 2018; Shields, 2016). Imagination and imaginings serve meanings and are generative of identities with a multiplicative ability, depending on the amount and nature of dispositions aroused.

Enactment of the clocking register system in schools communicated meanings to teachers. For teachers, the institutionalization of the clocking registers means that teachers are suspected to be potential cheats and, therefore, must be policed to ensure they work. Clearly, education policy uses subtle ways to make a statement. Given such interpretations, teachers are bound to respond to such imaging in different ways. Analysis of participants' narratives revealed that 'teachers were resisting and fighting back'. As reported by some participants, some teachers would sign the registers but still not attend lessons. Naturally, teachers do not like being forced to do things. Focus on producing high test scores and developing human capital skills was also viewed as a process of teacher imaging. By reorienting the pedagogy, teachers read that to mean that their ways of teaching are inadequate and, therefore, there must be fixed education policy to produce desired results. For teachers, this means that the way they have been teaching is inadequate. Teacher supervision equally images teachers in different ways. Commenting on teacher supervision and inspections, as outline above, Roberts-Holmes (2015) and Head (2016) note that the processes exerts pressure for teachers to meet performance targets, creating a lot of anxiety, stress and fear of dismissal on the part of teachers. The process affects teacher dispositions, highlighting the representation of teachers in education policy (Skourdumbis, 2018). As Moore and Clarke (2016:669) further note, the affective structures found in education policies and standards is "recast as a particular managerial

*discourse*” which is about re-imagining teaching practices towards performance-oriented pedagogical boundaries.

In short, the reason why teachers will image self in the manner they do is influenced by the meanings they get as explanation to why education policy prefers to do things in the manner it proposes. Behind each statement or action there is meaning. The nature of dispositions that are generated will determine what meanings we attach to phenomena.

### ***8.2.3 What explains the relationship between the education policy-induced teacher images and their teaching practices?***

What education policy does or says about teachers conversely reflects its attitudes to teachers. The accountability policies that are enacted during education reforms can be viewed as both “cause and effect of ways that teachers understand themselves” (Buchanan, 2015:701). When teachers imagine what policy is saying about them, that influences their actions. The PMS/RBM is a policy that reconfigures education, reducing it to skills that must be developed in learners. The performance system images teachers in certain ways that affect teachers either positively or negatively, depending on the dispositions generated. The rating of key result plans adds to the dimension of teacher identity construction, with teachers set to imagine who they really are. The final rating of the teacher tells a story about the attitude that the administrators have of their teachers. The analysis of participants’ narratives revealed the emotional nature of the process where, in cases, conflict has been unavoidable. What this shows is that teachers’ professional identity is “formed and re-formed constantly over the course of a career and mediated by complex interplay of personal, professional and political dimensions of teachers’ lives” (Mockler, 2011:518). The identities that are generated carve out professional agency in different ways, depending on the nature of teacher dispositions developed. Teachers make and remake themselves by “drawing on their current self-conceptions and then acting in ways that seek to match those self-conceptions” (Buchanan, 2015:705).

Analysis and discussion of education policy-initiated teacher identity, as discussed in Chapters Six and Seven, reviewed teacher identity to assess the interplay of how teachers are shaped by reform contexts and discourses, as well as how they, in turn, resist and negotiate in order to create a place for themselves in both their schools and the current national policy and reform climate (Buchanan, 2015). Where teachers experience negative emotions as a result of teacher

reimagining, they may react negatively, affecting their teaching practices. Moreover, teachers are unsettled with education policy that paints them negatively for learners' lack of progress when they know that other stakeholders, including government itself, are not playing their part, like providing material support. As noted in analysing participants' narratives, some of them talked contradictorily about their negativity to teaching focused on high stakes teaching in preference to holistic education, but spoke glowingly about their learners who passed the high stakes tests. In such cases teacher agency may not be clearly expressed.

