Teachers' representations of the implementation of the Zimbabwean Social Studies 2015-2022 curriculum: Challenges and mitigation strategies

By

PFUURAI CHIMBUNDE

Thesis presented in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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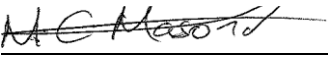UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL

School of Education

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July 2019

SUPERVISOR'S DECLARATION

As the candidate's supervisor, I agree to the submission of this dissertation.

Supervisor: Dr M.C. Kgari-Masondo

Signed: ~~M.C. Masondo~~ **Date: 6 July 2019**

PERSONAL DECLARATION

I**, Pfuurai Chimbunde** declare that,

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Acknowledgements

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my wife Bec and lovely sons, Wayne, Anotidaishe, Tinotenda and Farai.

ABSTRACT

Zimbabwe and her Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education undertook an updated curriculum to guide teaching and learning from 2015 up to 2022 after noticing that the education system was too redundant to effectively help in the socio-economic transformation of the country. However, the unpremeditated launch of the new curriculum in which Social Studies was embedded invited disparagements and public hullabaloos from key stakeholders professing the uncertainty of the feasibility of the implementation. This thesis investigated the teachers' representations of the nature of the challenges that they faced in implementing the Social Studies curriculum and the strategies to curtail the glitches, syphoning insights from the *Ubuntu* philosophy and Fullan's (2015) theory on educational change. As such, the study was guided by the two theoretical frameworks, resulting in the application of epistemological pluralism within the education system. The research, cast as a descriptive and interpretive case study engrained in the qualitative paradigm made use of semi-structured interviews, observations and Focus Group Discussion (FGD) to capture the teachers' experiences and views on the challenges they were experiencing in the implementation of the 2015-2022 curriculum and the mitigation strategies thereof. A total of 12 purposively sampled Zimbabwean teachers drawn from six schools located in the urban, rural, growth point and farm set ups participated in the current study.

The findings revealed that Zimbabwe adopted the top-down approach in the dissemination of the new curriculum, devoid of the teachers' consultations and participation. It emerged that the Social Studies curriculum had trekked an abstruse and ambivalent landscape in a volatile economic environment resulting in trenchant problems demonstrated by innumerable challenges such as inadequate resources, lack of training for teachers, too large a workload, poor public relations and lack of teacher representatives in the construction of Social Studies content. The study discovered that the basis of *Ubuntu* that the curriculum claims to hinge on is just on paper but practically it is not applied. Thus, the remedy to the challenges of Social Studies curriculum centres on the return to and application of "the usable past" which

embraces *Ubuntu* values as explicated by Mbigi's (2005) Collective Finger Theory (CFT) and Fullan's theory of educational change. Implications are that, there is need to consult teachers in curriculum change, wherein their concerns and voices are listened to. The study elucidates the need for a collective psyche in educational change in which curriculum planners engage the teachers in curriculum construction. The study recommends the employment of an integrated approach, thereby "*ubuntulising*" educational change which merges the benefits of both the top-down approach and bottom-up approach; a specific and comprehensive teacher' training; global partnership in resource mobilisation; enlisting teachers as developers of the Social Studies content; and improving cordial relations among educators to better school practices and policies. The study suggests the revival of the "usable past" which captures traditional African customs, work ethics and beliefs to perfect curriculum reform and implementation process.

Key words: Curriculum, Implementation, Representations, Social Studies, Teacher, *Ubuntu/Unhu*, Zimbabwe.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

Underneath are abbreviations that were employed within this study report. They are useful in reading the report.

CDTS………………………….Curriculum Development and Technical Services

CDU……………………………Curriculum Development Unit

CIET…………………………....Commission of Enquiry into Education and Training

CRP………………………….…Curriculum Review Process

FGD……………………………Focus Group Discussion

GoZ…………………………….Government of Zimbabwe

IBES……………………………Iterative Best Evidence Synthesis

INTASC………………………Interstate New Teachers Assessment and Support
                               Consortium

IPSB……………………………Indian Professional Standards Board

MoPSE…………………………Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education

NASS…………………………National and Strategic Studies

NEA…………………………….National Education Association

NCERT………………………National Council of Educational Research and Training

NCSS…………………………..National Council for Social Studies

TPD…………………………...Teacher Professional Development

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND ORIENTATION OF THE STUDY

1.1.   Introduction

This thesis presents a qualitative study of teachers' representations of implementing the new Zimbabwean Social Studies (SS) curriculum crafted in 2015. Unlike earlier work that looked at the challenges of the entirety of educational reform and excluded teachers' representations, here the thrust was exclusively on the development and implementation of Social Studies drawing from the educators' lenses (see Georgescu, 2008; Popa & Bucur, 2016; Yidana & Aboagye, 2018). I did not attempt to establish the challenges that all stakeholders in education faced, rather my intention was to evaluate the challenges faced by teachers as change agents since from the literature survey no study of this kind had ever been undertaken. Using data obtained from interviews, observations and Focus Group Discussion (FGD), I firstly interrogated the teachers' representations of the challenges of implementing the new Zimbabwean 2015-2022 Social Studies curriculum and secondly I examined the representations of the mitigation strategies that could ameliorate those perceived hurdles so as to inform policy and practice on effective curriculum change and implementation.

This chapter provides an orienting overview to the whole study. It unpacks the historical development of Social Studies internationally and locally pointing to the context that gave rise to Social Studies. In this introductory chapter, I also present the context of the problem, explain how my interest in the area developed, and I proffer a summary of the methodology adopted and the theoretical frameworks which informed the study and then hint on the significance of the study. The chapter then goes on to present the

general outline of the research report. A short overview of the focus of each of the seven chapters that constitute the whole thesis report is also presented.

1.2. Background to the study

There has been a surge of interest recently in the concept of curriculum change and its relevance in the global village. Each nation considers it worthwhile to revise the school's curriculum so as to perfect its education system. This idea affirms the assertion that the fundamental renovation of education is vital to improve the socio-economic, cultural and political progress of any country (Ndlovu, 2018; Nziramasanga, 2018; Gasva & Moyo, 2017; Kurasha & Chabaya, 2013; Chavhunduka & Moyo, 2003). Education is regarded as an instrument for the development of any nation both socially and economically since it is a prime mover of social change, which is capable of renovating societies more than any other agent acting singly. Consequently, curriculum in different parts of the world had witnessed shifts in configuration to address the societal priorities. Consulted literature depicts that education systems in each country have been shaped mostly by international perspectives and global economic trends. The works of (Dube & Jita, 2018; Kankam, 2016; Ndlovu, 2018; Nziramasanga, 2018; Zindi, 2018) claim that curriculum change is driven by the realisation that the education system of the late twentieth century had lost its worth in terms of content, objectives, methods and relevance. Zimbabwe was caught up in this storm of curriculum change and took controversial steps to align its education system to the needs of her people in terms of social and economic transformation. As a result, Zimbabwe introduced an updated curriculum with the hope of transforming its socio-economic status. The Social Studies curriculum embedded in the new 2015-2022 Zimbabwean curriculum was also revamped. While that was a noble idea with a novel intention, the new curriculum was kick started when Zimbabwe had no currency of her own. As such, that bred challenges in the implementation of the Zimbabwean curriculum in general and the Social Studies curriculum in particular. To place this Zimbabwean educational reform in proper context, a historical background of curriculum reform and implementation is hereunder provided.

1.2.1. History of curriculum reform and implementation

The vacillating economic and socio-political circumstances in many parts of the world had united to generate desires for constant improvements and changes in education. As Jacobs (2009) has argued:

> *…we need to overhaul, update, and inject life into our curriculum and dramatically alter the format of what schools look like to match the times in which we live. Our responsibility is to prepare the learners in our care for their world and their future. There is rising concern about 21st century skills and tools for our learners…*

Educational reforms in most corners of the world have been catalysed by a plethora of developments, some of which are to conform to global trends, nations' hopes and aspirations, social priorities and objectives as well as the need to "address the socio-economic challenges the nations face" (Gasva & Moyo, 2017, p. 455). The common theme evident in all educational reforms as depicted in the literature survey is that fresh concepts and needs have come out, and that the earlier education system is no longer appropriate. When education is not addressing relevant goals, its several effects consequently become irrelevant and substandard. As such, that has dictated the redefinition of the curriculum in the world to align it to the societal priorities and objectives, as witnessed across the globe from the 1950s to the present day.

1.2.1.1. Examples of curriculum reform and implementation internationally

The history of educational innovations and reforms in several countries of the world is mirrored, for example, in a review of numerous documents in the form of National Plans, written in the 1950s and 1960s in some African, Asian and Latin American countries. The vision fittingly articulated by Jacobs in 2009 holds water to many countries in the world. Towards the achievement of that vision of matching the eras in which we reside, curriculum innovations and renovations had become the baby of the policy makers and had triggered changes in curriculum. Several countries concentrated their change efforts in education matters. Curriculum review cases include the Romanian Curriculum

reform of 1990 to 2000 (Popa & Bucur, 2016); the review of the written curriculum of countries in Sub-Saharan Africa from the perspective of preparation for life and work in 2008 (Georgescu, 2008); the revised Northern Ireland Curriculum in primary; special and post-primary schools and textbook analysis from gender perspective from 2009 to 2011 in Viet Nam (UNESCO, 2012), and the review of the implemented competency based curriculum in South Africa (Bantwini, 2010). These studies highlighted the challenges of the curriculum packages in use at that time which led to some changes being made to address the needs. That was because of the popular belief that the degree of fit of a curriculum is measured by the extent to which it meets "individual attributes the requirements of the national economy, the needs of society and the future challenges and aspirations of the nation" (Kurasha & Chabaya, 2013, p. 57). As such, educational reforms are not a new phenomenon in many countries because an updated curriculum ought to speak to current needs of societies and inform the people's destiny in the global village.

1.2.1.2. History of curriculum reform and implementation in Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe joined the band wagon of curriculum reform and implementation before it attained political independence in 1980. As such, her educational reforms predates to the colonial times of which the changes were more concerned with aligning the education system to the demands of the colonial powers of that time. At political independence in 1980, Zimbabwe made noticeable strides in revamping her education system in a bid to transform the curriculum in terms of its content and vision. However, the changes made did not resolve the crisis in education as the curriculum was poorly implemented and remained too academic to spur employment and economic development. As such, the years beginning in 1997 saw Zimbabwe experiencing a precipitous collapse in its economy which powered damaging effects on the provision of education in Zimbabwe. When Zimbabwe's economy plunged to its lowest ebb, social services like education came to a halt (Kapingidza, 2014). The economic plunge reduced the education sector to ashes, as gains made within two decades from the advent of nationhood in 1980 collapsed. In her bid to position herself to deal with the

economic plunge, Zimbabwe turned to education for her recovery. This was based on the premise and belief that education is the route to escape poverty since it is regarded as a form of human investment that has the audacity to lift families out of abject poverty.

In 1998, the then President of Zimbabwe enlisted the services of Doctor Nziramasanga to lead a Commission of Enquiry into Education and Training (CIET) to investigate into and recommend on the critical modifications desired to the country's curriculum from primary to tertiary levels in order for education to be a valuable instrument for socio-economic change (Magudu, 2012). The report revealed that Zimbabwe's education was too academic and needed an intensive overhaul as it showed glaring gaps with regard to the content of the curriculum, absence of national values and a philosophy that guided the education system (MoPSE, 2016). MoPSE (2016, p. 9) admits that, "With the passage of time, it became increasingly self-evident that the curriculum required reviewing so as to do what is right in the education system for socio-economic development." What followed that observation was the new Curriculum Review Process in which parents were asked whether a new curriculum was needed. A major limitation of these consultative meetings was the non-attendance and involvement of the implementers of that curriculum. Instead, two teachers per school were assigned the duties of collecting and validating the views of the stakeholders thereby limiting their chances of making contributions to the reforms. Emerging issues from the consultations were noted which culminated in the compilation of the Narrative Report which later gave birth to the New Curriculum Framework for Primary and Secondary Education to be run from the year 2015 to 2022 in which Social Studies is embedded.

The New Zimbabwean dispensation in the education system was driven by the need to transform the Zimbabwean economy as it has been ailing for decades (Gasva and Moyo, 2017; Nziramasanga, 2018). The new 2015-2022 curriculum of Zimbabwe guided by the *Ubuntu* philosophy and through its aims, spells out what the graduates of the training system are expected to demonstrate. The exit competence of the learners is heavily tilted towards the demands and prospects of Social Studies. Among these are the fact that students were expected to display critical rational skills, problem solving

skills and leadership skills after completing the studies, all which stem from an effectively delivered Social Studies curriculum.

Previously, Zimbabwe learnt very little from the failure of the implementation of earlier reforms because research on teachers' representations was neglected that could have provided discernments into the sources of the challenges of curriculum implementation and the mitigation strategies thereof. This study noticed the lacuna and drew from the teachers' representation of the challenges they encountered in implementing the new 2015-2022 curriculum with special focus on Social Studies. Representations of curriculum change is critical as it structures our knowledge of the curriculum issues the same way we form meaning of things such as people, objects or events (Hall, 1997). In the context of this study, to represent something is to describe or depict it or to place a likeliness of it before us in our senses. It is not possible for us to know and describe the curriculum change and innovation without it being represented to or for us by narratives, visual data, gestures and silence by teachers. Based on this line of thinking, representations of the curriculum formed the foundation on which perfection of Social Studies curriculum implementation was hinged. While teachers' representation through narratives dominated in the current study, traces of silence and gestures representation were noticeably visible which was applied to triangulate representations in an attempt to deduce a comprehensive interpretation of the nature of the challenges that teachers faced.

Teachers in the current study represented the challenges of the Social Studies curriculum and their mitigation strategies thereof, of which the Social Studies curriculum is a blueprint of the amalgamation of mainly History and Geography and other Social Sciences and humanities that promote civic competence (Kgari-Masondo, 2017). This study could not interrogate the learning areas at secondary or tertiary institutions that had been covered previously in Zimbabwe (Dzimiri & Marimo, 2015; Mandina, 2012; Mtetwa, 2018) but confined its locus on primary schools. I deliberately chose primary schools firstly because I am a primary trained teacher and a teacher educator of Social Studies at a primary teachers' training college hence, I was very familiar with the

context. Secondly, research on the Social Studies curriculum in Zimbabwean primary schools was limited. The obstacles teachers encountered during the implementation process of the new Social Studies curriculum at this level was therefore a grey area. The study was therefore confined to primary schools to enhance the little attention paid to this level of education since most studies tended to concentrate on subjects from secondary schools and tertiary level overlooking the primary schools (Gudyanga & Jita, 2018; Mandina, 2012; Prendergast & Treacy, 2017). Reasons for this could have been because, in most African countries, very few teachers had advanced their education to doctoral level and remained in the primary sector. Hence focussing the study on primary schools by them was like studying a terrain alien to them since they could not be able to report any meaningful contributions. This study, thus added voice to the limited studies that were explored at this level of education.

To put the implementation of the Social Studies curriculum in primary schools in context, its history is important. Below is an examination of the history of its reform and implementation globally and locally**.**

1.2.2. History of Social Studies curriculum reform and implementation

Record in the literature survey has it that most African countries if not all were colonised either by Britain, France, Portugal or Belgium and as such, each of them was obliged to embrace the colonizers' education system (Kankam, 2016; Namasasu, 2012). Consequently, that created dissonance between the colonizers and the colonies in terms of their needs. Subsequently, upon attainment of political independence each colonized country made strides to correct the education system by revamping her education system. Social Studies education was not an exception, hence went through frequent reforms in its curriculum. This part unpacks the evolution of the Social Studies curriculum in the world in general, subsequently followed by that of Zimbabwe which was the focus of the current study.

1.2.2.1. Transformation of Social Studies curriculum in Europe

Social Studies education began in the United States of America in the 1890s where the work of John Dewey informed the formation of the Social Studies Movement (Salia-Bao, 1990 cited in Kankam, 2016). The deliberations in America by the committee of ten of the National Education Association of 1890 made suggestions for the teaching of what was called 'Education for citizenship" which was the first attempt to develop the Social Studies curriculum (Awopetu, 2001). Awopetu (2001) further notes that another meeting by the American Historical Association was convened in 1916. In that meeting Social Studies was then envisaged as a discipline. As such, the United States of America was the first nation to consider Social Studies, a learning area in her school curriculum which was offered compulsorily in primary and secondary schools (Bamusiime, 2010). The main essence for the adoption of Social Studies in American schools was that America had become a mixed pot of different races and Social Studies was regarded as a tool for socializing the "waves of immigrants coming to America's shores' (Cogan, 1976, p. 294). According to Awopetu (2001) from the United States, Social Studies then spread to Britain.

Literature has it that what informed Britain for the launch of the British Social Studies curriculum was the painful memories of the "First World War and the rise of totalitarianism in Europe coupled to the British deteriorating economic condition and her declining importance in world affairs" (Awopetu, 2001, p. 128). Similarly as in America, Social Studies in Britain was to impart a sense of citizenship as argued by Lyewarm (1984) that the roll out of Social Studies courses in Britain was meant to help young workers find their way successfully about the modern world (cited in Awopetu, 2001). What started the struggle for the development of Social Studies was the formation in 1935 of the Association for Education in World Citizenship (Lawton & Darfour, 1976 cited in Awopetu, 2001). Awopetu (2001) takes it further that between 1960 and 1976, there was a decline in the propagation of the subject, but the Crowther Report of 1959 and the NewSon Report of 1963 later culminated into the revival of Social Studies. Full

publicity and support for Social Studies in England was made possible by the publication of Lawton Darfour's handbook titled the *New Social Studies.*

1.2.2.2.   Social Studies curriculum in Africa

Scholarship confirms that in Africa, Social Studies was fused into the school curricula following conferences which were convened in several countries such as the United States of America, Britain and Kenya in the 1960s (Bamusiine, 2010; Kankam, 2016). The first conference convened in 1961 at the Endicott House, Massachusetts Institute of Technology interrogated the problems of education of the developing nations of Africa and proposed strategies to address those problems. At that conference, a "Subcommittee on the Humanities and Social Studies was formed" (Kankam, 2016, p. 216). According to Salia-Bao (1990) another conference as a follow up to the 1961 meeting was convened in 1967 at Queen's College, Oxford drawing delegates from Europe and Africa (quoted in Kankam, 2016). The delegates explored several issues in curriculum reform of the African nations, chiefly at primary, secondary, and teacher education level. The Social Studies curriculum was first introduced as a school subject to Africa in Nigeria on an experimental basis from the United States of America. As explained by Bamusiine (2010) that the Mombasa conference of 1968 in Kenya, informed by the international conference at Queen's College, Oxford became the hallmark for the introduction of Social Studies in Africa. Therefore, the Mombasa Conference "laid the foundation for the understanding of the meaning of Social Studies and an application of Social Studies in Africa" (Kankam, 2016, p. 219). According to Namasasu (2010), it gained admiration in Africa after the Mombasa Conference of 1968 which created in 1969 the Africa Social Studies Programme (ASSP).

In Ghana for example, the history of Social Studies went through a series of changes as from 1940 of which Kankam (2016) argues that Social Studies was first introduced on an experimental basis at the Presbyterian Training College, Wesley College and Achimota Training College. That experiment, did not bloom because of the teachers' and students' negative perception and attitudes towards the Social Studies programme

(Kankam, 2016). During the 1950s, the single subjects that were embedded in Social Studies were taught as stand-alone subjects because the Social Studies graduates from the colleges encountered challenges in implementing the expected integrated approach. The period towards the late 1960s saw the reintroduction of the integrated Social Studies in teacher training after some Ghanaians had returned from Wales and Bristol where they understudied the integrated Social Studies approach. As posed by Kankam (2016) those returnees spearheaded the development of the integrated programme and by 1976 Social Studies was rolled out as one of the core subjects of the school curriculum in secondary schools. However, fate had it that the Social Studies was once again abandoned because there was a mismatch between the expansion of secondary schools and the teachers in terms of numbers. The Education Reform Review Committee of 1987 led to the rebirth of the Social Studies curriculum in Ghana and it was introduced again in the teacher education as an optional subject to train student teachers to handle Social Studies in secondary schools (Kankam, 2016). He further explains that the Education Reform Programme initiated by the 1987 Education Reform Review Committee brought Social Studies curriculum at the primary level countrywide in Ghana as from the 1990s to the present day.

In Botswana, the Social Studies curriculum had developed through different stages of improvement as from the late 1970s. Like any other African country, after attainment of political independence, Botswana revised her education system in order to align it to the life needs of the Batswana. It was in the 1970s when the general populace of the country registered discontent with regards to the quality and nature of the education offered in Botswana. The people felt the education system of that time was a deadwood as it promoted the colonial legacy and did not address issues to do with their lives (Adeyemi, 2010; Mhlauli, 2010). In response to that displeasure, the government of Botswana in 1975 enlisted the services of a commission of inquiry to check the gaps and then suggest alternatives (Boikhutso, 2013). What came out from that inquiry in 1977 was a report named "Education for Kagisano" which called for, among other things, the introduction of Social Studies as a core subject at junior secondary school to

replace Geography and History (Boikhutso, 2013). Following the publication of that report, Social Studies was then introduced in schools in 1982.

Revision of the 1982 Social Studies curriculum was done in 1994 and it was aimed to address the contemporary issues arising from globalisation and everchanging economic needs of the country. According to Adeyemi (2010) the 1984 Social Studies curriculum was further revised in 2008 and its launch and implementation was done in 2010. All these efforts were made to redefine the Social Studies goals and values to suit the local Botswana context.

1.2.2.3. *History of Social Studies curriculum transformation and implementation in Zimbabwe*

This section seeks to focus on the historical evolution of primary Social Studies in Zimbabwe. The literature survey affirms that the development of Social Studies was a result of what the Zimbabweans thought and did, which was to a large extent greatly influenced by the social ills that besieged the country. The socio-political problems that plagued Zimbabwe from 1980 stirred a vision of Social Studies which spelt out the aspirations of the new Zimbabwe unlike the earlier Social Studies version which was used to entrench the interests of the colonizers. Several authors in this section concur that the Social Studies curriculum implementation was borne out of a crisis (Foley, 1979; Namasasu, 2012; Ndebele & Tshuma, 2014; Magudu, 2012). While these scholars agree that Social Studies before and after independence were in reaction to the problems of that time, they differ on the characteristics of the challenges.

The rationale behind the establishment of the Zimbabwean Social Studies is mirrored in several publications for instance Foley (1979) justifies the development of Social Studies on the basis that the disruptive behaviour in the 1970s and the uprising by Africans against colonial masters motivated the white run government to revisit the type of education that was offered to Africans, hence the Lewis Taylor Committee was thus mooted. In 1982 however, Zimbabweans experienced tribal clashes and as such

Magudu (2012) argues that what precipitated the seriousness in the teaching of citizenship education were the crises in the form of social and political clashes which took place in Matabeleland. As such, citizenship education embedded in Social Studies was aimed at moulding the youths into ideal citizens. For Namasasu (2012, p. 9) incidents of unruly and indecorous behaviour such as "racism, xenophobia, murder, vandalism, rape and assault which became increasingly common, particularly among the youth," were the reasons for the call for a robust implementation of Social Studies education in Zimbabwean schools. Mapetere, Chinembiri and Makaye (2014) cite rowdy incidents such as the decorous behaviour demonstrated by students in in Zimbabwean schools as reported in the media by the Herald newspaper of 22 January; 29 and 30 September 1997; 25, 27 and 30 October 2001 as justification for the attachment of citizenship education to the Social Studies curriculum.

1.2.2.3.1. Pre-independence

Like in other emergent countries, educational reforms in Zimbabwe was/is not a new phenomenon. Several writers (Zvobgo, 1996; Kanyongo, 2005; Namasasu, 2012) agree on the tenacity of the education system in Zimbabwe prior to her independence in 1980 of which they posit that throughout the colonial era, the educational reforms were guided by the need to preserve the interests of the white colonial masters against African competition in controlling the politics of the country and its administration.

Literature available reveals that the implementation and purpose of Social Studies in Zimbabwe then Rhodesia as envisioned by the Lewis Taylor report during the pre-independence times was a ploy by the whites of that time to perpetuate and entrench their interests and maintain the status quo (Foley, 1979; Namasasu, 2012). According to Foley (1979) the aim of the pre independence Social Studies was to introduce an individual laced with Eurocentric values which were foreign to African communal customs and it was designed to detach students from their local communities so that they become foreigners in their own land. He further argues that Social Studies through the acceptance of the dictates of the elite was then in this regard meant to promote

social inequalities, traditional and highbrow bondage, weakening of traditional culture, and curricula that were inappropriate to the actual wishes of African society. In the 1970s, Social Studies made up of Geography and History reveals shortcomings because the product of that curriculum took up arms against the government of that day and political uprisings were evident in Zimbabwe. Resultantly, the colonialists set up a commission to investigate the education system with the aim of purging the political agitation by Africans. That saw the birth of Social Studies meant for the African student which was meant to divert the attention of the African learner away from the economic and political spheres as envisaged by the Lewis Report of 1974 which led to the formulation of the Social Studies syllabus exclusively for African Students (Namasasu, 2012).

The birth of Zimbabwe in 1980 saw the country adopting the recommendations of the Lewis Taylor Committee of 1974, six years before political independence and the report noted that the colonial "History syllabuses were too remote from the African child's experience, that the stories included failed either to interest the pupils or to provide them with examples of the type of behaviour which they were supposed to exemplify" (Report of Inquiry into African Primary Education, 1974, p. 13 cited by Namasasu, 2012). The study by Namasasu (2012) indicates that the yawning gap revealed by the Lewis Taylor report, led to the integration of Geography and History to form a new syllabus termed Social Studies in which themes measured inappropriate were removed and replaced by new topics. Several scholars argue that they (curriculum planners) eliminated History as well as Geography syllabuses which they replaced with Social Studies (Mapetere, et al., 2014; Namasasu, 2012; Ndebele & Tshuma, 2014). To the planners, what determined irrelevance of topics for example was that the pre-independence Geography syllabus' focus was on Zimbabwe and western countries such as Canada and was taught from a Eurocentric view instead of the use of an Afrocentric approach and the decolonisation perspective. Namasasu (2012) claims Social Studies was the culmination of the Lewis Report of 1974 which was Eurocentric in nature because its collection in terms of its content did not embrace European Primary Education. Its scope and subject matter was confined to African learners. Its

recommendations were thus not originally intended for European primary school pupils. What came out at the end of that process was what Namasasu (2012, p. 44) describes as the "reorganization and integration of disparate subjects of Geography and History with new subjects such as Law, Politics, Economics, and Sociology to give rise to the new subject of Social Studies."

1.2.2.3.2. Dispensation of independence

The literature survey depicts that when Zimbabwe became independent in 1980, the Social Studies syllabus exclusively for Africans had not yet fully materialized and the ushering in of the new government halted the plans for implementation of which Namasasu (2012) argues was an opportune time for the new government to present a collective Social Studies programme in every schools that mirrored its own visions and aspirations within a short period of self-determination. As such the new government of Zimbabwe in 1980 used that chance to craft a new syllabus which dictated its own hopes. As such, it uprooted the racially segregated curricula. In agreement, Ndebele and Tshuma (2014) aver that soon after the declaration of the scientific socialism as the country's ideology after 1980, attempts were made to eliminate in the education courses any foreign content and consequently Social Studies in the primary sector and History in the secondary sector were selected to set the pace to orient students towards the new social dispensation. This meant that the Social Studies was incorporated in the curriculum to remove discriminatory and Eurocentric sentiments from the curriculum which was represented by two aims of Social Studies which read "To develop in a learner a spirit of national consciousness and patriotism through interest in and involvement with the affairs and the heritage of his/her community and Zimbabwe and to develop a responsible attitude toward citizenship and a desire to make a purposeful personal contribution to the creation of a united and self-reliant Zimbabwe through hard work and dedication to the service of his/her fellow Zimbabweans" (Ministry of Education and Culture, 1982).

Regardless of the adoption of that updated of 1982 Social Studies syllabus, more incidents of disruptive behaviours continued to soar (Magudu, 2012; Namasasu, 2012; Mapetere, et al., 2014). In response, more energy was upped towards the innovation of the Social Studies curriculum in the 1990s when indecorous behaviour manifested in all areas of the country (Mapetere et al., 2014; Magudu, 2012; Namasasu, 2012). References by Namasasu (2012, p. 10) include among others: " a case on 11 February 2006 when it was reported that two Prince Edward School prefects severely assaulted a 14-year old pupil causing him to sustain serious spinal injuries and a case on 24 July 2007, when the Herald Newspaper reported that the police were investigating the case of a Harare Grade 3 primary school girl who was allegedly gang-raped in the playground during break time by four boys believed to be from a nearby high school." For Magudu (2012) what precipitated the seriousness of the inclusion of citizenship education were the crises in the form of social and political cohesion which took place in Matabeleland in 1982 which inclined to be viewed as a tribal matter instead of a genuine partisan political subject as was claimed. This violent behaviour was like that in Nigeria which drove the initiatives for the development of Social Studies as a response to various ethnic and religious skirmishes that occurred in that country (Sofadekan, 2012).

1.2.2.3.3. Post liberation era to 2017

Observing the litany of challenges related to behaviour, the Zimbabwe government enlisted a Commission of Inquiry into Education and Training which reported that indecorous behaviour and indiscipline in the schools and society were a result of lack of *Ubuntu* values (CIET, 1999). In view of that report, it was recommended that citizenship education which is carried in Social Studies be taught as an autonomous subject. That report, subsequently advocated for the abandonment of the 1982 Social Studies curriculum.

1.2.2.3.4. The new Social Studies curriculum in Zimbabwe: 2015 version

Literature depicts that the 1982 Social Studies syllabus had remnants of the colonial perspective and succinctly indicates that it was not addressing the civic competence expected because of the lack of the *Ubuntu* philosophy and therefore another review of that Social Studies syllabus was overdue as witnessed by the youth's indecorous behaviour. According to the MoPSE (2015), technocrats were tasked to review the education system so that all the traits of the heterogeneous nature of the Zimbabwean society were incorporated into the curriculum, intending to produce a student instilled with the principles of *Unhu/Ubuntu* (Mapetere, et al., 2013).This was premised on the fact that the previous teaching of Social Studies and other cohorts subjects seemed not to address the moral decadence and the unruly behaviour that had been witnessed as evidenced from the literature survey because political agitation started in 1982 and indecorous behaviour took toll in the 1990s (Magudu, 2012; Mapetere et al., 2014; Namasasu, 2012). Thus the inherited 1982 Social Studies curricula was not responding to the needs of a new era such as embracing *Ubuntu* which demonstrated that the decolonization of the Social Studies curriculum which was to speak to the African dictates was long overdue. Kwaira (2018, p. 6) goes further and argues that "there is need to infuse elements of *Hunhu/Chivanhu/Ubuntu* across the full spectrum of learning areas to produce "a whole person" instead of just a book-based animal". This pointed to the fact that Zimbabwe needed academics and technocrats endowed with what could be termed as social skills in which education is understood as a useful tool intended to create persons of integrity - the type of individuals who are justly and devotedly responsible. In pursuant to that desire, a new Social Studies curriculum guided by *Ubuntu* philosophy was then enacted to run from 2015 up until 2022 after which another review was to be done. The Zimbabwean 2015-2022 version of the Social Studies curriculum was then termed Heritage- Social Studies (hereafter in this thesis to be referred to as Social Studies).

Despite *Ubuntu's* rejection in the 1980s in favour of scientific socialism, its adoption as the guiding philosophy in the education system of Zimbabwe was a move in the right

direction (Samkange & Samkange, 1980; Zvobgo, 1996). It was a demonstration that African values that have been overwhelmed by colonialism could be restored and renewed; and then be merged into practical and scholarly strands that address the dehumanisation and erosion of African institutions in knowledge creation (Zamora, 1997). The employ of *Ubuntu* philosophy and its related work ethics in educational circles is reconnecting and reviving the "usable past" in curriculum design and implementation, thus "*ubuntulising* the education system" (Kgari-Masondo, 2019, pers. comm.). Similarly, it is in line with the current global debates of decolonisation of the curriculum.

The term "usable past" means a coherent record of "events and experiences which compile themselves in such a way as to help people understand where they have been, who they are, where they are now and where they might hope to go and whom they might hope to become" (Kimball, 2015, p. 1). This indicates that, the past of African societies is blessed and associated with traditional beliefs and values engrained in *Ubuntu* from which Africans can borrow to guide their educational contemporaries in various ways towards a bright future. People can draw insightful lessons from African beliefs and values such as communalism, participation, survival, solidarity, respect, love and dignity to direct the progress of society as posed by Higgs and van Wykn (2007) that the *Ubuntu* philosophy of education draws from concerns, experiences and aspirations of Africans and how they construct knowledge (cited in Letseka, 2016). This indicates the need to decolonise the curriculum design and implementation.

The term decolonisation connotes the process that "involves confronting the academic mentality that ignores indigenous theorists and scientists and aims at placing indigenous information, resources and research culture on an equal footing with those imposed during the colonial era" (McGregor & Park, 2019, p. 333). Meaning that at the epicentre of decolonisation of the curriculum is the idea of returning to the traditional beliefs and customs of the olden days which were characterised by respect for people, their culture and knowledge systems when constructing the curriculum. Fataar (2018, p. VI) explained that decolonisation is constructed on a nullification of contemporary

foreign training whose systematising attitude is aligned on modelling the peopled into foreign subjects and in the process "stripping them of their humanity and full potential." So by decolonising the curriculum, we are giving space to those historically marginalised to communicate from their frames of reference (Kgari-Masondo, 2017; Le Grange, 2016). As such, it is therefore a shift towards an African identity that questions the western hegemony in educational space and seeks to construct the curriculum from their values and beliefs thereby showing sensitivity to the context of being decolonised.

However, the subsequent implementation of the *Ubuntu* driven curriculum in Zimbabwe in 2017 was rather impromptu and lacked adequate preparations. A hasty curriculum implementation caused "confusion, inability to raise and focus resources and resultantly poor delivery of the components of the curriculum" (Mutambara, 2017, p. 13). Stakeholders were of the view that the curriculum framework was not properly planned for and therefore did not have basic prerequisites necessary for full implementation, taking into cognizance that Zimbabwe is/was reeling from the economic crisis that predated 2008. The economy recovery path was and is still littered with fiscal problems as Harare has no currency of her own, yet changes in curriculum hinges heavily on financial resources.

Cognisant of the above observation, the introduction of the new curriculum in which Social Studies was embedded invited vilifications and public outcries from parents, teachers and other key stakeholders professing numerous challenges which they claimed could weaken the already fragile education system (Nkala, 2017; Maravanyika, 2018; Zindi, 2018). Undeniably, the roll out of the Zimbabwean New Curriculum Framework from January 2017 was an activity that had elicited a mixed bag of feelings, comments and insights. While most articles in the print media were clearly justifying the need for educational reform in Zimbabwe (Muranganwa, 2017; Murava, 2017) little was said about the ways the reforms were to be implemented. The implementation matrix was missing from both the policy makers and the implementers themselves, hence the public outcry. For instance, one of the schools in Zvishavane town took the then Primary and Secondary Education Minister to court over the new curriculum on making

overnight decisions and declarations on very important educational issues that needed wide consultation and pilot testing (Nkala, 2017; Mutambara, 2017). In addition, further controversy was ignited by teaching "Islamic religion, the national pledge and mass displays in schools, which were not well received by stakeholders" (Maravanyika, 2018, p. 73; Zindi, 2018, p. 26).

The challenges of implementing the Social Studies curriculum and the mitigation strategies thereof, from the teachers' lenses were the thrust of this thesis. I teased out teachers' representations of the challenges of Social Studies curriculum implementation to abate what Maravanyika (2018, p. 73) termed the "dissonance between official policy and the aspirations of stakeholders." Indeed, the study sought to ascertain whether the Social Studies implementation was going on effectively in the intended direction as envisaged from the teachers' lens. If not, what then were the challenges and the best ways that could be done to put the implementation on track? Informed by the above context, this study thus explored the teachers' representations of the challenges of implementing the new Social Studies curriculum and proposed austerity mitigation strategies to avert obstacles of curriculum implementation by suggesting the revival of the "usable past" and employ African "work ethics embedded in the *Ubuntu* philosophy to refine policy and practice in education.

1.3.   Purpose of the study

Against the unpremeditated launch of the updated Social Studies curriculum embedded in the latest version of the Zimbabwe Education system (2015 to 2022), the purpose of this study was to investigate the teachers' representations of the nature of the problems that they faced during the Social Studies implementation. It suggested the austerity mitigation strategies that could be utilised to curtail the challenges of Social Studies curriculum implementation. The mitigation strategies were representations from the teachers, based on the challenges they encountered during the implementation process. The suggested measures were then used to better the policy and practice of Social Studies curriculum implementation and other curriculum packages.

1.4.   Research questions

For a comprehensive answer to the purpose of the study, the following questions were addressed:

1. What are Zimbabwean teachers' representations of the challenges in the implementation of the new 2015–2022 Social Studies curriculum?
2. How do Zimbabwean teachers represent the mitigation strategies for the challenges they face on the effective implementation of the new 2015-2022 Social Studies curriculum?

1.5.   Research objectives

The study sought to:

1. Understand Zimbabwean teachers' representations of the challenges in implementing the new 2015-2022 Social Studies Curriculum.
2. Understand Zimbabwean teachers' representations of the mitigation strategies for the challenges and realise effective implementation of the Social Studies curriculum.

1.6.   Rationale and motivation for the study

The rationale is described by Bertram and Christiansen (2014) as the stimulating factors that interest the researcher to undertake a particular study. My rationale for engaging in this research stemmed from my personal, professional, academic and contextual standings hereunder explained.

As a Social Studies trained teacher, this study had a bearing on my teaching since I was witnessing and experiencing diverse challenges in implementing the Social Studies Curriculum. In the school where I taught, the implementation matrix was an onerous task. From the short stint that I had in the translation to reality of the new curriculum, there was a yawning gap in as far as availability of resource books that supported teachers in their implementation was concerned. Some schools had begun the implementation whereas others were still struggling to kick start the new curriculum. Those schools that had started showed evidence of lack of uniformity in their approaches by designing different assessment instruments. In addition, new initiatives and interventions that needed new teaching approaches had been included, where practitioners like me lacked subject matter and appropriate competences. Resultantly, parents of learners complained of the feasibility of the new curriculum. My observation was that the new curriculum being implemented in phases was bedevilled by insurmountable challenges. As a Social Studies teacher, I was better placed, and therefore could report on what was actually happening during the implementation of that curriculum in schools. Thus engaging in this research was to empower me and possibly other educationists to deliver well in the implementation of that curriculum.

My experience during the minimal consultation phase of the new curriculum heightened my interest. As a teacher no call was made on the educators to engage in curriculum reviews with regard to "what was to be taught and how it was to be taught" by the policy designers. In fact the form of teachers' participation in the new 2015-2022 curriculum has been accused for being tokenistic and not meaningful to teachers. This was because the teachers were used as research assistants who collected and summarised data from parents before sending it to the policy makers. Under such circumstances, my fellow colleagues and I were given no chance to contribute on the scope, content, structure and orientation of the subject. The process was a top-down approach which meant that it was a directive rather than a consultative development (Pansiri, 2014) which rendered me a mere implementer of an already crafted new curriculum, mainly because of my limited orientation to the Social Studies curriculum before its

implementation. This study was therefore my personal involvement and contribution to the development and application of the new Social Studies curriculum.

In the academic fraternity, the naked truth about curriculum change was that it rarely happened as expected. This was because in most cases policy makers made their own way from initiation, through to the adoption phase of curriculum change without taking necessary steps to achieve a plausible level of implementation. The problem lay not only in the formulation of the curriculum but also on the implementation of which Patterson and Czajkowski (1985, p. 204) argue are the weaknesses of earlier studies on educational innovations and that they focused attention on "the entirety of educational change rather than the neglected phase in curriculum change which was the implementation stage". I therefore focused this study on that implementation stage because it had not received much attention because some writers (Maravanyika, 2018; Namasasu, 2012; Shilling, 2013) argue that the evaluation of the curriculum change had led to the conclusion that miscarriage of educational reforms emanated largely at the implementation stage. This suggests that the educational innovations entered the classrooms perfectly well but their translation to reality remained a challenge. What then was wrong with the implementation stage? This study unravelled these challenges to complement the knowledge that already existed on curriculum change and implementation.

My academic motivation was also activated by the realisation that the literature survey I conducted revealed that the study was among the first of this nature if not the first in the locality to unpack teachers' representations of the challenges in implementing the new Social Studies Curriculum in Zimbabwe. There was an apparent scarcity of literature in the Social Studies field in Zimbabwe. Instead, several earlier studies were conducted to unravel challenges of implementing some learning areas in Zimbabwean schools such as Geography, Food and Nutrition, National Strategic Studies and Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (Dzimiri and Marimo, 2015; Mandina, 2012; Mapetere, et al., 2013; Mtetwa, 2018). From my literature survey to date, no study of the

implementation of the Social Studies curriculum using teachers had been undertaken at all. To fill this gap, I undertook this study for it to be a springboard for further research in other learning areas that this study did not address.

Admittedly, literature which was available on the Zimbabwean curriculum change and implementation depicted detailed information on other subjects' challenges. However, little was written on Social Studies per se and none of the studies focused on the mitigation strategies. More so, nothing was there on teachers' representations with regard to the Zimbabwean new curriculum of which (Chimhenga, 2016; Dzimiri & Marimo, 2015; Makunja, 2016; Namasasu, 2012; Ndebele and Tshuma, 2014) argue that for success to occur in the implementation reviews, checking feedback was very important. Threading through the literature, it was evident that there was no substantial evidence on giving feedback on the Social Studies curriculum implementation in Zimbabwe. An evaluation of challenges faced by teachers in implementing the 2015-2022 Social Studies teaching in Zimbabwe remained untapped. I then sought to investigate how teachers were managing the changes in terms of Social Studies curriculum implementation. As much as this researcher knew this research was the first of its kind in terms of examining representations of Zimbabwean teachers of challenges of the implementation of the 2015-2022 Social Studies curriculums. Hence with the introduction of the new Social Studies curriculum in Zimbabwean schools, it was interesting to get some ideas on the teachers' representations of challenges they encountered and the mitigation strategies they could employ at an early stage.

In addition as far as I have ascertained to date, no study had been undertaken to unpack the challenges of Social Studies curriculum implementation using the *Ubuntu* lens. Instead, the *Ubuntu* philosophy had gained prominence in the leadership and management of the business sector by so many researchers (Bryn, 2017; Khambula, 2015, Letseka, 2016; Khoza, 2018; Lutz, 2009; Mbigi, 2005; Mbigi & Maree, 2005). Thus, very few studies if there are any, from my survey of literature had applied the *Ubuntu* values on curriculum space. Furthermore, theories that scholars had used in

studying educational change were from a Eurocentric perspective for instance, Fullan's (2015) theory on educational change and Gross' (1971) theory on planned educational change had amplified my interest in the study. While I acknowledged their contributions and importance, their theories were developed in the European context and thus the lenses were western oriented and the Afrocentric view had no space. I felt a study on curriculum space using the *Ubuntu* philosophy drawn from the Afrocentric views could seal the gap and contribute to the current debates in academia of decolonisation of the curriculum.

My curiosity for this study was intensified by research which reported that the teachers' voices in educational change and their teaching experiences were often overlooked (Apple & Jungck, 1993; Carl, 2005; Cohn & Kottkamp, 1993; Fullan, 2015; Makunja, 2016; Obinna, 2007; Yidana & Aboagye, 2018). As posed by Nziramasanga (2018, p.36) policies are formulated at higher levels without easy consensus. As such some writers (Pansiri, 2014; Rahman, Pandian & Kaur 2018; Yidana & Aboagye, 2018) reveal that the tendency in policy making is to prescribe and enforce change on teachers instead of involving them which then leads to failure in curriculum enactment. To evaluate the fidelity of implementation then, there was need to seek the representations of those who were key players to see whether their involvement was effective and how that correlated with the actual implementation. The literature scouted was silent on this aspect and this study confined itself to the understandings and experiences of the teachers. As confirmed by Arnott (1994) one of the most needed areas of research in the area of curriculum innovation was to start with the teacher instead of the innovation. This study was therefore a mouth piece for the teachers who were voiceless in curriculum change and implementation. The ontological underpinnings of this study were meant to emphasize a teacher-centred approach to educational change that places importance on listening to the side-lined voices that have been lacking in the discursive spaces where policies on curriculum change and implementation are debated, and solutions decided and implemented. Therefore, this study served as an opportunity for that group of professionals to express their views and their experiences of the implementation of the curriculum so as to better their practice. Listening to the

voices of teachers created openings for these teachers to participate in curriculum design and implementation, a discursive space from which their voices had been erased.

My contextual motivation emanated from the fact that while literature depicted common threads on challenges of curriculum change, innovations and adoptions, no two countries were the same in terms of the context in which the reforms were undertaken, the resources available and the national aspirations. To back up this, Bennie and Newstead (1999) argue that the success and failure of curriculum reform rely on the unique formation of social, historical and ideological features that constitute the country. Meaning that, the success or failure of the implementation of educational reforms was determined by the socio-economic and political factors that either influenced or inhibited it.

The introduction of the updated curriculum by Zimbabwe while her economy was in crisis, invited disparagements from stakeholders (Zindi, 2018; Maravanyika, 2018) of which, Mutambara (2017) claims that curriculum change and its implementation requires heavy funding. This is so because curriculum innovations tended to be more costly than the old packages they substitute (Makunja, 2016). Against this backdrop, this warranted research in the context of Zimbabwe especially so on the updated 2015-2022 Social Studies curriculum so that the findings could add to the voices of other countries' findings. Zimbabwe was and is struggling to be on her feet economically. Then under such circumstances, challenges faced by teachers in the implementation of the subject needed to be evaluated to inform Zimbabwean policy and practice on educational change and implementation. Thus the contextual concerns inspired the study to explore what teachers experienced as challenges during implementation so as to direct and inform future implementation not only in Zimbabwe but also in other developing countries.

In conclusion, the motivation for the study was ignited by my personal, academic and professional standings. Embedded in the rationale for the study, was also my personal

growth in the learning area of Social Studies. The study academically and professionally empowered me through developing new insights in the area of educational change and implementation thereof. The socio-economic context of Zimbabwe under which the 2015-2022 educational reform was undertaken heightened my curiosity because new programmes tended to be more costly than those they replace. Teachers' voices were missing in decision making in educational change. On the other hand, the western theories had dominated in curriculum issues side-lining the African spring of knowledge-the *Ubuntu* philosophy. The study then informed the policy on the relevance of the "usable past" of the African people to educational matters globally and in African nations.

1.7.   Theoretical frameworks

The study was framed from two theoretical frameworks that had been used alongside each other in the form of inter-epistemological dialogue. In this work, I interpret inter-epistemological as the application of two or more combined theoretical frameworks to unpack any phenomena under study. The study is grounded on Fullan's (2015) theory on educational change and on the *Ubuntu* philosophy to demonstrate the inter-epistemological dialogue. The significance of the inter-epistemological dialogue is that it helps to integrate African values from the *Ubuntu* philosophy with Eurocentric views in education. It allowed for multiplicity of knowledge schemes within curriculum change and implementation. The idea of "inter-epistemological dialogue" was quite significant in this research as it became a theoretical framework for the analysis and interpretation of data, giving room for the examination of the opportunities for the amalgamation of *Ubuntu* tenets into curriculum change and implementation. The notion was a vital key for developing the implementation matrix that was missing in a way that takes into consideration the diversity of curriculum constructers and implementers.

From Fullan's (2015) theory, factors (for instance, vision, availability of resources, teacher training and management support) that have the impetus to the success or failure of curriculum implementation were drawn and utilised to formulate semi-

structured interview, observation and FGD questions. These questions addressed the research questions and the focus of the study. The strength of Fullan's theory lies in that it represented the Eurocentric view and had been widely employed. While the theory had contributed much in curriculum discourses, this study argues that it is not the only theory hence the need to have a theory ingrained in African values to complement it. I then imbued this study in the *Ubuntu* philosophy as an accompaniment to Fullan's (2015) ideas.

The *Ubuntu* framework herein developed has been cast from the perspective of local people and as such demonstrates the relevance and applicability of employing the usable past in local realities and frameworks that teachers could use to make sense of their work as the basis upon which interventions to challenges of curriculum implementation must be formulated. Thus *Ubuntu* philosophy is a fountain of wisdom which when applied to educational reforms similar to or beyond what had been applied can become an effective lever within the education system just the way it performed in management circles (Bryun, 2017; Khambula, 2015; Lutz, 2009; Msila, 2014). The study argues that involvement in formulation and translating the curriculum is possible when the policy makers and teachers appreciated the involvement of stakeholders as partners.

Ubuntu offers overarching social principles namely survival, solidarity, compassion, respect and dignity which Mbigi and Maree (2005) compacted as the Collective Finger Theory (CFT). The essence of *Ubuntu* is participation by all people in village activities. In the current study, participation is: "being with and acting for others with the aim of advancing the common good," (Pembroke, 2019, p. 1). Benefiting from the major assumptions extracted from *Ubuntu* philosophy, the study made use of these tenets as linchpins for understanding teachers' representations of challenges in implementing the Social Studies curriculum. As such, the tenets of *Ubuntu* namely participation, consultation, love, dignity, respect, togetherness and compassion guided in the provision of mitigation strategies to curtail challenges of curriculum implementation. In addition, the same tenets introspected on what could have been done before Social

Studies curriculum implementation to thwart the possibility of the blame-game between teachers and policy makers, the moment poor implementation was witnessed. The *Ubuntu* philosophy was ideal as it explained why challenges of curriculum implementation manifested the way they did as represented by teachers and in the end directed the formulation of suggestions on how to mitigate the challenges, the same way African communities solved their day to day problems. As such, the study argues that no challenge of curriculum change could therefore be completely averted without the efforts of interest groups whose major obligation is to work as support pillars for successful curriculum implementation. Thus, the *Ubuntu* philosophy of curriculum change and implementation draws from the teachers' representations illustrating the concerns, aspirations, experiences and aspirations of Africa on how they should construct curriculum packages and the implementation matrix.

1.8. Overview of research design and methodology

This study was a descriptive and interpretive case study which was hinged on the interpretive paradigm grounded on the qualitative method. I adopted the qualitative approach to generated rich and detailed data on the teachers' representation of challenges of Social Studies curriculum implementation and the mitigation strategies thereof.

1.8.1. The qualitative approach

The study was framed from the qualitative approach to obtain a deep and comprehensive description of the teachers' representations of challenges of implementing the Social Studies curriculum, grounded on the argument that the major features of it are meanings and the settings (Cropley, 2015; Yin, 2015). It was

advantageous to use a qualitative approach because it permitted me to continually tease out the nature of the implementation as it was "experienced, structured and interpreted by the teachers in the course of their everyday teaching" (Cropley, 2015, p. 13). The teachers' views and their representations could not be subjected to numerical analysis hence the appropriateness of the qualitative approach in the current study. The study was set to find meaning in text (Creswell & Poth, 2017), hence it searched for an understanding of how challenges of Social Studies curriculum manifested and the strategies for averting them.

1.8.2. Interpretivist paradigm

This study by virtue that it was qualitative in nature sat comfortably within the philosophical assumptions drawn from interpretivism which is aimed at understanding people in their natural settings or context (Mason, 2002; Newman, 2012; De Vos, Strydom, Fouche & Delport, 2014). Hence the study's tenacity was to generate data on challenges faced by teachers and the solutions to those problems through talking interactively with them and asking them questions. I made use of the interpretive paradigm in the current study because of its axiom that it is sensitive to human ethics and that reality is socially and culturally constructed (Tuli 2010, pp. 99-100) unlike the positivist approach that relies on measurements and statistical procedures.

1.8.3. The Research Design

I considered the view that a research design directs how the study is to be undertaken by showing in what manner all of the main parts of the research combine in an effort to articulate the research questions of which Cohen, et al., (2011) and Pandey and Pandey (2015, p. 18) define a research design as "the overall strategy that one chooses to integrate the different components of the study in a coherent and logical way". As

such, the case study design fitted well within the interpretive methods (Cropley, 2015; Ledford & Gast, 2018). I then borrowed from Ritchie and Lewis (2003), Tracy (2013) and Yin (2015) who regard a case study as being endowed with multiplicity of perspectives which are entrenched in a particular context and also from Cohen, et al., (2011, p. 289) who view it as a "unique example of actual people in genuine locations." Accordingly, I sought to get different views from different educators from different schools dotted in Masvingo Province of Zimbabwe. So the teachers were real people in real situations and thus I used a case study to produce a comprehensive, multidimensional understanding of an intricate matter in its real context (Crowe, Cresswell, Robertson, Avery, & Sheikh, 2011). The study was a probe of a present-day development with varied teachers' perspectives of challenges of the Social Studies curriculum implementation drawn from the Zimbabwean schools. Thus, I gathered data that was "socially-situated, context-related, context-dependent and context-rich" (Cohen, et al., p. 219; De Vos *et al.,* 2014, p. 220).

1.8.4. Sampling

Since the study was not interested in data generation from all teachers in Zimbabwe on challenges they faced during the implementation of the new curriculum, I shared Mason's (2002, p. 65) view that sampling is vital if one is "not interested in the 'census' or trying to conduct a broad sweep of everything". 12 teachers were purposively chosen from the six schools. The study focused on a small number of schools because each school had its unique traits in terms of its political, historical and geographical location though similarities were evident in the socio-economic settings. I employed maximum variation sampling as a "strategy for dealing with the problem of representativeness under the conditions of small sample size …" to maximize the variation in site selection when I selected the six schools (Patton, 2015, p. 102). The technique enabled me to gain an insight and understanding of the teachers' depictions of Social Studies

curriculum implementation by listening to only chosen participants drawn from the population of the study.

1.8.5. Data generation

Data generartion in the case study design is made possible through interviews, FGD, observation and analysis of document as posited by (Padilla-Diaz, 2015; Cropley, 2015; Creswell, 2013). I used the first three because using all the four demanded too much time that was to result in a voluminous thesis whose data was general. The three were used to triangulate data generated.

1.8.6 Data analysis

I made use of Miles and Huberman's (1994) basic steps for coding. Coding is summarising the content in short sentences line-by-line. Therefore, I put emphasis on the "meaning participants made" of the narratives as well as the justification for that position (Maree, 2012, p. 103). As such, data gathered by means of FGD, interviews and observations were analysed in tandem with the themes that emerged in line with the thrust of the study. The data were audio-taped, listened to, copied, explained, coded, abridged, presented and analysed while they were very fresh in my mind (Punch, 2011). Data validity was enhanced through member checking, where "themes were sent back to the participating teachers who made verifications whether the data matched or not to their lived experiences" in implementing the Social Studies curriculum (Birt, Scott, Cavers, Campbell & Walter, 2016, p. 1802; Gunawan, 2015, p. 10).

1.9.   Significance of the Study

A considerable number of studies on curriculum reform and implementation has been conducted worldwide which acknowledge that curriculum innovation and adoption are not always set on a rosy path but the implementation is riddled with challenges (Dube & Jita, 2018; Gudyanga & Jita, 2017; Drew, Priestly & Michael, 2016; Dzimiri & Marimo, 2015; Esau & Mpofu, 2017; Gasva & Moyo, 2017; Mtethwa, 2018; Tyre, Feuerborn & Woods, 2018). Curriculum change and implementation has then become a favourite topic for analysis but however, previous research in this field has concentrated on teachers' incompetence, resistance, their frustrations and feelings without listening to their voices. Hence, a substantial search on literature yielded no study that reports on how the teachers' represent challenges they confronted in the implementation of the 2015-2022 Social Studies curriculum in Zimbabwe. In light of that scarcity of literature on teachers' representation of challenges of Social Studies curriculum implementation, this study forms a landmark in the history of Social Studies curriculum reform and implementation in Zimbabwe since no studies in that area on challenges and mitigation strategies had been undertaken. Hence, the current study filled the emptiness in the local literature and provided the first scholarship of this nature.

The study provided the baseline data about teachers' representations of challenges and mitigation strategies. This is important to inform, direct and improve the policy on Social Studies curriculum implementation and other learning areas. Follow- up activities will therefore be more effective if they are based on corrected data on what teachers faced as challenges. The thesis provides the foundation for assessing whether or not curriculum innovation and implementation needs to be improved or not. If it does where and how, that should be done. The study adds to the frame of knowledge on curriculum reform and implementation particularly so to Social Studies curriculum in primary schools as it beams fresh insights to the evaluation of a planned educational change.

From a collaborative and participatory perspective engrained in the *Ubuntu* philosophy and Fullan's (2015) theory on educational reforms, this thesis strives to cement and consolidate the value of stakeholders' participation in educational change. Stakeholders are made aware of the factors that either influence or inhibit successful implementation of the curriculum. The coping strategies are brought to their attention and this would assist them to take their appropriate positions whenever faced with the need to revamp their education system. Thus the study could be used to guide school practices and policies on planning linked to curriculum change and implementation based on the tenets of *Ubuntu* philosophy - a theory that has been extensively employed in management circles (Lutz, 2009; Mbigi, 2005; Mbigi & Maree, 2005; Bryn, 2017, Khambula, 2015, Letseka, 2016; Khoza, 2018). From the review undertaken, none of the studies was on *Ubuntu* and educational change. As such, the *Ubuntu* philosophy's application in educational change has been inaudible hence the need to fill this lacuna. In addition, western philosophical traditions had provided the dominant theoretical framework for studying educational reforms. The current research was the base for the application of Indigenous Knowledge in the study of reforms in education which had been the preserve of the western frame of reference. The findings and implications offered in this research which include modifications and alterations for the perfections of Social Studies implementation will expectantly inform other researchers in related settings and circumstances. Thus, it is a launch pad on which other academics can start areas on which this research may fall short.

1.10. Organisation of the Study

The thesis explores in seven chapters the Zimbabwean teachers' representations of challenges of Social Studies curriculum implementation and the mitigation strategies to avert them. Chapter One contextualizes the background to the study, states the purpose, presents the rationale, poses research objectives and questions, presents a summary of the methodology and shows the significance. The significance of this chapter was to give a rundown of the reasons for undertaking the study as well as how

to answer the research demands. It also briefly introduces the reader to the location and context of the study.

Chapter Two reviews related literature on the conceptualisation of the Social Studies curriculum and challenges of curriculum implementation in detail. The voices of other scholars as well as academics are assessed showing how the present study adds to their contributions. It is within Chapter Two that I located the study in the big picture through the discussion of the lacuna in the literature which then provided the justification to my study.

Chapter Three is a continuation of Chapter Two but its focus is on the mitigation strategies which could be utilised to curtail challenges of curriculum execution. The theoretical frameworks that inform this study are discussed herein. This study uses Fullan's (2015) theory and the *Ubuntu* philosophy which acknowledges the participation of all implementers in curriculum reform and implementation. During the literature assessment, I made an effort to identify the scholarship gap, substantiate and advance an argument for conducting this research. I demonstrated how this study shares with and differs from previous research projects. A summary of the trends and findings is then presented which identifies the missing thread that needed to be incorporated in the current study.

Chapter Four presents the methodology in which I presented how I conducted the research. I discussed how I used the planned methodology and methods. Prior to that, the chapter discusses the philosophical assumptions that underpinned this thesis, examines the choice of the interpretive paradigm, assesses the qualitative case design, evaluates the data generating tools, the sampling methods employed were given attention as well as how issues of validity and reliability were promoted and maintained throughout the research. It also hints on data analysis and explores the ethical considerations of the study.

Chapter Five presents the data gathered from semi-structured interviews, observations and Focus Group Discussion (FGD) as directed by the questions of the research. The key data of the study on teachers' representations of challenges of Social Studies curriculum implementation in Zimbabwean primary schools are presented in forms of narratives employing themes and sub-themes or concepts in copulation to the tenacity of the research.

Chapter Six is a critical analysis of the research findings on the teachers' representations of challenges of Social Studies curriculum implementation and the mitigation strategies as presented in Chapter Five. I therefore explain and construe the data that I presented in Chapter Five. As such, the chapter explained how my data interpretation was done, the literature and the models that I employed and how I applied them to generate new insights concerning not the general field of new curriculum implementation but specific to Social Studies implementation. In that view, I discussed the data in the context of extant literature and the theoretical frameworks.

Chapter Seven is the summary and conclusion in which presentation of empirical findings are done, a personal reflection on the use of the *Ubuntu* values is interrogated and the importance of this scholarship is presented. It is rounded off by a discussion of the implications and recommendations for further studies.

1.11. Chapter summary

The chapter's deliberations were centred on the context in which the new Zimbabwean Social Studies curriculum took place. It demonstrated that curriculum change is a novel idea with a noble intention. However, curriculum implementation was fraught with teething problems driven by not taking necessary steps in planning its execution. An assessment of the evolution of Social Studies was undertaken in the chapter. It was

apparent from the literature that Social Studies in Africa both before and after political independence was a response to the idea of decolonisation of curricula; was meant to align the education system so that it spoke to their needs and aspirations; and was designed to curb the unruly and indecorous behaviour the youth exhibited (Foley, 1979; Magudu, 2012; Mapetere et al., 2013; Namasasu, 2012). Hence, scholarship justified the inclusion of Social Studies in schools.

The chapter highlighted the aim of the research which was to study the teachers' representations of the challenges in implementing the Social Studies curriculum and the ways of addressing the challenges. This introductory chapter contained the description of the justification for the study indicating how my curiosity developed in teachers' representations and the use of the usable past and the *Ubuntu* philosophy as a frame of reference to complement western thoughts on educational change. Research objectives were then identified while research questions were posed. Thereafter, the research design and methodology of the study were presented showing their relevance, significance and strength. A synopsis of the chapters in the thesis was given. The next chapter presents the related voices of other academics and scholars on the nature of the Social Studies curriculum and the challenges of curriculum implementation. These voices are critically analysed in the context of any curriculum implementation. It was not possible to generally review all literature on educational change, therefore what is contained in the next two chapters is related literature connected to the research problem. The lacuna which this study proposed to fill which was on the teachers' representations of the challenges of the implementation of the Social Studies curriculum and the mitigation strategies thereof, with special reference to the decolonisation of the curriculum in design, development and implementation drawing from the *Ubuntu* philosophy is explored.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW: CHALLENGES OF CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION

2.1. Introduction

The preceding chapter outlined the orientation of the study. The purpose of the study, research questions and objectives, rationale and significance of the study were presented. In the current chapter, a segment of literature review on the challenges of curriculum implementation as envisioned by the two frameworks which are Fullan's (2015) theory on the meaning of educational change and the *Ubuntu* Philosophy on participation and curriculum reform is analysed. This is to establish the implementation aspects that were missing and the questions about Social Studies that needed to be addressed because the literature review is a critical dialogue and summary of collected works that is of `general' and `specialized' importance to the specific field and subject of the research problem (Cohen et al., 2011; Cresswell, 2013; Fink, 2014). The literature reviewed formed the foundation of the research as it set the broad context of the study, and it clearly demarcated what was and what was not within the scope of the investigation. The literature review also justified those decisions about the worthiness and contributions of this study in relation to the existing writings. In this manner the purpose of the literature review was to locate the piece of work in the "big picture" of what was known about curriculum implementation from previous scholarship.

Using a thematic approach, I interrogated related literature pertaining to the conceptualisation of the Social Studies curriculum, understanding curriculum implementation, the mitigation strategies and representations of the implementation of that curriculum. While the chronological literature review is credited for offering insights

about the phenomenon within the progression of time (Fink, 2014), I made use of the thematic approach with the aim of connecting related topics and issues. The thematic literature review helped me to organize the work on subtopics based upon factors that were related to the themes or issues on challenges faced by teachers in the teaching of Social Studies.

The study looked at literature focusing on challenges (Kigwilu & Akala, 2017; Okoth, 2016; Makunja, 2016; Ndebele & Tshuma, 2014; Prendergast & Treacy, 2017; Rahman, Pandian & Kaur, 2018; Shillings, 2013; Zindi, 2018). To better examine the complexity of the implementation phase, I drew extensively from Fullan's (2015) theory on educational change and *Ubuntu* philosophy making use of literature from various erudite scholars using the main themes related to the research objectives.   Firstly is the review on the conceptualisation of the Social Studies curriculum and its implementation. Secondly, the factors as identified by Fullan (2015) and the *Ubuntu* philosophy which are impetus to the successful implementation of the curriculum are examined. Thirdly, insinuations of the voices from the literature review are then included.

2.2.   Conceptualisation of the Social Studies curriculum

This segment looks at what curriculum is and thereafter examines the composition of Social Studies. Authors are in agreement that the curriculum is the vehicle through which a nation's intentions are carried (Gasva & Moyo, 2017; Ngussa & Waiswa, 2017) and that Social Studies is described as the amalgam of disciplines that studies society and aims to deal with the world challenges in a wise manner (Hussain & Adeed, 2011; Kgari-Masondo, 2017; Mhlauli, 2010; Sinnema & Aitken, 2012). Curriculum being at the centre of the education system is described as "the aggregate of all that we impart to our learners through the experience of the school system, in a deliberate design to achieve educational goals" (CIET, 1999, p. 232).The curriculum of any country is a document that explains the roadmap for learning and teaching which dictates the affairs

of the educational system. Hence, Gasva and Moyo (2017) describe curriculum as the course of programmes which include all the experiences that learners acquire during their participation in activities offered by an educational institution. To further clarify, Ngussa and Waiswa (2017, p.18) define curriculum as "the desired goals or set of values that can be activated through a development process culminating in experiences for students". Similarly, Great Schools Partnership (2014) defines curriculum as the knowledge and skills students are expected to learn. In light of these views, curriculum is therefore an aggregate of all experiences and intended learning competences that learners get under the guidance of schools in a country. Generally, curriculum is what society deems fit and wishes to pass on to the youths as values, knowledge, information and skills. A nation's hopes and aspirations are thus treasured in the curriculum, which is then seen as a blueprint which guides the teaching and learning process by defining what is to be learnt, how it is to be learned and how it will be assessed.

Social Studies as a discipline is blurred by the ambiguity and inconsistence in its conceptualisation since its introduction as a curriculum subject in the world as demonstrated in the literature survey undertaken (Kgari-Masondo, 2017; Mezieobi, 2012). Some writers debate that Social Studies is a subject whose content is social and therefore the definition is conceptualised on the basis of its composition (Hussain & Adeed, 2011; Mhlauli, 2010; Sinnema & Aitken, 2012). Others conceptualised Social Studies on the basis of its purpose (Mezieobi, 2012; Okogu, 2011; Sigauke, 2013). The first view is a result of an interpretation in which Social Studies is seen as a fusion of various subjects chosen for learning in schools hence Social Studies is defined as "the social sciences simplified for pedagogical purposes" (Wesley, 1937 cited in Namasasu, 2012, p. 41). This is a content based definition that has led the National Council for Social Studies (NCSS) Charter to view Social Studies as a discipline used to include "History, Economics, Sociology, Civics, Geography, and all modifications of subjects whose content as well as aim is social" (Barr, Barth & Shermis, 1977, p. 2). The second view of Social Studies is based on its purpose hence Parker (2001, p. 5) describes it as a study programme that "help young people develop the ability to make informed and

reasoned decisions for the public good as citizens of a culturally diverse, democratic society in an interdependent world." Thus it is an integration of experiences and knowledge regarding human dealings as a form of citizenship education. The third version takes the two definitions by combining the content-based definition and the one premised on purpose. Thus, a more comprehensive and encompassing definition that combines the concepts from the various groups of scholars is one offered by the NCSS (2006) which view Social Studies as the unified study of the Social Sciences and humanities to encourage civic proficiency. This study adopts an eclectic approach in elaborating Social Studies as a learning area, so as not to succumb to a single fallacy factor to militate the chance of using an incomplete definition of Social Studies.

It is important to note that, before the appreciation of the subject in 1916, literature depicts that it was plundered by intellectual clashes over its meaning and purpose. Some label it with offensive terms such as; "social stew, social sludge or social mess" (Mhlauli, 2010, p. 39). Others view it as a subject deprived of the expertise necessary to operate in the real world (Bamusiime, 2010; Mira, 2017). As such a miserable picture is painted in the literature survey conducted which reveals that Social Studies curriculum implementation does not get support because of its divergent conceptualisations. Hence Allazzi (2005, p. xi) bemoans that "lack of understanding of the nature of Social Studies education, the bias in the favour on natural science and linguistic studies at all level of public education over Social Studies education course remains a challenge." The findings from studies reveal that the Social Studies curriculum is belittled as it is characterised by cynicism and prejudice which then promotes poor implementation of the learning area should consensus on its meaning and value be missing in the mind of those implementing it. As explained by Okoth (2016, p. 171), "teacher's knowledge of the subject plays a crucial role in the correct interpretation of the change in terms of reform requirements. The right conceptualization leads to the growth of teachers' ability to understand and implement with fidelity the curriculum."

2.3.   Understanding curriculum implementation

Most literature searched describes curriculum implementation as translating the educational document into reality in the classroom by the teacher. As explicitly explained by (Chimhenga, 2016; Moyo & Gasva, 2017; Ntumi, 2016; Obesiomo, 2015) implementation is the practice of transforming the educational plan   into practice through the collective effort of the educators, learners, school and the parents and that process involves the social interface with the physical facilities, instructional materials, psychological and social environment. Implementation is then the dissemination of the document-packed set of learning experiences in the classroom situation where teaching and learning interactions take place with the involvement of all stakeholders.

2.3.1. Challenges to curriculum implementation

The existing literature (Asebiomo, 2015; Fullan, 2015; Karim, Mohamed, Ismail, & Rahman, 2018; Kigwilu & Akala, 2017; Kisirkoi & Mse, 2016; Ntumi; 2016 Prendergast & Treacy, 2017; Rahman, et al., 2018, Shilling, 2013; Zindi, 2018) abounds with the notion that curriculum implementation is a tough, painful and highly multifaceted phenomenon troubled with obstacles, trepidations and anticipations. This is so, because many of the change agents dread the unfamiliar that the suggested alterations may make them feel "threatened about their ability to perform the assigned tasks and even about losing their jobs" (Castro, 2013, p. 35; Kgari-Masondo, 2017, p. 98). In light of the above, the implementation phase is confronted by a plethora of factors as deftly articulated by Fullan (2015) in his landmark work entitled "the new meaning of educational change" which also resonates with the work of Gross (1971) on sociological analysis of planned educational change.   Thus curriculum change theorist, Fullan (2015) identifies the double edged factors that can either enhance or inhibit the success of implementation. These factors are two sides of the same coin of which on one side, their availability stimulates implementation while on the other their absence inhibits implementation. This section presents and teases out the factors that stall curriculum

implementation. The factors that are impetus to educational change are numerous namely: training for teachers, resource support in form of funds, materials and manpower, feedback mechanisms that promote interaction and problem identification, and implementers' participation in decision-making (Fullan & Pomfret, 1977 in Anortt, 1994). It is from these factors that the study drew reference, to articulate the nature of challenges Social Studies curriculum implementers could face.

Challenges are inhibiting problems that retard the implementation process which many scholars refer to with generic terms such as constraints (Puyate, 2008), pitfalls (Bennet, 1980) and obstacles (Bennie & Newstead, 1999). In the current discourse, challenges therefore refer to all that work against the implementation of the curriculum. In perspective of the conceptualisation of curriculum implementation and the challenges, this section, scrutinises factors that can inhibit curriculum implementation namely lack of consultation and teacher participation, inadequate resources, limited training for teachers, attitudes of implementers and poor networking systems.

2.3.1.1. Consultation process: Top-down approach and teacher participation

The first understanding in this review emanates from the importance of consulting implementers in educational change if implementation is to take off and proceed with exceptional ease. Implementers are referred to as teachers, policy makers and school managers because they are at the forefront of ensuring the policies and content is applied and taught in class. Literature makes mention of limitations of the top-down approach which does not allow participation of teachers, school principals and community members at the planning stage.

There is a significant upsurge in research which depicts that developing of the curriculum content remains the preserve of experts and policy makers. As attested by Gasva and Moyo (2017, p. 450) in Zimbabwe, totally new content was introduced of

which teachers did not have background. That point is further explained by Dube and Jita (2018, p. 907) by stating that "the curriculum is formulated by politicians" and as such teachers "get a curriculum which they wonder what its purpose is" which is again difficult to implement. As such, some writers (Richards, 2003; Rogan, 2003; Simmons & Maclean, 2018; Nziramasanga, 2018) argue that policy makers prescribe educational changes on teachers without consulting them. From the literature survey conducted, no literature reports that teachers have been enlisted as curriculum developers on a large scale because the tendencies of policy makers and government is to impose the curriculum on teachers using the top-down approach. As explained by Prendergast (2018, p. 5) many educational reforms tended to follow a top-down approach which did not consider teachers' concerns and beliefs. Carl (2005, p. 223) further takes that up and argues that teachers were often not involved in curriculum reforms at most curriculum levels except in the classroom. This suggests that, educators do not take part in making decisions regarding educational changes and they are simply informed about the new reforms. Rahman, et al., (2018, p. 1106) suggest that the teachers' non-implementation of curriculum was "that they are not involved in the curriculum development process" which resulted in problems in implementing the curriculum reforms.

Some research (Chinyani, 2013; Makunja, 2016; Ngussa, 2015; Ogar & Awhen, 2015) concur that problems of curriculum implementation have their roots in how the curriculum is designed and disseminated. This was also noted by Syomwene (2013, p. 80) in a study in Kenya who reports that education policy making and implementation is a political process because educational planners and administrators infrequently undertake policy formulation and implementation without meddling from politicians of which the intrusions take several forms like rulings and political declarations from the top. In Zimbabwe, the trend is similar since the Curriculum Development Unit (CDU), is in charge of planning and developing national curricula for use in the schools (Chinyani, 2013, p. 128). In light of that view, it follows then that the curriculum resolutions aredone at the centre and then are disseminated to the teachers who implement them at the

grassroots level. That approach is pregnant with challenges of which Chinyani observes that, "the chances of the user system at the furthest end receiving a watered-down version of the originally documented curriculum cannot be ruled out" (2013, p. 128). This suggests that, the intended curriculum from the policy makers may not reach the learners in its original form and state. Seen this way, the centralised or top-down approach of programme improvement is fraught with problems of curriculum implementation which the user system experiences.

The views of authors are evident that disapprove the non-involvement of the implementers in curriculum reforms (Mingaine, 2013; Mutambara, 2017; O'Donoghue, 2007; Shilling, 2013; Ndebele & Tshuma, 2014; Zindi, 2018; Nziramasanga, 2018). Some writers agitate for the inclusion of teachers in the decision making (Castro, 2013; Fullan, 2015; Makunja, 2016; Shilling, 2013). They argue that change cannot be left to the experts alone and if teachers are only taken as change agents of other people's plans, their supremacy of teaching is perhaps misplaced from the time when they turn into ordinary technicians and, rather than being accountable for successfully implementing a new curriculum, they become purely its deliverers. Others (Dziwa, Chindedza & Mpondi, 2013; Fullan, 2015; Mingaine, 2013; Okoth, 2016) perceive that while teachers are the main engine for correct implementation, balance is best served when policy makers and school managers are roped into all implementation activities. Since literature has it that policy makers have a tendency to neglect the involvement of teachers it is therefore more a possibility than a probability that the implementation is fraught with challenges because policy makers and educational leaders spearheading curriculum renovations and innovations for future adoption would have neglected the people at the implementation level that makes the implementation implausible and irrelevant.

On the importance of roping in teachers in decision making, O'Donoghue (2007, p. 74) argues "teachers who have no input into the innovation will have no sense of ownership of it and, consequently, little commitment to it." Shilling (2013) takes this further by

arguing that, effective curriculum mitigation requires that each staff member makes contributions in decision making. In support of that view, Ndebele and Tshuma (2014) are of the opinion that the costs of avoiding implementers in the formulation process can be catastrophic. As such, if teachers are not involved it means the imposition of the curriculum by policy makers on the teachers without their input at all. The disadvantage is that the implementers may disown the reforms, because they may have an impression that they are foreign to them and might not comprehend the thinking behind the reforms. Similarly, Simmons and Maclean (2018) concur with Wadesango and Bayaga (2013) who argue that participation is a positive tactic to data sharing among teachers which makes them good decision makers; participation cultivates teachers' originality and resourcefulness, permitting them to implement ground-breaking ideas.

In line with literature alluded to above, lack of consultation of the teachers who are the foot soldiers therefore significantly spur failure in implementation because their involvement has an advantage in that the teachers would have enough knowledge of the techniques and approaches at the classroom level where implementation will take place (Mingaine, 2013; Pandian & Kaur, 2018; Wadesango & Bayaga, 2013). In the event that the educational change is left to experts then the experts could lack critical knowledge and strategies that may produce favourable results to practical implementation (Shilling, 2013). This calls for co-operation among all stakeholders in the crafting and implementation of the new curriculum as envisaged in the African thought of *Ubuntu* philosophy, which may be interpreted as "your curriculum is our curriculum."

A comb through recent studies reveals substantial disapproval of the non-involvement of teachers in crafting and execution of new curricula (Makunja, 2016; Ngussa, 2015; Yidana & Aboagye, 2018; Rahman, et al., 2018; Gudyanga & Jita, 2018).The reasons for the involvement of the teachers given by these studies are to help them own the changes. As argued by Shilling (2013) the non-involvement of teaching staff in planning the educational reforms, their adaption and adoption has contributed to poor teacher

buy-in. Concurring with that, Makunja (2016) and Okoth (2016) resonate that the participation of teachers in curriculum improvement is vital because it makes them feel part of the process because it helps them to own it. The implication is that once the teachers do not own the process then they do not participate fully in the curriculum change process because they may misunderstand what they are supposed to implement. If teachers contribute in planning, then the opposite is true. As such, Makunja (2016) and Carl (2005) concur, that teachers' exclusion from the planning and designing of curriculum innovation and change contributes to poor ownership of the curriculum. This implies that failure to incorporate the implementers in decision making invites daunting challenges since they would not co-operate when it comes to implementation of the education changes.

Literature reveals yet another important factor that condemns the non-involvement of implementers in decision making. It depicts that the absence of information on the curriculum change makes teachers, who are in charge of implementing the curriculum change, ignorant of what is expected (Cobbold, 2017). Subsequently these teachers will adopt certain curriculum accommodations that are in sharp contrast with the theoretical underpinnings of the change because their input would have been overlooked. Okoth (2016) argues then that the government must consider the input of teachers since they are the policy implementers. Seen that way, teachers make things happen in curriculum application because of their commitment through their input.

The literature surveyed indicates that the failure of curriculum implementation can also be traced to the school principals' non-involvement in curriculum reforms. Fullan, (2015) and Mingaine (2013) concur that, one of the pointers of lively participation is the attendance at workshop training by the school principals. As such Mingaine (2013) advises that school heads must facilitate professional development, promote decision making among teachers, delegate responsibilities and maintain a clear vision of the school, consulting stakeholders and other experts at the training workshops. The school head is thus seen as the oil that lubricates the implementation machine because of the

linkages s/he provides in the implementation of the curriculum. Resultantly, the school heads ought to lead the renovation of the programme through being ardent, dynamic and passionate.

Lack of team work breeds challenges of curriculum implementation because both the experts and the teachers would have no chance to share and make collective inquiry, renewals and application of ideas and concepts. The literature consulted (Castro, 2013; Carl, 2005; Dube & Jita, 2018; Pansiri, 2014, Rahman, et al., 2018; Yidana & Aboagye, 2018) has it that experts based on their knowledge in most cases employ a top-down approach in curriculum innovation and implementation using the centre-periphery model of change which has ripple effects in developing negative attitudes towards the change. For Hall and Hord (2010), Davies (2011), Fullan (1992) and Shilling (2013), the process of change needs leadership, teamwork, individual learning and dedication from the school members, as well as a common vision and tactical planning. The importance of the involvement of the school managers and the experts lies in the notion that it assists the teachers to unlearn some of the old practices that would have been rendered inapplicable and redundant by the changes. A study on management of educational change by Pansiri (2014) hints that; an all-embracing bottom-up approach of change which motivates active interface, teamwork, corporation, involvement and participation in educational reform is a remedy to pitfalls of implementation. That in itself, is a very important aspect in managing educational change because without team work during the process of implementation, the unfolding uncertainties and success stories of the implementation of the curriculum remain unreported hence Davies (2011) opines that such adjustments, restructuring and modalities can be denied the chance to take place.

The literature survey portrays the non-involvement of the whole community in curriculum delivery as an inhibiting factor in the prosperity of the execution of the curriculum. This could be so because the community members are vital in theimplementation process of which Davies (2011) confirms that the key players to

ensure a smooth implementation process are the parents of the learners and equally important is the physical and social environment in which the school is located that provides learning and teaching opportunities. Taken that way, a shaky integration of the school and the community members retards the implementation of which Schmidt and White (2004) argue that, "success with implementation of complex reform depends on the quality of communication, collaboration, partnership and involvement of all key parties such as local authority, teachers, parents and wider community and learners" (cited in Pansiri, 2014, p. 28). This implies that non- participation of these key players in implementation leaves some areas and topics untapped and further techniques from those uncovered areas are left to no use. The support from parents in the schools plays a role in implementation of which Davies (2011) observes that in Australia, an absence of parental backing and negative assertiveness was an obstacle to fruitful implementation of the curriculum. Implication is that failure of curriculum implementation rests on the lack of support from the community and the people in the community.

2.3.1.2. Inadequate educational resources

The second understanding from the literature survey pertaining to challenges of curriculum implementation is built around the issue of resources. Literature depicts that inadequate resources in schools can be in terms of funds, infrastructure, personnel and instructional materials. Most of the writers (Badugela, 2012; Chimhenga, 2016; Mandina, 2012; Ndebele & Tshuma, 2014; Ntumi, 2016; Ogar & Awhen, 2015; Saidu & Saidu, 2015) concur with (Fullan and Pomfret, 1977, p. 84) on their assertion that "resource outlay or initial investment can often be used to predict implementation" of which they argue that the upcoming countries have shown in their practice that one major generic challenge that teachers face as implementers of any curriculum is the shortage of resource support in the form of funds, infrastructure and personnel. The scholars agree that the obtainability of teachers and material support is thus indispensable for the fidelity implementation of the educational change; hence their absence militates against a comprehensive uptake of the policy implementation.

Funds as resources have been mentioned in a myriad of studies (Badugela, 2012; Dziwa, et al., 2013; Ndebele & Tshuma, 2014; Wilde, et al., 2018;) of which they posit that among the factors that emerge as the most prominent one upsetting the execution of the changes in education is the shortage of funds. The financial challenges stem from the socio-economic status of these unindustrialized countries as most of them are reeling from macro finance crises possibly because of their poor fiscal policies. That observation was also made in a study in South Africa by Badugela (2012) who affirms that for effective implementation of the curriculum, schools were to be resourced financially by all stakeholders. Similarities were also noted by Gatawa (1999) cited in Dziwa et al., (2013) that curriculum improvements everywhere have encountered problems of implementation due to cost implications. These studies agreed that curriculum reforms are more expensive than the curricula they replace because of the cost of research, production of materials and re-training of employees (Badugela, 2012; Dziwa, et al., 2013). In light of the above, it follows then that the importance of funds in educational change needs no further elaboration because whatever is done in the change and implementation of the curriculum is fund related. As clearly argued by Mobegi and Ondingi (2011) that; absence of funding results in insufficient supply of educational materials which consequently leads to poor curriculum implementation.

One constraint for a successful implementation as seen from the literature is the non-availability of infrastructure which is crucial for effective learning in schools of which (Ntumi, 2016; Ogar & Awhen, 2015) in agreement with a study by Azzi-Lessing (2009) cited in Ntumi (2016) is of the view that infrastructure provides the base for the rest. That position hinges on the fact that once the shortages linked to facilities happen, this may activate other glitches such as lack of space to work on or area to beautify the classroom. Acknowledging the significance of amenities, Ehiametalor (2001) opines that: "school facilities are the operational inputs of every instructional programme" (cited in Ogar & Awhen 2015, p. 147). Hence the school is likened to a manufacturing organization where machinery should be efficient for production of good results.

Similarly, Ivowi (2004) notes that to make certain that a curriculum is commendably implemented, physical facilities and educational materials ought to be in adequate quantities (in Ogar & Awhen, 2015). Henceforth, facilities as seen from the literature survey are seen as enabling tools for sound implementation of the curriculum, without which the process of implementation could be littered with challenges.