#### ***8.2.4 How does education policy's imaging of teachers and their teaching influence teachers' own construction of self as teachers and their teaching?***

Teacher identity instigated by education policy affects the way teachers image self as teachers and their teaching. The perceptions that teachers have of self as teachers is shaped by how education policy views them. Education policy's imaging of teachers creates emotional responses from teachers as they try to understand who they really are. Teachers react in different ways to education policy imaging of teachers, depending on the nature of emotions that are generated. Zeal or lack of it depends on the emotions that are aroused. Some teachers may sulk all the way to class, treating teaching as a duty rather than a moral act. In view of education policy mandates, teachers may resist and fight back, as reported by participants. Teachers may feel vulnerable when education policy reform mandates seek to change them from who they believe they are. When teachers feel vulnerable, they may do things to please administration. In this case they may engage in strategic deployment of emotions by down-regulating them to pretend that they share the same vision with administrators or education policy-makers.

When teachers have high levels of self-criticism, they are at risk for developing negative affectivity (Besser & Priel, 2010) when they think, as education policy would have them believe, they are not meeting the desired standards. Certainly, education policy's imaging of teachers affects how teachers eventually image self as teachers and their teaching.

### **8.3 Conclusion**

This research examined the influence of selected education policy's imaging of teachers and their teaching on teachers' own identity construction of self as teachers and their teaching. Teacher identity in this research is taken to mean "the set of meanings that define who one is

when one” occupies a particular role position in society like being a teacher (Burke & Stets, 2009:3). Examining education-policy-initiated teacher identity allowed me to “highlight the power of emotions, personal beliefs and context” in shaping teachers’ perceptions of self and their teaching (Olsen, 2012:1123). My interest was to understand teachers’ interpretations of, and emotional response to, selected education policy directives and how these eventually influence how teachers carry out their teaching. Teachers’ identity construction, as discussed in this research, is a function of emotions which are an outcome of one’s dispositions. Understanding teachers’ dispositions, therefore, becomes a vital component that affects classroom practice in different ways.

This research confirms that dispositions arouse emotions affecting teacher pedagogy, thereby influencing learning. Teachers’ emotions affect teacher-learner, teacher-administrator or teacher-parent relationships, thereby influencing how teachers eventually dispense their duties as teachers. In addition, teacher emotions can influence teaching pedagogy in various ways, depending on the nature of emotions one experiences. Emotions can either be positive or negative. This research argues that the meanings that teachers attach to education policy mandates influence how they view self as teachers and that, in turn, affects their teaching. My interest in this research was to understand Zimbabwean government secondary school teachers’ interpretations of, and emotional response to, the PMS/RBM, clocking registers and teacher supervision. Based on the results as discussed, this research concludes that the meanings that teachers attached to the selected education policies influenced the way teachers imaged self and that affected their teaching practices.

#### **8.4 Contributions of the study**

This research contributes to the existing body of knowledge in several ways. The major contribution is that education policy, in subtle ways, influences how teachers image self as teachers and that, in turn, affects their work as teachers. For instance, when policy makers opted to legislate PMS/RBM as the focus of education in Zimbabwe, teachers understood that to mean that the way they had been teaching was viewed as inadequate. Teachers, having been inducted to the teacher as moral agent during their training and in their teaching in the past, had problems in switching to the new requirement, as they were nostalgic about their past. They saw the move as undermining their contribution in shaping learners’ ‘knowing’ and academic

growth. Teachers were, therefore, torn between the new mandates and their valued ways of teaching, resulting in them being emotionally maladjusted. What this implies is that introduction of any new education policy must be preceded, and indeed informed by rigorous research that seriously assesses user-community's concerns. Success of policy hinges heavily on the way implementers view the suggested changes.

Another major contribution of this research is on the meanings that teachers attached to the use of the clocking register system employed in Zimbabwean schools. There has not been any published research in Zimbabwe (to the knowledge of this researcher) on the use (and in some cases, abuse) as well as the impact of the clocking register system on teachers' self-image and teaching. The research established that teachers viewed the clocking system as a way of unnecessarily policing them, taking away their autonomy, thus de-skilling and de-professionalising them in the process (Phakati, 2014; Giroux, 2010). The research noted the apparent contradiction of setting times for teachers to report for duty and knock-off time, disregarding the fact that teachers continue working into the night at home, marking learners work, planning for the following day's classes or researching for their teaching in general. Research findings revealed that the meanings teachers attached to selected education policies were that teachers were being imaged as potential cheats who care less for learners unless otherwise forced to. This way of viewing teachers was seen to be antagonizing them, resulting in their rebelling and fighting back against the said education policies. This research also established that there was neither prior research informing the policies, nor determination of the extent and impact of how the phenomenon affected the progress of learners in Zimbabwean schools (ADEA, 2015). This research, thus, makes a strong case for any intended education policy change to seriously think through the impact it would have on both teachers and learners. The focus should always be material improvement on learners' learning, the bona fide of education the world over.