Literature makes mention of the acute shortage of instructional materials as an impediment to implementation of the curriculum in most nations hence in her study Mhlauli (2010, p. 108) affirms that "it has been observed that there is a serious lack of instructional materials for teaching Social Studies such as conventional materials like textbooks, audio, audio-visuals and other resources that are technology related in Africa in general." She goes on to quote Asimeng-Boahene (2000) who opines that such materials are scarce and limited in terms of their use as they are not activity or problem-solving based. This implies that absence of these materials erodes the efficacy of implementation and in cases where the materials are available; their limited quantity affects the purpose for which they are meant in the implementation. Instructional materials are vital resources which can be used in helping the teachers to effect a sound implementation (Karim, et al., 2018; Kigwilu & Akala, 2017; Wilde, et al., 2018 Zindi, 2018). For example, one study in Botswana concurs with a study conducted in Nigeria by Ntumi (2016) who acknowledges that in order for the officially designed curriculum to be fully implemented as planned, the Department of Education in any country, should source and provide relevant educational materials to empower teachers and learners to execute their obligations as per requirement. Hence without resources and reference books from where the content of the newly introduced curriculum is drawn, it could be difficult for a teacher to both research and then address the demands of the syllabus (Mandina, 2012; Mhlauli, 2010). The lack of reference books and library services was blamed of which (Davies, 2011) argues that learning areas could be difficult to teach from the head, deriving content from nowhere. Similar observations to the above are the findings of the study from Zimbabwe by Mandina (2012) which explored the challenges experienced in implementing the Food and Nutrition curriculum,

which also reveals that shortage of reference textbooks and educational equipment upset the operational implementation of the subject.

Literature depicts that absence of personnel is one fundamental resource area that inhibits curriculum implementation (Kigwilu & Akala, 2017; Saidu & Saidu, 2015; Zvobgo, 2007). The existence of teachers in schools is a plus factor for curriculum implementation as pointed out by Yidana and Aboagye (2018) and Mandina (2012) who concur that the issue of resources is not confined to infrastructure and funds alone but rather extends to human resources. As explained by Zvobgo (2007) resources do not necessarily exist in physical material form, they also reside in the human mind. Following that argument a school with no teachers cannot be seen to be practically implementing the curriculum. Subsequently, lack of qualified teachers is therefore an issue that frustrates curriculum implementation.

The literature available from the scouted studies depicts substantial evidence that describes lack of funding, infrastructure, instructional materials and personnel as challenges that throttle the effective unpacking of the curriculum (Badugela, 2012; Dziwa, et al., 2013; Kigwilu & Akala, 2017; Saidu & Saidu, 2015). Implied herein is that appropriate facilities and equipment, availability of teachers and an adequate budget enhance curriculum implementation like what was observed in Australia by Hamilton and Middleton (2001) cited in Davies (2011) where implementation of technology education was a success because of the presence of the aforesaid resources. However, while acknowledging that the resources are indispensable to curriculum implementation, the literature is devoid of the context in which these implementations were undertaken.

2.3.1.3. Training for teachers

The trends in literature describe adequate training before the implementation of a new curriculum as a key to Professional Development (TPD) in terms of challenges facing

teachers when a curriculum kick starts. The survey of literature also reveals that training of implementers is the prime driver to implementation of which some writers (Asebiomo, 2015; Fullan, 2015; Ngussa, 2015; Kisirkoi & Mse, 2016; Yidana & Aboagye, 2018; Wedell, 2009) are of the view that while implementation policy looks good on paper, translating that into practice is a hurdle to untrained teachers. Other writers (Davies, 2011; Gasva & Moyo, 2017; Ndebele & Tshuma, 2014; Ntumi, 2016; Rahman, et al., 2018) raise the issues of pedagogy and observe that the absence of training to align teachers and their pedagogical prowess remains one challenge to implementation of the curriculum. Furthermore, literature also makes mention of various training that can be conducted through workshops, consultations and symposiums. Elliot (2006), Mandina (2012) and Ngussa and Waiswa (2017) are in agreement as they appraise training programs in form of seminars, conferences, workshops and in-servicing which can be organized at regular intervals to equip teachers with the requisite skills and relevant content for the implementation. As such, Rahman, et al., (2018) back that; curriculum development relies on Professional Development (PD) and as such teachers ought to be professionally trained in areas of their practices in schools and classrooms. It is against this backdrop that the next section assesses the aforesaid claims.

The literature reviewed shows the need of adequate training before and during implementation of the new curriculum as critical if it is to taste success (Fullan, 2015; Jerotuh, Kurgat & Kimutai, 2017; Prendergast & Treacy, 2017; Mtethwa, 2018). They all concur that training during the course of implementation is inevitable. Wedell (2009, p. 32) aptly corroborates that "however appropriately change aims are adapted and understood, teachers are almost certain to need support at the beginning and throughout the implementation stage." In addition, Fullan (2006) observes that change theory can be useful in directing education strategies and, in turn, getting outcomes – but only in the hands of people who possess profound knowledge of the changing aspects of how the elements in question function to obtain specific results. Surmising that, having a well-crafted and detailed curriculum document in use alone without competent and trained teacher to turn it into reality is bad enough. As such, the people

in it must be able to also push the policy to the next level, to make their theory of action explicit (Fullan, 2015, p. 15). An analysis of this assertion to a larger extent places the professional teacher at the hub of the implementation. However, inherent in the statement and important to deduct is that the teacher under description is not simply a teacher but rather a competent committed and experienced cadre who can articulate by effectively unpacking the dynamics of the implementation (Esau & Mpofu, 2017; Mtetwa, 2018; Mandina, 2012; Maravanyika, 2018). The teacher described here is like a highly trained pilot who navigates in the educational territory with exceptional ease. In the hands of such a teacher, the challenges of implementing the curriculum are mitigated.

In sharp truth and in line, Asebiomo (2015)'s contribution is that, if the implementation is left to novices then getting the results would be a far-fetched dream. The whole curriculum could then be deeply immersed in dirty waters and the written curriculum could appear excellent in black and white yet in reality it becomes a white elephant (Asebiomo, 2015). In that view, lack of training in the educational changes, the vision of the change, its scope and depth inhibit a plausible implementation. Hence in contention to that Fullan (2011) argues that the teacher without training in the changes of the new curriculum to be implemented is more like an unlicensed driver who is not certain when and how to manoeuvre from one street to another. He further reiterates that a 'wrong driver' is a thoughtful policy implementer who is limited in achieving the desired result, while a 'right driver' is one who achieve better measurable results for students.

Substantial research has revealed that when implementation of the new curriculum has been given the green light to kick start, the teachers climb the implementation ladder with no extensive training on how to execute the implementation (Asebiomo, 2015; Kisirkoi & Mse, 2016; Makunja, 2016; Ntumi, 2016). Thus in most cases lack of training is identified by many studies as a challenge which teachers face in the implementation of new curricula of which Esau and Mpofu (2017); Shilling(2013); and Ndebele and Tshuma (2014) observe that lack of training is a common practice when a new

curriculum is introduced. When training is conducted, only an insignificant number of teachers receive the training, which they then poorly cascade, resulting in poor curriculum implementation. Accordingly Castro (2013, p. 45) argues that "the quality of initial training is crucial if the new programme is to be well implemented", which suggests that, comprehensive training should be conducted, not only to a limited number of implementers but to most of them for effective cascading of the new changes in education.

On the importance of training for teachers, literature justifies challenges of curriculum implementation using two cogent reasons based firstly, on the ability to interpret the document policy. As Ndebele and Tshuma (2014) argue the challenges facing the new education system in Zimbabwe was the misinterpretation of the syllabus and non-smooth transition from the past to the new demands as claimed by Okoth (2016). One of the constraining factors is thus the failure of teachers to move from past practices to those which are more with the current or new curriculum. In addition, Okoth (2016) is of the view that if this challenge is not addressed then that could result in some teachers embracing an undesirable attitude, counterattacking the adoption of the new curriculum. The writers (Ndebele & Tshuma, 2014; Ntumi, 2016; Okoth, 2016) further argue that a teacher with little or no training faces the insurmountable task of interpreting the syllabus, a national policy document that spells out aspects to be taught and learnt. When the syllabus is poorly and wrongly interpreted it implies that the rift between the projected and the real curriculum is increased. An implementer typically pursues to secure the adoption of new ideas (Rogers, 2003 quoted in Hall & Hord, 2010, p.15). Hall and Hord (2010) added in elaboration that the change agent is identified as a peripheral innovation professional who participates with the client system to launch and inspire acceptance of the innovation. These claims consolidate the fact that the implementers ought to have the expertise to interpret the policy document accurately which stems from a relatively good training.

Secondly, the other reason for implementation failure advanced by studies is that which stems from lack of pedagogy. Hence, Kisirkoi and Mse (2016) caution that there should be a sustained school based teacher PD activities meant to better the pedagogical skills. Taken that way, there has to be a fit of professional competences to the dictates of the curriculum being implemented. Any gap of discrepancies may lead to strain and then eventually to a moral crisis which subsequently leads to avoidance of the new educational change altogether. Hence (Makunja, 2016) maintains that without the knowledge and skills from some sort of training so as to translate the curriculum, the implementation process is fraught with challenges.

One challenge curriculum implementation literature depicts is the deficit knowledge that teachers possess because of lack of or limited training. The NCERT (2006) in America contends that the implementation of the curriculum changes had been poor partly because of the absence of satisfactory emphasis on teacher education. This was so because not only was the pre-service training on syllabus needed, but the in-service training as well. Findings of the study by Asebiomo (2015) further established that most of the teachers seen in schools implementing the new programmes had little understanding on how to implement it. In support of that claim, Davies (2011) observes that in some areas around the world, for instance in Queensland, Australia, the absence of correct pedagogy was also identified as pitfalls to the execution of technology education. In Mauritius, lack of training of the classroom teachers and their limited exposure to a wide range of technological processes remain challenges to implementation (Davies, 2011). All these claims point to the inevitable need to train the teachers if curriculum is to be implemented religiously.

Within the context of PD is the issue of the subject content which teachers must be educated. Lack of knowledge in the subject matter is a major problem because teachers may be trained differently with a different curricular content. Lack of content to the new changes which the teachers deliver as their duty hampers infidelity to implementation of the curriculum of which Troudi and Alwan (2010) propose that "training and support

should be of great help in reducing the stressful effects of change especially during implementation, because training is to enhance their confidence, to show that the institution cares about their affective issues and to let them know they are not alone in the implementation of the sometimes imposed, changes" (cited in Castro, 2013, p. 46). That suggests that if training is handled by facilitators who are not knowledgeable it may result in poor cascading of the intended ideas and becomes a wasted effort. As such, Yidana and Aboagye (2018) caution that poorly taught change organisers can extremely influence on how information is cascaded to the actual implementers, demonstrating that lack of training standards during curriculum implementation. As such, innovations in education have to be made known to the implementers through some form of training. This therefore demands knowledgeable and experienced change facilitators.

2.3.1.4. Curriculum workload

Recent research (Dube & Jita, 2018; Fullan, 2015; Gasva & Moyo, 2017; Makunja, 2016; Ngussa, 2015; Ogar & Awhen, 2015; Nevenglosky, Cale & Aguilar, 2018) argues that in most cases the new curriculum is impeded by too many innovations leading to curriculum overload. As explicitly explained by Gasva and Moyo (2017, p. 450) too many learning areas availed by the Department of Education in Zimbabwe congested the timetable. They further take this up by pointing out that the too many learning areas in the new curriculum are compounded by very large classes because of the government's position to stop further recruitment of new teachers. As such, overcrowded classrooms increased the workload of teachers which suggests that, an increased workload presented challenges of curriculum implementation since teachers were overworked.

Lack of adequate time to cover the planned work is also a challenge to curriculum implementation. According to Nevenglosky et al., (2018) and Dube and Jita (2018) teachers were, in most cases unable to finish the curriculum within a year and the

increased overload had ripple effects on the part of the teachers. They further clarify that overload triggers resistance from teachers as they end up sabotaging the curriculum package. Other obstacles of curriculum workload depicted in scholarship have to do with managerial preparations regarding workload, timetabling and reporting systems (Bennie & Newstead, 1999). This suggests that, these organisational arrangements inhibit implementation of the new curriculum if not properly planned from the initiation stages of the curriculum design.

2.3.1.5. Support from the school principals

In this review, the fifth aspect that militates against proper curriculum implementation as portrayed by the literature survey relates to professional support which involves sharing information and ideas among implementers. Literature points out that this aspect is crucial if smooth implementation is to take place for without this communication, challenges of implementation remain unearthed (Asebiomo, 2015; Milondzo & Magongoa, 2018; Oder & Eisenschmidt, 2018; Yidana & Aboagye, 2018). As such, Hall and Hord (2010) argue that not only heads of schools have the responsibility to offer guidance for proper implementation but the whole education sector from the bottom to the apex must be part of the process. On the other hand, Davies (2011) postulates that infidelity to curriculum implementation depends on the nature of the networking systems that involve all players and inadequate support and level of feedback from the administrators found in different district, province and national offices which in the long run can betray the successful implementation of the innovations.

The experts who crafted the change had to pay regular professional visits to schools doing the curriculum implementation to ascertain whether the process is still on track of which Van Veen and Sleegers (2006) quoted in Castro (2013) affirm that lack of collaboration among colleagues can throttle an important source of advice to thwart the complicated and demanding work in the implementation of educational change. This is

so because it is from these visits by professional teams that those aspects posing as threats or impediments are picked up and dealt with forthwith (Milondzo & Magongoa, 2018; Oder & Eisenschmidt, 2018; Pansiri, 2014; Yidana & Aboagye, 2018). Consistent with that view Castro (2013) posits that poor teamwork among educators can stifle the adaptations and adjustments that teachers need to competently work the change process. In furthering that point Castro (2013, p. 47) exemplifies in her study that the collaboration can take the form of meetings, workshops and informal conversations with teachers. To manage change, one therefore needs to create a highly collaborative and networking system that actively engages people to confidently deal with the unfolding uncertainties which can be done through engaging the spirit of respect and dignity which is part of the traditional values and beliefs known as the "usable past" embedded in the *Ubuntu* philosophy.

2.3.1.6. Attitudes of constructors and implementers

The sixth and final factor that the literature review points to as a critical aspect that can negate the implementation process are negative attitude and deportment from both policy makers and implementers. Attitudes are behaviour perceived as related to actions and therefore useful and instrumental in affecting issues of implementation of any kind. Hence Odera and Ongott (2012, p. 779) argue that attitudes of teachers are "important variables in classroom application because of the relationship between attitudes and action". This implies that, attitudes are frequently transformed into explicit classroom and instructional practices which resultantly affect students' learning. The interconnectedness between the teaching behaviour and attitudes are aptly presented in what is referred to as theory of planned behaviour by Kennedy and Kennedy (1996) which argues that attitudes lead to intentions which eventually will be transformed into actions. From the theory, attitudes alone do not elicit actions instead two other important elements also come into play namely idiosyncratic norms and superficial developmental control. Idiosyncratic norms connote "significant others" that is what the individual believes that others (who could be influential such as colleagues and

superiors) think about the behaviour concerned (Kennedy & Kennedy, 1996). Perceived behaviour means "the degree of control individuals believes they have over a change situation and, can be influenced by skills and abilities to implement a required change and the clarity of information provided" (Castro, 2013, p. 40). In a simple version Odera and Ongott (2012, p. 779) explain that attitudes are conceptualised using three linked elements: "cognitive (the idea or assumptions upon which the attitude is based), affective (feelings about the issue), and behavioural (a predisposition toward an action that corresponds with the assumption or belief)."

Studies consulted reveal that curriculum change introduces into the teacher's realm some unfamiliar ideas about teaching and the curriculum of which Benett (1980) claims that innovative contributions in the programme result in the 'excitement' of people involved in the novelty. Conjecturing that novelty induces struggle and the conflict produced in the context of curriculum innovation is not only perceptual but also conceptual, that is, it is a conflict between beliefs, thoughts, and ideas that are at interplay which implies that, the generated conflict may breed indecision and this can lead to resistance to change. Benett (1980) further argues that every time an implementer is inexact about what confronts him/her, the implementers is correctly watchful and that such attentiveness either looks like conflict or changes itself into intentional resistance. Different to that, in spite of such resistance, according to Castro (2013), when teachers have become familiar with change they do become committed to regular and systematic change.

Literature reviewed (Castro, 2013; Mthethwa, 2007; Ogutta, 2014; Rahman, et al., 2018; Vandayer, 2017) depicts that the fidelity to execution of the curriculum is weakened by the negative attitudes of educators and their low ownership of the curriculum improvement. Even if positive attitudes towards a curriculum change may not be a precise forecaster of implementation of a reform, teachers' attitudes can be important in influencing the direction of the change. Hence Lee (2000) argues that receptivity is innovation specific, because improvements are different in terms of their features and

therefore present several grades of importance or risks to persons. The pressures are in the form of the challenges on their experiences, effort and work load. As such some researchers (Castro, 2013; Mthethwa, 2007; Ogutta, 2014) argue that teachers resist educational alterations because instinctive classroom practices reverse improvement though in some instances instead of resisting reforms, teachers are keen to use the new ideas in their classrooms. This implies that educational changes have an impact, especially on teachers, who have to bracket themselves from the old practices of the previous curriculum.

Scholarship indicates that negative attitude correlates with the level of curriculum implementation of which Topper (1999) claims that teachers with positive attitudes are instrumental in making a classroom climate because teachers' attitude shape "the sense they make of any educational innovation" (cited in Ogutta, 2014, p. 15). Inherently implied is that those with negative attitudes may resist the implementation of the curriculum. In light of the above, failure to model the teachers' attitudes may work against the curriculum implementation as argued by several authors (Ntumi, 2016; Rahman, et al., 2018; Zindi, 2018) that implementation of the curriculum necessitates significant revision of teachers' information, opinions, attitudes, and purposes to bring into line the obligatory practices with the idea of the educational reforms. This means that without the adaption of the implementers' attitudes then implementation of the curriculum may falter. However, literature also points out that teachers no longer resist educational reforms as reported in previous studies, but the poor implementation is because of other factors (Gudyanga & Jita, 2018).

2.4.   Lessons from the Literature Review on Challenges

World-over, the possibility of numerous challenges that beset the implementation of any new curriculum reform has generated wide interest in the academic circles, prompting research in educational change and implementation. In Europe, substantial studies

(Hao & Lee, 2016; Leavy & Houtigan, 2018; Quyen & Khairani, 2017; Shilling, 2013; Simmons & Maclean, 2018; Tyre, et al., 2018; Walsh, 2016) had been conducted in an attempt to explain the prevalence of challenges of curriculum implementation. In Africa, countable studies (Asebiomo, 2015; Badugela, 2012; Chimhenga, 2016; Kigwilu & Akala, 2017; Kisirkoi & Mse, 2016; Magudya & Jita, 2018; Milondzo & Magongoa, 2018) have been undertaken to unpack challenges of curriculum implementation of which most concentrated on the teachers' stages of concerns, beliefs, attitudes, preparedness, resistance and their incompetence. Recent studies in this field from Zimbabwe (Dube & Jita, 2018; Esau & Mpofu, 2017; Gasva & Moyo, 2017; Mangwaya, Blignaut & Pillay, 2016; Mufanachiya, 2015; Mtethwa, 2018) have significantly added their voices on challenges of curriculum implementation though they overlooked the teachers' voices in curriculum design, development and implementation. Some of these studies support that teachers resist change. However, from the literature survey conducted, recent research argues that teachers believe they are not as resistant to change as traditionally alleged (Gudyanga & Jita, 2018). What then is the problem with implementation as seen from the teachers' lens? This study answers this question.

So, despite the significant contributions to the understanding of educational reforms by these previous studies, their limitation was that they concentrated on putting the blame on the teacher as seen from other stakeholders' mind-set, leaving the teachers' voices untapped on the causes of the challenges of curriculum implementation and the ways to abate them. From the literature scouted, it was noted that while some studies focused on whether the teachers implemented the new curriculum with fidelity (Budak, 2015; Meshane & Eden, 2015; Nevenglosky, et al., 2018; Pista, Justice, McGinty, Mashburn, & Slocum, 2015) several other studies concentrated on teachers' beliefs, stages of concerns and contradiction of philosophy (Bakir, Devers & Hugs, 2016; Bell, 2015; Gudyanga & Jita, 2018; Loflin, 2016; Vandeyar, 2017). Subsequently, substantial research report that the teachers' voices in educational change and their working experiences are commonly unnoticed (Apple & Jungck, 1993; Carl, 2005; Cohn & Kottkamp, 1993; Fullan, 2015; Makunja, 2016; Obinna, 2007; Yidana & Aboagye, 2018).

To fill this lacuna, this study sought to listen to the neglected voices by delving deep enough into the mind-set of the teachers so as to unpack the challenges and how to mitigate them as depicted from their narratives. Hence teachers have been selected to seal this yawning gap. There is little research, if any, which reports teachers as participants in curriculum innovation on a wide scale. As such, their roles had been chiefly that of implementers. This study explored the teachers' understanding on the importance of their full participation in curriculum innovation and implementation.

2.5.   Chapter Summary

The chapter explored related literature on curriculum innovation and implementation in general and Social Studies specifically. The Social Studies concept was explored, and a myriad of studies indicated that Social Studies is a study program that carries various disciplines drawn from social sciences and humanities which seek to promote civic competences (Kankam, 2016; Mezieobi, et al., 2014; Okogu, 2011; Sigauke, 2013). While studies overwhelmingly appraised Social Studies as an indispensable subject, some scholars noted that Social Studies was criticized for being devoid of occupational skills (Bolick, et al., 2010; Mira, 2017; Namasasu, 2012). The literature survey also indicates that educational reform is a noble idea with a novel intention but is fraught with challenges (Fullan, 2015; Kisirkoi & Mse, 2016; Makunja, 2016; Mhlauli, 2010). For instance: lack of training before and after the introduction of the educational reform (Kisirkoi & Mse, 2016; Makunja, 2016, Ntumi, 2016); inadequate support materials and resources (Chimhenga, 2016; Ogar & Awhen, 2015) and non-involvement of stakeholders in the planning process leading to negative attitudes being exhibited (Mingaine, 2013; Pansiri, 2014; Wadesango & Bayaga, 2013) to cite a few. Literature gleaned presented the challenges the implementers could encounter in the implementation of the reformed curriculum. Significant reading of the literature indicates that challenges of the curriculum are represented by the authors without exploring the teachers' voices. The voices of teachers were silent on what they perceived as obstacles in implementing any new study course presented to them. This study

investigated the teachers' representation of the challenges of implementing a new Social Studies curriculum in an attempt to close this shortcoming. However, a review of what other scholars had researched and documented on mitigation strategies was not assessed as of now and as such the next chapter explores that area.

CHAPTER THREE

MITIGATION STRATEGIES, REPRESENTATION AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

3.1.   Introduction

The previous chapter addressed literature on what the Social Studies curriculum is and the factors that militate against successful curriculum implementation. The review was thematically organised indicating some challenges that implementers of new curricula could face. In this chapter, I present an authoritative account of what is known about the possible strategies that can offset problems embedded in new curriculum implementation. Hence, the chapter is a critical analysis of what other researchers had captured as ways to mitigate challenges of curriculum implementation. It is split into sections of which the first segment is a review of literature of what other authors had contributed to the understanding of the measures that can be undertaken to allay challenges of curriculum implementation. The second part presents insights into the concept "representation". The last part which wraps up the chapter interrogates the theoretical frameworks on which this study was framed.

3.2.   Mitigation Strategies for Curriculum Implementation

Drawing from a paucity of studies conducted in different parts of the world, the study in the next section unpacks the austerity strategies that have the potential to offset the challenges that forestall the teachers' procedures and teaching in the implementation of curriculum in primary schools. References are to be drawn to illuminate these measures which literature suggests.

The literature search conducted describes mitigation strategies as approaches or tricks that implementers may adopt to allay challenges of curriculum implementation (Makunja, 2016; Shilling, 2013). As such, a survey of literature on mitigation strategies detects various options that can be employed if success of reform implementation is to be realised of which Mezieobi, Nzokurum and Mezieobi (2014) suggest teacher's training in pedagogical issues while Kanham (2016) suggests mitigating of negative attitudes from implementers. Hussain and Adeed (2011) propose the use of collaborative engagement of teachers and experts in form of communication. Makunja (2016) and Shilling (2013) opine the participation of teachers in the planning process. As such, this segment of the review is divided into five subsections: top-down approach and teacher participation, provision of educational resources, training for teachers, mitigating constructers and implementers' attitudes and professional support.

3.2.1. The Top-down approach and teacher participation in curriculum reform

Curriculum planning and implementation in most developing countries is entrenched in the top-down approach in which teachers are not consulted (Gudyanga & Jita, 2018; Yidana & Aboagye, 2018; Rahman, et al., 2018). Some writers (Cuban, 1993; Fullan, 2015; Obinna, 2007) are of the view that teachers are best qualified to be consulted as they are familiar of what works and what does not work in the implementation. Others (Makunja, 2016; Ndebele & Tshuma, 2014; O'Donoghue, 2007; Shillings, 2013; Yidana & Aboagye, 2018) argue that teachers accept ownership of the new curriculum once they are involved in the planning stage. This suggests that the involvement of the implementers at the planning stage improves acceptance of the educational changes as the implementers would feel that it is their curriculum as depicted in the *Ubuntu* philosophy which emphasises participation and togetherness. Hence, the involvement of teachers at the planning stage is moving away from the top-down approach. As argued by Carl (2005, p. 223) "contemporary dialogue on the essentials of successful education curriculum development elsewhere emphasizes the need to move away from

the top-down policy making style towards a participatory process that involves practitioners and other stakeholders right from the planning stage."

On qualifying why teachers are to be on board during the planning stage, Obinna (2007) and Fullan (2015) argue that the teacher is best positioned and is the most competent personnel to be asked for guidance since s/he is the chief person in the line-up of the programme execution, hence has to participate at all points of the curriculum reform. This means that if they are omitted in decision formation in the course development, the variance between the planned and the real curriculum could be widened. As posed by Shilling (2013) teachers who would have not been consulted make different interpretations and choices with regard to that intended curriculum based on their expertise, experiences and realities of the situation.

Trends evident in the literature review conducted show that participation of implementers at the planning stage is an area of concern and as such is critical to fidelity of implementation of a curriculum of which some writers argue that teachers who participate in the planning phase are given ample time to get used to challenges that they may encounter during implementation which emanate from adopting the changes hence may develop an execution plan (Dambudzo, 2015; Kallick & Colosimo, 2009; Shilling, 2013; Yidana & Aboagye, 2018). Sharing the same view, (Gudyanga & Jita, 2018; Makunja, 2016; Ntumi, 2016; O'Donoghue, 2007) argue that teachers own the new reforms provided they are involved in the planning stage. The involvement of the implementers at the planning stage improves acceptance of the educational changes as the implementers would feel that it is their curriculum as depicted in the *Ubuntu* philosophy which says "your pain is my pain" suggesting togetherness in the implementation even in difficult times.

Thus, it has been reported succinctly in the literature that the involvement of implementers promotes the ownership of the educational change. As buttressed by Makunja (2016) the involvement of implementers in curriculum transformation

inventiveness makes them part of the curriculum reform process, and not ordinary implementers. This indicates that involvement of the teachers is likely to push teachers to show commitment and go an extra mile so that their own curriculum tastes success at the implementation stage. Therefore, according to Makunja (2016) the sense of ownership is established among teachers when they are consulted, hence motivation among them is likely to be high. Through that process, teachers will accept that change is learning and problems are their friends in the process. 'Problems are prevalent in any thoughtful change effort; both within the work itself and via accidental disturbances (Arnott, 1994). In most cases, change-linked challenges are "ignored, denied, or treated as an occasion for blame and defence" rather than as "natural, expected phenomena" (Fullan, 1993, p. 26). Admittedly, people avoid problems and consequently inhibit productive change because problems need confrontation so that breakthroughs happen.

A critical component that emanates from the involvement of teachers in the construction and implementation of the new curriculum as posed by (Kallick & Colosimo, 2009; Shilling, 2013) is that which entails developing a map or an execution plan. The map is vital for guiding actions and without it many implementations have faulted hence Fullan and Miles (1991) warn that a good map must be a valid representation of the territory, or we will not get to where we are trying to go (cited in Arnott, 1994). The map will somehow show the complexity of the problems that are likely to be encountered and possible strategies are then mooted along those lines. An effective enforcement of a curriculum is therefore attributed to mapping and planning (Shilling, 2013). Substantial studies have indicated that planning plays a pivotal role in the execution of the implementation phase because teachers are given ample opportunity to share instructional practices based on real classroom information (Dambudzo, 2015; Kallick & Colosimo, 2009). The gathered data is then used as a springboard to make decisions that are directed towards a successful implementation of the curricula. On the importance of planning Dambudzo (2015) says planning assists the teachers to define roles more clearly as well as inputs and outputs. This shows that, the teacher can be a

mentor or designer who offers support to the learners who have problems, and aids in identifying and selecting of the appropriate tools for easy access to the models, examples and rubrics.

The literature consulted above reveals that change is effected more readily with more permanence if most of the people involved participate in some way in the reform programme. Thus educational change can be readily accepted if key players who are to effect the innovation are involved in planning and execution since that enables the teachers to understand what they are to implement. In the end, they own the changes and the implementation efforts. Other than involving the implementers in determining in the planning process, there is need to keep a networking system to relay problems and success among these same members. One area that appears as a challenge is the shortage of resources and as such the next sections hint on how that can be dealt with, drawing reference from what the consulted literature reveals.

3.2.2. Educational resources

Recent studies on implementation of educational programmes have pointed to resources as keys to successful implementation of the curriculum but disagreements vary on how that should occur. Agreements on what resources are, is evident from various authors who view resources as made up of funds, human and tangible materials (Dzimiri & Marimo, 2015; Mandina, 2012; Mapolisa & Tshabalala, 2013; Ndebele & Tshuma, 2014, Ntumi, 2016; Oguta, 2014). These scholars concur that successful implementation of the curriculum is heavily correlated to the presence of teachers as well as the physical resources which can be made accessible through ample funding. In their elaboration of what resources are, Sanchez (2010) and Ogutta (2014) define materials resources as instructional possessions which include: print resources for instance textbooks, journals and newspapers; digital resources such as internet, intranet, interactive whiteboards, computers, cell phones, tablets and geographical

information systems; physical resources such as classrooms, libraries and the community environment; and social networks like webpage, podcasts and blogs. Ntumi (2016) and Mandina (2012) also describe human resources as those possessions which include among others: teachers, parents, librarians, historians and community elders. These resources can be used differently to implement the curriculum successfully. For example, the implementers can make use of the community to consult on issues which they are incompetent. Some implementers may use the available resources within the confinement of the school while others may opt to use these resources outside the school environment. This suggests that, taking the school to the community is possible through field trips, surveys, camping and service projects and bringing the community to the school is done by inviting resource persons who can open doors of vivid learning experiences.

While there is consensus on what resources are and their importance in the execution of the curriculum, authors differ on the degree of importance and how these should be utilised so that they become helpful to the implementation of the educational reforms. Mandina (2012) and Mhlauli (2010) agree that the main resource is the teacher which this study also believes because once the teacher is available other resources can be made available by the initiatives of the teacher. Other authors claim that the teacher alone as a resource though a necessity is not adequate and workable because some teachers may lack the initiative to provide material resources (Chiromo, 2011; Mezieobi et al., 2014). Certainly, if a teacher lacks in creativity, then improvisation of educational materials is hardly possible.

On the importance of the teacher as an asset, Mandina (2012) and Mthethwa (2007) argue that teachers have comprehensive knowledge of the curriculum. Surmising that, the teacher works on the syllabus, breaks it into teachable units and even hunts for and improvises the supporting materials so that the teaching process is effective and in line with the dictates of the new curriculum. Similarly, Chiromo (2011) advises that teachers should source educational materials on their own, rather than waiting for supplies from

somewhere else to improve the implementation process. This indicates that, educators as the end users of the curriculum documents should improvise materials whenever possible.

Literature available detects that human resources which are important in the implementation of the new educational changes are not confined to the teachers but extends to school principals and consultants in the education sector (McLaughlin, 2008). For Fullan (1992) teachers take educational change seriously only if the central administrators demonstrate through actions that they are part of the implementation effort. Due to that, school administrators and other education partners have to be active in the implementation of an educational change. Real change therefore takes place when administrators are actively involved in a practical way and as such, Hord (2004) and McLaughlin (2008) concur that the school administrator does not only initiate innovation but should also provide the support required by teachers who are endeavouring to put into practice a new curriculum. Certainly, the school managers and consultants are instructional leaders who are the raw energy for implementation and their involvement can make a significant difference.

The authors who offer divergent views on the teachers as the only key resources to unlock the implementation process suggest the availability of material resources as the core driver of curriculum implementation and thus argue that faulty curriculum implementation is squarely blamed on the shortage of appropriate facilities and relevant materials (Chiromo, 2011; Mezieobi et al., 2014; Ndebele & Tshuma, 2014; Ntumi, 2016; Oguta, 2014; Puyate, 2008). In their arguments they claim that more often than not the implementation of the curriculum benefits from resources such as appropriate reading books, learning materials, and suitable instructional media. Following this claim it means then that the obtainability, accessibility, quantity and quality of educational materials together with suitable facilities impact on curriculum implementation as envisaged in the literature survey conducted. That point is also consistent with Ndebele and Tshuma (2014) who argue, in their study, that there were insufficient resources to

back the implementation process. Oguta (2014, p.17) takes that further and confirms that the, "quality and adequacy of resources such as teaching and learning materials predicts the effectiveness of curriculum implementation." This Illustrates that availability of instructional materials is vital to allay the challenges that teachers may face during the implementation of a new curriculum.

In their study on syllabus implementation Dzimiri and Marimo (2015) using Geography as their case study, detected concerns such as the availability of funds to secure reading books, resources to carry-out fieldwork undertakings, internet facility to research, small classes, enough teachers, specialist rooms and libraries as prime drivers to curriculum implementation. This implies that, insufficient instructional materials and facilities are some militating factors that inhibit implementation. In addition, reports from research reveal that students today need access to the digital tools and media-rich resources that will help them explore, understand, and express themselves in the world they will inherit tomorrow of which Odera and Ongott (2012) claim that: to achieve excellence in schools, teachers have to integrate technology in their practice.

While the findings from Puyate's (2008) study reveal that scarcity of buildings and apparatus, inadequate teaching materials and reference sources have negated the curriculum implementation, the study by Mandina (2012) recommends that sufficient infrastructure must be erected in schools by the central government so that the schools are properly equipped for functional execution of any new curriculum. Consistent to the view on the role of the government, Ntumi (2016) proposes that the central government ought to create an enabling environment in which implementation can be conducted. This is because teachers need facilities in which they operate and need materials which they use. The importance of sourcing the materials concurs with the arguments raised by Puyate (2008) and Ntumi (2016) in their assertion that the availability and accessibility of additional materials in the teaching room promotes the autonomy of the teacher and builds confidence in planning lesson activities and projects. Taken this

way, the appropriate instructional materials which suit the dictates of the novel program have to be made available to reduce the work-load of the teachers of becoming scavengers searching for teaching media and content to teach.

In the context of improvising the materials on the part of the teacher in response to the plight of non-availability of teaching resources some writers (Mezieobi et al., 2014; Dzimiri & Marimo, 2015) are of the view that when tutors are financially supported they can be innovative and creative of which they argue that teachers as scholars should be supported financially to contribute in the provision of instructional materials through research as demanded by the curriculum. In light of that view, Mezieobi, et al., (2014) assert that teachers need support to search for educational materials that had been developed with real classroom situations. So the teacher-made materials have to be tailored to suit the demands of the topics being taught taking into cognisant the cognitive level of the learners.

A survey of literature reveals that while manpower and physical resources are indispensable to execution of any curriculum at any stage, funding is one of the prime drivers of curriculum implementation of which Kanyongo (2013), Dzimiri and Marimo (2015) and Mandina (2012) concur that the major challenge of curriculum implementation is defeated by the availability of the resources which can be made through funding. In tandem to that Kanyongo (2013) exemplifies in resonance that availability of money to stock the educational system in Zimbabwe could be a break to the main challenges of curriculum implementation. This means schools in Zimbabwe are poorly financed. The funding problem in Zimbabwe and anywhere else is blamed on politicians who at political rallies want to gratify the voters by negating levy payments by parents in return for their votes (Ndebele & Tshuma, 2014). Access to tools and resources is detected by (Dzimiri & Marimo, 2015; Kanyongo, 2013; Mandina, 2012) as a major weapon that can derail challenges of curriculum implementation yet their availability depends on funds. Funds oil the implementation stage since it enables teachers to acquire apparatuses and instructional resources useful for sharing

knowledge with students. Thus the implementers need access to the tools and resources to manage the complexities of the educational enterprise.

Literature detects that funding should not only focus on teaching and learning materials but should also incentivize the teachers because they are the chief change agents of the new programme (Ogar & Awhen, 2015; Olaitain, 2007; Puyate, 2008). Whence, Olaitain (2007) argues teachers as change agents are expected to effect and inculcate the desirable knowledge to the learners. This can only be done effectively if the teachers are in their right frame of mind. To have that state of mind, remuneration in form of incentives, allowances, promotion and so on should be provided by the government and by so doing 'the horse that muzzles the corn', could have been noticed. Meaning the teacher who is at the centre of the implementation phase must be provided with stimulus or a dangling carrot to enable fidelity to implementation of the curriculum. So, funds are important in educational reforms for buying instructional materials and for rewarding those doing the actual implementation of the curriculum.

3.2.3. Training for teachers

Teachers' training is identified as a critical mitigation strategy that has a potential to alleviate challenges of curriculum implementation. The work of Mezieobi et al., (2014) identifies teachers' training in two critical issues: pedagogical issues and the subject matter. They argue that whenever an educational reform is introduced, old teachers already in the system must be taught the demands of the new curriculum. In this training old practices that are not matching the new change are purged and new initiatives and interventions are adopted. Hence (Asebiomo, 2015; Fullan, 2015; Mtetwa, 2018; Ntumi, 2016; Okoth, 2016; Prendergast & Treacy, 2017; Zindi, 2018; Yidana & Aboagye, 2018) argue change involves thinking and doing things in new ways, meaning that educational reforms are characterised by a wide set of new initiatives and interventions. As such, both the old and new teachers require some form of training when the implementation is

at its infant stage through to its maturity. Literature supports that those old teachers who had previous training on the old curriculum, had to undergo retraining to equip and align them with the dictates of the new reforms in the area of pedagogics and didactics (Hall & Hord, 2010; Mtetwa, 2018; Rahman et al., 2018).

Some authors argue that it is important to train teachers on specific content of subject matter (Fullan & Pomfret, 1977; Hall & Hord, 2010; Rahman, et al., 2018). They argue that staff training to enhance the teachers' understanding of the content of the subject is a critical factor of curricular change and the training is not just done prior to but also during the implementation phase. This implies that, teachers as chief implementers must undergo vigorous training at different phases of the curriculum change. On the reasons why training has to be done Hall and Hord (2010, p. 150) assert that change initiatives hardly depend on the previous knowledge of the implementers; thus professional training ought to be taken as "the basis of and corollary to change." In agreement to that view, Oguta (2014, p. 19) has it that "teacher preparedness is a vital component for effective curriculum implementation as they are professionals capable of making rational decisions and hence a teacher needs to be fully prepared in terms of pre-service training, in-service training as well as professional documents." This connotes that the professional training before and during the implementation phase is a cog in the drive for a flawless implementation as it equips implementers with new approaches which endows them with teaching skills as expected in their work. This will enable them to respond to the classroom challenges with minimum intervention and supervision from school principals (Esau & Mpofu, 2017; Pansiri, 2014). Furthermore, on the relevance of training teachers, Fullan and Pomfret (1977) agree that staff training to enhance the teachers' knowledge of the subject matter is a critical factor for curricular change. Similarly, Zindi (2018) concurs with Ndebele and Tshuma (2014) who recommend that a comprehensive training for teachers before and after an innovation is instigated. Teachers' training in some subjects besides Social Studies is based on what has to be taught and the pedagogy to be used to deliver that content. Oguta (2014), Yidana and Aboagye (2018) and Mandina (2012) are in agreement as they recommend

that training for teachers has to be done continuously. In addition, Mezieobi et al., (2014) further elaborate that conferences, seminars and workshops help Professional Development (PD) of teachers and expedite publications which are important for teachers' development of content, teaching approaches and materials.

On the issue of the pedagogy, literature indicates that although teachers had previous knowledge on the old curriculum it is necessary for them to have skills in didactics (Mthethwa, 2007; Hall & Hord, 2010). In support of that claim Pansiri (2014) asserts that teachers need skills to have more control over their work so that they capably respond to the classroom challenges with minimum difficulties. In Nigeria, Puyate's (2008) study reveals that curriculum implementation faulted due to inadequate professional and experienced teachers. How then can the challenges be mollified? A study by Kisirkoi and Mse (2016) recommends that there is need to train and support the teachers if they were to deliver on the implementation of the curriculum. On the teachers' training Mandina (2012) in concurrence to Ntumi (2016) argues that the government must in-service, staff develop and assist teachers to get the highest credentials and skills possible in teaching in order to impart their knowledge to the learners. What then is depicted in the literature survey is that the training of implementers is therefore seen as very important both to new and old teachers regardless of their previous foundational knowledge on curriculum implementation.

As for both the change in teaching skills and adoption of new subject matter, the literature conducted reveals that teachers form part of the human resource and are vital in the provision of education services, hence their training and continued PD is essential to attaining the vision and objectives of the educational changes (Jerotuh, et al., 2017; Mtetwa, 2018; Ntumi, 2016; Oguta, 2014; Okoth, 2016; Shilling, 2013; Prendergast & Treacy, 2017; Zindi, 2018). This suggests that, a teacher of any subject must get training on its teaching methods and approaches that are relevant and applicable to that updated subject. Taken that way it implies that teachers are to engage in active PD at different levels for different learning areas to better their professional competence both

in exposure and in practice first as individuals and then as a school. Teachers' competences and skills are central to implementation of the curriculum. Absence of such qualities would necessitate that they get trained in the requisite skills and knowledge to drive their competences and classroom performance (Sofakaden, 2012; Namasasu, 2012; Shilling, 2013). Furthermore, Oguta (2014) and Mezieobi et al*.,* (2014) observe that the learning of the teacher does not end at the initial training at college but continues after graduation and well into the service. It points that; the teachers do not rest after certification, but continuously learn to ensure that their performances match the changes in educational reforms.

Academic training is also seen as pivotal training in mitigating curriculum implementation hurdles because teachers get empowered with skills to understand and implement the curriculum easily. Hence Riley (2005) points out teachers are able to select content and identify key points appropriately when implementing curriculum because of their academic and professional qualifications. He further claims that "there is recognition of the need for teachers to be well equipped with a sound understanding of what the curriculum requires" (quoted in Odera & Ongott, 2012, p. 779). Such a teacher who is well trained is more precise in evaluating the extent of the child's comprehension and this type of teacher is able, also, to interest the children more and more and to teach in a more engaging fashion (Odera & Ongott, 2012). In support of that assertion, Mandina (2012, p. 34) aptly says "If teachers are weak in content knowledge and pedagogical competence so vital for effective learning, then the achievements of learners will equally be weak." Deducing that, once, the students' exit profiles are described as weak, then that would be an indication of an ineffective implementation of the curriculum.

Training focused on the acquisition of the subject matter of a learning area is undeniably viewed as important in extenuating implementation hiccups. If one is not knowledgeable about the subject one intends to teach then teaching would not take place because teaching is based on the premise of having knowledge of what to teach. In that regard

(Mezieobi et al., 2014; OKogu, 2011) share that the teacher's knowledge of the subject matter does impact the teaching process and the fertility of students' learning. Several studies are in agreement that familiarity with the content of the subject is critical to implementation of which (Odera & Ongott, 2012; Sanchez 2010) argue that teachers working with diverse students must be knowledgeable on the content of the subject. They further advise that teachers must teach the subjects which they had specialized and trained. Surmising that, it is necessary for academic preparation beyond the certification stage as a technique of guaranteeing competence among teachers.

One way to overcome hurdles of curriculum implementation is the use of teachers with relatively short teaching experiences in educational change and implementation of which Ntumi (2016) submits that diverse experiences of teachers in schools can present challenges to effect changes swiftly or even to consider new arrangements and practices. As suggested in the Zimbabwean Shona proverb that it is difficult to teach an old dog new tricks. As argued by Ewing (2010) that old habits are slow to change when challenged by new practices and ideas (cited in Barton et al., 2014). Surmising that, once a habit is established its operation often becomes satisfying to the individual. Furthering that point, Goodman and Brand (2009) are of the view that the "teachers are social beings and since they are coming from different backgrounds, they bring their past experience into their classroom practice to influence the curriculum" (cited in Ntumi, 2016 p. 56). This suggested that if the teachers have vast experience of wrong things, that experience would be difficult to purge and may take a long time to defunct.

3.2.3.1. Trained Social Studies teachers and the effects on Social Studies curriculum implementation.

Having Social Studies specialist teachers is vital to allay challenges of Social Studies implementation. This stems from the observation made by literature that Social Studies trained teachers are scarce in African countries. As posed by Mhlauli (2010) the

problem which is common in Africa relates to teachers' training at colleges or universities. Mautle (2000) and Asimeng-Boahene (2000) further back that trained and experienced Social Studies teachers in most African schools and teacher training institutions are not many (cited in Mhlauli, 2010). Consistent with that observation was the finding from a study by Sofadekan (2012) in Nigeria which reveals that while some teachers were not Social Studies specialists, they teach it. Guessing that teaching of Social Studies in Africa can be done by those teachers who are either specialists in the subject or those teachers who are not experts in the subject but might have attained teaching qualifications. Once the teacher of Social Studies is a neophyte or non-specialist, then the chances are high that the methods of delivery from such a teacher may be shaky of which Okogu (2011) in the Nigerian study reveals that poor teaching of Social Studies originates from incorrect use of teaching approaches, and the incapability of its teachers to implement the curriculum adequately. This was so because of the absence of training in the relevant subject area. In that regard, training of Social Studies teachers becomes imperative because some research professes that availability of specialists is a push factor for success in the teaching of that subject.

The literature above voices that in most African countries the Social Studies implementation is inhibited by absence of Social Studies specialists hence the subject is taught by qualified teachers who did not specialise in the field. This impedes proper implementation of the subject as pointed out by Okam (2012) that effective implementation of Social Studies is possible if its teachers are professionally trained. A trained teacher is taken to describe one with the subject's knowledge, skills and attitudes who can interpret the curriculum effectively so that the gap that exists between the intended and the actual or delivered curriculum is narrowed. In the end, the vision of the Department of Education, teachers, parents and that of the government would be achieved. However, having specialists alone is not adequate but their attitudes to the changes in the discipline are of great importance. For that reason, the next section looks at the attitudes of both the constructers and implementers of curriculum as mitigating strategies of the problems implanted in curriculum implementation.

3.2.4. Mitigating constructers and implementers' negative attitudes and deportment

The term "constructers" in relationship to curriculum change as seen from the scholarship connotes those personnel who initiate, develop and disseminate the study programme (Asebiomo, 2015). In this regard, they are the policy developers who craft the curriculum documents. Onyeachu (2008) describe implementers as those people who engage in the process of putting all that was planned as curriculum into practice. Implying that, implementers are teachers and school administrators. Many writers are in agreement that teachers' attitudes are feelings and reactions about the practicality of the new educational system in the classroom in the context of the previous educational system which is either positive (favourable), neutral or negative (Castro, 2013; Kankam, 2016; Mthethwa, 2007). This segment of review interrogates the ways that can be used to mitigate the negative attitudes of constructers and implementers.

Positive attitudes of implementers are posed as key in inhibiting progress of the implementation of the new curricula (Castro, 2013; Kankam, 2016; Ntumi, 2016; Odera & Ongott, 2012; Zindi, 2018). In the words of Mowlaie and Rahimi (2010) one of the causes of the discrepancy between teachers' claims and practices may be teachers' attitudes (cited in Castro, 2013). Substantial studies agree and reveal that an area of concern that is associated with implementation of an educational programme is indeed the negative attitude of the teacher (Mthethwa, 2007; Odera & Ongott, 2012; Castro, 2013). The urgency on the matter is depicted in the work of Kankam (2016) by stating that, negative attitudes from both implementers and constructers of curriculum set the clock backwards if not taken care of. This suggests that attitudinal change is therefore critical and an inevitable part of any pedagogical change both emanating from the constructers and implementers of the curriculum. As posed by Kankam (2016, p. 216) that the manner in which teachers view educational reforms determines their level of

commitment to the implementation of those changes which indicates that, attitudes are not very much divorced from the competences and commitments of people (Odera & Ongott, 2012). Attitudes determine not only what teachers and policy makers think about educational reforms but also how they feel and do about the reforms. Seen this way, the constructers and implementers have to positively make adjustments and alignments to their beliefs and practices in line with the dictates of the learning area. This has been acknowledged in the research literature of which Orafi and Borg (2009) in Castro (2013) claim that "new curricula are often not implemented as planned because of the mismatch between the new curriculum demands and the teachers' beliefs". Attitudinal change is therefore fundamental and an inevitable part of any pedagogical change both emanating from the constructers and implementers of the curriculum and as such authors propose that has to be addressed to effect or promote change.

3.2.4.1. Aligning attitudes of implementers as a mitigation strategy

Substantial studies agree and reveal that an area of concern that is associated with implementation of an educational programme is indeed the negative attitude of the teacher (Castro, 2013; Kankam, 2016; Odera & Ongott, 2012). On the same note, Topper (1999 cited in Oguta, 2014, p. 15) maintains that teachers depicted as "proactive are open to changes and are willing to try new opportunities hence are high curriculum implementers." Therefore, if teachers possess the positive concern on what has to be implemented then progress is to be noticeable in the implementation stage. To instil positive attitudes in implementers, the top-down approach to curriculum change must be discarded (Pansiri, 2014; Shilling, 2013; Simmons & Maclean, 2018). The reason for disparaging this approach is based on the fact that the centre-periphery model does not take the views of the implementers hence the implementers become alienated from their work. This inhibits ownership of the implementation of the curriculum. Deducing that designing, development and effecting educational change needs to embrace people's feelings of which (Castro, 2013; Simmons & Maclean, 2018; Kankam, 2016; Nziramasanga, 2018; Maravanyika, 2018) in agreement posit that it is

indispensable that each time a program is to be launched the voices and concerns of teachers ought to be listened to first, otherwise it will be introduced but they will not own it. As put by Wedell (2009, p. 2) "change implementation involves requiring people to alter aspects of their familiar professional practices, hence taking care and being sensitive to teachers' emotions should be as important as teachers' understandings of the proposed change and the implementation of that change" Hence attitudinal gaps create dissatisfaction among implementers. Seen that way, it is imperative to comprehend the prejudices and typecasts that teachers may have on the improvisation and usage of curriculum materials and the aspects that act as enablers to teachers' constructive curriculum material improvement, choice and use in educational change (Odera & Ongott, 2012). According to Mapolisa and Tshabalala (2013, p. 1487), "successful implementation of new curriculum will take time and move through a series of phases and requires changing teachers' attitudes and feelings." Implying that, positive attitudes of implementers are core to putting into practice an educational reform.

The nature of attitudes therefore has to be factored in for total support during the implementation stage so that teachers disburse more input and responsibility towards the intended actions. This is so because literature available is in agreement that the educators sometimes resist reforms in education and do not tailor their practices to suit the demands of the intended change. As postulated by Mthethwa (2007) and Wedell (2009) who claim teachers do not support the reforms, rather they resist change and tend to maintain their old-style of performing things, or blend the ancient with the novel. It is the responsibility of the policy constructers to assist teachers to uproot these negative attitudes. Wedell (2009) points out that the change policy makers in different parts of the world tend to ignore the human factors which include the teachers' attitudes.

3.2.4.2. Aligning attitudes of curriculum constructers as a mitigation strategy

Curriculum constructers are the springboards of implementation and their attitudes need to be always positive (Barton et al., 2014; Castro, 2013; Kankam, 2016). Since curriculum constructers feel they are experts with knowledge, they have an attitude of not communicating with the change agents to seek advice on curriculum change and consequently that negates the implementation process. The imposition of a curriculum and ignoring the voices of the implementers is a hindrance to proper implementation of which several studies (Nziramasanga, 2018; Simmons & Maclean, 2018; Zindi, 2018) back up what Castro (2013, p. 42) observes that "externally imposed curricula, educational innovations have often been poorly implemented, and have resulted in periods of destabilization, increased workload, and intensification of teachers' work and a crisis of professional identity." In support, Carl (2005, p. 228) acknowledges that by disregarding teachers' opinions, the consequences of new rational on curriculum improvement may be frustrated, delaying the unsafe state that teachers just become "voices" crying in the wildernesses." The attitudes and behaviour of school principals had to be altered so that the teachers' attitudes and concerns are also factored in for total support in the implementation phase. Pursuant to that view, Pansiri (2014) argues the introduction of the curriculum using a top-down approach may make it difficult to identify with the subject and the failure of the curriculum makers to consult widely with users may influence the build-up of negative attitudes towards the subject. Pansiri (2014) further argues that the role of the teachers is autonomous because when in their classrooms, they choose and elect what to do from the official curriculum. From the curriculum the teacher may have preference to teach certain concepts naturally because they are areas of interest or are areas the teacher is comfortable (Mezieobi et al., 2014). Then it becomes apparently evident that the attitudes of school heads had to be altered so that the teachers' attitudes and concerns are also factored in for total support in the implementation phase because according to Evans (2000) a change that is imposed produces poor job-linked approaches since that diminishes or eliminates facets of the work that are indispensable; and when choice is removed, people reduce their effort and accountability towards the envisioned objective (cited in Barton et al., 2014) which implies that the implementers have to be listened to in the educational

changes so that their buy-in is established and entrenched during the implementation stage.

3.2.5. Professional support from school principals

From the literature survey undertaken (Castro, 2013; Davies, 2011; Pansiri, 2014), professional support involves organizational communication where implementers namely teachers, school managers and those who crafted the reforms share views and guidance on the changes for them to own their input and take responsibility for the implementation. Seen this way, professional support is perceived as pivotal in mitigating challenges of curriculum implementation. Hence, it is the thrust of this section.

Authors consulted raise the issues of the need to discuss what is happening in different school settings and the need to have constant communication among implementers (Hussain & Adeed, 2011; Shilling, 2013; Mezieobi, 2012). These authors agree that support in the form of communication is the key to successful implementation of the curriculum because it contributes in quality implementation that has shared values and principles. They further argue that it is important to detect the flaws of the old curriculum and documented material through communication. As such, communication is therefore seen as pivotal in mitigating curriculum implementation. On feedback on what is happening in different schools, authors agree that discussion at the implementation phase can provide an opportunity for school principals to share their insights into what is working well and what remains as a challenge in the implementation process (Department of Education Services (DES), 2006; Hussain & Adeed, 2011; Shilling, 2013). Besides the school principals, the teachers who are chief implementers through the discussion can learn teaching methods and approaches that work from their colleagues. In addition, they get to know how some of the challenges which they

arelikely to encounter can be mollified as they progress with the curriculum implementation which indicates that, the teachers share best practices in how to implement an updated curriculum.

Another point different from the discussion of activities in different schools is an area of constant communication that school managers have to maintain. From Shilling's (2013) opinion change leaders have to constantly communicate on the innovation so that implementers do not think that the reform has lost its importance. Thus, Hall and Hord (2010) argue that teachers have difficulty in taking changes seriously unless they witness strong and visible support from the administrators. According to Mapolisa and Tshabalala (2013) the head as an administrator is accountable to the success of the new programme, determines the degree of effective implementation and is meticulously related to the amount of backing the teachers receive. This backing includes: providing information about the new curriculum, development of teachers' individual skills, building relationships, provision of materials, and negotiating financial support from education authorities (Milondzo & Magongoa, 2018; Oder & Eisenschmidt, 2018; Yidana & Aboagye, 2018). That view indicates the indispensable value communication plays during the implementation stage. *Ubuntu* stresses the importance of communication of which Tshika (2014, p. 16) argues that people should "discuss until they agree and members of the village are encouraged to voice their views openly regarding the vision and direction of the clan." Therefore, the educationists have to freely express themselves until they exhaust all issues that affect them up until the vision of the educational change is clear.

On supervision of subordinates Mezieobi (2012) advises that adequate and continuous supervision is meant to assist the teachers in areas of their limitations in respect of subject matter, pedagogical skills and methodologies to better the instructional quality of the curriculum. Sanchez (2010) similarly asserts that multiple-way communication enables stakeholders to share pertinent issues regarding the schooling of students. This sort of communication gives feedback that shapes the direction of the

implementation process. As such Sanchez (2010) further advises that administrative systems must also assess implementers' needs in order to guarantee fidelity to implementation. In addition to that, Oguta (2014, p. 27) asserts that "as far as management support is concerned, school principals and management personnel should be involved and put in place an appropriate environment to make the new curriculum a success." Appropriate environment implies social relations among others which promote quality implementation of the new curriculum.

Literature surveyed indicates that supervision of the subordinates is not the domain of the school manager alone but also extends to provincial and even the national teams (Shilling, 2013). Substantial literature reports that collaboration of all stakeholders at planning plays a critical role of which (Fullan, 1992; Hall & Hord, 2010; Simmons & Maclean, 2018) argue that the change process demands leadership and teamwork, learning from training and commitment from the educators. Shilling (2013) takes it further stating that it is worthwhile to craft the implementation plans as a team because this presents teachers with correct information about the envisioned direction to be undertaken. It follows then that implementation plans for the curriculum are to be tailored, tried and put into action collaboratively with the staff members to promote coordination of activities and positive attitude.   Hence Shilling (2013) claims that besides the school heads at the schools, other educational leaders from the district, provincial and national offices had to work together sharing notes on the impediments that the teachers face and once there is evidence of a misfit, they had to assemble and generate solutions and remedies. Awareness on curriculum challenges by implementers will be a remedy for the efficacy of the curriculum implementation. Towards that end, the supervisors have to craft tools for evaluation that all the implementers are familiar with, to ease the process of checking for progress hence Hussain and Adeed (2011) further suggest that a checklist had to be developed against the recent curriculum document for checking and assessing that curriculum under implementation. This implies that, a check list should incorporate various facets and stages of curriculum improvement and

implementation where feedback could be used for upgrading the current curriculum using the list as a point of reference.

The above literature indicates that professional support and communication are essential in three ways in mitigating the challenges of curriculum implementation. Firstly, communication allows those involved to discuss what would be happening in different schools' settings thereby sharing experiences and best practices (DES, 2006; Hussain & Adeed, 2011; Shilling, 2013). Secondly, feedback is promoted wherein an opportunity is provided that allows constant communication among implementers to prevail. This communication is the launch pad for administrators to show their seriousness in the innovations and as such propels the teachers also to be serious (Ogutta, 2014; Sanchez, 2010; Shillings, 2013). Thirdly, the professional support entails supervision by school managers, consultants, officials from district, provincial and national offices. The supervision is aimed at sensitization of the challenges that are posed by the new curriculum, giving them room to gather and generate solutions (Hussain & Adeed, 2011; Shillings, 2013).

3.3.   Insights into Representations

The theme in this section seeks to unpack and comprehend the landscape and tenacity of the concept "representation". The two systems of representations which Hall (1997) identifies are mental and language. As such, the connection between mental representation and language is teased out to direct the discussion on representation of Social Studies challenges and mitigation strategies.

3.3.1. Conceptualising Representation

Literature scouted (Hall, 1997; Wagoner, 2015; Chartier, 2014) depicts that the definition of representation is shrouded in vagueness. This emanates from the fact that

the concept was examined from several theoretical and disciplinary perspectives in which its usage is wide-ranging. Galbin (2015, p. 86) argues that social representation is a label signifying a sequence of positions that have come to be expressed after the publication of Berger and Luckman's work in 1966 about representations in Social Sciences but that have been studied, revised and refined by other intellectual movements such as ethno-methodology, Social Studies of science, feminism, post structuralism, narrative philosophy and psychology, post foundational philosophy and post-positivist philosophy of science, and more (see Burr, 1995). As such, the meaning of representation depends on the nature of dissertation in which it is engrained, the diversity of traditional phenomena to which it may denote, and the theoretical packages and philosophical perceptions it is proposed to assist (Wagoner, 2015; Hakoköngäs, 2017). Drawing from these premises, the notion of representation in this study is aligned to the Social Studies curriculum. One such comprehensive definition is from Hall (1997, p. 15) who postulates that "representation means using language to say something meaningful about the world to other people." Hence, representation is defined as the creation of meaning using language. To represent something is therefore to describe or depict it. The process of attaching meaning on a social object rests on mental representation and language.

3.3.1.1. Representation as a social construct

To comprehend social construct as representation it is important to perceive it as linked with interactions between people. Several writers (Wagner, 2017; Berger & Luckmann, 1996; Galbin, 2015; Hall, 1997) agree that the way we represent the world is not naturally imposed by supernatural powers. Instead the events and objects are continuously created through social interaction. Hence, through the interaction we attach meaning to events and objects taking into account the context in which they appear. The same authors concur that the way we think and represent the world is largely swayed by the circumstances in which we live. We create meaning of the world through our activities. Therefore a thing is situated in the background of the activity. As

such, representation is a social construct. In this segment, representation as a social construct is examined because we are able to communicate through interpreting the world roughly in similar ways as we construct meanings mentally and then convert them into language. This process is socially constructed (Burger & Luckmann, 1996; Hall, 1997).

To say something is socially constructed means that it is not imposed on us, but created from the context and the conditional aspects of the social world. So a social construct is something we are born not knowing, rather it is culturally defined in our societies, implying that an object or item is social not because of some "immanent characteristics, but by virtue of the way people relate to it" (Karamanoli & Papachristopoulos, 2017, p. 11). In the context of this study, Social Studies is located in the activities of the world and should be drawn from those activities. Hall (1997) argues that since we make sense of the world in almost the similar ways, we can develop a culture of shared meaning, therefore constructing a social world. This is because as we use the mind and the knowledge comes from what we see. Our maps are formed from what we perceive in the social environment and our experience with these objects and events. Thus we create our worlds from our insights of the real world. As such, Berger and Luckmann (1996) claim that community make and withstand all social phenomena through social practices. Mead (1934), writing in the United States of America, founded 'symbolic interactionism' with his book '*Mind, self and society*' in which he proposes that as people, we form our own identities via our daily social interactions in our meetings (cited in Galbin, 2015, p. 88). For example, a street kid walking from one dust bin to another picking left overs may mean the street kid is wallowing in abject poverty to an extent of eating from the rubbish bin.

Thus, social construct in representation implies that people interpret the world and represent it through social interactions. Concluding that, representation has a social character since it functions in the context of social action (Burger & Luckmann, 1996; Gabin, 2015; Wagner, 2017). Representation is then seen as social in its origin where

individuals are said to create the things, objects and events in the world, most of which are shared in stocks and are acquired through social interaction among members. All that we represent is therefore an outcome of our interaction in the life world, or the world of everyday life which can be either mental, silence or language. Language representations manifest in form of narratives, gestures or visuals.

3.3.1.2. Mental representation

Several authors (Hall, 1997; Wagner, 2017; Chartier, 2014; Hakoköngäs, 2017) concur that meaningful interpretation of the world rests on mental representation. As such, its contribution to correct interpretation of the world is indispensable hence an elaboration of what it is, is inevitable. This elaboration is to enable us to see how objects of the world get represented in our minds. The same authors are in agreement that mental representation is a system in which formation of concepts and images starts first and then is followed by description of the world using language. However, Hakoköngäs (2017) is of the opinion that, the mental pictures of any object, people and events may be formed and then remain in the head without being expressed in verbal and non-verbal forms. This then becomes representation through silence. This part of the review presents mental representation and silence as representation and explores how the two are useful in depicting Social Studies.

Mental representation is depicted as instrumental in representation of which several studies (Chartier, 2014; Hall, 1997; Hakoköngäs, 2017) argue that without it we cannot meaningfully interpret the world. This is so because meaning of the world starts from the formation of concepts and pictures in our mind. We then use these thoughts and images to describe the world. As for Hall (1997) mental representation is a system by which all things, happenings and people are interrelated with a collection of ideas in our heads. The pictures created in our mind are the conceptual maps, which enable us to refer to things both inside and outside our heads. Thus meaning relies on the connection

amongst things in the world such as people, events and objects and the conceptual system that functions as mental representations of them.

Scholars agree that mental representation is a system of representation whose concern is to attach connotations to the world by creating a collection of correspondences between things, people, events and abstract ideas and our system of concepts known as the conceptual map (Berger & Luckmann, 1996 Galbin, 2015, Hall, 1997). As such, people describe the world through the maps that are formed in their heads during social interaction. The interpretation is based on these maps and the context in which the events, things and people appear and how that is related to the activities of people. This is because representation of the world is seen as a social construct as argued by Berger and Luckmann (1996).

3.3.1.3. Silence as representation

Spiral of silence is a mass communication theory put forward by the German scientist Elizabeth Noelle-Neumann. It denotes the affinity of individuals to remain inaudible in the event that their views are contradicting with the popular views on a matter (Moy, Domke and Stamm, 2001 cited in Hall, 1997). According to Noelle-Neumann (1991) reasons for the silence may be ignited from: Fear of isolation when the group or public notices that a person has a conflicting view from the rest of the group; and fear of retribution or exclusion for voicing said opinion might lead to a negative consequence beyond that of mere isolation (cited in Hall, 1997). For instance, Social Studies teachers may fear the threats that emanate from the integration of History and Geography in Social Studies because many teachers are not trained to master both subjects. As argued by Kgari-Masondo (2017) Historians and Geographers fear for the independence of their subjects as they feel that their subjects will be subsumed into the Social Studies learning area. Hence the teachers engage in silence.

In addition and against the background of the evolution of Social Studies as a learning area, the teachers may feel, think and describe the content of the subject as driven by political will. As such, they may immerse in deep silence on the contributions of the Social Studies curriculum for fear that its implementation may emancipate the citizens from the yoke of the powerful elite. Hence that emancipation of the people of various opinions (povo) may lead them to be isolated by those in power, jeopardising their career and status. The teachers' silence has a meaning with regard to the benefits and demerits of its implementation. The silence by Social Studies teachers portrays the harmful effects that it may pose to them as professionals (Kgari-Masondo, 2017).

3.3.1.4. Representation through Language

Substantial scholarship (Galbin, 2015; McNamme, 2004; Wagner, 2017, Hall, 1997) depicts that language is an important tool for construction of knowledge and is key for proper representation of the world. These authors agree language manifests itself in two forms: verbal and non-verbal. The non-verbal form includes gestures and visual data whereas the verbal form is either written or spoken words. Some writers (McNamme, 2004; Galbin, 2015) submit language just like mental representation is also a social construct since the meaning conveyed is contextual. In this section, representation through language is assessed and later representation through narratives, gestures and visual data will then be explored.

Since people in a society share almost similar conceptual maps, they also share a way of communication to make sense of the world. This is done through a language. From literature surveyed language, is able to carry and express meaning through sounds, images and words (Hall, 1997; Galbin, 2015; Wagner, 2017). Inferring that sound and images form what we call language which enables us to exchange meanings and concepts. We are therefore able to express meaning and ideas through language.

Language is perceived as interactive process through which we comprehend the world and ourselves (Gablin, 2015, p.82). Implied herein is that it has a central aspect that assists the process of knowledge production. This is due to the fact that with the shared language we are able to represent or exchange meaning. In the context of Social Studies, the teachers can exchange these meanings among stakeholders in education through language representation. As McNamee (2004) has argued that to understand representation through language is useful for describing and representing the world, as well as a way of constructing it since it is a form of social action. As such, language gets its interpretation from its usage in context (Burr, 2003, cited in Gablin, 2015, p.88).

Representation through language is also about meaning making. Hence, language is the process of constructing meaning, just like mental representation because instead of visualization representations in minds it is healthier to visualise them through minds, reminiscent of a "canopy being laced by people's collaborated conversation and activities" (Wagner, 2017, p. 96). This infers that meaning of the world is accomplished through synchronised efforts of many people. Thus, what I say remains nonsense until one assesses its meaning contextually. Knowledge is thus in continuous production as dialogue ensues. Language then invites other means of creating and showing knowledge, which goes beyond scientific texts, moving toward lively expressions of language that capture the imagination of people (Watkins, Mohr & Kelly, 2011 in Wagoner, 2015). As such, Hall (1997, p. 18) argues that "our theoretical map (which is shared meanings in our minds) must be decoded into a shared language so as to relate our thoughts and ideas with certain forms of language." This means that language can either be verbal or non-verbal as long as these forms of language can produce knowledge and represent the world of which Galbin (2015) argues that narratives, social poetics, images, and videos are all employed in knowledge production and expression.

3.3.1.5. Representation through Narratives

A narrative is described as a spoken or written text providing a description of an incident/act, which is sequentially related (Czanarniawska, 2004, p. 17). Thus a narrative account that Social Studies teachers share is either textual or oral representation. Literature (Murray, 2002; Chartier, 2014) points out that those narratives are social constructs as they are made in a social and interpersonal context. Murray (2002, p. 7) asserts that "it is together that we remember and it is within the social medium of language that we articulate our most individual memories in the mode of narratives" which are not imposed upon Social Studies teachers through nature; instead they are created by them. These narratives are expressed through a shared language in order to have a meaning. Such narratives have two underlying features namely time and identity (Murray, 2002; Czarniawska, 2004; Chartier, 2014).

Substantial scholarship (Murray, 2002; Czarniawska, 2004; Chartier, 2014, Hakoköngäs, 2017) describes time in reference to narratives as the period or phase in a temporal world. They further argue that time is important in the representation of narratives. As such, Durkheim in Murray (2002) observes that a comprehension of time is fundamental to an understanding of social realism. For instance, the content and teaching of Social Studies during the colonial period in Africa was characterised by the teaching of Geography and History of Europe (Foley, 1979; Namasasu, 2012). By then that was the reality of the Social Studies education. Upon attainment of political independence, the teaching of Social Studies in Africa was then aligned to the History and Geography of that country first and then Africa. This means that the representations through narratives that people create are relatively time implied consequently; Social Studies teachers had to familiarise themselves with its curriculum of that time. What they represented as Social Studies was thus based on the History and Geography of the western countries which was in line with that period. Hence, Ricouer (1997) contends that people live in a sea of time and narrative offers a map of that sea (cited in Murray, 2002). In addition, disciplines embedded in Social Studies such as History and Geography makes use of time in their analysis of the events and actions which form

part of the narratives. Hence Stanley and Nelson (1994) portray Social Studies as "the study of all human enterprise over time and space" (cited in Ross, Mathison & Vinson, 2013, p. 20).

The understanding of past events and actions hinges on the period these actions took place and their implications for the future. This is because; the narratives are not stagnant in the past. Rather, they permeate the future. Hence Murray (2002, p. 15) substantiates that people connect their interpretation of old objects or events with the present and future events "to give a progressive forward trajectory". Thus stories are continuously created on a daily basis during social interactions. Admittedly, History, Geography, Sociology and Economics engrained in Social Studies go under transformation of which Kgari-Masondo (2017, p. 85) asserts that "South Africa as in many parts of the world has made great strides in transforming History and Geography curricula as independent subjects within the Social Studies learning area." Each theme in Social Studies is dynamic and its change is inevitable. For that reason, what was correct yesterday might be incorrect today. This means that to the Social Studies teacher, the challenges and the mitigation strategies, content, the methodology and the approaches in Social Studies as seen from the representations through narratives is ever changing to suit the context of the time. This signifies that teachers perceive the inevitability to be engaged in Social Studies curriculum research continuously to tame several of the problems brought by the Social Studies curriculum changes. In addition, narratives make Social Studies teachers illuminate the stories of challenges they face in the implementation of the learning area with regard to time allocated to the learning area, when and how often the subject is to be assessed. For example, narratives from student teachers pointed out that Social Studies curriculum is apportioned less time (Kgari-Masondo, 2017) which is one of the hurdles in Social Studies curriculum implementation.

Literature depicts identity formulation as one concern of narratives of which Ricouer (1991) defines it as a social changing development by which the narrative brings

meanings to the world through numerous forms of appearance (quoted in Rappoport, 1993). This means that, we depend on traditional plot lines to make our story about the world and to define ourselves, our community and our society. As such, creation of history through stories makes us unique from other people. This is termed societal narrative and it encapsulates the history of a people (Murray, 2002). Rappoport (1993) takes this further by arguing that such societal narratives as representations may, through community mobilisation, start to challenge oppressive narratives and develop more non repressive ones. As such, Ross, Mathison and Vinson (2013, p. 23) posit that Social Studies education imparts social skills in students for successful living together in the global contexts. It is via this that Social Studies teachers engage in the process of identity transformation because of narratives that depict the realities within communities. In the same way, Social Studies as a learning discipline has its distinct characteristics that separate it from other subjects but having themes that have roots in the societal narratives. Hence Kgari-Masondo (2017) argues that Social Studies have indigenous themes and it makes sense that they have to be studied in a decolonised fashion which is part of the current debates on curriculum transformation. These themes are portrayed as the history of the nation. For example, civic education encompasses issues related to democracy that have evolved from the humble beginning of traditional governance up to modern governance. In stark contrast to the representation of Social Studies elucidated above Ross, et al., (2013, p. 22) argues that the purpose of Social Studies education is to teach students patriotic or 'democratic' values through the teaching and learning of isolated, truthful pieces of material drawn from the canon of western thought and philosophy. This depicts that Social Studies is Eurocentric in content and its pedagogy. Hence Social Studies seen this way does not make use of African Indigenous Knowledge Systems because the content is Eurocentric and indigenous knowledge has been ignored. In the African context, Social Studies is therefore taught using the western epistemology lenses (Kgari-Masondo, 2017). Implying that identity of the people it purports to serve is absent.

In sum, literature scouted on representation through narrative describes Social Studies as a subject that evolved from two major learning areas: Geography and History which were historically slanted to the dictates of the European views. From the literature surveyed Social Studies cherish Eurocentricism both in content and pedagogy at the expense of the Indigenous Knowledge System and African thought - the *Ubuntu* philosophy. In the African context, Kgari-Masondo (2017) depicts Social Studies as an area of study endowed with indigenous themes. As such it has to be taught and learnt in a decolonised fashion to align it with the demands of Africans.

3.3.1.6. Representation through gestures

Gestures as narrative representation are described in several studies (Gilbert, 2010; Chartier, 2014) as a language made by the body parts in their movement. Studies have shown that gestures are underrated (Gilbert, 2010) yet observing a teacher at work reveals that gesture, is extensively used as an addition to other forms of representation. There are four usages of gestures of which (Gilbert, 2010) describe thus: First, deixic use which is used, for example, when a teacher is explaining countries of the world in a Social Studies lessons points to the map and the relative position of the countries. Secondly, metaphorical use, that is, figuratively using gestures to convey meaning of speech. For example, the use of hand and arm movements to portray the rate at which colonisation took place in Africa. Thirdly, for temporal highlighting, where emphasis is shown by body movements. For example: when hand movements are employed to stress the order of events in the colonisation of a particular African country. Fourthly: the social interactivity use in which the relations of notions to other thoughts are relayed. For instance when showing the historical order of the main developments during the evolution of Social Studies (Golden-Meadow, 2006 cited in Gilbert, 2010, p. 8) such gestures represent narratives in that they offer the descriptions and chronicle of events that took place during that time of Social Studies development.

3.3.1.7. Representation through visual data

The term visual representation as depicted in literature connotes to that representation which shows an idea or image that is presented in a particular way to have its meaning or symbolism (Hakoköngäs, 2017; Hall, 1997). Studies have revealed that a variety of forms of representation through visual data has emerged of which (Gilbert, 2010; Hall, 1997; Banks, 2007) make mention of maps, graphic diagrams and computer created 3D visualizations. As such, in Social Studies, various visual media were employed in recording social occurrences and as topics of study (Loizos, 2000; Banks, 2007). Hence, the content of Social Studies has pictures, photographs and other pictorial images to convey meaning. Thus, the context in which the visual representation is used determines its nature and scope of its curriculum.

For the Social Studies teacher, visual data can be depicted as a crucial mode through which the representation of Social Studies can take place since visual data can simplify abstract information that they find difficult to explain in words. As such, several studies agree that visual images have several characteristics (De Rosa & Farr, 2001; Hakoköngäs, 2017; Helmers & Hill, 2004) which make them more appealing and meaningful than what texts offer (Helmers and Hill, 2004). Based on that argument, representational images such as photographs and videos make the impression that a given image represents reality by inviting the viewer to empathise in the present unlike text and verbal messages that may remain distant and far-fetched. One trait endowed in the visual images that makes them powerful in the social world is the power of the documentary descriptions to arouse feelings like grief, compassion and anger. For example, in the Social Studies textbook, we may have horrific pictures of dead bodies as a result of war which evoke emotions. This is because the picture itself is seen as evidence (Barthes (1980) cited in Hakoköngäs, 2017), with the emotional capacity closely connected to the reality. Hence, the visual images are not contested simply as textual or verbal.

Another point that literature raises on representation through visual data is related to creation of identity. Hence, Hakoköngäs (2017) explains that each collection has its own standard of visual images; for example, in the Social Studies curriculum, in most nations, the portraits of former presidents together with flags and coats of arms, which decorate the partitions of primary schools, bring people together under a single visual sign. She further notes that the incessant recurrence of some images and themes generates common imageries, which then forms a group's identity. In support of that view, Zelizer (2004) argues that visual images help us to remember, since they freeze a moment somewhere in the middle of a narrative; the viewer almost automatically completes the story implied in the image (cited in Hakoköngäs, 2017). This infers that, teachers view a still image (for example a photograph) in books, as a tool that has the capacity to communicate the stories before and after the chronicled moment. Yet the photograph captures a split second of the real moment. In totality, the social power of representation through visual images is hinged on their impression of Social Studies reality, which can be employed to convince, their capability to trigger feelings by denoting to familiar things, their appeal to memories, their ability to show both sympathetic and horrific scenes, and their creation of identification, which actually makes the images meaningful to the people by referring to shared imagery.

In summary, representation structures our knowledge of the Social Studies curriculum the same way we form meaning of things such as people, objects or events (Hall, 1997). It is not possible for us to know and describe the Social Studies curriculum without it being represented to or for us by narratives, visual data, gestures and silence. Everything like objects, people or events is interrelated with a system of mental concepts. The concepts are the mental representations of real-world phenomena. These may be created from physical, material objects that we can see through our senses, or they may be intangible things that we cannot directly perceive. The mental concepts then correspond to a set of signs called language, which can be either written or spoken words. Language can also include visual images, gesture, music, or other

stimuli such as traffic lights. These forms of language assist us to represent the Social Studies curriculum.

Several authors point out that representation is normally used in textbooks' analysis and analysis of objects (Mason, 2002; Cropley, 2015, Cresswell, 2003). However, while in this study the focus is on representation through silence and gestures, greater emphasis is placed on narratives. In support of the use of narratives Cropley (2015, p. 84) argues that the fundamental task of qualitative researchers is to describe the world as it is experienced in the everyday lives of the people who live it, and to increase understanding of this experience. Narratives thus require accounts from people actually experiencing or possessing experience of the aspects of the world the researcher is interested in, and the accounts must be true to the context in question. As such, the narratives fitted comfortably in this study as it sought the teachers' representations of Social Studies curriculum implementation, challenges and the mitigation strategies. Narratives, according to Creswell (2009) are characterized by a comprehensive investigation of people's lives and as such attempt to ask people to give accounts of their lives. In addition, information is retold several times by the researcher thereby turning it into a narrative record where there is an integration of a participant's life with that of the investigator's which in this case can be called collaborative narrative. So, while teachers' representation through narratives dominates in the current study, traces of silence and gestures representation are infrequently visible. That was applied to triangulate representation through narratives in an effort to deduce a detailed interpretation of the type of the challenges which the teachers faced.

3.4.   Model of science teachers' representations on curriculum implementation

Under this review, a model of Science teachers from Atlanta and Asia is explored on the premises that no studies about teachers' representation of challenges of Social Studies curriculum implementation and the mitigation strategies have been undertaken. As

such, it is pivotal to explore in another learning area how scholars depict curriculum implementation, its challenges and the approaches to circumvent the challenges. Using this model might lay the foundation for researchers to conceive operational policies for eliminating obstacles that inhibit teachers' implementation of curriculum innovations (Ni & Guzdial, 2010; Mansour, 2010). Hence this Science model, might provide directions to constructers and implementers of the curriculum on how to plan an effective implementation matrix that "create a real-world impact on teaching practices and assists students' learning" (Ni & Guzdial, 2010, p. 3). The Science model here presented serves as a springboard from which the Social Studies stakeholders may effect educational change and implementation. The literature surveyed depicts that Science teachers conceptualise Natural Sciences in more or less the same way by defining it as an area that seeks to help people gain scientific knowledge and awareness of the environment and acquire positive attitudes and practical skills to solve environmental problems, thereby building environmentally friendly values (Chen & Whei, 2015; Yinghui, 2016). Science teachers' representation on challenges of implementation reveals that the problems are anchored on the way the curriculum is disseminated using the top-down approach instead of the down-up approach. Evidence is also available that depicts the two models of disseminating the curriculum (Elliot, 2006; Schneider, 2002; Mansour, 2010; Ni & Guzdial, 2010). This section presents the Science teachers' understanding of curriculum implementation.

Research (Chen & Whei, 2015; Mansour, 2010; Schneider, 2002, Yinghui, 2016) reports that Science teachers have a good understanding of what Science Education (SE) entails. As such, the Science teachers conceptualise Science Education as the creation of people who are inventive, critical, investigative, and balanced through the practise of analysis based, learner centred teaching that will facilitate students' construction of information. Therefore, Science teachers represent science teaching as consisting of "habituating the pupil to observe for him, to reason for himself on what he observes, and to check the conclusions at which he arrives by further observation and experiment" (Elliot, 2006, p. 56). While authors confirm that teachers are the end users

during curriculum implementation, their weaknesses rest in their beliefs that teachers naturally resist educational reforms. As argued by Mansour (2010) that central to the apprehension of any curriculum execution objective is the need for knowledge concerning the beliefs that teachers hold about curriculum implementation and the geneses of the beliefs.

A survey of research depicts that representation on the Science Education implementation from the teachers' lens is chequered with challenges that emanate from the way the curriculum is brought to the teachers. Two models have been used: the top-down approach, that is, from the centre to the periphery and the bottom-up approach, which is in stark contrast to the former (Pansiri, 2014). Neither of these two models is pure with any limitations. Hence some researchers (Fincher &Tenenberg, 2007; Levy & Ben-Ari, 2007) posit that in a commonly used top-down approach, in which change is regarded as the diffusion of ideas from programme developers or policy makers to implementers, teachers are generally held accountable for the miscarriage of an innovation (cited in Ni & Guzdial, 2010, p. 124). On the other hand, the bottom-up approach is often characterised as grass roots-initiated and is devoid of a unified direction and management of which the implementation is then blamed for lack of standards. However, the centre-periphery model is perceived by Science teachers as unworkable as it is haunted by teething problems (Shilling, 2013). As such, Schon (1971) argues that centre-periphery systems are susceptible to disappointment because the requirements from the periphery on the centre always surpass its capability to provide an adequate supply of physical, human and financial resources, to sustain them (cited in Elliot, 2006, p. 56). Therefore, the Science teachers are of the view that a teacher model of curriculum implementation is sounder (Elliot, 2006; Ni & Guzdial, 2010; Schneider, 2002). For Mansour (2010, p. 126), "the success of Science Education reform depends on the teachers' ability to integrate the philosophy and practices of current programmes of its reform with their existing philosophy." This implies that, the integration of the philosophy of the learning area is possible if the teacher initiated approach is taken.

The Science model which the teachers view as suitable is a model of teachers in which Ni and Guzdial (2010, p. 126) who deal with Science Education teachers from Atlanta describe as bottom-up approach takes into account the teachers' knowledge and beliefs as key elements in the interaction of professional development and in converting the curriculum into reality. The model is premised on the assumption that teachers' beliefs influence their perceptions, which in turn affect their behaviours in the classroom. As McLaughlin (2008, p. 174) has pointed out, "what actually is delivered or provided under the aegis of a policy depends finally on the individual at the end of the line…" This implies that, teachers create their own interpretation of any projected curriculum as they get oriented to it and elect what to implement. Literature thus depicts the importance of involving teachers in the implementation process by following the bottom-up approach in cascading new reforms (Pansiri, 2014; Shilling, 2013).

3.5. Impression of the Literature Review

The literature revealed that representations of curriculum change is critical as it structures our knowledge of the curriculum issues the same way we form meaning of things such as people, objects or events (Hall, 1997). Threading through the literature, it was clear that there was a growing interest in studies that looked at challenges of curriculum implementation. However, little information is available on the teachers' representations of the implementation of the Social Studies curriculum because few, if there are any, studies are available on it which explored the teachers' representations of challenges of implementation and the strategies per se. Therefore, the implementation stage of the new Zimbabwean 2015-2022 Social Studies curriculum lacked Zimbabwean teachers' representation. Surmising that, their voices were missing which was a knowledge gap on the teachers' representation of the curriculum design, development and implementation of which this study addressed. The teachers' representations could unlock the mysteries concerning challenges of implementation

and mitigation strategies since teachers are considered as "the most influential factor" in educational reforms (Prendergast & Treacy, 2017, p. 1; Zindi, 2018, p. 27).