On another note, the findings on teacher supervision carried out in politically, socially and economically unstable conditions adds to the existing body of knowledge on how the process influence teacher imaging. The research established that people generally do not want to be forced to do things against their will. When this happens, teachers employ unwilling and strategic compliance in very deceptive manner for them to escape sanctions (Vahasantanen &

Etelapelto, 2009). The research discovered that teachers employed up-regulating (faking) positive attitudes and down-regulating (hiding) negative emotions (Taxer & Frenzel, 2015) to escape censure. The problem noted with this is that no corrective measure can be taken because there is no declaration of a problem. There would be pretence and, therefore, contrary views are recorded, thus not warranting a relook at the said issues.

By and large, the research established that education policy's imaging of teachers does influence ways in which teachers view themselves. More importantly, the research revealed that there is a kin relationship between how teachers view self as teachers and their actual classroom practices. What all this points to is that when embarking on education policy development it is essential to include teachers throughout the process, from policy development to policy implementation. Education policy that requires teachers for its implementation but side-lines them during policy development is bound to fail because teachers have different ways of fighting against policy they do not agree with. Education policy development should, therefore, rope in teachers to ensure they buy into the ideas for successful implementation.

The research contributes in expanding knowledge on theorising identity construction in education. The current research established that education policies do not simply reflect teacher identity, but reshapes it in varying degrees. It is important to understand how the new ways of seeing self as teachers eventually affect how they dispense their duties. Each of the images that are created will either positively or negatively affect the way teachers perceive self and that in turn influences the way they will dispense their duties as teachers. When teachers view education policy as out 'to fix them', they naturally become defensive. The destabilised images evoke a spirit of resistance negatively affecting their output as teachers. Education change that antagonises teachers is viewed in the realm of 'a physical war in which survival hinges on strategies for survival'. In a war, the moral fibre is lost and in its place an uncaring beast exists. In such cases we cannot pretend but acknowledge the severity of the 'struggle' as this has severe effect on the learner. A whole nation would be at risk to say the least. In addition, the research has also revealed that the operating environment contributes a lot in shaping and influencing teachers' interpretations of enacted education policies.

### **8.5 Strengths and limitations of the study**

One of the strengths of this research is that it brings out the link between teacher identity and classroom practice. The research examined the influence of selected education policies' imaging of teachers on teachers' own imaging of self as teachers and their teaching. The aim was to show the close connection between what policy does on teachers and how that cascades to learners. The results have shown that there is a kin relationship which, conversely, also means that the positives that government does on, and for, teachers, will eventually cascade to learners. The research advocates that education policy process should be all-inclusive to ensure that all suspicions are ironed out right at the onset of the policy process.

The research also brought together the identity theory, education policy and the personal interpretive framework to explain how teachers made sense of education policy and teacher identities it projected. Teacher dispositions caused by the meanings that teachers deduced from education policy were linked to the eventual emotions that teachers felt which in some cases resulted in teacher vulnerability.

The research also discussed the role that the environment played in teachers' meaning-making process. The nature of the environment that prevailed was shown to have a bearing on the meanings teachers derive from education policy. The environment was, thus, seen as key in shaping and understanding identity construction and how the identities are eventually understood by others.

This research also noted that education policy, once enacted, needs to be evaluated from time-to-time to ensure it still serves the purpose that it was meant for. Lack of such evaluation allows the system to keep in place policies that have lost their essence and at times that are counter-productive to what they were meant for.

One weakness noted in this research is lack of learner voice on the effect of education policy-induced teacher identity. Learner voices and experiences in this regard could add pedigree to what participants said. The research, however, has added a voice regarding the influence that education policy's imaging of teachers have on teachers' imaging of self and their teaching.

## **8.6 Implications on education policy development and implementation**

Based on the findings as discussed in this thesis, the research makes the following observations.

- The process of education policy should be an all-inclusive process that brings together all stakeholders. The process must be open and void of impositions allowing sharing of ideas and debating on points of differences. This allows participants to express their views and also for members to share ideas on the problems necessitating the proposed policy. Such debates allay fears and dispense with suspicions that those involved might have. An all-inclusive education policy development process reduces chances of failure as much as it guarantees palatability of policy to all stakeholders. Wright (2020:105) notes that allowing teachers, the individuals “who specialized in teaching children a voice in educational policy” seems like common sense. It is essential for government to realize that without securing teacher support education policy will not succeed.
- Legislating education policy increases chances of teachers rebelling against such policy as an imposition by policy makers who are removed away from experiencing what it means to be teachers. Naturally, when people are not involved in crafting policies that affect them, they look for ways to discredit such policy to prove their point that it cannot work. Rather, the rational approach to education policy increases chances for success.
- Government and policy makers need to move away from the ‘teacher is to blame’ and ‘unprofessional teachers’ narrative that antagonizes teachers because this only serves to emotionally charge teachers into a defensive mode in which there is no winner. The ultimate impact this has is the negative effect on learners who will be the ultimate losers. There is need to create an environment that enables learning and at the same time giving teachers a voice in educational policy (Berliner & Glass, 2014).
- There is also need to sincerely negotiate and deescalate issues of teachers’ working conditions because, if these are not addressed, they affect education policy implementation. This also includes supportive materials availability for meaningful policy implementation.
- This thesis also notes the need for regular evaluations of implemented education policies to allow adjustments where needed or to disband the policy where it is not achieving the expected outcome. For instance, there has not been any evaluation of the clocking register

system to see whether it is achieving the intended results or not. Its use in schools seems to be ritualistic now than serious business.

- There is also need to assess more truthfully what the performance and accountability movement has achieved in qualitative terms, to escape from the discourse of ‘so many’ to ‘what quality’ because abilities in creativity, criticality, reflectivity and problem-solving are the change agency of the future.

### **8.7 Personal reflections**

This research has been a personal journey into understanding how education policy images teachers and their teaching in subtle ways. The research process allowed me moments to reflect on what some education policies mean for teachers and how they affect learners and learning in the end. Through the research process, I appreciated the way in which education can be subverted for the selfish ends of governments.

### **8.8 Suggestions for further research**

Based on the research process and findings, the following are recommended.

- Future research may need to also consider examining learners’ voices to corroborate teacher participants’ views on the effect of education policy-induced teacher imaging on teachers’ teaching processes.
- Further research could also look at other localities to find out what obtains in those environments.
- It could also be pertinent to explore the phenomenon in a rural set-up.

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- <https://opentextbc.ca/socialpsychology/chapter/defining-social-psychology-history-and-principles/>

## APPENDICES

### Appendix A: Authorisation documents



04 November 2014

**Mr Webster Kadodo 213574122**  
School of Education  
Pietermaritzburg Campus

**Protocol reference number: HSS/1448/014D**  
**Project title: Imaging teachers and their teaching in the context of education reforms in Zimbabwe: linking teacher images to teaching practices**

Dear Mr Kadodo

**Expedited Approval**

In response to your application dated 30 October 2014, the Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee has considered the abovementioned application and the protocol have been granted **FULL APPROVAL**.

**Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment/modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number.**

**Please note: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.**

**The ethical clearance certificate is only valid for a period of 3 years from the date of issue. Thereafter Recertification must be applied for on an annual basis.**

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

Yours faithfully

  
.....  
Dr Shenuka Singh (Chair)

/px

cc Supervisor: Dr TA Mbatha  
cc Co-Supervisor: Professor P Ramrathan  
cc Academic Leader Research: Professor P Morojele  
cc School Administrator: Mr T Mthembu

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Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee



Dr Shenuka Singh (Chair)






Westville Campus, Govan Mbeki Building

Postal Address: Private Bag X54001, Durban 4000

Telephone: +27 (0) 31 260 3587/8350/4557 Facsimile: +27 (0) 31 260 4609 Email: [ximbap@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:ximbap@ukzn.ac.za) / [snvmanm@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:snvmanm@ukzn.ac.za) / [mohunp@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:mohunp@ukzn.ac.za)

Website: [www.ukzn.ac.za](http://www.ukzn.ac.za)

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*all communications should be addressed to  
"The Secretary for Primary and Secondary  
Education  
Telephone: 732006  
Telegraphic address : "EDUCATION"  
Fax:794505*



**REFERENCE:** C/426/3

Ministry of Primary and  
Secondary Education  
P.O Box CY 121  
Causeway  
**HARARE**