While several studies (Ntumi, 2016; Makunja, 2016; Kanham, 2016; Kigwilu and Akala, 2017; Rahman, Pandian and Kaur, 2018, Zindi, 2018; Karim, et al., 2018; Ndhlovu, 2018) provide critical and meaningful understandings on a number of generic challenges faced by teachers in the implementation of the new curriculum, their limitations lay in their failure to consider the teacher's perspectives of the mitigation strategies thereof. To close this gap, the study sought to unpack the mitigation strategies that could be adopted to drive fidelity of implementation of the innovated curriculum in Zimbabwe. Research reports that the teachers' voices in educational change and their personal experiences are habitually neglected (Carl, 2005; Cohn & Kottkamp, 1993; Dube & Jita, 2018). Indeed, voices of teachers on curriculum reform, mitigation strategies and implementation on the new Social Studies curriculum of Zimbabwe were silent throughout the literature. As far as I knew, this study was the first to evaluate opinions of Zimbabwean teachers on the implementation of the new 2015-2022 Social Studies curriculum since a substantial search did not report any concrete research on the challenges of implementation of the updated curriculum expected to run in Zimbabwe up to 2022. Countable research (Esau & Mpofu, 2017; Gasva & Moyo, 2017; Dube & Jita, 2018) on curriculum change and implementation in Zimbabwean schools was undertaken. The limitation of these studies was that they focussed on attitudes and the incompetence of teachers which they argued emanate from their resistance, lack of PD and resources. The narratives of these studies echoed the old adage that teachers needed to be taught so as to successfully implement changes. None of these studies was an attempt to listen to the teachers' voices despite them acknowledging that teachers are key to unlock the implementation process. The challenges teachers encountered in the implementation process of the new Social Studies curriculum was therefore a grey area.

Literature depicts detailed information on other subjects' challenges but little is written on Social Studies per se and none of the studies focused on the mitigation strategies (Dzimiri & Marimo, 2015; Mandina, 2012; Mtetwa, 2018). More so, nothing on teachers representations with regard to the new curriculum of which (Chimhenga, 2016; Dzimiri & Marimo, 2015; Ndebele & Tshuma, 2014; Namasasu, 2012; Magudu, 2012; Makunja, 2016; Shilling, 2013) argue that for success to occur in the implementation reviews, checking feedback is very important. The study strived again to suggest ways to mollify these challenges as identified from the teachers' representations which was limited in other studies. However, this study could not interrogate the learning areas that had been covered previously but confined its locus on the Social Studies curriculum.

Usually, the context in which the educational reforms are undertaken changes globally because the resources available and the national aspirations differ from country to country. This was evidenced by the diverse findings of curriculum reform and their challenges for instance in Nigeria Mezieobi, et al., (2014) and Sofadekan (2012) claim that the shortage of Social Studies teachers works against implementation whilst in Botswana; Mhlauli (2010) argues that poor teaching methods are to blame. This warranted research in the context of Zimbabwe especially so on the updated 2015-2022 Social Studies curriculum so that the findings could add to the voices of other countries' findings. By virtue that educational reforms are invariably sustained by the current economic, social and political context within the country in which they are implemented, the launch of a revised Social Studies curriculum in schools from January 2017 when Zimbabwe is/was struggling to be on her feet economically could somehow further weaken the already fragile learning environment in schools and classrooms. Then under such conditions, the challenges the teacher met in the implementation of the subject were evaluated to inform policy and improve teaching practice hence the thrust of this study.

So far, from the literature survey the possible mitigation strategies that educators can employ to avert the challenges of curriculum implementation were assessed. The last

section situated this study in the big picture by showing the grey area for research. The next segment outlines and interrogates the theoretical frameworks that illuminated the study. In this part, the conceptual frameworks and their applicability to the research questions are explored.

3.6. Theoretical Frameworks

This section presents the two theoretical frameworks that informed this study which were: Fullan's (2015) theory on educational change and the *Ubuntu* philosophy on stakeholder participation. The first theoretical framework shapes the study by identifying the factors that are impetus for effective educational change while the last one explains the importance of participation and team work in educational change. To put the discussion in context the concept "theoretical framework" is firstly defined. This is because many researchers have complications in connecting a theoretical framework to a study, resulting in the misconception of the gist of it.

Against that understanding, Imenda (2014, p. 185) describes a theoretical framework as "the theory that researchers choose to guide them in their research." Seen that way, a theoretical framework is therefore the use of concepts in a theory in a bid to provide enlightenment of an event, or research problem. It can be an entire theory or parts of it that are tied together but serve to illuminate the issues surrounding the phenomenon. In an elementary statement a theoretical framework stems from a theory and offers the skeleton or the plan of the research (Cohen et al., 2011; Creswell, 2013; Imenda, 2014). A theory is concerned with explaining a phenomenon while a theoretical framework gives direction and assists the investigator to condense any previous information and directs the upcoming course of action. Having defined the term "conceptual framework" the focus then is on the theories which guided this study.

3.6.1. Fullan's (2015) theory on educational change

In his work, "The New Meaning of Educational Change," Fullan (2015) envisions three general phases to the change process. The initial phase is named "adoption" which connotes a process which leads up to and includes a decision to proceed with change. "Implementation" is the second phase, which encompasses the first experiences of trying to put the educational blue print or the education reform into practice and action. The final stage is termed "institutionalization" which refers to whether the change is accepted and then taken as an on-going part of the system or is discarded by way of commission or omission. The current study confined itself to the second phase of Fullan's (2015) change process namely the implementation. This was because existing literature (Fullan, 1992; Ogar & Awhen, 2015; Maravanyika & Nazi, 2014; Shilling, 2013) suggests that the way curricula are executed does not frequently replicate what curriculum originators planned. This means that, a gap exists between policy and the actual implementation. In this regard, curriculum implementation was fraught with teething challenges which emanated from the way the implementation process was carried out.

Literature portrays that curriculum implementation is the most important stage in educational reform (Fullan, 2015; Rahman, Pandian & Kaur 2018; Yidana & Aboagye, 2018). As posited by Ogar and Awhen (2015, p. 145) "a curriculum may be beautifully planned but will be of no relevance if it is not implemented." Taking heed of that, the study adopted the implementation stage so as to investigate and unearth challenges teachers faced that impeded the successful implementation of the updated curriculum. Upon taking note of the challenges from the teachers' representations, the strategic measures for their extenuation were mooted. I had purposively selected this phase as it was to my contention, after a survey of literature, that this phase was apparently a grey area, especially so when the study took into cognizance the representations of curriculum implementers who in most cases had been neglected and side-lined on education reforms. I shared the same opinion with Obinna (2007) and Fullan (2015)

who argue that the teacher is the most competent person from whom advice must be sought. The teachers were selected because several studies report the imposition of educational change on teachers of which Rogan (2007) claims those teachers' voices in educational reforms have been silent and commonly not respected. I took it that if teachers were disregarded in the curriculum implementation process, the gap between the intended and the actual curriculum could be widened. Research (Cuban, 1993; Shilling, 2013; Maravanyika, 2018; Nziramasanga, 2018) and practice show that there were significant disparities between the targeted curriculum and the actual curriculum taught in schools.

Against that understanding, Fullan's (2015) theory claims that there are factors which when inadequate could cripple the successful implementation of a new curriculum. He further points out that the more factors there are which support the implementation, the more the change is noticeable. He makes mention of the incorrect vision of anything which was to be implemented, inadequate training for teachers, lack of resources, lack of feedback mechanism, non-involvement of implementers in decision making as well as the negative mind-sets of implementers of which several authors (Dzimiri & Marimo, 2015; Makunja, 2016; Ogar and Awhen, 2015; Okoth, 2016) also back. Fullan (2015) acknowledges the importance of these factors at the implementation stage which indicates that, the process of carrying out curriculum is an arduous task because the factors that are impetus to positive implementation are varied.

Incorrect vision of the object be implemented as seen from Fullan (2015) connotes the misconception of the subjects to be implemented. This indicates that, shortcomings on the subject to be implemented imply that the implementers could work blindly with little knowledge of the expectations to be fulfilled. Fullan (2015, p. 76) describes lack of lucidity about objectives and aims concerning educational change as a "perennial problem". The problem of clarity includes vague goals and implementation strategies. Hence Fullan (2007) argues that clarity refers not only to details but also to the general sense of direction and purpose of the innovation. Surmising that, implementers ought to

have an image of what to do to get there. This factor was important as it guided the questions which helped in determining the teachers' awareness of what the Social Studies curriculum implementation was and the expectations in implementing it. While the teachers who participated in the study were Social Studies trained, the vision of its change was not apprised to them, hence worked blindly following instructions. Instead of them leading in the implementation process, they lagged behind the policy makers who were knowledgeable of where they were going.

One factor which Fullan (2015) opines as critical to implementation of an educational change is Professional Development (PD) which connotes the training that the implementers had to undertake to acquaint themselves with the changes of which Bennet (2007) argues that PD is vital because it provides teachers with knowledge and skills which are essential to sharpen their teaching practices, to refresh them, and to better the student learning. Besides PD, feedback mechanisms are identified by Fullan (2015) as key to unlock the implementation hurdles. Feedback mechanisms refer to organizational communication among the implementers. Fullan (2015) submits that educational changes miscarry because there is inadequate interaction during the implementation phase.

Resource outlay or initial investment is among one of the raft of factors that can often be used to prophesy the degree of success of implementation. As such, Fullan and Pomfret (1977) argue developing countries have shown in their practice that one major generic challenge that teachers face as implementers of any curriculum is the shortage of resource support. Resource support can be in the form of funds, personnel, instructional materials and infrastructure. Whereas involvement in decision making implies roping in all implementers in the development of change, the positive mind set entails the attitudes that teachers have during the implementation phase. Thus, one of the great problems that Fullan points out in educational innovation is "not resistance to change, but the presence of the negative mind-set" (Fullan, 2015, p. 29). The positive mind set entails the attitudes that teachers have during the implementation phase. Hogg

and Vaughan (2005) describe attitude as beliefs, feelings and behavioural inclinations to noteworthy objects, groups, events or symbols (cited in Oguta, 2014). As such attitudes are used to elucidate the course and determination of human performance. Thus an attitude believed will drive one to perform contingent to its nature. Therefore, the process of assimilating the transformation with one's personal reality needs to be prepared in advance if acceptance of the changes is to be witnessed.

The contributions by Fullan (2015) on educational change resonates with the pioneering work of Gross (1971) who propounded that the putting into practice of any educational programme takes into account issues of facilities, teachers' capability, management support, compatibility with organizational arrangement and clarity of the teacher of the subject to be executed. Gross (1971) in his sociological analysis of planned educational change therefore hints that fidelity to curriculum implementation is stalled by four elements which are: lack of intelligibility of the reforms to teachers, incapability of the teachers, and non-availability and inadequacy of resources and absence of a sound management support.

While Professional Development as put by Fullan (2015) was likened to Gross (1971) capability of the implementers which connotes the need for the implementers to receive adequate training before, during and after the execution of the new educational changes, resource support was equated to obtainability of resources. Feedback mechanism as envisioned by Fullan (2015) was the same as management support as perceived by Gross (1971). The clarity of the innovation as put by Gross (1971) was almost the same with the implementers' correct vision of what was to be implemented by Fullan (2015). The basic assumptions of these two scholars were that the demise or rise of the implementation of the new curriculum was hinged on the factors alluded to above. As such, the factors that obstructed the effective implementation from the two were similar in context except on terminology. Hence this study employed their contributions as a blue print to examine the challenges that teachers faced.

Fullan's (2015) theory was applicable in guiding this research on the basis that the factors which he made mention were pertinent to the implementation of the transformed curriculum in Zimbabwean schools. Hence, these factors were the basis from which interview questions and focus group questions were extracted. This implies that, these elements were to hint at the nature of the teachers' representations of challenges which were encountered during the implementation of the Social Studies curriculum and illuminated some solutions to the challenges. However, the theory was heavily tilted towards the European world view and represented the western epistemelogy as argued by Higgs (2011, p. 2) that what is taken as education in Africa is not Africa but rather a reflection of Europe in Africa and therefore was biased and highly applicable in the western context of the first world countries characterised by high socio-economic status. This is because no research is "ever neutral, objective and apolitical because power, priviledge and philosophical location influence what we research, how we do it, what sense we make of it and how we communicate it" (Moletsane (2018, p. 2). The use of Fullan's theory alone was inadequate since reliance on it was doing injustice and deservice to the decoloniality impetus as put by Tsakeni (2019, p. 2) that curriculum is part of modernity which spreads to all parts of the world, resulting in Eurocentric hegemony. Pillay and Swanepoel take it further and observe that curriculums in Africa remain largely Eurocentric and continue to reinforce whites and western dominance (2019, p. 119).

To address the epistemenological limitations of Fullan's (2015) theory, the study employed the hallmarks of the *Ubuntu* philosophy to explore and illuminate the mitigation strategies for the unearthed challenges thereby situating the work in an African epistemic position in terms of its social and political context. As succinctly explained by Pillay and Swanepoel (2019) that employing the Afrocentric views is re-centering Africa in the curriculum, ensuring that the curriculum speak to, and from, the African context which Ngugi (1981, p. 87) calls "the quest for relevance" in which localised cultural and social recollections are expressed and embedded within non

western epistemologies. That is what Waghid and Hibbert (2018, p. 269) term "defamiliarisation" which functions to look beyond the familiar, dominant narratives by cultivating critical reflection and deconstruction of the taken for granted perspectives. Since Fullan's (2015) theory was done in Europe, this study also added views from Africa as argued by van Wyk (2011, p. 177) that "currciula should be firmly anchored in the cultural and intellectual environment of the community in which it is located" thereby contributing to the project of epistemological redress and infusing the curriculum with the wealth of knowledge which is informed by wishes and thoughts of local communities. That is backed by Freter (2019, p. 20) who argues that "we need to start reading African philosophy and recognise that philosophy is not a western invention but a shared existential practice of humanity as a whole." Locating the *Ubuntu* philosophy in the curriculum discourse has remained a *terra incognita* and as such, by employing an epistemological bricolage of it and Fullan's (2015) theory, the study broke away from the conventional way of viewing curriculum from an exclusive Eurocentric lens to accommodate African knowledge systems.

3.6.2. The *Ubuntu* Philosophy

I couch this study in *Ubuntu* philosophy which has the impetus to usher in new thinking in curriculum change and implementation. While the *Ubuntu* philosophy has been extensively used in management and other discourses other than in curriculum change, it has great potential when employed in curriculum issues, to contribute to effective curriculum implementation by mitigating challenges that continue to plague the process. Thus, the second theoretical framework that shaped this study was based on *Ubuntu*, whose major tenets echo the African thought of communism which was a bid to construct the bridge between the policy developers and teachers in the implementation of the study programme. *Ubuntu* strives on three components namely metaphysics, ethics and epistemology (Mangena, 2018).

The *Ubuntu* ethics refer to the idea of morality and use of terms such as good or bad behaviour; respecting or not respecting et cetera (Mangena, 2018) hence it is premised on common moral position in which the community is the foundation, writer and guardian of ethical fibre or principles. How teachers work when implementing a new curriculum must tally with upright morals such as empathy, respect, honesty and diligence. Metaphysically, *Ubuntu*'s nature of reality is on "being" in which the idea of being has its fullest expression through participation. Sekou Toure has termed this "the communion of persons" whereby "being" is a function of the "us" or "we" as opposed to the "I" as found and celebrated in the west (cited in Mangena, 2018). This suggests that, the idea of being is relational and carries a communal character. In that light, whatever has to be reformed should reflect the realms of togetherness and cooperation in terms of suggesting the ways on how to go about implementing curriculum.

Ubuntu epistemology is concerned with the meaning, source and the nature of the knowledge. Battle (2009, p. 135) submits that African epistemology starts with the group and ends with the individual which suggests that, the notion of knowledge in Africa is vested in in the group and not in individuals who constitute that group. As such, strategies on meaningful curriculum change and implementation reside with the community of stakeholders made up of teachers and experts. The teachers in the schools have knowledge of the nature of the challenges they could face when implementing a new curriculum which they can represent through narratives. Teachers are also the custodians of the implementation matrix because of their experiences hence their contribution in decision making of the educational change is indispensable so as to effect implementation successfully. *Ubuntu* epistemology is experiential as seen and applied in the African proverb from the Shona tribe which says "*Takabva nako kumhunga hakuna ipwa*." (We passed through the millet field and we know that there are no sweet reeds there). Suggesting that, the experiences that we accumulated as teachers is useful in assisting us in the Social Studies curriculum implementation as we know when and where we can meet hurdles. As Ramose (1999) sums it up the African tree of knowledge is derived from *Ubuntu* philosophy, hence *Ubuntu* is seen as a well

spring (Mangena, 2018) that streams within African concepts of survival such as ideas of curriculum change since the epistemology strives on wholeness and oneness. Seen that way, the African education system can "build cooperation and competitive strategies based on *Ubuntu* to permeate challenges" of curriculum change and implementation (Mbigi & Maree, 2005, p. 75).

The *Ubuntu* literature depicts two major ideas adopted in the current study wherein *Ubuntu* is seen first as a philosophy or world view and secondly as a humanistic work ethic (Chimuka, 2015; Hailey, 2008; Nkata, 2010) as it is multi-dimensional and multi-disciplinary as demonstrated in its wide use in different contexts. Its acceptability and relevance in different fields is evident in scholarship, for instance in reconciliation efforts (Mandela, 1994), social work (Mugumbate & Nyanguru, 2013), business management (Mbigi, 2005; Lutz, 2009) and leadership models (Khambula, 2015; Khoza, 2011; 2018; Msila, 2014). As such, this study considers Chitumba's (2013) sentiments that *Ubuntu* is complex, elusive and multifaceted, as it reflects the multiple and shifting nature of African society and human relationships of which Ramose (1999) and Broodryk (2006) describe *Ubuntu* as an "interactive ethic in which our humanity is shaped by our interaction with others" (cited in Letseka, 2016). On one end, the *Ubuntu* perspective is made up of work ethics which constitute what scholarship terms social capital of which Smith (2009) describes it as networks, shared norms, values and understandings which enhance teamwork within individuals. This indicates that, the *Ubuntu* philosophy denotes connections among individuals which give rise to social networks and norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness. *Ubuntu* philosophy is therefore a footing on which a society is not only fortified but rather, it cements and fastens the people together. The strands that run through *Ubuntu* are of African origin as remarked by Setiloane (1985) that it is a piece of local-made African knowledge which strives on its virtues that emphasise the relevance of a community through the advancement of shared interests.

The *Ubuntu* philosophy is a concept deeply - rooted in community life. As such, some aspects fundamental to its conceptualisations are ingrained in resources, their

accessibility to the resources and their assemblage for use for the betterment of people. The patterns of social interrelationships that are ingrained in the *Ubuntu* philosophy enable people to organise actions to attain the sought after goals (Msila, 2014). *Ubuntu* thus blooms on the premise of reciprocal relations and harmonic effort among blended groups. Seen that way, the social network entrenched in the *Ubuntu* philosophy is a way of developing a sense of togetherness, tapping ability and endowment, and of entrenching prolific human relationship of reliance and permissiveness to bring extraordinary gains to the community. While Khoza (2018) argues that *Ubuntu* philosophy is etched in African proverbs and sayings premised on a communal African way of life, Mbigi (2005) presents the Collective Finger Theory (CFT) as the foundation on which *Ubuntu* work ethics are deep-seated. Interestingly, there is congruence in their elaborations of the *Ubuntu* values. The CFT is best explained by the African proverb: "*Chara chimwe hachitswanyi inda*" (A thumb, although it is strong, cannot kill aphids on its own). It needs the combined effort of other fingers (Mbigi & Maree, 2005, p. 110). Two meanings can be extracted from the proverb: first the fingers represent individuals who act collectively to achieve a targeted goal and the fingers stand for significant social values that are essential for shaping and entrenching a shared ethos. Mbigi (2005) coined the fingers survival, compassion, solidarity, dignity and respect and argued that these values are important tools in African society because they defend brotherhood, manage society and promote interaction among people.

Poovan, du Toit and Engelbrecht (2006, p. 22) describe survival as the ability to continue living and existing despite any form of challenges. In the context of Social Studies curriculum implementation, survival entails the ability to derail the impediments to curriculum implementation irrespective of the notion that the curriculum is fraught with teething trajectories. I borrow from Mbigi and Maree (2005) and thus argue Africans were cultured on how to stay alive in times of challenges through brotherly care in which they developed a collective psyche for use to pool resources together to address their survival issues. This suggests that, for the success of the Social Studies teaching, all partners in education have to work as brothers to increase their capacity through

collectivism and collaboration which is possible through the display of personal sacrifice and a servant spirit for the existence of the group (Poovan et al., 2006).

The second value on the CFT is solidarity which can be described and explained metaphorically thus: "*Rume rimwe harikombi churu* (One man cannot surround the anthill) (Poovan et al., 2006). Implying that, difficult goals and tasks such as curriculum change and implementation can only be accomplished through concerted effort. Combined effort has an advantage of easing what is perceived to be difficult. African societies have been known to have *Nhimbe/ Jakwara* (work parties) in which members jointly carry out a task for a member in the community in the name of mutual assistance and voluntary participation for the good of the whole community. It was through such organised work parties that the spirit of solidarity was established and entrenched. As explicitly put by (Poovan et al., 2006, p. 24) through "the collective works and the beliefs in solidarity, the Africans have created intense feelings of communalism and unity" which can also be extended to the discourses on curriculum change and implementation.

Compassion is one social value that is extracted from the *Ubuntu* philosophy. In this value, is etched the human feeling of empathy which seeks to understand the plight of others and suggest ways to assist. Compassion is described as helping others and applying humanism (Poovan et al., 2006) which is engrained in the belief that all humans are interconnected and interrelated such that they believe in a collective and joint accountability for one another. Considering that view and taking cognisance of the envisioned curriculum change, issues related to the inadequacy be they funds, human resources, educational materials or facilities can thus be rectified through the application of this value of compassion. In African societies, nothing is said to be scarce because it is everyone's responsibility to offer a hand whenever there is need.

The two last social values of *Ubuntu* are so intertwined that there is a thin line between them in their application because where there is respect there is dignity. While respect

connotes unbiased consideration for others, dignity implies a value that gets or merits respect (Poovan et al., 2006, p. 26). Dignity is part of the African culture that rests on the notion that as people we take into account human value and interconnectedness of people during our daily tasks. When juxtaposed with curriculum activities, it would mean that the stakeholders need to treat each other with respect so as to earn dignity suggesting that, good rapport should exist among implementers of the curriculum.

By virtue of the variations of *Ubuntu* axioms, Msila (2014) presented five tenets of *Ubuntu* namely: people-centred, permeable walls, partisanship, progeny and production. On people-centeredness the thrust is on the duties of persons in the education system and those individuals should be dedicated if that system is to prosper (Msila, 2014). It implores to leadership that they should concentrate on the people surrounding them; empower them and use their influence in implementing clan tasks. This suggests that, policy constructers from the education sector as leaders must consult all stakeholders and make use of their contributions in curriculum change and implementation. The *Ubuntu* philosophy agitates for the need to make use of every member's contributions for the betterment of the society. As posited by Ngambi (2004) every community task is shared since the spirit of 'we instead of me' is dominant amongst the African people. This indicates that, through such meaningful dialogue as Dare/Imbizo, indigenous African leaders are able to create a shared vision through which ordinary community members are able to identify. *Dare/Imbizo* is a Shona/Zulu word respectively for a traditional community gathering called by the chief or leader to solve community issues. Benefiting from this work ethic of engaging *Dare/Mbizo* protocol, curriculum constructers vested with the leadership powers can call such a gathering or a consultative meeting to deliberate on issues linked to curriculum change and implementation.

As for permeable walls people should communicate fearlessly among themselves. Suggesting that, teachers and policy makers must interrogate critical issues boldly but at the same time retaining their jobs and status in the system. This is because the belief

of *Ubuntu* indicates that a person can be a person through others. As argued by Mbigi (2005) the idea of independence is absent in the *Ubuntu* framework, but embraces collectivism. This indicates that, the top - down approach popular with policy makers in curriculum change and implementation has no place in the African context as communalism is prevalent in African societies. As such, *Ubuntu* flourishes if consensus is espoused in the formulation of decisions, egalitarianism and when there is interdependence among members (Khoza, 2011). Thus both curriculum constructers and implementers have to communicate freely which makes them feel closer as they shape their ideal curriculum relevant for their nation. Partisanship encourages loyalty and if people are faithful to the group, they would rely on each other and then respect will be enhanced. According to Msila (2012) *Ubuntu* denotes that a person is so defined because of others and that is only possible through the application of reciprocity which has the power to erect a mutual workforce based on interdependence which will as a result promote mutual enjoyment. This suggests that, the presence of loyalty in the dealings of educationists ensures the sharing of the variables of curriculum change and implementation leading to success in their efforts as a reflection of their devotion towards achievement of educational goals. The aspect of progeny encourages taking decisions collectively. As such, Mbigi (2005) and Oppenheim (2014) posit that with *Ubuntu* application, decisions are in use holistically. It follows then that all stakeholders have an obligation to air their views on how best to innovate curriculum and then put into practice the envisioned curriculum as per their consensus. Ncube (2012) argues that people should practise the communal way of life in which, sharing of ideas and resources takes centre stage. The last feature of *Ubuntu* is production of which Msila (2014) contends that it is based on the employment of all *Ubuntu* values for the reason that production cannot happen if consideration of all the principles of *Ubuntu* are not taken into account. This implies that, production as a thread running through the *Ubuntu* philosophy connotes effective implementation that stems from a culmination of all the axioms of the work ethics embedded in the *Ubuntu* philosophy.

The literature surveyed depicts that solidarity is the lifeblood of *Ubuntu* on which the African people have relied on for years and without it African life is not complete because, solidarity with one another was cherished through communalism, conformity, compassion, respect, human dignity and collective unity (Bruyn, 2017; Mbigi, 2005; Msila, 2014). This indicates that, the concept of *Ubuntu* is a pre-colonial idea symbolising communalism and human interdependence that has been in existence in Africa for years. Thus the *Ubuntu* philosophy seen this way is the usable past from African societies which we can refer to so that we reconstruct our knowledge on curriculum development and implementation. As such, that spirit of solidarity which is embedded in the philosophy of *Ubuntu* is the linchpin on which cooperation strategies can be built to permeate the education system. This is so because, the *Ubuntu* philosophy had been applied and became an effective lever within management (Bryun, 2017; Khambula, 2015; Lutz, 2009; Msila, 2014), and its major features build around communalism can also be utilised in educational frameworks. *Ubuntu* operates as an adhesive that glue people from different background notwithstanding their social standing or access to wealth (Lutz, 2009). Hence, seen this way, curriculum implementation is a shared experience in which teachers from different backgrounds can contribute to its construction through their narratives regarding their aspirations and vision.

The essence of the *Ubuntu* theory is "participation" which is fundamental for this research (Masoga, 2017; Setiloane, 1985). As put by Setiloane (1985, p. 14) "a human being is not only a vital force, but vital in participation." This suggests that the full person's involvement in life's agents and mechanisms is important. Participation is an ecological concept (Ashford & LeCroy 2010, p. 133) which takes into account all people's heterogeneous nature with particular reference to what stakeholders in education offer in terms of their knowledge and competences in curriculum change and implementation. Consequently, that participation induces a dedication to create, take and honour receptiveness and unity in the spirit of implementing a home grown, life-long and life-giving curriculum for the socio-economic and political good of all community

members (Altrichter & Elliot 2009, p. 62). As such, this value of participation is grounded on other values engrained in the *Ubuntu* philosophy namely love, respect, and maintaining dignity of others, self-discipline, cooperative working, and care for the environment.

The Afrocentric approach in community tasks is participation. Each time an African village had a task, it was the responsibility of the king to invite his subjects to a traditional meeting (*Indaba, Dare,* Council) to deliberate on issues that affect them as a community. The participation was characterised by frankness and open debate in which all views were respected despite their source of origin. One's social position was not important as such but what one contributed as a member of society was greatly valued and respected. Each participant's voice was thus vital for the survival of that society. Meaningful participation by all stakeholders improves ownership of changes and abates resistance against what could be a noble initiative.

From an *Ubuntu* lens, participation of all stakeholders at the planning stage helps in the ownership of changes. As advised by Mbigi and Maree (2005, p. 105) "villages' operations are based on grassroots democracy which manifests as open discussion forums. Each time key issues that affect the village are tabled, forums are called for. These forums are called "*indabas*" in Zulu or "*dare*" in Shona or "*khotlas*" in Tswana." This study infers that if Social Studies curriculum implementation is going to be effective, the policy makers had to create an open and an "all inclusive discussion" at the users' level to unpack critical issues in curriculum change and implementation. The cardinal point that is drawn from the *Ubuntu* lens is that these forums must be inclusive and must have an aspect of open agendas. Hence, there has to be space to discuss all fundamental issues which are connected to education reform and implementation. Teacher involvement in curriculum development as seen from the *Ubuntu* hallmarks can result in amplified participation, proprietorship, and dedication, so that when things deviate from the plan there is a reduced amount of blaming each other. Rather, all

stakeholders involved in the implementation process will have a tendency to combine effort towards finding solutions.

By virtue that curriculum change and implementation is premised on the need to transform the nations in the political and socio-economic spheres, then *Ubuntu* values such as: community, social interdependence and individual co-operation become indispensable and presents valuable insights into the nature of consultation and participation in which the stakeholders were involved. Therefore, at any one time, any community is more than the sum total of the physical elements that compose it of which Masoga (2017) argues that the community, is a cauldron, an interlocking circuit; in which the members, are not only human, exist in interdependence on one another. As argued by Van Binsbergen (2001) *Ubuntu*, is that well-knit cluster of ideas believed to have the power to inspire development in the various Southern African communities as it is believed to possess the management ideologies for the sub-region (cited in Chimuka, 2015). Therefore, in the African context, the enactment and management of curriculum change and implementation drew lessons from the fountain of values that *Ubuntu* possesses. This is so because the *Ubuntu* values play a key role in integrating the various groups in education that have been put asunder by western models of curriculum innovation and implementation such as the top-down approach (Pansiri, 2014).

The philosophy of *Unhu/Ubuntu* is collectivist in approach of which Samkange and Samkange (1980) claim contradicts the Eurocentric approach to life and education which is individualistic. This is because the *Ubuntu* philosophy implies that we are correctly human purely in group with other people. The philosophy is aptly put by Mbiti (1989, p. 108), "I am, because we are; and since we are, therefore I Am." or, as Turaki (2006, p. 36) says it: "People are not individuals, living in a state of independence, but part of a community, living in relationships and interdependence." Curriculum reforms are not necessarily the responsibility of the experts and those who craft policies but the community as a whole, the implementers inclusive. On the values of *Ubuntu* in terms of

participation Mugumbate and Nyanguru (2013) assert that *Ubuntu* says "I participate therefore I am" implying that through participation a person become whole and non-participation diminishes a person's interest in educational changes. Curriculum innovation and implementation is therefore a community task whose success rests on concerted effort of all community members. Participation which is fundamental to this study is a concept referring to efforts made to assemble assorted stakeholders for the purpose of solving problems as well as for making decisions (Aref, 2010).

One tenet of *Ubuntu* has its origin in the saying that "it takes a village to raise a child or in Malawian language m*wana wa mnzako ngwako yemwe, ukachenjera manja udya naye"* (Mugumbate & Nyanguru, 2013, p. 95). It is not the work of the policy makers alone that makes implementation of a new curriculum a success but rather the whole spectrum of educators. Instead, curriculum implementation from the *Ubuntu* point of view is a social construct which is a 'negotiated' national curriculum which is continuously constructed and reconstructed in an interlocking network of local and national forums. Therefore at each level representative of functional groups in our society: teachers, parents, employers, employees and appropriate levels of government, would share and negotiate in dialogue their respective visions of educational aims and processes. The whole spectrum of stakeholders will make an effort to transform the common interpretations which develop into practice that allow for further debate (Elliot, 2006, p. 61). The *Ubuntu* values therefore direct us to see whether the whole educational village did participate meaningfully in the formulation and implementation of the changed curriculum just like the way any community task could be handled.

Ubuntu, as submitted by Samkange and Samkange (1980) is mirrored in leaders who lead with their subordinates. As such, one maxim rests on the African belief that "the king owed his status, including all the powers associated with it, to the will of the people under him" (Madzanire & Meier, 2014, p. 3). People are defined in reference to the community and as such, school principals in the administration of educational changes

who are vested with the powers to dictate policy cannot successfully do so without the blessing of the implementers. As such, Mugumbate and Nyanguru (2013) argue that *Ubuntu* stresses collectivity and consensus, allowing every individual to have their equal say in any discussion and in ultimately reaching an agreement acceptable to all. *Ubuntu* emphasises the significance of communication in which people exhaust issues under discussion and this is done with mutual respect. This is so because without the input and the views from implementers, then no effective implementation may take place. In terms of all stages in the community activities, consultation is bottom-up not top-down which was relevant for this research since educational change is hinged on the power of consultation which celebrates all contributions from all concerned persons. As such, that involvement of all people in the crafting and implementation of any subject assists in ownership and effective implementation. This study therefore borrowed such ethics with the purpose of improving practice in crafting the curriculum and devising the implementation matrix.

The *Ubuntu* philosophy was helpful as I employed it to evaluate the nature of the consultations, leadership and level of participation basing on the Shangaan's saying that "*rintilo rimwe a ri nusi hove*" (One finger cannot pick a grain) which means that community tasks like educational change and implementation are easier done in a group rather than as an individual. The nature of the challenges teachers faced could be easily tackled should implementers work in solidarity. Mpofu (2002) further suggests that *Ubuntu* philosophy with its social structures places emphasis on asking for help should challenges reach a level that is overwhelming for an individual to complete. Challenges of Social Studies curriculum implementation were to be derailed should teachers seek assistance from other partners in education. Therefore these values extracted from the *Ubuntu* philosophy presented the insights on which the curriculum implementation could follow. The nature and level of participation by all stakeholders in educational changes especially the teachers who were the focus of this study was illuminated by the *Ubuntu* philosophy since it was premised on the fact that

educationists work as teams. Hence, the success of reforms depends very much on cooperative working.

In addition, the premise of the reformed curriculum in Zimbabwe was on *Ubuntu* hence it was important to look at it through this theory. This was so because the thrust of the Zimbabwean Social Studies curriculum was on helping students in their diverse areas of development and skills during and after their school life. It is because of this phenomenal context that the home-grown new curriculum is largely rooted in the African philosophy of *Ubuntu* which is anchored on social values, patriotism, hard work and cooperation. This was after the Nziramasanga Commission of 1999 has noted that the inherited education system from the colonial powers lacked a philosophy underpinning it (MoPSE, 2015). As such, a high need for a re-orientation of Africans to an African-grown education system characterised by a high regard for African values and practices was then formulated, which was a noble idea to return to the "usable past".

Benefiting from the major axioms extracted from *Ubuntu* philosophy as depicted above, the study made use of these tenets as linchpins for drawing questions that solicited for the understanding of teachers' representations of challenges in teaching the Social Studies curriculum. As such, the tenets of *Ubuntu* namely participation, togetherness and resource mobilisation guided in the formulation of interview and focus group questions. In addition, the same tenets introspected on what should have been done before Social Studies curriculum implementation to thwart the possibility of the blame-game between teachers and policy makers, the moment poor implementation was witnessed. Hence, the maxims from *Ubuntu* philosophy illuminated challenges as represented by teachers and directed the formulation of suggestions on how to mitigate the challenges in implementing the Social Studies curriculum, the same way African communities solved their day to day problems. This is because, Africans are known for their ability to comprehend and learn that problematic tasks can be solved as a community. Arguments are that no challenges of curriculum change can be therefore completely averted without the efforts of interest groups. Indicating that, the *Ubuntu*

tenets are vital in curriculum development and in transforming it into reality. In that view, the *Ubuntu* philosophy was adopted in the current study as a pillar on which ideas on how best educational change and curriculum implementation could proceed from the planning stage through to acceptance.

The *Ubuntu* philosophy was useful as it presented a framework that is indigenous to Africa and her educational challenges. Fullan's (2015) theory is foreign in origin. As such, foreign theories had been employed in the African context causing a mismatch, leaving some critical issues untapped (Chimuka, 2015; Kgari-Masondo, 2017; Mpofu, 2002). Bruyn (2017, p. 43) argues that, the Afrocentric paradigm affirms that Africans and African topics ought to be studied, analysed and understood from an African (internal) viewpoint, founded on African philosophical assumptions. The application of the *Ubuntu* lens was essential in the study of African phenomena as it approached such phenomena from an internal standpoint, from "within the culture, history, experience, and perspectives of African people" which is termed the usable past (Pellerin, 2012, p. 153).

Fullan's (2015) theory made mention of the factors that influence the implementation. It missed on how the stakeholders in education had to interact in as far as work ethics were concerned. It was from the *Ubuntu* philosophy that I drew the attributes and the work ethics of educators that were necessary to unpack the challenges of the new curriculum implementation which other theories missed. A combination of a foreign based theoretical framework and the *Ubuntu* perspective, a home grown theory that negotiated solutions in the light of familiar terrains validated the findings and were most suitable. Dlomo (1991, p. 51) argues that *Ubuntu*'s strength is anchored on the fact that "it is an indigenous, purely African, philosophy of life" which is not borrowed from eastern or western Europe. It is grown from Africa and therefore had potential to offer African solutions to African challenges that teachers faced in the education sector. Its strength lay in the fact that it is the usable past which means the traditional values and

beliefs drawn from the African societies which can be utilised to drive reforms in education in Africa and globally.

The two theoretical frameworks were helpful in mirroring the teachers' representations of challenges and mitigation strategies of the 2015-2022 Social Studies curricula in Zimbabwean primary schools. From these frameworks, insights on how to ameliorate the challenges were drawn. Instead of competing, the theoretical frameworks complemented each other to gain a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon. Hence, weaknesses on the implementation of the revised curriculum from a canon of western thought and culture were derailed by the indigenous African perspective – the *Ubuntu* philosophy, hence this was the application of inter-epistemological. Of importance to this approach was that it developed the implementation matrix using both the Afrocentric and the western views which were missing for use by the change agents – teachers.

3.6.3. Relevance of the theoretical frameworks on curriculum change and implementation

The distinctiveness of this study is premised on the use of both the Afrocentric view and Eurocentric view on curriculum space. The contributions from Fullan (2015) and the *Ubuntu* philosophy shed light on this study because the factors that literally could either enhance or obstruct effective curriculum implementation were mentioned by the two theoretical frameworks. The factors that were suggested by these theoretical frameworks were the launch pad for the questions which were used to interrogate teachers' representations of challenges they confronted during implementation of the subject. Consequently, the theories guided the generation of information and data analysis. The teachers' representations of the challenges and mitigation strategies were weighed against the factors mentioned by Fullan (2015) and those enshrined in the *Ubuntu* philosophy. In the end, areas of agreement among the theoretical frameworks

and the representations of teachers were gauged. If other issues raised by the theories became obsolete in the teachers' view, then the theoretical frameworks were extended, thereby illustrating their limitations and suggesting improvements. The factors that drove the implementation which were engrained in the theoretical framework were the threads running through the literature review which fell under the challenges to implementation of the 2015-2022 Social Studies curricula. Thus the arguments raised were guided by the factors as postulated by Fullan (2015) and the collaborative efforts cherished in the *Ubuntu* philosophy. Using the two theoretical frameworks enhanced the validity of the research in that the issues illuminated were corroborated from the two lenses.

3.7.   Chapter Summary

This chapter provided a synopsis of the mitigation strategies that could avert the challenges teachers faced in any curriculum implementation. Existing literature related to issues pertaining to any new curriculum reforms, implementation and mitigation strategies, depicts that effective implementation of a curriculum is possible with adequate resources, enough Social Studies trained teachers (Mhlauli, 2010; Sofakaden, 2012), relevant teaching methods being utilized (Bamusiime, 2010), correct conceptualisation of what Social Studies was all about, correction of the negative attitudes of implementers and constructers of the curriculum and involvement of teachers at planning stage among others. The lacuna which this study sought to plug was detected.

The chapter ended with an examination of the two theoretical frameworks embedded in the study and their relevance, of which it was evident that these lenses guided in the formulation of interview questions which answered the research demands. The frameworks provided an insight on why the Social Studies curriculum implementation was haunted with challenges and in the end provided an explanation of what should be done for the fidelity of curriculum implementation. The two theoretical frameworks were

the basis on which the data generated in the study was analysed. The contributions by Fullan (2015), as well as the *Ubuntu* philosophy were therefore compatible and hardly inseparable in the current research. Thus, the study using the lenses of these theories, explored the challenges that obstructed the effective implementation of the newly formulated curriculum as seen through the teachers' representations.

The next chapter presents the methodology which was used in the current research to answer the research questions.

CHAPTER FOUR

METHODOLOGY

4.1. Introduction

The last two chapters cross-examined literature so as to locate the problem contextually. I demarcated the study and reflected on its practicability. What remained was the approach employed to elicit the teachers' representations of challenges in implementing the Social Studies curriculum and the mitigation strategies of which this chapter discusses. This chapter assesses the research approach which I took and the descriptive and interpretive case study design which I used to fill the scholarship gap identified in the last chapters.It enlightens on how I generated and analysed data. This chapter therefore attempts to contextualize how I conducted the study and why I selected the qualitative approach and the case study design. It also unpacks the trustworthiness aspects of the research and the last segment unearths the ethical issues which I followed in the current study.

4.2. Philosophical Assumptions

The study was grounded in the interpretive model based on the qualitative method. I shared Imenda's (2014, p. 190) advice that studies "involving people's ways of life, lived experiences, behaviours, emotions, and feelings as well as about organizational functioning are better studied in ways that generate qualitative data that are mainly descriptive and interpretative". As such, this study investigated the teachers' representations of the challenges that they met during the implementation of the Social Studies curriculum in Zimbabwean schools and the mitigation strategies thereof. The narratives of teachers represented their feelings, depicting their educational

experiences and practices. This study was therefore descriptive and interpretive in nature and collected qualitative data.

4.2.1. Research Paradigm: Interpretivism

The word paradigm was coined by Kuhn (1962) in his classic work entitled: *The structure of scientific revolutions.* The word denotes a theoretical framework agreed by a group of researchers which provides them with an appropriate model for studying difficulties and finding clarifications. From a layman's understanding, a paradigm is a "whole system of thinking" (Neuman, 2011, p. 78) or a "world view" (Cresswell, 2013, p. 5). However, technically a paradigm is described by Babbie (2011, p. 15) and Rubin and Babbie (2010, p. 32) as all "accepted philosophies, customs, methodologies, representations, a structure of orientation, frame of study and approaches. It may perhaps be a model or framework that could be used for observing and understanding a phenomenon. Thus, it is a research culture having a collection of opinions, standards, and suppositions which are shared by a group of investigators who have a similar position regarding the nature and conduct of research (Kuhn, 1996). A paradigm therefore is a school of thought believed by a group of researchers which acts as a blue print or guide for action in their research work.