20 June 2014

Mr.W. Kadodo  
University of KwaZulu-Natal  
Private Bag X01  
Scottsville 3209  
Republic of South Africa

Re: **PERMISSION TO CARRY OUT RESEARCH AT SELECTED PRIMARY  
SCHOOLS, SECONDARY SCHOOLS AND PROVINCIAL OFFICES IN  
MASVINGO AND GOKWE SOUTH DISTRICTS: MASVINGO AND  
MIDLANDS PROVINCES**

Reference is made to your application to carry out research at **Selected Primary  
Schools, Secondary Schools and Provincial offices in Masvingo and Gokwe  
South Districts:** Masvingo and Midlands Provinces on the title:

**"IMAGING TEACHERS AND TEACHING IN THE PROVISION OF PUBLIC  
EDUCATION IN ZIMBABWE"**

Permission is hereby granted. However, you are required to liaise with the Provincial  
Education Directors, Masvingo and Midlands Provinces, who are responsible for the  
schools which you want to involve in your research.

You are also required to provide a copy of your final report to the Secretary for  
Primary and Secondary Education by 16 December 2016.



M. I. Madzinga  
Acting Director: Policy Planning, Research and Development  
For: **SECRETARY FOR PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION**

*ALL communications should be addressed to  
"The Provincial Education Director for  
Primary and Secondary Education"*  
**Telephone: 263585/264331**  
**Fax: 039-263261**



Ref: P/Kadodo Webster  
Ministry of Primary and Secondary  
Education  
P. O Box 89  
Masvingo

09 January 2015

The Head

Victoria High School  
Ndarama High School  
Mucheke High School

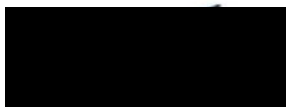
**RE: PERMISSION TO CARRY OUT AN EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH IN THE  
SECONDARY SCHOOLS MENTIONED ABOVE IN MASVINGO DISTRICT:  
KADODO WEBSTER: UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU NATAL**

The above matter refers.

Mr Kadodo Webster, a student at University of Kwazulu Natal has been granted permission to carry out research on the above mentioned High Schools in Masvingo District on,

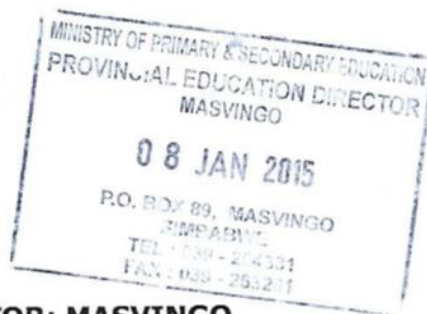
**"IMAGING TEACHERS AND TEACHING IN THE PROVISION OF PUBLIC  
EDUCATION IN ZIMBABWE ".**

Please assist him where ever possible.



Z. M. Chitiga

**PROVINCIAL EDUCATION DIRECTOR: MASVINGO**



## Appendix B: Participants Consent Letter

School of Education  
University of KwaZulu-Natal  
P Bag X01  
Scottsville  
Pietermaritzburg Campus, 3209  
South Africa  
Dear Participant

### INFORMED CONSENT LETTER

My name is Webster Kadodo. I am an Education PhD candidate studying at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg campus, South Africa. I am interested in learning about the effect of teachers' imaging of selves and their teaching in the provision of public education in Zimbabwe. I am studying cases from Masvingo District (in Masvingo Province). Your institution is one of my case studies. To gather the information, I am interested in asking you some questions and/or tell your story regarding the above issues.

Please note that:

- Your confidentiality is guaranteed as your inputs will not be attributed to you in person, but reported only as a population member opinion.
- The interview may last for about 1 hour and may be split depending on your preference.
- Any information given by you cannot be used against you, and the collected data will be used for purposes of this research only.
- Data will be stored in secure storage and destroyed after 5 years.
- You have a choice to participate, not participate or stop participating in the research. You will not be penalized for taking such an action.
- The research aims at knowing the effect of teachers' imaging of selves and their teaching in the provision of public education in Zimbabwe.
- Your involvement is purely for academic purposes only, and there are no financial benefits involved.
- If you are willing to be interviewed/give your narrative, please indicate (by ticking as applicable) whether or not you are willing to allow the interview to be recorded by the following equipment:

	willing	Not willing
Audio equipment		
Photographic equipment		
Video equipment		

I can be contacted at:

Email: [kadodoweb@yahoo.com](mailto:kadodoweb@yahoo.com); [webkadodo@gmail.com](mailto:webkadodo@gmail.com)

Cell: +27847555690 (South Africa) or +263776294721 (Zimbabwe).