The origins of research methodology namely qualitative and quantitative have their foundation in different philosophical research paradigms namely positivism and post positivism (Blumberg, Cooper, & Schindler, 2011; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Lincoln, Lynham & Guba, 2011; Muijs, 2011). For Bellamy (2012) and Blumberg (2011) post-positivism also known as post-modernism is branded by two sub-paradigms, viz. interpretivism and critical theory, and realism which is in between positivism and post-positivism. Paradigms are characterised by ontology and epistemology. Ritchie and Lewis (2003, p. 1) define ontology as "the nature of the social world and what can be

known about it" and epistemology as "the nature of knowledge and how it can be acquired." Ontology is therefore explanations of what exists while epistemology refers to construal of the nature of information and the way it is acquired. Ontology as a branch of philosophy focuses on the quality and composition of the universe and describes the nature and creation of realism and all what can be learnt from it. Epistemology, on the other hand is the scope of human information and its interpretation that can perhaps be obtained via various types of exploration and different methods of examination. Thus my ontology was my explanation of the teachers' representations of the challenges met in implementing the Social Studies curriculum and their strategies they mooted while my epistemology was concerned with the reasons why the teachers represented the challenges the way they did as seen from their narratives obtained through observations, interviews and FGD.

Not all paradigms fit well within one research design. Subsequently, the type of paradigm employed defines the design and methodology of the research work because each paradigm is endowed with its own features which give direction to the researchers in selecting the appropriate investigation procedures (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003). This is because the cardinal features of the philosophical perspectives namely the worldview, the nature of knowledge pursued, and the various ways through which knowledge is constructed within each model illuminate any research undertaking. This study was qualitative in nature and subsequently was greatly powered by the philosophical assumptions drawn from interpretivism whose tenets are teased out below. In the current study I explored the teachers' representations of the challenges experienced in Zimbabwean primary schools and how they could avert the impediments they encountered during the implementation of Social Studies curriculum. The interpretive paradigm was used because the study was focused on understanding people in their "natural settings or context" (De Vos et al., 2014, p. 8). The people were the teachers and their natural settings were the schools in which they worked. Bertram and Christiansen (2014) argue that researchers using this paradigm are interested in describing and understanding how people interpret their world, and how they construe

their actions. As such, I was not interested in predicting what people could do but rather was concerned with describing and interpreting people's feelings and experiences in words. In doing so, I avoided the quantifications and measurements. Therefore, I adopted interpretivisim to unpack the nature of the "phenomena", that is, the connotations things have in our understanding (De Vos et al., 2014, p. 322; Cropley, 2015; Newman, 2012). The interpretive paradigm in Social Science is the result of the works by Max Weber (1864-1920) and Wilhelm Dilthey (1833-1911) who explained that the philosophical roots of interpretivism was taken from hermeneutics and phenomenology. With hermeneutics, understanding of the social world is made possible by iterating between the meaning of parts and the whole that these parts form. The acquisition of knowledge is regularly from the whole to the part and then from the part to the whole hence hermeneutics is an attempt to understand people in a contextual background. Thus, this aspect of the contextual meaning is key to all interpretive exploration that is hermeneutics in scope of which this study adopted.

Based on the explanations above the interpretivist paradigm therefore suited the choice of this work. Of significance is that, this study fell far short of a critical study in that it did not attempt to evaluate and challenge the status quo in the implementation of the updated curriculum (Creswell, 2003). Neither did it seek to challenge the decision making but to refine on what is in the education sector. Hence, the study was not meant to disapprove the educational reform as is the aim of critical theory but rather appreciated and evaluated the missing links in the implementation of an already formulated educational transformation drawing reference from the application of *Ubuntu* philosophy, "the usable past" and Fullan's (2015) contributions on educational change.

I made use of the interpretive paradigm in the current study because this model embraces the people's ethics; its reality is personal, varied and is a social construct unlike the positivist approach that relies on measurements and statistical procedures (Tuli 2010, pp. 99-100). The interpretive paradigm is a humanistic interpretive perceptive of the "everyday lived experiences of the people in specific historical

settings" (Neuman 2011, p. 75). As such, it assisted me in comprehending the different vantage points from which the teachers' representations of challenges in implementing the Social Studies curriculum could be understood. I could understand various versions of their experiences from several primary school teachers regarding their representations of both the challenges and the mitigation strategies in Social Studies curriculum implementation. The teachers' knowledge, their understandings, their voices and interpretations of the curriculum implementation was the reality of the social world. To gain that representation, I had to understand them, interact with them and listen to their voices of which Lincoln et al*.,* (2011) argue that in interpretivism the "the researcher and the 'participant' of inquiry intermingle to sway each other. My purpose in the current study was to explore the complexity of the teachers' representations of challenges with the intention to acquire some understanding. That was achieved through interpretation of everyday events, social interactions and social structures as well as the explanation of values attached by the teachers on the Social Studies curriculum implementation under study. I, as the interpretivist researcher, developed the teachers' constructs from the teaching arena by a profound investigation of the revolutionised curriculum. For interpretivists, knowledge and meaning are acts of interpretation, signifying that all knowledge is always attached to human reasoning (Blumberg et al*.,* 2011).

Of importance to note is that the interpretive paradigm is anchored on observation and interpretation, where observation entails collecting information from events and interpretation connotes the making of meaning of the information collected by drawing inferences or by judging the match between that information and the abstract pattern (Blumberg et al., 2011).The interpretivist model emphasises the need to put analysis in context of which this study was concerned with understanding and analysing the challenges of the improved curriculum as seen from subjective experiences of primary school teachers. To deal with several certainties that happen such as those from the researcher, participants, reader or audience interpreting the study, I relied on the voices

and interpretations of the teachers which were captured through interviews, FGD and observations and later I conducted member checking to validate the findings.

This research was aimed at exploring the context of the Social Studies implementation and how teachers described the challenges they faced and how the problems could effectively be abated in their Zimbabwean schools. Therefore, interpretive research applied in this research was not premised on predefined hypotheses but placed emphasis on the nature of challenges encountered in implementing Social Studies as the situation emerged in particular schools. The assumption here was that there were several human realities that made it impossible to use measurements to examine reality. To understand real-world of educational reforms there was need to study the teachers in detail within the context of their schools in which they worked (Lehman, 2007) which I did. On that ground, the use of the interpretive paradigm became useful.

I positioned the study in the interpretive model since the ontological and epistemological positions sat comfortably within the focus of the research which explored the challenges represented by teachers as they taught the new 2015-2022 Social Studies programme. The teachers' representations and their views on the mitigation strategies were derived from the context in which the Social Studies was taught. The narratives the teachers retold were their representations as seen from their perspectives hence the study generated thick description of the phenomena. Empathetic understanding so envisaged by the interpretivist was also generated by me because I was a Social Studies teacher and teacher educator. Indicating that, the knower and the known constituted a dualism and were inseparable as the researcher got into the field to generate data using the qualitative techniques namely interviews, observations and focus group. Views of the teachers were then contextually analysed, which generated meaning from the social world in the form of different school settings.

Following the discussions of the research paradigm above I found the interpretivism's epistemological position (that what constitutes people' knowledge is their social reality made of their views and understandings gathered through their socialisation) and the ontological position (that data can be meaningfully generated through interactions such as asking questions and listening to people and gaining admission to their interpretations and enunciations) more valid as compared to those obtained from positivism and I conducted my study using the interpretive paradigm of which Ritchie and Lewis (2003, p. 7) claim is "the school of thought that stresses the importance of interpretation as well as observation in understanding the social world."

4.3. Research Methodology

Research methodologies are strategies of inquiry or models which offer detailed steps to be followed in a research. For, Leedey and Ormrod (2010, p. 14) a research methodology is "the researcher's general approach in carrying out the research project," while Creswell (2009, p.11) refers to it as a strategy adopted to follow in gathering, presenting and analysing data. A strategy of inquiry is a term that is interchangeable with terms such as approaches to inquiry or research methodologies (Creswell, 2013). Whatever the nature of study, there are three approaches available for use by researchers namely quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods (Williams, 2007, p. 65). However, Clough and Nutbrown (2010, pp. 29-35) caution that, the researcher has to be unquestionably convinced as to which approach or method would deliver the most relevant information needed. Following this argument, a study can therefore employ a quantitative approach, a qualitative approach or a mixed method approach (Creswell, 2009, p. 12; Williams, 2007, p. 66). The suitability of these methods is therefore dependent on the circumstances, intent and nature of the research study. None of the three approaches is best because according to Punch (2009) one approach can be a substitute to the other taking into cognisant of the type of research being conducted.

The interpretive paradigm which was explained above hinted that a quantitative approach was inappropriate because the current study was focused on views and thoughts of teachers that could not be subjected to fundamental laws and statistical procedures. By discarding the quantitative approach, it followed then that the mixed approach, which is a combination of the qualitative and quantitative approaches was not applied in the current study. That pointed to the employ of the qualitative approach.

4.3.1. The qualitative approach

The idea behind the use of the qualitative approach in the study was based on that it interrogates the way people interpret their "own concrete real-life experiences in their own minds and in their own words" (Cropley, 2015, p. 15). While Creswell (2009, p. 4) defines a qualitative approach as: ''a way for reconnoitring and construing the connotation people attach to societal problems,'' Corbin and Strauss (2008, p. 12) see it as that which "provides opportunity for the researcher to step beyond the known and enter into the world of the participants and then see the world from the participant's perspective." The qualitative approach is one in which the investigator usually build knowledge fundamentally from the constructivist approach win an aim to develop a theory. Similarly, Padilla-Diaz (2015, p. 107) postulates that the qualitative paradigm is branded as a "decolonizer of method" with a flawless orientation to an exploratory attempt which detaches itself from the common quantitative technique since the qualitative paradigm pursues to explore the understandings of people in their most natural, purest scenarios. It follows then that the qualitative research method studies happenings or manifestations in their setting and try to infer meaning about it or construe occurrences from the persons concerned.

 By implication, the current study did not collect, present, analyse and quantify the data but rather the researcher understood and interpreted the meaning of the teachers'

representations of the challenges of implementation from the teachers themselves who witnessed the process and as it was observed and construed by them. Accordingly, narratives were used to describe the phenomena. That being so, qualitative research was appropriate and was therefore used. I became acquainted with the implementation of the learning area, achieved a profound comprehension of how teachers depict it and described the representations of the research participants in line with the research question. I shared Newman's (2012) idea that qualitative designs employ cases and setting to study social developments, examines the understanding or the formation of meaning in specific settings and embraces social life with multiple points of view as they look at how people construct identities. Qualitative research was thus more suitable to this study as this was concerned with non-statistical methods and purposively selected samples (Cropley, 2015; Delport & De Vos, 2011). Furthermore the qualitative presentation was thick with citations, explanations and accounts, as the researcher attempted to record the teachers' experiences, views, voices and connotations taking into account the socio-economic background of study.

This study was premised on the meanings and contexts embedded in qualitative research of which (Yin, 2015; Cropley, 2015) argue that constructing of meaning is anchored on personal history as one deduces, experiences and negotiates diversity. As such, the context of the study was significant in qualitative research. In my research project, I explored schools in Masvingo Province as cases to generate the teachers' representations of challenges they met in effecting the Social Studies curriculum. Six schools were selected in their real life context and the data generated were then analysed in a qualitative manner. Acknowledging that Zimbabwe has ten education provinces, the boundary of the research was one province (Masvingo) from which I picked three districts where six primary schools were then selected as 'cases in context and as an instance in action' (Cohen et al., 2011, p. 289). To obtain a rich and detailed description on the teachers' perceptions and practices of implementing the Social Studies curriculum, it was beneficial for me to use a qualitative approach because that provided ample time for me to continually tease out the nature of the implementation as

it was experienced, structured and interpreted by the teachers in the course of their everyday teaching (Cropley, 2015).

Benefiting from this, I followed a qualitative approach. This was because qualitative investigators gather data either as written or spoken language, or in the form of observations that are then documented in language and analysed by identifying themes. Since my focus was on teachers' representations of challenges, the approach was beneficial as I dealt with the lived experiences of the participants. One cogent reason why the qualitative approach looked plausible was that it provided me with the chance to link with the teachers at "a human level and thereby getting at the inner experience of participants" (Corbin & Strauss, 2008, p. 12; Creswell, 2013, p. 41).This current study's objectives were centred on the challenges confronted by teachers during the implementation phase of the new 2015-2022 curriculum as seen and understood by the implementers and as such both the quantitative and the mixed methods approaches while relevant and applicable to other educational research were not suitable because they fell short in creating interpretive and naturalistic approaches to its content and could not interpret the phenomena in terms of the connotation people brought to them (Cropley, 2015, p. 18). Qualitative research enabled me as a researcher to present the results in a narrative fashion, rich with descriptive data, emergent themes and story lines of which (Kumar, 2011; Simon, 2011) claim and agree.

4.3.2. Research Design

A research design guides on how the study is to be done by showing how all components of the research study merge in an effort to answer the research objectives of which Cohen, et al., (2011) and Pandey and Pandey (2015, p. 18) define it as "the overall strategy that one chooses to integrate the different components of the study in a coherent and logical way." Lin (2013) further adds that "colloquially a research design is an action plan for getting from here to there, where 'here' may be defined as the initial

set of questions to be answered and 'there' is some set of (conclusions) answers" (p. 19). A research design is regarded as analogue to a plan of a study that illustrates how other components of the research work to answer the research questions. It therefore, serves to design, develop and implement the research to enhance the soundness of the findings (Cropley, 2015, p. 13; Yin, 2015, p. 18) and gives direction from the fundamental theoretical suppositions to generation of data. The research problem under consideration had pointed towards the adoption of a qualitative approach in this project as the strategy of inquiry. Consequently, it followed then that the research design from the current study had to come from many alternatives skewed towards the qualitative approach of which the case study was identified.

4.3.2.1. The case study

The research design for this study was a descriptive and interpretive case study that was analysed through qualitative methods. Yin (2015, p. 23) defines a case study as "an enquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, when the boundaries between the phenomenon and context are not clearly evident, and in which multiple sources of evidence are used." A case study was adopted base son the reasons that this study aimed at understanding people in their own world by making interpretations of their representations as a case (De Vos et al., 2014, p. 322; Cohen et al., 2011, p. 289). This was in tandem with Tracy (2013, p. 3) who is of the opinion that a case study seeks to answer "specific research questions which solicit a range of different evidences from the case settings." I also considered Yin's (2015, p. 16) argument that a case study investigates a "contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context." The case study approach was useful in the teachers' situations in which the contextual conditions of curriculum implementation were critical of which Ritchie and Lewis (2003) see the main tenets of a case study as being its endowment with several perspectives which are deep-seated in a particular background.

A case study design fits well within the interpretive methods (Ledford & Gast, 2018; Cropley, 2015). This is so because an interpretivist extracts what s/he considers to be relevant statements from each participant's description of the phenomenon and then groups these statements into themes which s/he then mixes into a narrative description, interpretation and explanation of a phenomenon. This is what the study was set to do. On the grounds that a case study celebrates depth and breadth in the understanding of the representation of the phenomenon it is directed to answer the "How, What and Why" questions (Cropley, 2015, p.71; Yin, 2015). As such, this study equally sought to get profound explanations of the teachers' representations of the modified curriculum implementation hence the research questions of this study fell squarely in the context of the case study. The tenacity of this study was to throw light on the phenomena by investigating how it was professed by the players of which this translated into collecting 'deep' message and information through inductive qualitative methods (Christensen, Johnson & Turner, 2010; Lester, 2009; Padilla-Diaz, 2015; Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2014; Simon, 2011).

The inductive qualitative methods are those methods such as observation and interviews, which represent the information as perceptions abstracted from the standpoint of participants. Similarly, the study examined the way "people made sense out of their own concrete real-life experiences in their own minds and in their own words" (Cropley, 2015, p. 8). This current study obtained a comprehensive understanding of the representations of the challenges teachers faced during the implementation of the amended curriculum thereby respecting the voice of the ordinary people. It shed light on the teachers' daily activities thereby getting an accurate representation of the phenomenon. The case study became appropriate and applicable for the study as it provided "an in-depth narration of events, relationships, experiences or processes occurring in the Zimbabwean context" (Cropley, 2015, p. 8). I therefore shared Creswell's (2013) submission that case studies depict the meaning of the teachers' lived experiences about their representations of challenges in implementing Social Studies, and as such that translated into collecting representations from the

understandings of the teachers themselves. De Vos, et al., (2014, p. 321) also aver that a case study "describe a single unit, system or event bound by space and time involving multiple sources of information." The case can be a process, an activity, and event or a program, of people of which Ledford and Gast (2018) argue is about studying teachers in classroom ssettings with the aim to examine a process in detail. I collected data from the teachers who were at the schools from various geographical settings (Cohen, et al., 2011; De Vos et al., 2014).

The suitability of this design also stemmed from the notion that it studied teachers' experiences on the relationship between the educational changes and how they had come to understand these reforms. Hence, the current study was interested in teachers' representations of challenges through "listening to them and gaining access to their accounts and articulations" (Mason, 2002, pp. 63-64; Yin, 2015, p. 3). As the focus was to explore the teachers' representations of the prevalent challenges of curriculum implementation in schools, which constrained its success, I used a case study because it enabled me to get a profound descriptions of teachers' everyday experiences which could not be apparent to policy designers (Tracy, 2013, p. 3; Yin, 2015) since they usually lack a comprehensive understanding of the context in which the educational policies they craft were made operational. Hence the study was cast in the qualitative approach which was an interpretive and descriptive case study design meant to establish the teachers' representations of challenges during the implementation of the newly updated Social Studies curriculum, which was set to run from 2015 to 2022. It sought the teachers' representations of the strategic ways to mollify the challenges.

The new Social Studies curriculum was implemented in the whole country and the challenges were experienced nationally hence the solutions were for the nation. A case study was the only approach that offered a practical solution in a situation where a big sample population was difficult to reach and study (Yin, 2015, p. 68; Cropley, 2015, p. 95). The case study then suited this study because it was considered useful and

enabled me to examine data at the micro level leading to a practical solution at the macro level namely for the country of Zimbabwe and beyond. I used the case study because of its elasticity and adaptableness that permitted me to triangulate data generation methods which I used to investigate the research problem. That finds resonance in the words of Crowe et al., (2011) who claim that qualitative studies that make use of a case study usually involve the gathering of various sources of data making use of many techniques. I employed a range of qualitative methods to collate the teachers' representations of the challenges they encountered during the teaching of Social Studies in primary schools in Zimbabwe. The use of many sources of data and various participating teachers assisted me to triangulate data (Yin, 2015) and allowed substantial contributions to emerge.

Benefiting from the above traits of a case study, the study examined a delimited system namely the Social Studies curriculum implementation, over time (from 2015 up to date) using several sources of data (various teachers) located in primary schools in Zimbabwe. The collected evidence was assembled to decide on the best possible responses to the research question(s). Resultantly, I gained a sharpened understanding of why the challenges of Social Studies curriculum happened the way they did, and what might develop into important mitigation strategies which could be used to guide future research in educational reforms. The study employed semi-structured interviews, FGD and observation and made use of a variety of participants' perspectives (teachers' representations) which was in tandem with what cases had to do (Cropley, 2015; Tracy, 2013; Yin, 2015). Furthermore, a case study suited in this research as it satisfied what Merriam (2009, p. 14) in Mufanechiya (2015) describes as the four essential characteristics of a case study: "particularistic, descriptive, heuristic, and inductive." Particularistic refers to one event, process or situation that is the focus of a study (Mufanechiya, 2015). According to Mufanechiya (2015), ddescriptive refers to the wealthy and all-encompassing set of information relating to the event (that is, representing the phenomena as it is). Mufanechiya (2015) takes that further and argues these two above are heuristic because they push apprehension of the situation, while

inductive refers to a type of reasoning meant to determine generalisations of concepts that emerge from the data.

In addition, I made use of a case study to reinforce the applicability of my study since case studies are believed to be more convincing to policy makers and teachers than academic considerations (Levy & Powell, 2005: Ponelis, 2015). Moreover, I shared Merriam's (2009) and Ponelis' (2015) view that studies without a qualitative component are not good enough to be used as a basis to recommend actions to educationists nor to enlighten policy, a significant insight that the study into educational reforms often seeks to make. The choice of this qualitative case was advantageous because it included a rural, urban, farm, mission and growth-point settings and therefore I gained access to teachers of different calibre in terms of their teaching culture as sanctioned in their various school policies. The natural setting of the schools allowed me to get a profound review of curriculum implementation whilst 'retaining the all-inclusive and expressive features of Social Studies' (Yin, 2015, p. 4). That enabled me to closely examine the teachers' representations of the challenges of implementation of the rejuvenated curriculum within a specific context of which Cropley (2015) and Yin (2015) concur that case studies are helpful in searching or labelling the data in tangible situation and is good at explaining the intricacies of the real world state of affairs which cannot be gathered by experimental or survey research.

My research focused on the Social Studies implementation process in schools, the representations of challenges and mitigation strategies for decision-making in the education sector. As a central policy implementer, the teacher is placed on a very precarious position from which all teaching activities are centralized (Gudyanga & Jita, 2018; Prendergast & Treacy, 2017; Rahman, et al., 2018). Thus, the element of examination in this project was the teacher's perceptions which epitomized both the challenges of Social Studies curriculum implementation and the austerity measures to ameliorate them. Cohen, et al*.,* (2011) and De Vos et al*.,* (2014, p. 320) observe that,

the unit of analysis can be an event, an organization, a group or a division with particular focus. As such, in this study analysis was focused on the teachers' description of challenges of curriculum implementation using representations through narratives.

However, the case study approach is beset by several problems of which Merriam (2009) observes that case studies are not representative enough. Indicating that while this study's data was idiosyncratic, the emphasis was on what was learnt from a single case since it propagated fundamental knowledge in the teachers' representation. The case method herein employed supported the building of both Fullan's (2015) theory and the *Ubuntu* philosophy and their testing (Yin, 2015). In this research, the case study approach aided in adding the plausibility of Fullan's (2015) theory on education reforms as well as the "usable past" engrained in the *Ubuntu* philosophy. To offset the lack of generalisations in the study, I made thick description of teachers' representations of curriculum implementation from diverse participants from several schools using their quotes as the basis of establishing thematic issues. That confirmed the submission by Denzin and Lincoln (2011) that case studies can be generalised, by "considering numerous actors in various backgrounds. The multiple actors were teachers from various schools and the different schools represented the multiple settings.

4.3.3. The qualitative study procedure

Protocol to the naturalistic approach had to be followed by the book if qualitative data was to be generated and these included issues inclined to the researcher as an instrument and gaining access to the natural setting among others (Cohen, et al., 2011; Creswell, 2013; Ritchie & Lewis, 2003). Below is an exploration of how I treated these two aspects.

4.3.3.1. Researcher as an instrument

The chief research tool in a qualitative approach is none other than the human being. This is the main distinction that separates the qualitative from the quantitative research is that, in quantitative research people are not used for collection of data, rather measuring instruments are used which were not appropriate for this interpretive and descriptive study which I conducted. Justification for the use of humans other than measuring instruments is described by Lincoln and Guba (1985, p. 40) that it would be almost incredible to plan *a "priori* a non-human instrument with sufficient adaptability to the variety of realities that will be constructed." Furthering that point Vakalisa argues:

> *Among other advantages of having a human being as the instrument for collection of data from other human beings are that the researcher can tell when the moment is not right to ask certain questions can rephrase questions that are puzzling to the respondents, can tactfully probe for elaboration when data given by the respondent tends to be too sketchy, and more importantly, can sense when it is best to just listen attentively to, and to observe keenly, what the respondent is saying and doing* (1995, p. 113).

Following the advice raised above, I found it appropriate that I become the instrument to gather data through semi- structured interviews, observations and focus group from the school teachers drawn from Zimbabwe. I made use of these instruments to minimise loss of time and effort on the development of complicated instruments which left me with more time for doing field work.

4.3.3.2. Gaining Access to the setting

Natural setting is premised on the conviction that knowledge construction is linked to the social world. Thus construction of realities emphasises the relationship between time

and context so as to understand the phenomena under study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). This study was conducted among 12 teachers drawn from Masvingo Province who were manning classes that had introduced the new Social Studies curriculum in Zimbabwean schools. The participants, who were teachers, were talked to in their schools and classrooms. This enabled me to take as much meaning from the teachers and their context (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). To maintain the "natural flow" as advised by Lincoln and Guba (1985), I spent one month visiting these schools before data generation so as to be part of the social locale and to acclimatize myself with the context.

According to Glesne (2006, p. 44) access to the research area is a procedure that refers to the obtaining of approval "to go where you want, observe what you want, talk to whoever you want, obtain and read whatever documents you require, and do all this for whatever period of time you need to satisfy your research purposes." That required acquisition of consent from management and those who were gatekeepers within the institutions where the research study was situated. While that is the most essential component of the research because it determined its success or failure, it is also the most difficult encounter in research because non entry into the study area implies no study is undertaken. For this study, I began by getting an introductory letter from the University of KwaZulu-Natal which I took to school principals under the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education in Zimbabwe (because my research was based in Zimbabwe) stating the nature and tenacity of the research. The school principals then referred me to the Research Director under the guidance of the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education. Thereafter, on receipt of approval to conduct research from the Department of Research in Zimbabwe, I then presented the approval letter to the Education Director for Masvingo Province where I sought permission and support to conduct research in the schools. Upon getting the green light to conduct the research in Masvingo Province, I then proceeded to the specific districts and schools where I met the school principals from whom I solicited for approval to do research with their teachers. I got permission to carry out research in the schools after explaining the purpose of my study to them. I also sought permission to take

photographs on condition that the pictures were not to be traced to the schools under study. After gaining permission from the school-heads, the head and I then identified teachers who met the criteria set in the study. Lastly I contacted individual teachers who were identified or suggested and requested them to take part in the study. I explained that their involvement in the study was charitable, thus it was up to them to decline even when the interviews were midstream.

The entry into the study area was lengthy, difficult but valuable. This was because it was characterised by red tape and the iron law of oligarchy. However, that enabled me to interact with the key stakeholders and at the same time got their views and reactions. Openly seeking consent was useful in that the participants offered open support and that promoted the ease propagation and acknowledgement of the findings to educationists in the implementation of the Social Studies. That would have been impossible should I have gotten into the study area covertly.

4.3.4. Sampling and sampling procedures

Sampling is the process whereby a small number of individuals is selected and investigated in order to discover something regarding the whole population from which it was picked (Salaria, 2012). In further exploration and agreement, Pandey and Pandey (2015, p. 54) confirm that "sampling means selecting a given number of subjects from a defined population as representative of that population." Sampling was choosing teachers on the basis of their relevance, picking only "information rich" participants from a population under study. Sampling therefore relied on very few numbers which could provide an inkling of what was to emerge in the entire population (De Vos et al., 2014, p. 222). So whatever component I chose in the current study was done to give a valid representation of it.

4.3.4.1. Population

While Cohen, et al., (2011, p. 153) define a population as "the people from which a sample is drawn", O'Leary (2014, p. 28) regards it as "the total membership of defined class of people, objects and events which have the required data in a given area of study". A study population is the sum total of units from which the sample is actually chosen (Pandey & Pandey, 2015). The participants in this research were primary school teachers in Masvingo Province of Zimbabwe who were teaching either grade three or four classes that took the new Social Studies curriculum. The classes (under the Junior School) were selected because they were the starting point in the implementation (were the first to take up the new curriculum) of what had been dubbed as the new or updated curriculum in which Social Studies was embedded. All the primary teachers teaching in the schools in Zimbabwe taught Social Studies irrespective of whether they took it as their area of specialization during their teacher education training. In this research, the population was all the teachers at the six selected schools taking classes in which the first dose of the updated curriculum was being administered. It follows then that sampling was getting a miniature picture of that group made up of the Social Studies specialist teachers so as to make representation of the large whole.

4.3.4.2. Purposive sampling

I chose six schools using purposeful sampling which was not sampling by random but rather by choice based on their relevance because I chose "information-rich" schools for interrogation in depth since the selected schools mirrored all the types of schools available in Zimbabwe. This was in line with qualitative research that places emphasis on particularisation instead of generalisation (Cropley, 2015; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). I also considered what Bricki and Green (2016, p. 9) advise that, samples for qualitative research are "purposive" and that meant teachers used herein were selected because they were expected to produce valuable data for the study. Similarly, Ritchie and Lewis (2003, p. 79) are of the opinion that purposive sampling connotes what the name

submits where participants of a sample are selected with a "tenacity" to stand in for a location or type in connection to the benchmark. Purposive sampling was my strategy to choose a small group of Social Studies teachers who were knowledgeable and informative about its implementation, challenges as well as the mitigation strategies that could be employed to lessen the obstacles. Researchers critique purposive sampling over issues linked to size and generalisations. However, Luborsky and Rubinstein (2011) argue that, the thrust of sampling is to ascertain that responses are valid and meaningful of which purposive sampling did in the current study. Subsequently, I made use of it to increase the usefulness of data acquired from small samples because the emphasis was on particularisation instead of generalisation (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

It was impossible to gather data from every school relevant to this study but from some fractional part of the schools with the intention of representing all primary schools in Zimbabwe offering Social Studies. For that reason, I picked one school from urban primary schools, one boarding school, one mission school, one rural school, one school from a growth point and one farm school from Masvingo Province making a total of six schools. The sampled schools were coded schools S, R, G, M, J and C to hide their identities. The selected schools reflected all the types of schools available in Zimbabwe hence they were representative enough in light of the fact that purposeful sampling selects "information rich" cases for study as pointed out by Neuman (2011). The size of the sample of schools was decided by the researcher taking into account that the sample was representative enough of the population though I used a small number of cases (Cohen et al., 2011, p. 145). The study focused on a small number of schools endowed with the intended traits. Each school had its unique traits in terms of its political, historical and geographical location though similarities were evident in the socio-economic settings. The sample of six schools therefore was representative of the variety of school categories found in Zimbabwe. Had I increased the number of participants, then that could have led to a too large sample size which was going to be

challenging to get relevant data. Simultaneously, the sample could have been too large to attain data saturation.

My justification for the choice of six schools was partly due to cost implication and time management. This was because using all schools in Zimbabwe was going to be time consuming and that too demanded a research team which required a heavy purse for transport and subsistence allowances. The second reason was that each one of the six schools was representing one type of schools that are found in Zimbabwe hence could provide the relevant data. This was so, to include all schools with different characteristics to maximize diversity in the sample and to get the widest range of views possible to increase the utility of data obtained which means the study has to focus on a small number of schools endowed with the intended traits. Each school has its unique traits which provided the context in which the Social Studies curriculum was implemented. This empowered me to get a whole representation of challenges that stemmed from these varied schools because the way teachers thought and saw the phenomena, to a larger extent, was greatly swayed by the social circumstances and background of the schools in which they taught. It was also logical to select six schools and two participants from each school for feasibility reasons (O'Leary, 2014, p. 30) hence, even if it was promising to detect and examine the whole relevant population, time and cost concerns made it a high-priced task. Therefore with a sample, time, money and effort was combined to yield quality research. Besides the qualitative research was also based on small numbers since data generation through interviews normally produces messy data which in turn could lead to difficulties in interpretation. I made use of the argument by Cohen et al., (2011, p. 289) that in qualitative research the size of the sample does not matter. Masvingo province was chosen on the convenient reasons as it was reachable and within the areas from which the researcher had worked for years.

I adopted maximum variation sampling as a "tactic for addressing the challenge of representativeness given the conditions of a tiny sample size … to take full advantage of the difference in site choice when I picked the six schools" (Patton, 2015, p. 102 cited in Namasasu, 2012). I included all schools with different characteristics to maximize diversity in the sample and to get the widest range of views possible. That enabled me to enhance the usefulness of the data found from very few examples (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011).

Teachers from the participating schools were purposively selected with the aid of the school principals. The two participants (two teachers from each school) of this research phase were selected on the basis that they were Social Studies trained and were knowledgeable about what the study sought; and on their involvement in teaching grade three and four classes that were doing the updated curriculum in Zimbabwean schools. This enabled me to generate data from the experts of Social Studies rather than picking untrained Social Studies teachers who were not conversant with the learning area. The researcher was of the view that selecting one teacher at a school could defeat the purpose of data triangulation hence the choice of two teachers at each sampled school. Excessive reliance on one teacher at a school as the source of data was avoided because that could have distorted the researcher's image of the specific state of reality being investigated. Satisfaction was therefore achieved when the two teachers' representations of challenges of the implementation process yielded substantially the same results.

The teachers who took part in the semi-structured interviews participated in the FGD and I took into consideration their involvement in the interviews. The group discussion was then used as a complementary source of data to triangulate other sources. Exclusive reliance on one data generating technique could have biased and distorted the researcher's image of the specific part of entity I was exploring (Cohen et al., 2011, p. 195). Semi-structured interviews, observation and focus groups were to double-check

similarities of the information provided by the participating teachers hence validity of the study was enhanced. Conclusively, 12 teachers were selected and emerged as participants who were at the six selected schools and therefore generated useful data. The participants were eighteen years and above which represents the lawful age of majority in Zimbabwe hence could make informed independent decisions to participate or not. As such, they read and completed the acceptance form to enable them to take part in the study (See appendix D).

4.4.   Data generation

All useful information that is obtained from the participants which addresses the research problem can be termed data (O'Leary, 2014) of which data generation is the act of collecting information to address the dictates of the research. As De Vos et al., (2014, p. 335) state "the gathering of data boils down to the actual observation and taking of field notes." For the generation of data I employed the semi-structured interviews, observations and FGD as per the recommendations of Padilla-Diaz (2015). In the project the intentions of collecting data were to gain meaningful insights on how the teachers represented challenges of Social Studies curriculum implementation, and to obtain insight into the mitigation strategies teachers and policy makers could use for the betterment of curriculum planning and implementation. I elected to use the semi-structured interviews so as to direct the interview questions to the focus of the project; to enable me to make cross-analysis of results (Cropley, 2015; Crowe et al., 2011; Yin, 2015); and to open opportunities to probe further for new and relevant issues that could develop during the interviews. Resultantly, I designed the interview guide that interrogated the context, content, and process pertaining to the implementation process of the new curriculum (See Appendix E). Interviews and observations concurrently were employed to gather data pertinent to the challenges of Social Studies implementation and to solicit the mitigation strategies.

Lastly the focus group was used to understand how teachers could mollify the mentioned challenges. The focus group was a follow-up to the semi-structured interviews. The teachers met as a group and discussed what they considered were the major barriers met in the implementation of the curriculum and by what means they could avert them in form of a discussion. The questions employed in data generation were rooted from the factors which stimulate educational reforms embedded in Fullan's (2015) theory on educational change and from tenets of the *Ubuntu* philosophy.

4.4.1. Semi- structured Interviews

Interviews manifest in three forms; the structured, semi structured and the unstructured (Crowe et al*.,* 2011). I preferred the use of semi-structured interviews to structured interviews following the advice of Cohen et al*.,* (2011) who argue that, in most cases questions in structured interviews are closed and, involve exact answers hence had no room for explanation and probing. Since one facet of the study was to unravel the challenges faced in the implementation of Social Studies and the teachers' depictions in the teaching of it in their everyday operation, it was necessary for me to detect common issues to address the research questions. Henceforth, unstructured interviews were unsuitable for this study. Unstructured interviews despite being useful research tools for the production of rich information, gives room for the interviewers to be influenced and probe incompatible questions since there would be no pre-prepared interview guides (Patton, 2015) and subsequently the direction of the study may be lost. On the other hand the structured interviews are strong in that a pre-prepared guide is employed which give room for a common arrangement to allow for ease data coding and analysis but their limitations is that they follow meticulously the interview guide and this may create difficulties in the probing of pertinent evidence from the participants (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003) in order to discover the challenges the teachers faced which was the focus of the current study. Therefore with the aim of roping in the strengths and eradicate the limitations of both the structured and the unstructured format of the interviews, the semi-

structured interviews were employed in the current study to allow for discovering, searching and further asking questions to elucidate and shed more light on pertinent issues through a conversation with the implementers of the curriculum. Benefiting from the above, I adopted semi-structured interviews since they could capture the "emic" perspective that is, taking the view of the people being studied by probing their frame of meaning (Corbin & Strauss, 2008, p. 11; Ritchie & Lewis, 2003, p. 4).

The interviews or question and answer sessions were focussed to learn about the challenges encountered by teachers during the implementation of Social Studies. This was because interviews were an excellent way to get the 'depth' of issues under study to an extent of going to the extremity of teacher's emotional pool and I was used that to ascertain the reliability of answers provided (Pandey & Pandey, 2015; Cohen et al*.,* 2011). I used the semi-structured interviews as they were appropriate since these enabled me to have direct contact with the implementers and this led to specific and constructive suggestions thereby improving practices. The employ of semi-structured interviews allowed me to be in contact with a few participants who were needed and were of importance to gather rich and detailed data (Bricki and Green, 2016). The view is also shared by Patton (2015) who explains that semi-structured interviews are helpful in reading the contents of someone else's mind, and that permits the investigator to collect information which would be implausible to be collected by means of other tools. In the study, interviews were done out using a topic guide which had open-ended questions outlining the issues to be reconnoitred (Bricki & Green, 2016). This was therefore an approach that followed a frame which was to articulate key themes instead of specific questions. Simultaneously it allowed me a certain degree of flexibility to respond to the answers of the interviewees and in the process I established the topics and issues as they emerged.

4.4.1.1. The interview protocol

Teachers were provided with a tentative interview schedule that indicated when I was visiting their schools. Thereafter, the interviews were set up by contacting the participants in advance and establishing an appointment for the interviews. A telephonic reminder of the date and time was made a day before the interview date. The interviews were conducted at the teachers' place of work during their free time convenient to them, which was either at lunch hour or after hours. The conducted face-to-face semi-structured interviews lasted for over a month. To build relations and trust, I conducted the face to face interviews with teachers and each session took about 45 minutes to one hour. The interviews were helpful because they enabled me to identify non-verbal cues that I used to probe for more information.

On the day of the interview, the first five minutes was used to discuss the background of the study, the motives for undertaking the research, and what I anticipated to attain. Therefore, every interview started with a reassertion of the tenacity of the interview, a promise of confidentiality and a reassurance that all answers were correct and that the interviewer truly desired to know what they felt, thought and suggested for research purposes only. This was important to curb any misunderstandings from the beginning. I also sought permission to audio-tape the dialogue for transcription and explained that an interpretation of the interview was to be given back to confirm correctness. Notes were also concomitantly taken down during the recording as a backup of the audio tape to buffer the chances of the failure of the audio tape. Thereafter, the interviews were tape recorded with the granted permission from the participants and then I revisited all what I had jotted down as my notes soon after each interview. As for observations, I took photographs and added short notes on the same day whilst my memory was still fresh. I recorded the interviews following the order in which they were undertaken instantaneously after the session and while the memory was fresh on what had emerged. During the transcribing process I kept on highlighting with different colours some of the notes answering the study questions. When nearing the end of the study, teachers were then given transcripts of their notes to read, correct, comment and

approve or disapprove. Later the edited transcripts from the interview were corrected and retyped.

4.4.2. Observation

In addition, observation was used to further understand the challenges; as way of corroboration to the views expressed from the teacher' perspective in the semi-structured interviews. Observation as a technique of collecting data for qualitative research was employed for a plethora of reasons. Most importantly was that it enabled me to obtain first-hand information of the context of the natural settings in which Social Studies was implemented in Zimbabwe primary schools. Bricki and Green (2016, p. 20) take that further and argue that it aids the investigator "to understand fully the complexities of many situations," By participant observation we mean "the method of generating data which entails the researcher immersing herself or himself in the research 'setting' so that s/he can experience and observe at first hand a range of dimensions in and of that setting" (Cropley, 2015, p. 88; Mason, 2002, p. 84). I did not collect information within a social location by taking a role in that setting because it was not suitable since taking a role in the milieu could have compromised the authenticity of the results since I was known in Masvingo Province where the study was conducted suggesting that, participant observation fell short. Consequently, I made use of mere observation which was a thorough study based on visual observation. The following then was observed: the socio-economic position of the schools; geographical location and the environs; impression of classrooms; the delivery and the constructions of the curriculum and relevant comments.

That observation was important as it impressed on the setting in which the curriculum was implemented. The rationale for the application of this technique lay in its strength in which the artificiality and formality of interviews was replaced by reality and informality

in the observation made. As such, the data acquired through observation were more accurate than that collected using other methods such as interviews and focus group (Pandey & Pandey, 2015).

4.4.2.1.   Observation protocol

On the same day of the interviews, background information about the schools was gathered through observation. That was employed to further understand the challenges as a way of corroboration to the views expressed in the semi-structured interviews from the teacher's perspective. Subsequently, I observed the socio-economic state of the schools, their geographical location and surroundings; and the impression of classrooms. A checklist was made that provided a summary of the setting of the source of the data. That facilitated an understanding of the setting in which the implementers worked and thus provided data on the conditions in which the interviews were conducted (Creswell, 2003, p. 8; 2009, p. 177; Scott & Usher, 2011, p. 106). Using observation, I discovered inconsistencies and resemblances between what teachers said and believed could happen and what really happened (Pandey & Pandey, 2015, p. 21). I jotted down all I observed and made notes as quickly as possible. I took photographs to supplement my notes. I then arranged the observation notes according to the themes that addressed the research questions immediately after leaving the research site before memory lapsed.

4.4.3. Focus Group

While focus groups are used in political circles to "road test" policies (Pandey & Pandey, 2015), the current study incorporated it to solicit challenges and strategies that could promote efficacy of Social Studies, that is, free from challenges teachers had

encountered during the implementation phase. I made use of the FGD on the premise that it was a self-contained method which could also be employed as an additional source of data. This enabled me to hold and sustain a productive discussion with the teachers thereby capturing as much data as possible that was vital in understanding how teachers could be engaged in Social Studies curriculum implementation issues. This was in congruence with De Vos et al., (2014, p. 361) and Babbie (2011) that, FGD was a plausible method which can be used to elicit data from multiple sources "systematically and simultaneously" from a group of twelve teachers.

My assumptions were that these teachers shared and experienced the same obstacles in the implementation of the renovated curriculum. The FGD created a profound understanding of the teachers' representations of the challenges studied. The teachers generated impulsive exchanges of perceptions and attitudes in the comfort of the crowd (De Vos et al., 2014). While FGD had their weaknesses in that they compromise confidentiality, this type of data generation was undertaken as a follow up to individual interviews to triangulate data from other sources. In this research, among many of the advantages, teachers who were interviewed prior were given an opportunity to represent the challenges they were facing. This was important as rich data emerged through interaction within the group which was so because group settings normally allow a more comfortable atmosphere for participants than a one-to-one interview (Pandey & Pandey, 2015) and as such diverse and profound material from several teachers was obtained.

4.4.3.1. Focus Group Discussion protocol

Before the group discussions were conducted I made an appointment with intended teachers to attend the FGD at a place that was set for the purpose. A day before the discussions, a follow up to confirm the attendance was made through the phone. To

create a quiet, comfortable, relaxed, friendly and controlled environment (De Vos et al.*,* 2014, p. 371), the discussion was conducted at lunch in a classroom at a pre-set school during the end of the week on a Friday to elude disturbances that could stem from using normal working hours. At the venue the purpose of the research and ethical issues were discussed. Those willing to attend were then asked to do so. The door was open for those who felt could not participate. Then permission was sought to record the focus group session using the tape recorder and thereafter, the discussion started. The discussion was done using a focus group guide which Bell (2012) describes as a set of questions with their prompts for the researcher to use. To direct and align the discussion so as to safeguard that all facets pertaining to the study questions were deeply covered, I planned a focus-group guide.

I was aware that some vocal teachers could dominate the contributions, disadvantaging the less assertive participants but I took note of Maree's (2012) advice and mitigated this flaw by promoting the involvement and debate by all. That was done by establishing working rules at the opening of the session in which we agreed that all answers were right, hence the need to listen and respect each other's contributions as illustrated by the *Ubuntu values*, that only one person may talk at a time and everyone was encouraged to participate. Unwarranted statements and predispositions were diplomatically thwarted by restating the agreed rules. In the end, this FGD was helpful in collating data that triangulate other sources hence comparing information was achieved.

I was a rapporteur during the session. I remained quite neutral and impartial throughout the discussion. A conducive climate was first created by introducing; all the teachers and making them sit around a round table for better communication, productivity and comfort in divulging data. The discussions lasted for about one hour. I made notes of The FGD and recorded it using an audio recorder. The recorded data was played several times and the information was transcribed taking into cognisance of the research themes as projected by the research objectives. I shared Maree's (2012)

caution that at the end of the discussion and in order to verify data, prominent points that developed from the dialogue and any amendments and alterations had to be made in the attendance of the participants. I did this while the teachers were still there and in the end I left the research site gratified that accurate information had been gathered and validated by the teachers who generated it. Weaknesses from the FGD were averted by data triangulation in which I made comparisons of it with what I gathered through the semi-structured interviews and the observations made at the schools from which the teachers were selected.

4.5.   Data Analysis

In general terms, data analysis refers to "working with the data, organising them, breaking them into manageable units, coding them, synthesizing them, and searching for patterns" (Patton, 2015, p. 268). Analysis of results from the case study research design is more often than not messy since it generates substantial amounts of data from interview notes, tape recordings and some other jottings (Lester, 2009). That, to some extent is attributed to the fact that data do not necessarily fall into neat categories. I, as an interpretive researcher derived my data through direct interface with the issue being studied and then I thematically analysed the data as per the advice of Flick, (2009); Rosenthal (2004); and Gomm (2004).

4.5.1. Procedure for analysis

Semi-structured interviews, observations and FGD supplied the qualitative data for this current study. The study made use of Miles and Huberman's (1994) basic steps for coding. The first stage was to record and then transcribe both the FGD and the semi-structured interviews word for word on the same day these were conducted. After

transliterating, I read the transcription to the participating teachers for authentication. Modifications were then made accordingly in a bid to report their understandings accurately. This was done by transcribing while listening to the recording on the tape recorder. The revised transcription was then read again to the teachers who then confirmed by signing and dating to confirm accuracy of results. That provided me with the chance to write down notes so as to set the context of the analysis. As I read the notes transcribed, themes and issues that addressed the research questions were noted. A repeat of the above was done to ensure that what had been transcribed was consistent with what had been highlighted. Taking into cognizance the research focus namely the questions and objectives, the interview transcripts were read a number of times, to acquaint myself with the information as advised by (Bryman, 2008). This allowed me to produce linking concepts that were significant among teachers. Thirdly sub categories were then created from recurring concepts. This was done to avoid disregarding an element that could afterwards look significant. The detected elements were then bundled according to likenesses (Cohen et al., 2013). This is what Miles and Hubberman (1994) call "data reduction or condensation" whose purpose was to categorise the information by subjects so that the data is not removed from its background. The fourth stage was when all the categories were further revised and abridged, implying that the segments of the data were thinned and what was left was vital to the study. Lastly, the clusters were scrutinized to decide the likely topics. All that was done to reduce the data until no new themes could emerge. This was in tandem to what Cohen et al., (2011, p. 601) call "data saturation" in which no new information could come out whatsoever. The topics recognised were then compared with all the records for any blunder and the omissions picked were included where necessary.

In the current research, data analysis was done by reducing the size of data, through sieving the most relevant data and, identifying common and noteworthy patterns. I then used these patterns as themes and sub-themes. Aware of Maree's (2012) and Patton's (2015), data analysis was done concurrently with data generation to curb accumulation of large volumes of data. In my case study data were thematically presented as

narratives. In these narratives, the teachers' representations of the 2015-2022 Social Studies curriculum implementations in Zimbabwe were depicted with special reference to the challenges and the mitigation strategies. The headings that emerged from the narratives based on the interviews, observations and FGD were:

1. Challenges of Social Studies curriculum implementation
2. Mitigation strategies

The participants were given transcribed interviews and asked whether there were any incorrectness, misinterpretation, or discrepancies regarding what they had contributed during the interviews and discussions and to make corrections before the dissemination of results. Their acceptance was then shown by affixing their signatures on the notes.

4.6. Trustworthiness of the Research

By virtue that reliability as well as validity is often based on standardized instruments, they are applicable to quantitative research. In stark contrast, accuracy and trustworthiness are issues embraced in qualitative research which is difficult to measure. However, a plethora of strategies were employed to improve the trustworthiness of the findings (Creswell, 2009; Creswell, 2013; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). I shared Creswell's (2009, p. 12) and Lincoln and Guba's (1985) view that:

> "*the trustworthiness of qualitative research can be established by using four strategies: credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability which answers to questions that ask whether the findings of a study truly represent the participants and research setting, whether they can apply to other participants and research settings, whether they are replicable with the same or similar participants and research settings, and the extent to which they represent the participants and research setting and not the researcher's own biases, interests and perspectives.*"

Each of these strategies in turn uses criteria like reflexivity (which means the relationship a researcher shares with the world is investigating), triangulation (which connotes confirming evidence from different sources which could have been collected through various data generation tools) and dense descriptions (which refers to a thorough explanation of an occurrence that includes the researcher's understanding coupled with the observed environment and developments). I satisfied two conditions for trustworthiness viz: credibility and transferability. That was attained through reflexivity, thick description, data triangulation, member checking and transferability. External validity, reliability or objectivity was not areas of concern as these are closely aligned to the positivist research hence had no place in an interpretivist research like this study.

4.6.1. Credibility

Credibility which is comparable to internal validity is defined as the degree to which the information gathered and analysed is convincing and dependable. As such, I employed triangulation by making use of various data sources and multiple informants as a criterion to solidify credibility of the study, which made use of multiple methods namely interviews, FGD and observation and different teachers from different schools. I also applied member checking to add to the study's credibility by giving feedback regarding preliminary findings and interpretations of the study to participating teachers and taking note of their comments.

4.6.2. Triangulation

Following the advice of Creswell and Poth (2017) on triangulation, I adopted an approach that made use of multiple data sources, informants, and methods to generate

multiple perspectives directed at obtaining a more complete interpretation of the phenomena. As explicitly explained by Creswell (2009, p. 11) triangulation is a "process of corroborating evidence from multiple sources in an effort to shed light on a theme, issue or perspective." In this regard, triangulation was used to judge the accuracy of the specific data items and not to seek universal truths (Guba & Lincoln, 1985). According to Ritchie and Lewis (2003, p. 43) 'triangulation is the application of various methods and sources to verify the truthfulness of, or extend, the implications made from the results and it has been extensively used as a technique of establishing the similarity of the data and inferences."

In the current study, semi-structured interviews, observations and FGD were utilised to enhance the trustworthiness of the findings. There was methodological triangulation of which Cohen, et al., (2011, pp. 195-6) describe as a tactic in which varied data-collection methods were employed to gather different opinions from diverse contributors on a similar entity of study. Firstly, I conducted interviews and observations at the six schools. Lastly, twelve teachers participated in the FGD to complement the first session of interviews and observations. That was done to see areas of agreements and disagreements. Use of multiple methods enhanced the accuracy of the data because each method employed compensated for the shortcomings of the other which helped to avoid misrepresentations instigated by depending solely on a particular viewpoint. Furthermore, multiple informants were in the form of the two teachers from each school sampled. Their views were to be compared and corroborated with the other teachers from the other schools to defeat the problem of bias. Hence, the study consequently attained triangulation of both data generation methods and sources of data, enhancing worthiness (Creswell 2013, p. 129; Maree 2012, p. 39). The act of looking at phenomena from several-perspectives through methodological triangulation (semi-structured interviews, observations and FGD) and different sources of data (different teachers from different schools) was one way of achieving credibility. Verifications of viewpoints as well as diverse experiences were done to create a picture of the teachers' representations of Social Studies curriculum implementation.

4.6.3. Member checking

I used member checking to also enhance the accuracy of the study. Member checking is the inclusion of the participants in checking the findings, meaning to say, members will gain feedback on the data, interpretations and conclusions and then can either confirm or disconfirm and correct given findings if need be. It involves a to and fro process of confirming emergent topics and trends (Birt, et al., 2016, p. 1802). While member checking is vital for increasing credibility in that it allows the researcher to test data, analytical categories, interpretations, and conclusions with the participants from whom the data were originally collected, its limitation is what Lincoln and Guba (1985) consider as "the most difficult and critical technique for establishing credibility" (p. 314) yet I found that it was essential in that it ensures that my conclusion was an accurate representation of the teachers' own reality.

 As for member checking, I amassed all the notes made during interviews, FGD and observations, then read and corrected them before presenting them to participants. Where I faced challenges in getting sense of the notes, I asked the participants to assist. I later made an appointment with each of the participants and then met them as scheduled to allow them to go through the findings and then asked them to make amendments where necessary and then they made comments showing agreement or otherwise with regard to the study.

4.6.4. Transferability

Transferability or generalizability denotes the degree to which one can embrace the description of a specific circumstances or people to other persons, times or context than those under study (Mason, 2002). Indicating that, my worry was the degree to which the

discoveries of the research could be same when subjected to other situations. Research findings are transferable if and only if they are replicable and can remain unchanged if put into new settings other than the real study or other settings. Picking specific schools endowed with all traits that showed the shadings of Zimbabwean schools allowed findings to be juxtaposed to other analogous schools in identical positions in Zimbabwe. Transferability in the current study was made possible through reflexivity and thick description.

4.6.4.1. Reflexivity

"Reflexivity is essentially a process of self-critique by the researcher to examine how his/her own experiences might or might not have influenced the researcher process… the constant awareness, assessment… of the researcher's own contribution/influence/shaping of inter-subjective research and the consequent research findings… the role of the researcher is subject to the same critical analysis and scrutiny as the research itself" (Patnaik, 2013, p. 10 cited in Moletsane, 2018, p. 10). This indicates that reflexivity recognises the position of the investigator as member in the research practice and as such the bias of the researcher as the main tool in a qualitative study is a danger to valid suggestions. Prejudice is inescapable in a study (Corbin & Strauss, 2008), because the position of a researcher endows him/her with more power and privilege than their research participants or informants. This implies that researchers happen to have their personal judgments and prejudices which may lead to distortions of the cultural phenomenon under study. Subjectivity is the power of positionality which refers to the implication of the researcher in the production of knowledge which basically implies being aware of one's lens and position as a researcher and the responsibility.

In terms of my personal history and professional competence, firstly as Social Studies trained teacher and secondly, as a teacher educator at a teachers' college and part time university lecturer, data assimilating with my prior knowledge made me revisit my approach to the study. I was aware that my professional background had an influence on both the Social Studies curriculum experiences and my relation with the participants to an extent of them disclosing half-truths of the representations being sought. That background shaped my approach toward various issues on this study and research in general because as humans our bodies and minds also live in a context. To mitigate the influence, I avoided directing denunciation, assessment and view to teachers and concentrated on how the phenomenon under study was represented by them. I identified principles, prejudices, and suppositions about the study topic which were written down at the beginning of the study for self-reflection and external review by a colleague from a university in South Africa. This promoted self-monitoring on my part so as to prevent prejudice and to increase impartiality of the study. Indeed, reflexivity was not easy to carry out, as it was not always easy to stand back and examine the effects of one's preconceptions. To abate my preconceptions, I asked the teachers to check whether the narratives I documented were accurate and revealed what teachers had shared with me to remove any misinterpretations and presumptions on my part. Such endorsement also added to the credibility of the research (Creswell, 2013). Thus, I made reflective and meaningful evaluation of myself, the participating teachers, their roles, relationships and assumptions. I also roped in the help of an academic to counter my bias.

I made use of Tracy's (2013, p. 3) advice that self-reflexivity involves the careful contemplation of the means in which investigators' earlier involvements, opinions, and duties impacts on the researchers' connections with, and clarifications of, the research. To align myself to this requirement, I suspended or suppressed the judgments and the position with regard to my experiences of Social Studies curriculum implementation (bracketing). I constantly re-examined my understanding of my subjectivity in light of the study as it unfolded. Furthermore, I provided a detailed, rich description of the

methodology and steps I took for the duration of data generation. According to Lincoln and Guba (1985, p. 161) peer review entails connecting some associates who are in qualitative research procedures to re-interrogate the raw data, attend to the researcher's worry and deliberate on them. To fulfil that, the indispensable information on the teachers' representations of the barriers of implementation was given to one of my colleagues who had recently completed doctoral studies with one of the universities in South Africa who consistently appraised me critically on the importance of the connotations devoted to the findings and he made his own decision regarding the applicability and replication of the results to other situations with which he was familiar.

4.6.4.2. Thick description

By the term thick description we mean a "rich, thorough description of the research setting, and the transactions and processes observed during the enquiry" (Tracy, 2013, p. 4). As such, it embraces the connotation and targets of the participants and the investigator's theoretical growth. To offset the limitations of transferability, Seale (2002, pp. 104-105) advises that transferability is achievable by giving "a detailed, rich description of the settings studied to give the reader adequate information to be able to judge the applicability of the findings to other locations". The descriptive research is for that reason planned to give a representation of the state of affairs as it naturally ensues of which De Vos et al*., 2014, p. 96) refer to it as "a more intensive examination of phenomena and their deeper meanings" consequently leading to a detailed portrayals which is used to substantiate current work and possibly to make decisions and correspondingly to advance theories.

The aim of the current study was to discover, gain an insight and understanding of the representations of challenges of curriculum implementation specifically of the Social Studies curriculum from the teachers' lenses. It was also meant to unpack mitigation

strategies for the challenges identified. That made a difference in how the teachers implemented the curriculum and how the policy makers could unite and combine efforts to drive curriculum execution in all schools. On the basis of Merriam's (2009) view, narratives used to express what participants and I erudite about the involvement and participation of teachers in curriculum renovations and implementation. Meaning cannot be detached from the related description. To acquire the expressive data, I collected it logically by penetrating into the lives of participants through relating, questioning and audio- taping their teaching experiences. What emerged was an explanation, full of brilliant accounts and impressive interfaces of events.

In the research project I described the patterns through participants' representations in form of narratives, gestures and silence which were implausible to be collated by statistics (Cohen et al., 2011, p. 289; De Vos et al., 2014, p.320; O'Leary 2014, p. 29). I recorded the narratives, accounts and ideas of the participants and also gave a description of the background of the schools (see Chapter Five). I adopted several sources of data namely the semi-structured interviews, FGD and observation of which the quotes became the form of narratives of the representations of the issues studied. The generation of data for the study was socially produced in a natural setting. I provided a rich, thick description of the study such that the data and description spoke for themselves to enable readers to appraise the significance of the meanings attached to the findings and make their own judgment regarding the transferability of the research outcomes. Furthermore, I identified and justified the methodological approach and I wrote in detail the fundamental processes and procedures that assisted me to build, form and attach meanings connected to the phenomena under study.

4.7. Ethical Considerations

In a qualitative study the researcher immerses his/herself into the private spaces of the participants in the form of personal domains, values and weaknesses. That raises ethical issues that must be attended to whenever undertaking a research of which Creswell (2003) cautions that the researcher has an obligation to respect the rights, needs, values and desires of the informants. Miles and Huberman (1994) list several issues that researchers should consider when analysing data to include among others;

- Informed consent
- Harm and risk
- Honesty and trust
- Privacy, confidentiality, and anonymity
- Intervention and advocacy

Adherence to strict ethical guidelines so as to respect participants' secrecy, privacy, self-respect, rights, and anonymity was religiously followed. Before approaching the participants, permission was sought from gatekeepers of institutions and organizations. As such, ethical clearance was granted by the University of KwaZulu-Natal, protocol reference number HSS/0855/018D (See appendix A). Approval was first sought form the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education, Education Director for Masvingo Province, the District Schools Inspectors and the School principals to conduct research in their schools. Participants signed consent forms to fulfil De Vos et al's (2014, p. 117) recommendations. Consent for the use of a tape recorder in interviews and focus group sessions and then later for the use of the interviewees' quotes for publications was entreated. Pseudonyms were used to hide identity. With the letters of approval from the above gatekeepers, I then went on to the research sites just before the dates of the actual interviews for familiarization purposes. I also identified teachers who were to take part in the study with the aid of the school principals, weeks before data generation. That was preparing the ground following Creswell's (2009, p.12) guidance that group preparation was vital to eradicate the

chances of being wrongly labelled as an trespasser; to dodge upsetting the school life during the study and to build an friendly working relationship with the teachers from which data was generated. The surveillance visits I made did that satisfactorily.

4.7.1. Informed consent

Informed consent was an important issue in ethical considerations in this study of which (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003, p. 76) relate it to giving participants a chance to agree or refute to participate. Hence it demanded that participating teachers had to understand the purpose and possible injury that such participation could impact on them (De Vos et al., 2014, p.117; Cohen et al., 2011, p. 77; Ritchie & Lewis, 2003, p. 70). Participants were informed that acceptance of participation could be cancelled even when the study was in progress. In this regard, the teachers were provided with information concerning the research problem, its nature and scope, the data gathering process and in what way the data was to be treated after the findings. I then informed teachers that participation was voluntary. To signify acceptance, members filled in and signed the consent form. To accomplish this, I took note of De Vos et al.,'s (2014, p. 117) advice and crafted a consent letter which was read and signed by each teacher who participated (See appendix D). Consent was also beseeched for the using a tape recorder in interviews, FGD and then later for the use of the interviewees' quotes for publications.

4.7.2. Harm and risk

Assurance of physical or psychological safety was deliberated on and the researcher guaranteed that none of the teachers was to be maltreated in whichever manner due to participation in the research.

4.7.3. Privacy, confidentiality, and anonymity

Taking heed of Cohen et al.'s (2011) advice, I clarified to the teachers that their names were not to be used. Instead quasi names were to be adopted and I explained that no information was to be shared that could led to their identity in any way. In addition, I made sure that the concealment and secrecy of the participating teachers was to be kept by purging of identifying traits before cascading the findings. Word of assurance was provided to the effect that their identity and answers were to be handled with discretion and were to be used for research purposes only.

4.7.4. Storage of data

The researcher was fully cognisant of the compromise of ethical considerations that could emanate from the inappropriate storage of generated data. As such the information gathered, that is, the written notes and audiotape were secured in the office of the supervisor, and was to be kept for five years. Thereafter, as per the university policy it was to be destroyed through shredding of notes and incineration of audio tapes.

4.7.5. Feedback to participants

Upon completion of the study, all the participants were invited for a one-day workshop at one of the schools located at the centre of the province, where feedback on the major findings was presented. These results were always presented in a way to maintain the participants' anonymity. The results were also made available to the participants in the form of a hard or electronic copy, depending on the participants' preference. Once this

study is published, participants will be informed of this occurrence and will be given access to the published article through the university's electronic database where a copy of the thesis will be available.

4.8.   Chapter summary

This chapter interrogated the topography of a qualitative approach along with the case study design employed after the consideration of the philosophical assumptions underpinning the study. In the chapter, the interpretive paradigm and its justification were presented. The study focused on the Social Studies teachers' representations of the challenges that they were facing in its implementation and the austerity mitigation tactics which could be used to better practice. It adopted a case study so as to enlighten the "lived experiences" of teachers who took part in the implementation of the new Social Studies curriculum. The chapter had chronicled the relevance of interviews, FGD and observation as data generating tools together with the procedure for data generation and analysis. The trustworthiness of the research as well as the ethical procedures was presented.

In the next chapter, the data generated from the qualitative research are heralded, wherein the summary of data from interviews, FGD and observations are presented.

CHAPTER FIVE

DATA PRESENTATION

5.1. Introduction

The focus of the study was to establish the teacher's representations of the challenges of the 2015-2022 Zimbabwean Social Studies curriculum implementation and to draw an understanding of the mitigation strategies. This chapter presents the constructed narratives of twelve teachers drawn from six primary schools of Masvingo Province in Zimbabwe. The narratives are presented from the teachers' perspectives showing their representations of the challenges they encountered as implementers of the modified curriculum. On one side of the concerns, they described the challenges they met in implementing the Social Studies curriculum implementation while on the other side they suggested strategies they deemed were fit to lessen them. Firstly, I describe the context in which Social Studies was implemented, the background of participants, the research sites and secondly, I glean the teachers' representations of challenges and the mitigation strategies of curriculum implementation in the form of narratives. The presentation of findings was in reverence of their perceptions and ideas in relationship to how they could weave and shape interactions in translating the curriculum into practise.

Prior to gathering data, I made an undertaking that all ethical considerations were to be followed as advised by Creswell and Poth (2017). I, at the beginning of the study, got to the participants and then explained to them its purpose and the techniques I was to employ to maintain their privacy. Teachers were also told about how the findings were to be disseminated, what their rights were, and how they were to benefit from the study (Creswell & Poth, 2017). During collecting data, I made the greatest effort to avoid

questions which were sensitive, and I planned to store data in the supervisor's office for five years after which it was to be destroyed. I made a promise to participants that real identities of the schools and participants were not be employed in the thesis. As an alternative, pennames were to be used to hide the names of participants (See Table I). I had worked in Zimbabwean primary schools for fifteen years in different school settings including boarding, mission, farm, rural and urban areas. I had more than 15 years teaching experience as a primary school teacher in the Zimbabwean context. Consequently, the study was founded in a familiar setting to me, and I being a part of the context, I knew the importance of the study in the background of Social Studies teaching in Zimbabwe.

5.2.   The context in which Social Studies curriculum implementation was undertaken

The updated Social Studies curriculum was rolled out when Zimbabwe had no currency of her own due to the economic plunge leading to a number of challenges. From 1997 to date, Zimbabwe has been going through unprecedented economic decline. The economic recession in Zimbabwe reached its peak in 2008 (Raptopolous & Mlambo, 2010; Madzanire & Mashava, 2012; Kapingidza, 2014; Munangagwa, 2009). That economic meltdown had been long in the making of which at one point, the economy withered by more than half, a reduction not lived by any nation not at war in the latest history (Biti, 2015; Kapingidza, 2014). Scholarship attributes the economic crisis to economic mismanagement fuelled by failure of fiscal policies to control budget deficit (Munangagwa, 2009; Biti, 2015) and loss of support from the international community which were compounded by periods of drought. It was against that backcloth that the Social Studies curriculum was updated and then implemented in schools from January 2017.

The study was grounded on an inter-epistemological dialogue which was an integration of *Ubuntu* philosophy and the Eurocentric perspective. The African perspective drew from values of *Ubuntu* of solidarity, survival, compassion, love, respect, cooperation, and participation. The Afrocentric standpoint focuses on the emphasis of Africans in making their history significant in its own right. This was coupled with the Eurocentric perspective represented by Fullan's (2015) theory on the new meaning of educational change. The *Ubuntu* philosophy calls for all African phenomena, activities, way of life to be explored and be given meaning from the standpoint and way of life of the Africans. While Fullan's (2015) theory was useful in unpacking the factors that influence the success of the updated curriculum, the *Ubuntu* tenets were captured to provide insights on how best curriculum innovations and implementation matrix could be worked out. *Ubuntu* was the theory of the study which advocates consultations, participation, collectivism and sharing resources if the implementation of the new programme was to taste success. The employ of the *Ubuntu* philosophy was premised on the idea that the use of Fullan's (2015) theory alone was not enough to understand mitigation strategies as it was western in origin prone to produce wayward and awkward conclusions when juxtaposed in African contexts of education. As such, inserting the *Ubuntu* philosophy in the study was meant to provide solutions to the challenges of Social Studies curriculum from the vantage points of Africans to reclaim African voices in educational changes. The salient features of *Ubuntu* are critical in re-asserting a sense of agency so as to attain sanity in the implementation process. Thus, it is a decolonising philosophy which is "a narrative of return" to African roots of respect, compassion, participation, love and humanness. It is a return to something African which gives educational solutions to challenges of Social Studies curriculum implementation drawing insights from African institutions' ways of life in the community. As such, the current study resituated and repositioned the *Ubuntu* philosophy within the mainstream educational spaces and discourse alongside other world views on an equal footing.

5.2.1. Background of participants

The basic educational qualification of primary school teachers in Zimbabwe is a Diploma in Education and within two years of appointment, they are eligible to enrol to study a Bachelor of Education Degree. All teachers who took part were qualified SocialStudies trained teachers who had vast experience in teaching at primary school level. Their experience spanned from 11 to 30 years of teaching experience. Nine of them had a Diploma in Education obtained from various Teachers' Colleges in Zimbabwe. Three had a Bachelor of Education Degree and one of the three had a Master of Education in Sociology. None of them had foreign qualifications.

In this qualitative study, data were gathered from six schools located in different parts of Masvingo Province. I administered separate semi-structured interviews with two teachers from each school that were named as presented in Table 5.1 below. The 12 teachers also took part in the Focus Group Discussion (FGD) and herein were named FGD teachers.

Table 5.1: Pseudonyms used for schools and teachers

School	Teacher 1	Teacher 2
G – Mission School	G1	G2
R - Boarding School	R1	R2
M – Rural School	M1	M2
J - Growth Point School	J1	J2
C – Farm school	C1	C2
S – Urban School	S1	S2

5.2.2. Research sites

The study was located in Masvingo Province, a province in the southern part of Zimbabwe. For the administration of education, Zimbabwe has ten provinces viz. Bulawayo, Harare, Manicaland, Mashonaland Central, Mashonaland East, Mashonaland West, Masvingo, Matebeleland North and Matebeleland South. Each of these provinces is further divided into districts. The participating province was Masvingo Province. It was one of the ten provinces in Zimbabwe with seven districts from which different types of schools were housed. Six primary schools were chosen and these were: G school- a mission school, R school- a boarding school, S school - an urban school, M school- a rural school, J school- a school located in the growth point and C school- a farm school. These schools were different in terms of facilities and resources, which was a common trait in Zimbabwe which indicates that, the schools had diverse features in terms of their socio-economic configurations. The choice of schools and teachers was based on accessibility and purpose (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Each of the participating schools is hereunder described using data from observations made on the day of the individual semi-structured interviews.

5.2.2.1.   G school

Located about ten kilometres in the outskirts of Masvingo town was G school. The participating teachers were qualified teachers who specialised in the Social Studies curriculum. However, most of the teachers at the school were not Social Studies specialists though they were qualified teachers. A quick observation of G school revealed that it was one of the oldest missionary schools. The buildings at the school were made of very strong bricks and all the rooms observed showed durability beyond description. The walls of the classrooms were covered with educative classroom media and learning materials for all the ten learning areas. Each learning area had specific

materials. However, the instructional materials at the school were far from being adequate as few items relevant to the Social Studies were observed. There was no commercial teaching media such as maps and globes for use as references. A single copy of the Social Studies syllabus was used by the two teachers for the grade level. Only three Social Studies books titled "*Ventures Primary Heritage- Social Studies Learner's Book Grade 3* authored by Chishakwe, Chikwava and Thusabantu and published by College Press in 2017, were at the school. Teachers' resource books which guide them on each topic in terms of content breakdown were not available. Information and Technology Communication gadgets at the school were not adequate since only three desktops for use by the school Principal, the Priest and accountant were availed. Although the school had electricity and was connected to the Wi-Fi the network connectivity worked within a radius of twenty metres from the Principal's office. Indicating that, none of the teachers or learners had access to the internet for research. For the updated Social Studies curriculum, only three textbooks were used by ninety learners as reference books. As for the furniture and general stationery, the school could be regarded as most learners had sitting and writing places. Typed schemes of work were observed and the schemes of work were similar for the two grades. The rooms were not spacious and could not properly house the more than fifty learners at a time hence learners were uncomfortably crowded. The school operated on a budget close to two hundred and fifty thousand dollars which was raised because it was a boarding school hence the money was used to purchase provisions for the learners and other necessities for the smooth operation of the school. The school had a culture centre as shown on Figure 5.1 and Figure 5.2 below:

Figure 5.1: Picture showing part of the culture centre at G school**.**

Source: Photograph taken by the researcher during fieldwork

Figure 5.2: A culture hut with the Social Studies artefacts at G school

Source: Photograph taken by the researcher

5.2.2.2. R school

At the heart of Masvingo town was R school. From the observations made, R school revealed that it was a former group "A" school meant for the children of the whites during the pre-independence era. The buildings were modern and large enough to accommodate learners who were housed at the school since it was a boarding school.

The school was/is meant for the affluent. Consequently, the learning materials were provided by the parents of the learners. A reasonable number of learners had personal copies of the Social Studies textbooks. It was evident that the same copy of the learner's book seen at G school was also available though in limited quantities. Though, teachers' resource books were not available, other reference books such as atlases were also available for the teachers' use which suggests that, the atlases were in use before the launch of the new Social Studies curriculum. The teachers had no personal copies of the syllabus from which they could refer when planning the lessons. Instead, the teachers shared the copy that was under the custodian of the school principal. The school did not provide internet service to both learners and teachers though it was connected to the internet and Wi-Fi. As such it was only accessed by the administration for the running of the school not for teaching. As for teachers, the use of the internet was very limited as the administration block was the only infrastructure that had been connected to the internet. Observation showed that the classrooms were spacious and had charts that reflected that some teaching of Social Studies was underway (See Figure 5.3). The learning centre for the subject had few items like clay pots, iron tools and animal skins that represented some aspects of Social Studies remnants and artefacts of the past showing that, some resources were available which spurred the implementation.

Figure 5.3: Picture showing some of the learning materials at R School

Source: Photograph taken by the researcher during fieldwork

5.2.2.3. S school

S school was an urban primary school situated in the location of Masvingo town. Observations of the school facilities revealed that the school had modern buildings with standard classrooms. However, while the classrooms were big enough to accommodate the required forty five learners at a time, it was observed that the classrooms were at the time of visit shared by two classes, each made up of sixty learners. As such, the school operated double sessions. One class attended lessons from morning up to eleven o'clock thereafter, another group of learners made use of the room from eleven up to late in the afternoon. The school was operating a double session in which two groups of learners made use of the same classroom at separate intervals of the day.

The instructional materials in the rooms were just a drop in the ocean. Observations revealed that the school had a single copy of the syllabus that was shared between two teachers teaching the same grade. In this regard, the teachers' limited access to the syllabus could have affected them in reading the syllabus for personal understanding of the curriculum. The common learner's book which was at both G and R schools was also available in small quantities hence their sharing was a burden to the teachers when it came to distributing them equally. The culture hut, a feature that was introduced to propel multiculturalism in Zimbabwean schools was not seen at the school. That culture hut was meant to be erected at all schools so that it could store historic items such as an iron axe and stone age tools which learners could learn in their history and culture lessons. While the school was located in the urban set up, its revenue was poor as evidenced by lack of books for use in the new curriculum. The school last had an educational tour about a year ago (Interviews S1 and S2) indicating that while the school was cognisant of the importance of educational trips; their financial position could not allow such an expense.

5.2.2.4.   J school

In one of the growth points (a settlement earmarked to be developed into a town) of Masvingo Province was J school. Its physical structure was impressive as modern standard classrooms were seen. The school was better placed financially in comparison to rural schools. The learners at this school were drawn from parents in the civil service who had to sacrifice to make ends meet considering the fact that Harare was reeling under the economic crisis.

In the large learning rooms observed, Social Studies learning materials were scarce and very limited in terms of their quantity. The school had no Social Studies textbooks bought by the school for use by learners. Only one book was available which was used

by the teacher as a source of reference during the time of lesson preparation and learners could not learn on their own from textbooks. However, some learners had their personal copies. Soft copies of the syllabus were said to have been given to teachers (Interviews J1; J2). A culture hut with traditional artefacts was seen with relics and remnants of the past. In the culture hut were items from the past such as animal skins, Stone Age tools, digging sticks, long ago African attire and cooking sticks and spoons as Social Studies curriculum draws its content from the history of the people. In terms of human capital, all the teachers at the schools were trained teachers and were holders of a Diploma or a Degree. As for the participants, the teachers were Diploma holders who had specialised in Social Studies therefore whatever they narrated was based on their experience and savoir-faire of that curriculum.

5.2.2.5. M School

The school was located deeply in the rural areas. The buildings were very old and recently renovated. The economic challenges Zimbabweans were experiencing was making it difficult for the parents of this school to erect modern classrooms (Interviewees M1; M2). The classrooms at the school were standard though the floors were in a bad state and the buildings were cracked posing a threat to the lives of the learners. Evidence collected through observations revealed that the instructional materials were inadequate in number. Teachers were struggling to put the learning media in shape and improvised educational charts were displayed on walls which were far from being new. None of the reference materials was available except for one syllabus which the two teachers at the school shared. As for textbooks, only one copy, a replica of what was observed in other schools (G; R; J; S) which were said to be samples from bookshops were seen.

Regarding internet connectivity, no ICT gadgets were observed that were intended to be used for teaching purposes. Instead one computer was available that was used by the head of school for administration purposes. While the two teachers from this school who took part in this research were Social Studies specialists who held Diplomas in Education, the rest of the teachers were non-specialists as they were trained in other learning areas such as Agriculture, Maths and English. By virtue that primary teachers in Zimbabwe teach all learning areas offered in the primary curriculum at a specified grade, it follows then that the new Social Studies curriculum was also being taught by non-specialists though the teachers undertook teachers' training at colleges.

5.2.2.6. C School

Located in the once famous cattle ranch, was C School swimming in abject poverty. In terms of educational infrastructure C School is under-developed and is a school in the making (See Figure 5.4). As such, the school had inadequate educational resources. Consequently, the teachers and learners encountered many challenges which included the shortage of reference materials, writing materials and furniture. Not even a single Social Studies textbook was available except for a soft copy of its syllabus. The school was not connected to the internet and Wi-Fi. Owing to inadequate educational materials, the education standard is very poor. This school can be described as a school in the making since it is both a farm and a satellite school which was established to cater for children of the new black farmers who took the land from the white commercial farmers during the chaotic and controversial land reform programme which was one of the causes of the current economic crisis in Zimbabwe. There were no schools in most commercial farms and the old breed of farmers used either to drive their children far away to schools or send them to boarding schools. As such, Harare had to establish the unplanned satellite schools to attend to the educational needs of children of these new farmers.

The school relied on one classroom block which was a meaningful structure at C school. Other classroom blocks were still under construction hence temporary classrooms made of poles and mud were in use (See Figure 5.4 below). No evidence was available that showed the presence of a culture hut which was supposed to be a learning centre with artefacts of the past that could be used as concrete media in Social Studies lessons.

Figure 5.4: Photograph showing a classroom block under construction at C school

Source: Photograph taken by the researcher during fieldwork.

5.3.   Representations through narratives from the six schools

In this work, evidence was gathered from twelve participating teachers. The selection of the participants did not take into cognisance sex since gender issues did not directly have any bearing to the understanding of how teachers depicted the challenges met in Social Studies curriculum implementation. I conducted semi-structured interviews with 12 teachers from the six schools. Observations were conducted the same day the interviews were done at the sampled schools. Later the twelve teachers were engaged in the FGD to triangulate the data. Transcription of data was extracted from recordings and the notes made during the interviews, discussions and observations. The objective of the study was to answer two critical research questions:

1. What were Zimbabwean teachers' representations of the challenges in the implementation of the 2015–2022 Social Studies Curriculum?
2. How did Zimbabwean teachers represent the mitigation strategies for the challenges they face on the effective implementation of the new 2015-2022 Social Studies curriculum?

From semi structured interviews, observations and FGD; data were generated and pigeonholed into themes which are reported as the participants' narratives. Data generated were reduced to two important broad topics and several sub-topics which I employed to organise it. Below is table 5. 2 with the themes:

Table 5.2: Emerging topics and sub-topics

Topic	Sub topic
1. Challenges faced by teachers	➢ Consultation process: Top-down approach and teacher participation ➢ Inadequate educational resources ➢ Training for teachers ➢ Curriculum workload and remuneration ➢ Psycho-social support from school principals

	➤ Teacher representatives in the construction of Social Studies curriculum
2. Mitigation Strategies	➤ Consultation process: Bottom-up approach
	➤ Partnership in the provision of educational resources
	➤ Training for teachers
	➤ Curriculum workload and remuneration
	➤ Psycho-social support from the principals
	➤ Teacher representatives in the construction of the Social Studies curriculum

The two segments hereunder present the narratives from the six schools namely G, R, M, J, C and S (these are pseudonyms which I created for anonymity purposes) which were found in Masvingo Province in Zimbabwe. The participants were teachers who taught at different schools endowed with different traits in terms of their schools' socio-economic backgrounds. Their narratives described their concerns on Social Studies curriculum implementation as change agents. Incoherent phrases had been discarded and grammatical mistakes had been polished to maintain the meanings of their representations. The descriptions of the research sites here above were premised on the observations made during the day the semi-structured interviews were conducted. These served to triangulate data collated from the interviews. The findings hereunder presented are divided into two major segments of which the first illuminates the teachers' representations of the challenges encountered in the implementation of the 2015–2022 Social Studies and the second part elucidates how Zimbabwean teachers represent the mitigation strategies for the challenges they faced on implementation of the new 2015-2022 curriculum.

5.3.1. Teachers' representations of the challenges of Social Studies curriculum implementation

The theme was cast from a question which sought to solicit issues that had implications to the teachers' conceptualisation of the challenges that besieged the implementation of the renewed curriculum as seen from their lenses. The question was: "What were Zimbabwean teachers' representations of the challenges in the implementation of the 2015–2022 Social Studies Curriculum?" Under this theme six subthemes emerged for the presentation of findings namely: The top-down approach and teacher participation; inadequate educational materials and lack of funds; limited expertise/ knowledge and inadequate training; demanding workload and poor remuneration; nature of support from school principals; and the non-Africanised content of the new Social Studies curriculum. What emerged from the observations, semi-structured interviews and FGD was that indeed the teachers faced teething challenges in implementing the new Social Studies syllabus in Zimbabwe. Social Studies curriculum was bedevilled with porous implementation. Below are the findings from the observations, interviews and FGD.

5.3.1.1. Consultation process: Top-down approach and teacher participation

The teachers who participated in the research admitted that while the new curriculum was a noble intention with a novel intention, it was fraught with challenges that emanated from the way the educational change was enacted coupled to the abject poverty exacerbated by the economic crisis Zimbabwe was experiencing. In the words of teacher G1:

> "The top to down approach used in launching the Social Studies curriculum was more like a prescription. While I enjoy the new Social Studies curriculum, it makes me a learner since it was poorly cascaded and hurriedly rolled out. More

to it is that, our economy which is deeply immersed in crisis does not allow us to tamper with the already fragile education system".

While Teacher S1 corroborates these views by stating that: "It was an imposition of the curriculum by the government. We are not familiar with their intentions and how to go about the changes."

From the semi-structured interviews and FGD, it emerged from some of the teachers interviewed that the fulcrum of the new Social Studies curriculum and how to put it into practice was unclear. In addition, school principals were arrogant and disrespectful as evidenced by the response that emerged from S2 who said:

The workshop facilitators told us to go and implement the new Social Studies curriculum but upon asking them what we were to implement in terms of the content, they just said go and implement. We went to the school principals who also just commanded us to go and implement the new curriculum in a militant voice that lacked love and respect.

From the above responses, it indicated that the teachers were subjected to a top–down approach hence were not familiar with the direction of the new Social Studies curriculum and its intentions in the new dispensation. It also emerged from the teachers' representations that the new Social Studies was the work of the policy makers and teachers were partly rejecting it as reflected in their narrations. Cognisant of the above statements, I claim that the teachers were clueless when they implemented the new Social Studies curriculum because their narrations showed that, they were inefficiently adapted to the new Social Studies curriculum and their buy in was limited. Lack of respect and love shown by the trainers and school principals suggest poor relations among implementers.

One obstacle that ricocheted throughout the data generation was related to the superficial consultation process. The accounts of teachers revealed that they were in

the dark of what was anticipated of them in their new roles. That was because they were not fully involved in decision making during the planning stage. This was revealed in the response of G2 who reported that:

> *Breakfast meetings, workshops and seminars were organised where questionnaires which sought views on whether the people of Zimbabwe wanted the new curriculum. In that process, we as teachers compiled notes made during the sessions and in that way we were seen as research assistants who thus collated the data that emerged from the meeting. The collated results were sent to the district offices for onward transmission to the province and finally to the national office, where the curriculum was then crafted. Sadly, teachers' views on the content of the subjects and how to implement it were not sought. Hence teachers were not consulted. We were told to implement the new and updated curriculum and no effort was made to robe in our views in terms of the content of the Social Studies curriculum and the approaches to deliver it.*

From the above, it was evident that the teachers' participation at the planning stage was only done to ensure the teachers collected results which the policy makers wanted without considering their views. Therefore, while teachers were made to take part, their participation was dehumanising because their views as people in the community were silent because the policy makers did not consider them as humans who are part of the community. This showed lack of respect and concern for the teachers' input. With a frown visible on the face, S1 said:

> *No effort was made to seek our views though we were to go and implement the new Social Studies curriculum since it was now a policy. As teachers, we do not change policies. So the new curriculum was an imposition by the government. Eeh it was the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education's directive and we had no option as classroom practitioners. But what worried me was that while I am a trained teacher, the changes were not clear to me. I don't know how to start. In most cases, I retained my old practices. It is like putting new wine in an old bottle.*

This was taken further by the S2's testimony who narrated that: "We just accepted the new curriculum because it is part of our job. It is part of our job to teach. If they say teach this one, we had to read, learn and teach."