My supervisor is Dr. Thabile Mbatha who is located at the School of Education, Pietermaritzburg campus of the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

Contact details: email: [mbathath@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:mbathath@ukzn.ac.za) Phone number: +27332605501.

My Co-supervisor is Prof Labby Ramrathan  
School of Education, Edgewood campus,  
University of KwaZulu-Natal  
(Tel) +27312608065, Email: [ramrathanp@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:ramrathanp@ukzn.ac.za)

Research Office contact details.  
HSSREC Research Office  
Ms P Ximba  
(Tel) +2731 260 3587  
Email: [ximbap@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:ximbap@ukzn.ac.za)

Thank you for your contribution to this research.

**Appendix C: Proof of Editing Letter**



**Great Zimbabwe University**

**Department of Curriculum Studies**

**PO Box 1235**

**Masvingo**

**Zimbabwe**

**16 January 2022**

**Email: [rmareva@gzu.ac.zw](mailto:rmareva@gzu.ac.zw)/ [marevarugare@gmail.com](mailto:marevarugare@gmail.com)**

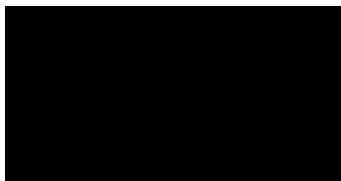
**Cell: +263 772 978 970**

**TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN**

**Re: Proof of Editing Webster Kadodo's Doctoral Thesis**

**This is to certify that I, Prof. Rugare Mareva (National Identity Number 22-101 400 K 22), have edited Webster Kadodo's Doctoral thesis titled: *'Zimbabwean teachers' imaging of self and their teaching practices in the context of education reforms'*, to be submitted to University of KwaZulu-Natal. I am a holder of a PhD (English) (University of Venda), M.Ed (English) (University of Zimbabwe), B.Ed (English) (University of Zimbabwe), and a Certificate in Education (English Major) (Gweru Teachers' College).**

**Thank you.**



**Prof. Rugare Mareva (PhD), Language Editor: GZU Policy Documents; Journal of New Vision in Educational Research (JoNVER). Great Zimbabwe University, Department of Curriculum Studies, Masvingo, Zimbabwe**

**Appendix D: Turn-it-in Report**

**Thesis**

**by Webster Kadodo**

**Submission date: 17-Mar-2022 03:32PM (UTC+0200)**

**Submission ID: 1786341928**

**File name: KADODO\_THESIS\_EDITED\_pdf.pdf (5.22M)**

**Word count: 90553**

**Character count: 514864**

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**SIMILARITY INDEX**

**15%**

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**6%**

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## **Appendix E: Data collection instruments**

### **Sample of questions that were used to initiate participants' narratives on selected education policy in Zimbabwe**

1. Briefly talk about your decision to become a teacher.
2. How has your school fared in the context of education reforms that were put in place in the education field from 2000?
3. Share with me your personal views and experiences with the education reforms in your school.
4. How has the process influenced your work as a teacher?
5. Tell your story regarding the quality of education in secondary schools.
6. Share with me your philosophy about education and teaching. How does that philosophy work out in the context of reforms?
7. Talk about your experiences regarding the use of the Performance Appraisal Management System and the Results-based Management system as used in your school and in other secondary schools showing how the processes influenced you as a teacher.
8. Share with me how your work is supervised in your school. How and who does the supervision? Share with me the experiences of these moments?
9. Share with me your views about 'teacher accountability' and 'teacher professionalism' in secondary schools.
10. How has professional relationships been shaped in the period of the implementation of the reforms in secondary schools?
11. Share your experiences regarding the relationships between teachers and learners in secondary schools during the implementation of the education reforms.
12. Share your own assessment of the operating environment of education reforms in Zimbabwe.

**Journal Entries**

**Date** .....

**Time** .....

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**Participant's feelings about the occurrence**

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## Appendix F: Education Policy Forms

### GUIDELINES TO THE COMPLETION OF APPRAISAL FORMS

This new form was designed to help you and your subordinate to set detailed work plans on precisely what is expected of the subordinate during the period under review. **Three copies** of this form should be used for each appraisee. The cover page and section 1. (1.1 to 1.4) are to be completed at the beginning of the review period and the rest of the form (except page 3) should be completed at the end of the review period.

It is important to provide feedback on the performance of the subordinate to acknowledge good performance and help to develop them for improved performance. Feedback should therefore contain **both** praise and suggestions for areas that need improvement.

1. The appraiser should review and update the appraisee's job description as required at the beginning of the review period.
2. Extract and agree on Key Result Areas (KRAs) with the appraisee at the beginning of review period and enter them in priority order in column 1.1. KRAs are those elements in the job description that are critical to accomplishing one's job.
3. Set performance objectives related to each KRA and enter them in column 1.2 of the agreed work plan. For each KRA one or more objectives must be set and agreed by both the appraiser and appraisee. Objectives must be **Specific, Measurable, Achievable** (but stretching), focus on **Results** (not activities) and be **Time framed** (SMART) specifying the exact date by which the objective will be achieved (e.g. September 30th, 1999).
4. In column 1.3 write up an agreed action plan (i.e. how the objectives in 1.2 will be achieved). The more comprehensive and the more detailed the action plan, the greater the likelihood of the objectives being achieved. Action plans are the physical means of achieving objectives. They must be agreed by both appraiser and the appraisee.
5. Performance Standards based on these objectives need to be discussed and agreed by both appraiser and appraisee in column 1.4. That is, how will the objective be measured to ensure it was achieved. Specify the **minimum** acceptable standard that the appraiser will accept.
6. The appraiser should give a signed copy of the agreed work plan to the appraisee and the appraiser keeps the other copy until the final appraisal (at the end of the year). After the final appraisal, **a third copy of the completed form** should be signed and forwarded through his/her Head of Department to the Ministry's Principal Establishment Officer (PEO). The Head of Department is expected to summarise the results (on a separate sheet of paper) for all employees of his/her department for the PEO's attention. The PEO will likewise summarise his/her ministry's results along with copies of page 1 of all completed appraisals for the attention of the Public Service Commission.
7. Monitor and review performance on an on-going basis from the period that the work plan is agreed, up to the time that the formal performance appraisal interview is done. Use section 3 to make any adjustments to the work plan. Again both appraiser and appraisee must sign in agreement to the amendments.
8. Have a formal performance review interview at the end of the review period, e.g. at the end of the year, before September 30th. Before this interview, both the appraiser and the appraisee assess the appraisee's performance separately (on blank paper) and bring their assessments to the interview for discussion and agreement. The agreed ratings are placed on all three copies of the form and the forms are signed by both parties.
9. Ensure consistency of ratings between all of the subordinates that you rate. That is, do not over or under-rate one individual's performance based on your personal feelings. Focus on whether the subordinate has achieved **all** of the results expected, that is, if all the objectives have been fully accomplished— then a '4' would be warranted. If all the objectives were accomplished but in addition the subordinate contributed **beyond** expectations and in many other ways to the organisation, then a '5' should be awarded. If less than all the objectives were met but the subordinate met the basic standards agreed at the beginning of the review period then a '3' would be the appropriate score. If, however, the minimal standards have not been met the rating should be a '2'. If the subordinate clearly falls far below the standard then a '1' rating must be assigned.
10. The training that is recommended in section 5 should be derived from the (those) area(s) that the subordinate needs to improve on during the next review period. Obviously, Government cannot afford to train everyone that will need training in one year. So it should be made clear to subordinates that their turn for training may or may not come up during the next period under review. However, it is the appraiser's and the appraisee's duty to try to arrange for the appraisee's required training at the soonest possible time. In the meantime, the supervisor should coach the subordinates on ways to improve their standards.
11. After the final appraisal is completed, each appraisee should immediately draft new work plans (columns 1.1 to 1.4) for next year's appraisal. If a new form is not available at that time, the work plans should nevertheless be drafted on a blank piece of paper (to be redrafted on the forms when they are made available). These work plans should again be agreed and signed by both the appraiser and the appraisee.
12. Finally, the date of the next appraisal/review should be agreed on and that date affixed at item 6.3.

The RBM form

Confidential Heads of Departments (HoD)

PUBLIC SERVICE OF ZIMBABWE

PERSONNEL PERFORMANCE WORK PLAN & APPRAISAL

PERIOD OF ASSESSMENT: FROM: \_\_\_\_\_ TO: \_\_\_\_\_

Distribution - 1 copy to appraisee - 1 copy to the appraisee's personal file

Section 1 PERSONAL DETAILS AND SERVICE PARTICULARS

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

E.C. No \_\_\_\_\_ National I.D. No \_\_\_\_\_

Qualifications: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Experience: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Date of Appointment into

Service: \_\_\_\_\_

Current Post \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Appointment to the Post \_\_\_\_\_

Ministry \_\_\_\_\_

Department \_\_\_\_\_ Station \_\_\_\_\_

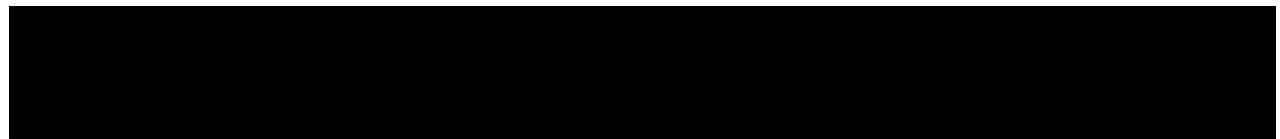
Appraiser's Position: \_\_\_\_\_ Reviewer's

Position: \_\_\_\_\_

**NOTE:**

See Guidelines for Completion

1 Zimbabwe Public Service: (2009) ©



## 2: PERFORMANCE PLAN & ASSESSMENT

OUTPUT PERFORMANCE (Total Weightage: 60%)

KRA Description.	Goal Description.	Objective Description	Outcome Description	Output Description.	Weight	Agreed Target	Actual Perf.	Allowable Variance	Actual Variance	Rat

*\*The form goes up to pa*

# THE PUBLIC SERVICE OF ZIMBABWE

## CONFIDENTIAL APPRAISAL REPORT

NAME:

PRESENT GRADE AND TITLE:

EMPLOYEE CODE No.:  MINISTRY:

DEPT:  PROVINCE:

DATE OF FIRST APPOINTMENT INTO SERVICE:

DATE APPOINTED TO PRESENT GRADE:

APPRAISER:   AL:

POSITION OF APPRAISER:

PERFORMANCE PERIOD FOR:

APPRAISAL DISCUSSION DATE:

### PURPOSE OF THE APPRAISAL

The purpose of this performance appraisal is to improve efficiency and effectiveness of Government officers and employees to achieve the following results, which are to:

1. Create mutual understanding between the officer and his or her manager concerning the aspects of the member's key result areas, objectives and action plans which will make the most important contribution to the overall achievement of the Ministry and the Public Service as a whole.
2. Facilitate reviews of performance and achievement during the course of the year in order to measure progress and resolve any problems in those areas that need attention.
3. Provide a basis for measuring the overall performance of the officer for the period under consideration, and form the basis for discussion of the subordinate's future career and training needs.

If the appraiser and appraisee do not agree on work plans or the rating of performance, this issue should be taken to the immediate superior of the appraiser. If not resolved by the appraiser's superior, the matter should be taken to a committee established by the Head of Department or Head of Institution (e.g. school/hospital) and ideally agreed to by both appraiser and appraisee. If the committee fails to achieve agreement the matter should be referred to the Head of Ministry. The Head of Ministry may resolve the matter or it may be dealt with as a normal grievance.

#### RATING KEY

- 5 CLEARLY EXCEEDS/OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE—contributes more than full requirements.
- 4 ABOVE AVERAGE—completes all assigned objectives.
- 3 SATISFACTORY—meets basic requirements.
- 2 BELOW MINIMAL BASIC REQUIREMENTS—falls marginally short of basic requirements.
- 1 FAILS TO MEET REQUIREMENTS—clearly falls far below basic requirements.

FINAL RATING AVERAGE.  (from page 2)

Comments (if any) by Head of Ministry (Confirmation by Head of Ministry required for all Rating 5)

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Head of Ministry (Authorisation of the Commission required for anyone other than the Head of Ministry to sign).

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Print Name

Designation