Such representation in the form of gestures indicates that, the teachers had no power over the policy. Theirs was to implement it. Equally notable, was that from an outsider, unfamiliar with the process, it may appear as if there was consultation of the new Social Studies curriculum where people discussed critical issues together. Yet the teachers' responses elucidate that the workshops done were meant to inform them about the coming of the new curriculum and what was expected of them. It was giving them directives rather than affording them the opportunities to share information. From these statements it was evident that orientation to the new changes was limited. That was powered by the poor involvement of teachers in the planning stage. It also emerged from the sentiments that educational policies in Zimbabwe were centrally formulated and then imposed on the change agents who translated that into action. On being further probed why the teachers from the six schools had poor orientation of the new Social Studies curriculum they described their involvement in the process as tokenistic participation. The following are statements representing their understanding of their level of involvement. J1 had this to say:

> *I think we were partly involved but by that time we had no enough knowledge about the new curriculum. We thought it would take a long time to be implemented. I can remember that at one time we called parents and the learners for a new curriculum meeting. In that meeting, teachers were involved in helping parents and learners to complete some forms of what was needed by that time. That is what I did and what I know.*

Not very much divorced from the sentiments expressed above were findings from R1 who recounted:

> *There was a referendum that involved parents and all stakeholders wherein the teachers were instrumental for interpreting some of the facts which were difficult*

for stakeholders. The top policy makers were responsible for collating the data which was then used as the basis for the new curriculum framework which was centrally formulated and later cascaded back to schools.

Another response that elucidates some light in the context of participation was given by S2 who shook her head and narrated:

Aaah, we were not involved at all because we just heard about this new curriculum through the media. We were then called for a workshop at the implementation stage. Before the implementation there were no workshops that I attended. We just accepted it because it is part of our job to teach. If they say teach this, we just teach.

This was further substantiated by the narration given by S1 who claimed:

At the initial stage, we were not involved at all. They (policy makers) did not consult us on issues that were inclined to the implementation process. At a later stage, they called us to attend workshops from which we learnt that the new curriculum was to begin, its history was explained and learning areas were identified. Syllabus interpretation was limitedly done. We were then told to go and implement.

What was evident from these sentiments was that the involvement of teachers in educational change was thin, hence was tokenistic participation. In the words of teacher G1:

At first, we did not fully participate in the planning and development of the new curriculum. They did not consult us at all on the implementation process of the updated curriculum. They planned and developed the implementation process without us from the grassroots. Later, they called us to attend a workshop at which we were informed of the launch of the new curriculum. That was tokenistic participation because we could not get the gist of the implementation matrix which as implementers was supposed to know before the roll out.

The above suggests that, the informants were partly consulted in the process though they bemoaned the lack of meaningful participation which could have assisted them in acquiring necessary skills and knowledge related specifically to the Social Studies changes. The teachers' representations of their participation in the changes that brought the new Social Studies curriculum depict teachers as research assistants (Interviews, R1, J1 & G1). As such, their views were not included, in terms of whether to adapt or adopt the new changes. It also emerged from the teachers' voices that teachers were powerless once a policy was enacted and was instructed to be implemented. The findings also revealed that curriculum change was centrally done at the top and disseminated to the grassroots where implementers put that into practice even if consultation was not extended to the teachers. The policy makers were armchair theorists who believed that teachers were passive consumers of curricular materials as such curriculum change and implementation were seen as a preserve of the theorists who used the wisdom of books and not the classroom experiences of teachers.

Therefore, while teachers were coerced into participating, it turned out to be dehumanising because their views as people in the community were silent because the policy makers did not consider them as humans who are part of the community and who have the right to contribute to their community's welfare. This showed lack of respect and concern for the teachers' input from the policy makers. From the above narratives, it indicated that participants were not acquainted with the direction of Social Studies and its intentions in the new dispensation. It also emerged from the teachers' representations that the new curriculum was the responsibility of the policy makers. Cognisant of the above statements, this study infers that the teachers were not respected and dignified when they implemented the new Social Studies curriculum because their narrations showed that, teachers were inadequately oriented to the new curriculum and their buy-in was limited. Lack of respect and love shows poor relations by the trainers.

5.3.1.2.   Inadequate educational materials

The participants made mention of several challenges they faced specifically as Social Studies primary school trained teachers even though their depictions of challenges differed from school to school. As put by Teacher C1 from a farm school:

> *Aah, we do not have the hard copy of the Social Studies syllabus, not even one textbook for learners as well as concrete media in form of artefacts in the so-called culture hut. We do not have proper and enough physical facilities.*

Their point of departure in their representations of the challenges was understood considering that the teachers worked at different workstations located in different geographical areas chequered with different socio-economic localities. For example at school M in terms of issues of resources teacher M1 from a rural school mentioned that they had only one learners' textbooks which is used by the two teachers while the teachers in the urban context argued that while textbooks were inadequate, there was a reasonable number of Social Studies personal copies for use by the learners which they had bought themselves (Interviews R1, R2, S1 and S2).

The semi structured interviews, observations and FGD directed their efforts towards ascertaining whether resources were available in schools for the efficacy implementation of the modernised curriculum. The teachers' narratives in the study indicated that schools were poorly resourced with regard to reference books, the syllabus and learner's books as well as teaching media. As put by R1 who said, "The sticking challenge in the implementation of the course was the unavailability of adequate materials." That was further illustrated by C2 who said:

 "If the facilitator was not well equipped with relevant books and educational materials, the implementation was doomed because implementation is hinged on availability of these items."

At M - a poor rural school similar findings of scarcity of resources was evident as put by M2: "We have only one syllabus; one book per grade level and the two teachers use the book."

G2 from a well -off school had another dimension of resources when he said:

The challenges we are facing are insurmountable. We have acute shortages of funds which also affect the availability of other resources such as textbooks, ICT gadgets and instructional materials.

Similar findings were reported at M school through M1's representations of which she reported:

The major challenge is teaching media and the source of matter, that is, textbooks. We do not have enough ICT gadgets. We have got no textbooks except one copy that is used by the teacher only. The Wi-Fi was recently connected using the donor funds but we got no computers and laptops or smart phones.

A summary of the inadequate resources which were seen as determinants that side-tracked the proper implementation of Social Studies was made by one teacher in the FGD:

The new Social Studies curriculum was giving us problems as we happen to have scarce educational materials such as the syllabus, textbooks in form of teachers' books, learner's books and the teaching aids which could go a long way in the implementation of the subject. Teachers were facing challenges in getting these materials. In addition, textbooks were not yet available in book shops and even if funds were available, we could not find them. What was available at our schools and in the market were the sample books which were not for sale as they awaited the approval from the Ministry of Education.

To illustrate the seriousness of book shortages R2 reported:

Presently, we don't have enough resources. The school has one laptop which is very rare to come to our contact because it is always used by the administrators. For Social Studies curriculum, we have got one textbook for the teacher who has the right to use it. Otherwise learners could tear it off. Then if we look at that ratio where thirty-two learners are benefitting from one textbook, you can see that it is a great challenge.

That was also seen at the school premises on the day of my visit. Similar findings were also confirmed from J2 who postulated that, "the school does not have Social Studies textbooks. We only have one teacher's copy." In agreement to that scarcity of textbooks, S1 confirmed that, "We can't teach without reference books. Where can we draw the content from …..?The head? It is impossible to know everything by heart."

Observations showed that some of the schools had no standard classrooms, for instance at G school – a mission boarding school and C school - a farm school. As such, the learning rooms were very small and meant to accommodate not more than thirty learners against the forty-five that make up a Zimbabwe class as per policy. As such, learners were crowded in their learning rooms. In addition, S school had no culture hut which was supposed to store some remnants of the past as concrete media for teaching purposes. Hence S1 affirmed that: "We even don't have a culture hut, something which is important in the teaching of our heritage and history." That also finds resonance with C1 who said, "Aah, we do not have the artefacts to use in our Social Studies teaching which are supposed to be housed in the culture hut." The sentiments showed that the culture hut was a requirement at schools if the Social Studies curriculum could be implemented effectively. However, lack of such physical facilities was common in the sampled schools. In view of that S2 testified:

We need teaching aids in form of concrete media. The models and imitations of historic and heritages sites are facilities needed. The idea of a culture hut at school is important. The culture hut has to be fitted with artefacts and relic. Unfortunately, this resource is not available at this school.

On being asked the causes that had ignited the acute shortages of educational materials, teachers (S1; G1; G2) attributed the shortages to lack of funds. As put by G1, "as for funds it is too bad because of the economic crisis in Zimbabwe. So, in short there is a shortage of resources that work against our effort because of lack of money." That statement was confirmed by observations made at the schools that reflected shortages of instructional materials as well as physical structures. The learning space was described as poor as evidenced by the overcrowding of learners. In addition, classrooms were inadequately decorated with educative and informative teaching media. The economic plunge was blamed for the poor resources and working conditions (Interviews G1, G2; S1 & FGD). To further buttress that position, one teacher who participated in the FGD confirmed the lack of funds as the problem behind the shortages of instructional materials when she narrated:

> Teachers are facing challenges in sourcing educational materials due to the economic plunge being experienced by Zimbabwe. Schools do not have enough funds and this works against the provision of teaching materials. When the role of providing funds is shifted to parents, it becomes a burden to them again because the parents are sunken knee-deep in abject poverty.

The role of funds in the provision of educational resources was not only limited to the purchase of educational materials but goes beyond that as explained by S2:

> We do not have funds in schools. With funds learners should be able to embark on educational tours so that they see the real heritage sites such as Great Zimbabwe and Matopos Hills. Learners are just hearing of these historical important sites and they had never been there. The visits are vital for synchronising the theory and the real world.

Borrowing from the teachers' representations through their narrations, the schools were experiencing shortages of Social Studies materials like reference books, funds and

physical structures. Their representations depict that such shortages impact negatively on teaching pedagogy and learning. As such implementation is a nightmare. The stories of teachers revealed that resources were critical in the implementation of the subject. As for the reference books, their unavailability in the market compounded the problem. Thus it came out from the teachers' narratives that, the acute shortages of instructional materials were driven by the non-availability of funds which emanated from the economic decline that the country was experiencing. Teachers interviewed also put blame on the hastiness of the government in implementing the new curriculum in spite of the economic turmoil the country was/is in (Interviews S1, G2). As clearly put by teacher in the FGD:

> *The implementation process was hurriedly done amid poor funding of educational materials which is attributed to the economic crisis in the country. While parents are informed of the importance of providing materials, their purses are dry because of the poor economy. As such, the economic settings in the country incapacitate stakeholders in terms of their effort to buy instructional materials which in turn inhibit effective execution of the new study course.*

For change in curricula it is pivotal to consider the political, social, economic, environmental and other contextual factors of the country so that, effective implementation can occur.

5.3.1.3. Training for teachers

One pestering and pertinent issue that was common from the teachers' representations of the challenges of the implementation of the transformed curriculum was the absence of knowledge in the content of the subject and the teachers' lack of teaching competences.

As for knowledge deficit on the new Social Studies, S2 reported:

As a teacher I should be the one with the knowledge of what I am going to teach. I don't need to scratch my head for what I teach. Instead they (Policy disseminators) just said do this (implement) yet I do not know what to teach and how to teach it.

That limited knowledge was further elaborated by R1 who recounted thus, "As I see it, the human capital needs to be re-serviced because some of us are still lagging because of lack of information." Similarly, S1 posited that he was implementing the policy albeit challenges which were hovering above his head of which he said:

Yes, we are implementing the Social Studies curriculum. But with the little exposure we got, it is a mountain to climb. Syllabus interpretation and lesson planning pose the greatest challenges. I am not aware of the terminology used in the document. The content is too deep to decipher. We should have discussed these issues had we been consulted.

That sentiment was also raised by one teacher in the FGD who described that:

The syllabus is too difficult to interpret especially on the wording which sometimes forces the teacher to resort to using a dictionary. Yet, teachers themselves should be well versed of the syllabus as well as what was to be implemented. We can have books and computers but if we do not have the knowledge, then we are wasting the resources.

The issue of the limited expertise was best summarised by G2:

Our challenge is that we have no knowledge of the content and the know-how on how to teach Social Studies. If we had effective training, we could have shared our perceived challenges. We could sail in the same boat. But alas, we are not conversant with the syllabus interpretation itself. So teaching is already affected negatively in view of that point. The base for teaching is on how best to interpret the syllabus. The training should have focused on that area of which that was a one all fit all approach which combined all learning areas. It was poorly and hurriedly done. We had gaps on that.

The verbatim narratives from the teachers suggest that teachers' knowledge is useful for the correct conceptualisation of the reform requirements. In the absence of such knowledge teachers as change agents can make accommodations that are a mismatch of the theoretical underpinnings of the educational change. This infers that the fidelity implementation of the curriculum could be realised if teachers have the knowledge of the reforms made. From the teachers' representations of the limited expertise they had, it also emerged that the limited knowledge about the new Social Studies curriculum was not confined to educators alone but extended to parents. This was revealed by G2 and the utterance captured during the FGD of which S1 recollected that, "Parents themselves also do not understand the new curriculum. They see it as something imposed on them. They say negative things about the new Social Studies curriculum."

From the FGD, it also emerged that lack of knowledge extended to school heads and facilitators. One teacher said that both the management team and the hand-picked trainers had limited knowledge because they did not understand the new Social Studies curriculum and its demands. The teachers further took that up and explained that the school principals had challenges in interpreting the syllabus because; school principals attended the same training with the teachers. As such, what they got as information on the new Social Studies curriculum was the same as the teachers (FGD). The principals of schools confessed their ignorance of the new curriculum when participants asked them for the direction of the implementation which they failed to give. The positive attitudes of the school heads and teachers towards the launch of the new educational programmes were weakened by uncertainty and lack of knowledge.

On probing further on why teachers had poor knowledge of the revised curriculum, the participants revealed that it was the lack of knowledge among educators that stemmed from short training and non-involvement in the planning process. The narration from teachers indicated that an average of three to five days workshops were conducted (Interviews FGD, G2, S1, S2, J1, J2, M1 and M2). From the interviews and FGD, it

emerged that lack of specific training for a specific subject created challenges on interpreting the Social Studies syllabus. As clearly illustrated in teacher G2 who mentioned:

The base for teaching is on how best to interpret the syllabus. The training should have focused on that area of which that was a one all fit all approach which combined all learning areas. It was poorly and hurriedly done. We had gaps on that.

In line with that view, C1 had this to say: "The training I received was slightly before launch of the new Social Studies curriculum. However, it was not detailed since it was a bunched workshop that was not directed to a specific learning area." That finding finds resonance with the narration of G1 who reported:

I got training well after the launch of the updated curriculum implementation with some teachers from other schools. The workshop was on selling the idea of the new curriculum, its benefits and when to implement it as well as the requirements in terms of records keeping. Nothing was said on the subject matter of Social Studies curriculum. Instead all ten learning areas were fused together and roughly explained.

That was pointed out by J1 who recounted:

The Social Studies curriculum change is a challenge to us as educators because of the new requirements of the renovated curriculum which we do not have the knowledge based on content and implementation thereof. We don't have enough knowledge about it. The facilitators of the new curriculum and the school heads had restricted knowledge to an extent that when we asked them, they confided that they were not conversant with the new curriculum and their task was to ask us to go to the schools and implement.

In support of that representation, another teacher in the FGD further confirmed that trainers were not knowledgeable as evidenced by the statement in which she said, "The trainers had partial knowledge about the new Social Studies curriculum as they were

training issues they were not conversant with. We are better off with our old skills that we learnt at colleges. Otherwise their training was irrelevant as it did not address our concerns as teachers". This suggests that, teachers remained in the obsolete treasured comfort zone of the old teaching skills. That finding from the teachers' representations was evident in many schools of which J1 and S2 concurred:

> *The training was mostly about record keeping, what the new curriculum was all about and we were not taught about specific subjects. Upon interrogating them on other issues, they pointed that their task was to request us to go and implement the new curriculum since the details was still haze for them.*

That limited expertise also applied to the heads of schools who confessed their ignorance of the new curriculum when participants asked them for the direction of the implementation as was pointed out above under the subtheme one on the direction of the innovations. The positive disposition of the school principals and teachers towards the introduction of the new educational programmes was weakened by uncertainty and lack of knowledge.

It therefore emerged from the teachers' narration that absence of preparation for teachers was hampering the implementation of the new Social Studies curriculum. The training deficit which was mentioned fell into two domains: the subject matter and the pedagogy skills which were required to effectively implement the Social Studies curriculum. Evidently, knowledge deficit was experienced by the major implementers of educational change namely teachers, parents and administrators. Findings also indicated that the trainers were not well versed with what was to be implemented. It also emerged that the teachers were still comfortable with their archaic teaching practices that they were using before the introduction of the new curriculum. It emerged that the training was hurriedly done and not comprehensive enough to attend to the teachers' training needs. The inference here is that, the training for teachers was regarded as a quick fix to anticipated problems of the implementation of the mended curriculum.

Hence, such training did not address the teachers' limitations in the face of the looming Social Studies curriculum challenges.

5.3.1.4. Curriculum workload and remuneration

The interviews and the FGD reported that teachers were overworked because of the new curriculum which was bloated with activities. Evidence collected revealed that teachers were always busy throughout the week, struggling to finish the intended weekly work. The remarks by J1 pointed to that fact of which she said:

> *Aah, I can say this new Social Studies curriculum thing is straining us as teachers. It is also straining the learners as too much work is loaded on them. The Social Studies subject has five lessons per week, implying there is more work in the new Social Studies curriculum in comparison to the old Social Studies which had three lessons per week. There is incredible too much work from all the eleven learning areas that have to be written by learners and marked by the teacher.*

Not only teachers and pupils were strained but also parents as put by S2 when she said:

> *We are demotivated because the Social Studies work is too much for us as well as for parents as compared to the old Social Studies. Parents have to buy materials to accommodate this new curriculum. Things are becoming too much for me because for every topic, assessment for every child has to be done and the results are to be filed. Paperwork is too much and when paper work is as such, the actual teaching deteriorates. In addition, our timetable is now congested and lessons spill into and over lunch because of too many lessons. The new curriculum is giving us a hard time because of lots and lots of subjects and lots of paperwork. Some of these subjects do not fit in the normal timetable.*

Similarly, teacher R2, S2, M1 and J1 concurred that lessons for the primary learners were now taught after lunch which was an anomaly that was never experienced during the old Social Studies implementation of which interviewee R2 reported that, "the master timetable does not accommodate all subjects and their lessons before lunch. As such, lessons spill into the afternoon". In the same line of narration, M1 had this to say: "The timetable cannot cover all learning areas in one day. We teach after lunch so that we meet the minimum requirements. The recording is tiresome as well". That was in congruence to the narration of G2 who reported:

> The time table is congested with too many learning areas that demands lots of scheming and planning. We teach even after lunch to meet the dictates of the new Social Studies curriculum. It is hard for us. We are always stressed by the work and the number of learners had ballooned such that we cannot effectively manage and control them. I hate this new curriculum thing.

The FGD teachers also revealed that the time table of Social Studies was a bother as described by one teacher who said, "The time table is congested to an extent of having lessons well after lunch because of five Social Studies lessons which were expected to be taught per week. Each learner has to be assessed per topic. Time is therefore money". It also emerged that despite the increased workload, the teachers' salaries were not commensurate to their work. The participants blamed the timing of the educational change of which S1 bitterly lamented:

> I think this good curriculum came at the wrong time. Our economy does not permit us to make new changes. As teachers we are demotivated. If work is increased with no accompanying remuneration, then it becomes a burden for us. Yeah it is a good idea to renovate our bookish curriculum but the incentive issue is a bother to us especially when one has to teach such large classes. They froze the recruitment of teachers citing budgetary constraints and resultantly we are manning too larges classes. How can I work when I cannot feed my family? Under such circumstances, my attention is diverted towards the welfare of my family.

From the above teachers' representations of the challenges related to workload, it emerged that the workload of teachers had swelled from that to which they were accustomed. While the workload had increased, remuneration for the teachers remained stagnant pushing teachers to unruly practices like vending and offering private lessons to their students which was a deviation from the Ministry policy. As such, teachers sought other means to supplement the meagre salaries they received from the government (Interview C1; S1). Five critical issues were described: the timetable that could not accommodate all learning areas before lunch; the paperwork to record progress of learners; the preparation of lessons that encompassed the idea to research on the part of the teacher to align their knowledge level to match it to the demands of the revised curriculum; too large classes and the poor salaries. Upon being questioned on how they were responding to the challenge of paperwork, the teachers (J2; M1; G1; S2) revealed that they were now resorting to buying schemes of work from the market despite the fact that those schemes were not prepared by qualified teachers but by those who were hunting for money to make ends meet in such a volatile economic environment.

5.3.1.5. Psycho-social support from the school principals and teachers

The voices of teachers knocked at the management corridors and depicted that minimal support from the administration team was a challenge in the implementation of the revitalised curriculum. Hence the epicentre of effective curriculum implementation was in the hands of the school head. The school heads offered minimal support as posed by S2's claim:

> *I think the school heads do not understand us as the new curriculum teachers. The new curriculum is quite challenging unlike the old one. Their emotional involvement and their professional support through provision of resources and*

their guidance and wisdom are at the centre of the Social Studies curriculum implementation. Frequently when they are approached for assistance they claim funding is a problem. In addition the supervisors demand to see records as evidence of my working yet I can make and prepare records perfectly well at the expense of the actual teaching.

In response to how school heads assisted in the implementation of the renewed curriculum, several teachers revealed that they sourced soft copies of the syllabi and specimen textbooks but that remained elusive because they had challenges to produce hard copies because some schools like M and J which were found in the rural area and in the farm respectively had no computers and accessories to do that. As pointed out by M2:

The school heads did not provide resources because schools had no money. In addition, the heads of schools lack the know-how on how to impart teachers with skills that match the demands of the Social Studies curriculum. We still need more training and more practice on the new Social Studies curriculum. We have challenges of how to use technological gadgets to access some relevant information. We got soft copies of the syllabus but the school had no computers and printers to produce hard copies. When you request for help, you are met with arrogance that emanates from the school heads' frustration caused by their failure to cope with demands of the new curriculum.

Findings also indicated that the teachers bemoaned that the school heads had narrow knowledge on syllabus interpretation and the continuous assessment tools. Hence their roles as supervisors in the implementation process was weak since they were failing to provide proper guidance to teachers (Interviews S2, M1, M2, C2 and J1) The teachers' accounts revealed that the minimal management support characterised by harsh responses when asked for guidance was a hitch in the implementation of the new reforms curriculum which rattled the implementers' confidence. This suggests that, failure of the implementation resulted from the incompetence of school heads to adequately and professionally supervise and coordinate the implementation process under healthy relations.

On the nature of relations and the reactions that the school principals displayed, teachers revealed that support which was given was tainted with lack of respect, love and compassion. In an interview, S1 noted:

> *Each time I knocked on the door of our principal, I received a cold welcome punctuated with a "what is it again" expression on the face. When I explain the purpose of the visit, the school principal usually reminds me of my laziness and then an elaboration that we received the same training and as such was not even aware of how to deal with my problems. That is again followed by a serious lecture on why the school cannot honour my requests because of financial constraints. Their behaviour is likened to that of the then Prime Minister of Primary and Secondary Education who once said: "the new curriculum has now come to stay, shape up or ship out.*

The sentiment by the teacher reflects poor relations and therefore denotes lack of concern, love and dignity from the school principals which are central to *Ubuntu* values. If this view represents lack of humanness, I maintain that the teacher who is exposed to such poor decorum from a leader is likely to unyoke him/herself from the burden of being part of a team and directs the effort to other issues that are not linked to the goals and visions of the school. That neglect from the school principal speaks volumes on lack of the importance of teamwork in an educational setting which I believe is due to ignorance or lack of African wisdom that celebrates unity of purpose.

From the teachers' accounts, the implementation of the curriculum was indeed an obligation presented to them by the government though it was strewn with challenges. The teachers who participated in individual interviews and FGD from the observed schools revealed that successful implementation of the changed curriculum was working against several odds made up of challenges which included but not limited to: the poor orientation of the innovations and tokenistic participation; inadequate educational materials and lack of funds; limited knowledge and inadequate training;

demanding workload and poor remuneration; minimal support from school principals; unknown content of the new Social Studies curriculum; and weak consultation process about the implementation of the curriculum. It was after describing these challenges that they made suggestions on how to derail them if the Social Studies implementation was to taste success.

5.3.1.6. Teacher representatives in the construction of the new Social Studies curriculum content

From the interviews, it emerged that most of the participants agree that the new Social Studies was an amalgamated learning area that is woven from several strands drawn from a number of subjects that tend to stand alone as we move from primary school to secondary school curricula. From these subjects History and Geography topics dominated more than any other subjects. The teachers interviewed represented Social Studies as a field which constitute a number of subjects that had been fused together and these subjects are drawn mainly from the humanities and social sciences. That was aptly described by G1 who defines Social Studies as "an integrated field of study of people in relation to each other and to their world and this subject is drawn from humanities and social sciences". In terms of differences in the content of the new and old Social Studies curriculum, it was noted that the renewed Social Studies curriculum had modified topics which were added to the old ones. In the words of G2:

> *The old Social Studies curriculum was mainly an integration of History and Geography with some topics drawn from Economics and Sociology. The new Social Studies curriculum is more like an extension of the old Social Studies curriculum and its focus is on the social life of people of the world. It has some aspects which are concerned with the local history of the people of Zimbabwe. Its thrust is on the real aspects and its emphasis is on practical work.*

To further that argument, C2 had this to say:

To begin with the content of the new Social Studies is now deeper because of some additional made. We now have topics such as Cultural heritage, Family history and Local heritage, National history, Sovereignty and governance, Entitlements and responsibilities, Natural heritage and Global issues. In addition, these new topics have new forms of assessment which are somehow different from what we used to do in the past since Social Studies is now competence based discipline.

This suggests that, new topics of Social Studies had been added which also indicated that the obsolete content had been modified. On the basis of that, teachers' accounts revealed that the implementation of the subject was fraught with some problems which were created that evolved around their content and competences in the implementation process thereof. The participants agreed that there were several changes in terms of content and assessment forms that were made in the Social Studies curriculum which they were not familiar with. In addition, the syllabi, the teaching approaches, the planning and scheming had also been altered. From the interviews and FGD with the teachers, it emerged that teachers were not familiar with what was expected to be done as some of the addendums of the new curriculum were new to them and consequently they were also learning just like the learners were (J1, S1, S2, G2, C2 and R1). As put by one teacher in the FGD:

Some of the topics provided in the new Social Studies are new. New things had been added and old things had been rejuvenated. We have limited knowledge with regards to the content of Social Studies and the skills which we are to use to deliver the knowledge to pupils. The extension part on the subject matter needs some training. I am not well versed with some of the topics. Some of the topics are farfetched for the Grade four pupils. Subsequently, they need to be toned down. I need to research before I teach. The pupils and I learn as we go. We are at the same level in terms of content of the subject.

Narrations from the teachers (J2; G2) revealed that the work for the learners was not commensurate with their cognitive development as it was work suitable for senior students in secondary schools. As such, interviewee J2 recounted that, "some of the

topics such as governance, cultural heritage and global issues would not suit the level of the grade four learners whom we are teaching." While, teacher G2 said, "The content is too demanding as it is the same with that done at secondary level."

The quotes infer that the themes engrained in the Social Studies were expansive and complex. The statements by the teachers depicted that while they were trained Social Studies specialists teachers, new content which was added was beyond their knowledge level to an extent of them being found wanting in the delivery of Social Studies lessons. The teachers had to align themselves with the Social Studies changes in terms of the content through reading. Similarly, teachers G1, J2 and S2 affirmed that the content of the new Social Studies curriculum was an extension of the old Social Studies hence new challenging topics had been added. In view of that G1 said: "As I said earlier, the content of the new Social Studies is deeper in scope and breath. It needs the learners and me to be researchers on a daily basis. Some of the work is quite suitable for secondary school learners." Agreeing with this, S2 said, "Sometimes we don't teach some of the new topics because we don't know them unless we research. The new Social Studies curriculum has new things that we never learnt at school or college." In the same context, J2 claimed that, "as an implementer of the Social Studies syllabus, I am not well acquainted with some of the topics. I need to research and if I do not have internet, then there is going to be trouble."

From the observations made, it emerged that the content as reflected in the Social Studies textbook was added to include issues that were related to governance and global issues leaving out African themes like living together. As put by J2:

> As I said earlier, new topics were added for instance the topics "Global issues" and "governance" were added yet they are too difficult to be delivered by teachers. I am clueless of what to teach and how to teach it. I wonder why they left out a topic like "Living together" which promotes humanity and African values for instance respect and tolerance. They brought in Eurocentric topics which are

not necessarily helpful in the African way of life. We are potent sources of knowledge for the Social Studies curriculum. As such, we can be helpful in the development of the curriculum content.

That reflects that the policy makers did not identify teachers as a potent source of Social Studies content. They belittled them to be mere implementers of an already crafted policy. They missed the experiences of the teachers as springs of knowledge. They did not see the importance of the African themes that make up the African way of life. Hence, their reluctance to apply the *Ubuntu* values in their dealing with the teachers as shown by the arrogance and lack of solidarity that was demonstrated during the training phase. Revelations from observations show that the Social Studies curriculum was aligned to a Eurocentric view which promotes globalisation. The teachers believed that the non- Africanisation in the Social Studies content was because they were not involved in the curriculum designing process (Interview J2), relegating them to mere implementers which suggests that they saw themselves as very good curriculum developers because of their experiences they gained from their community life.

5.4.   Teachers' representations of the mitigation strategies

Teachers' representations under this theme were based on the question:

"*How did Zimbabwean teachers represent the mitigation strategies for the challenges they faced on the effective implementation of the new 2015-2022 Social Studies curriculum?*"

Teachers from all schools interviewed revealed that the challenges they faced could be dealt with should some considerations be made. Their accounts indicated that if austerity measures were taken which were skewed towards being sensitive to the teachers' needs, most of the problems could be abated. As such, the teachers'

representations of the mitigation strategies were pivoted on the bottom-up approach coupled to meaningful contribution by teachers during the designing stage through to implementation, the provision of resources through partnership, training on the content or matter of the curriculum and the appropriate consultation process. Since the thematic approach was adopted in this study, the above issues became the sub-headings based on teachers' narratives. The narratives were woven because of the severity of challenges experienced by educators in implementing the Social Studies curriculum and consequently they (teachers) then gave the way-forward on how to mitigate the upheavals they faced within their current Social Studies classrooms.

5.4.1. Consultation process: Bottom-up approach and teacher participation

Teachers pointed out in their representations of challenges of Social Studies curriculum implementation that it was infested with teething challenges of poor orientation of the innovations, limited expertise and a congested workload because of the top- down approach taken by the government in the curriculum change process (Interviews J1, S2 & R1). Consequently, participants in the FGD and interviews voiced their suggestions on how to ameliorate those challenges by employing the bottom-up approach. They implored for the need to up the degree of their participation and involvement in the planning stage of the implementation stage - a stage which they felt was their responsibility as change agents.

The teachers' accounts pointed to the fact that they were the cog of the engine that could drive the implementation process and as such, their participation in planning the educational change through to implementation was vital for the achievement of the implementation of the reforms. As a strategy to mitigate the challenges brought about by the top-down approach teachers in the interview and FGD discussion argued for their active participation which is meaningful. For interviewee J1, J2 and the quorum in the

FGD meaningful participation of teachers in curriculum construction and implementation mean:

> *It is always important to engage the people who are going to implement any new aspects of the new changes that are going to come. Those people are going to share among them what is needed (subject matter and its workload) and how they would implement the changes (pedagogy expertise). This would reduce the complications embedded in the implementation process. Planning should start from grassroots where we as implementers discuss and agree on the changes and the implementation strategies. The discussion will unpack the implementation map which would assist us to see the vision of the innovations and how to trudge on in the odyssey. Thereafter, we can then take that up for fine tuning and perfection of the suggestions by policy makers. If they impose like what happened, then challenges are inescapable.*

Teachers' input is indispensable to fidelity implementation of a new programme though the teachers' contribution is regularly overlooked especially so in centralised curriculum development systems. The bottom-up approach finds support by all teachers as key in mitigating challenges met during the implementation stage of a curriculum. The teachers revealed therefore that meaningful participation in curriculum change hinged on sharing the pedagogical competence, content of the subject matter, its timetabling and the vision of the changes.

In my discussion with the teachers with regard to the function of the management team in mitigating curriculum implementation process of the improved curriculum, it emerged that many consultations were to be made among all concerned implementers (Interviews G1, G2, J1, J2, and FGD). In the narrations, teachers revealed that listening to their concerns was critical if implementation of the study programme was to be effective. As such, G1 described:

The idea of telling us what to teach without us knowing what to teach and how to teach is not palatable. I would be happy if teachers were consulted and involved because an officer who is not knowledgeable about what transpires in the classroom is not qualified to impose the curriculum on us. We know from our experiences that some work does not work for such grade learners and such work is suitable for such learners.

It implies that consultation must not occur only at the implementation stage but from conception till the end. The teacher's voice is critical when curriculum is constructed as explained by J1:

Since we are the implementers we can see the advantages and disadvantages. We can look around and determine which resources are valid to implement this and that. We can look from our societies and see how best we can implement the proposed changes. Together we can sift, grade and sort proposed changes to our likings in line with our aspirations as a nation. A one man operation is not good for us as a nation hence results can be disastrous.

In sum teachers interviewed suggest that proper of applying the new curriculum hinges on the consultation process in which teachers' views are sought and applied. It suggests the application of teamwork with the aim of making concerted effort so as to avoid a stillbirth of curriculum implementation. While curriculum makers are vested with the socio-economic and political powers that can initiate an innovation, the power of the implementers must not be taken for granted. This is so because the implementers have the audacity to defy or ignore the directive meaning that, one can take a horse to water but cannot force it to drink.

5.4.2. Provision of education resources through partnerships

From the FGD and semi-structured interviews the buzz word was teamwork in sourcing resources which had bogged down all schools. Teachers voiced that players in education had to be collectively committed to lessen the acute shortages of resources in schools of which interviewee J1, R2, M1, M2 and G1 concurred that the teachers had to be resourceful in partnering with others in improvising some of the teaching media using materials from their local environment. In addition teacher M2 said that in order to deal with lack of resources: "we have to look for help from the international community and well-wishers to fund the provision of resources." Involvement of global communities is critical if provision of educational resources is to be realised. According to interviewee R2 her school got some assistance from well-wishers of which she recounted, "Our head of school had to ask for help from the international community in a bid to source things like computer gadgets which we do not have in our schools and fortunately our school was provided with Wi-Fi. What are left are the computers."

One suggestion made by the teachers in their representation of the mitigation strategies was to delay the practising of the new study course so that the economy becomes stable before launch of any educational reforms. As argued by G2, from even a well- off school, that the challenges they were facing were insurmountable because of the acute shortages of funds which also affected the availability of other resources such as textbooks, ICT gadgets and instructional materials. He/she takes that further by stating that the Social Studies implementation should have waited until the economy stabilised since Zimbabwe was reeling from abject economic crisis. The FGD suggested a plethora of options in getting teaching resources of which one teacher summarised them when she narrated:

> *On their part, teachers ought to be resourceful and should scavenge for instructional materials from their communities. They are urged to author books for use in the schools. As for schools, they should introduce a book levy so that*

they can have textbooks. Schools should organise fund raising activities such as raffles to beef up their coffers. The government has to resuscitate the per capita grant for all schools on need basis so that the money is used to purchase more educational resources. It has to exercise speed in approving new textbooks in the bookshops. The government has to establish minimal infrastructures required per school. Provision of educational materials has to be the responsibility of the government and everyone else.

The duty of the stakeholders together with that of the government in sourcing the resources was triangulated by a teacher in the FGD who submitted:

The government should provide schools with adequate resources before the launch of any new programme. The government should resuscitate the per capita grant to all schools so that the money is used to purchase instructional materials. Schools on the other hand should levy learners for textbooks. Teachers ought to be resourceful so that they improvise some materials.

The statements above depict that all stakeholders have a role of partnering with the education department in the provision of the educational resources. Each one has an obligation to see to it that schools were equipped with the much needed resources if the Social Studies curriculum was to be implemented effectively. From the voices of teachers, there was need to have teamwork in sourcing resources. The findings from the teachers' representations revealed the importance of working together for the common good of the schools, community and the country.

5.4.3. Training for teachers

Most teachers interviewed stated the lack of TPD as one issue vexing the Social Studies implementation which was attributed to the hastily introduced curriculum that left teachers scantily knowledgeable about the Social Studies curriculum. From the interviews and the FGD, Teacher Professional Development (TPD) before and during

the implementation process was key to effective implementation (Interviews C1; C2; J1; S2). Several issues with regard to training were mentioned of which teacher J1 submitted that, "if we are staff- developed then that would be better". In tandem to that observation, S2 suggested that the education department:

Should give us more workshops on how to teach the new Social Studies curriculum in particular because we do not have any problems with other learning areas like Mathematics or English since not much was changed in these disciplines. But as for Social Studies curriculum, we need to be educated because the content added is new and while we were at school or college we did not learn this subject to such a depth. As such, we are told to teach what we have not been trained to teach.

In congruence to the above suggestion interviewees S2 and J2 also indicated that, "I think more training is needed because the training we undertook did not look at a particular subject area. We need training along those lines at school, cluster level and beyond if we are to have quality education." Teacher R2 confirmed the deficiency in training and called for further training to mitigate the challenges related to delivery of the Social Studies lessons of which he testified that, *"Training is therefore a requirement for the success of Social Studies curriculum implementation. If we are to have it on termly basis, it will help us as educators to share ideas on the ways to improve our pedagogy."* That was also suggested by interviewee G1 who said: "Termly training has to be conducted continuously to equip us with knowledge, skills and attitudes on the new Social Studies curriculum." The FGD also confirmed that the employ of training sessions was helpful to mitigate the training deficit experienced by teachers in the implementation process. As demonstrated by one of the teachers in the FGD who reported:

Teachers need adequate training before any new programme is introduced. If we all sit down as a group and interpret the Social Studies curriculum together, then what we will teach would be uniform. We also noticed that the trainers had limited competences because they were non teachers. I think policy makers should invite classroom teachers to get the first training at the planning stage. As such, we propose that the trainers be drawn from the teaching fraternity. Let teachers

get trained by teachers because hand-picked trainers do not know what happens in the classrooms.

The above quote infers that trainers were non teachers and not knowledgeable about what transpires in the real classroom situation. As such, their competence in terms of assisting with appropriate skills for effective implementation of the new curriculum was shaky. It was, therefore, appropriate for teachers to train their colleagues. From the FDG it also emerged that some training in form of workshops could be done to empower practising teachers with skills to author reference books which had proved to be unavailable. As put by one teacher in the FGD:

Teachers do not have knowledge on how to write relevant books which are related to curriculum. It is necessary to prepare us with writing skills so that we establish the relationship between the syllabus and what is published. This will go a long way in alleviating the challenge of non-availability of textbooks in our schools.

The statements suggested that teachers had deficiency in terms of writing books that were compatible to the new curriculum and hence needed assistance to combat shortages of books in schools that had affected the Social Studies implementation. From the voices of teachers in interviews and FGD, it emerged that if implementation of the curriculum was to taste success, then training had to be for the specific learning area, the training had to be done at school, cluster and district level, training had to be done regularly or termly, teachers had to be trained on the subject matter, pedagogical and authorship skills. All these should be covered in a comprehensive training that encompasses the needs of the teacher which has to be done in teams, considering the involvement of the teachers.

5.4.4. Curriculum workload and remuneration

It came out from the interviews, observations and the FGD that the new Zimbabwean curriculum burdened teachers to an extent of them going beyond their stipulated

teaching hours. Too much workload manifested in the form of too much paperwork on lesson preparation, too many lessons per week, congested timetable and very large classes. Asked on how they could mitigate that challenge R1 suggested:

> *We must work as a team for the implementation of these changes. Since some subjects overlap into the afternoon, a time reserved for sports, school heads must allow us to teach after lunch so that we do not have a crush programme. If that sounds impossible, then I suggest we allocate more time to examinable subjects like Social Studies and then non examinable subjects like Mass Displays and Visual and Performing Arts can be combined or allocated a small chunk of the time on the timetable.*

R2 from an urban school had a different opinion on how to manage the workload that haunted the teachers of which he/she said:

> *More teachers are needed to man the large classes and as such, the government has to lift the recruitment ban. There is also need for the teachers to be given a leeway to choose subjects that they are specialised in rather than being forced to teach all subjects. Because we are generalists at primary schools, we are not competent to teach some subjects. That chews much of our preparation time as we struggle to research. The teaching of these subjects lasts hours as we struggle to teach unfamiliar content.*

The findings recommend that the time table for the new curriculum was packed with activities that overlap into the afternoon leaving no room for the preparation of the next day's work on the part of the teacher. That scenario finds solution in the introduction of subject specialisation at primary school because no time will be wasted by specialist teachers on studying on the subject in which they are conversant. One suggestion made was to decongest the timetable by reducing the number of slots for subjects that were not examinable. The government was urged to unfreeze the recruitment of new teachers to bring anomaly on the sizes of the classes that had ballooned.

5.4.5. Psycho-social support from the school principals

Interviews and FGD findings from the teachers' representation suggested that supportive management was said to be fundamental if the Social Studies curriculum was to be effectively implemented. One aspect that teachers raised was the idea that management had to be flexible on the timetable of the learning areas since teachers had autonomy of the classroom activities and hence were not slaves of the timetable. The teachers were also of the view that management had to source materials for use by teachers through whatever possible means. They also made mention of the need to organise training of teachers in liaison with the district teams. The study indicated that teachers worked with some school principals who were hard heartened, insensitive and inhumane (Interviews R1, C1, M1, and M2). The supervision of the new curriculum was said to be too concentrated on the production of records instead of focusing on what the learners were benefiting. This was evident in the narrations of R1, R2, J1, J2 and those in the FGD of which R1 narrated:

> *The school heads must ask the district team to keep on holding workshops. While funds are limited, the administrators together with the School Development Committee have to try their level best to source funds and provide essential instructional materials. Heads of schools must not concentrate on supervising the records as these are fraught with artificiality because one can have excellent records while the delivery of the subject matter is extremely poor. And if we concentrate on record keeping our lesson delivery suffers.*

Teachers in the study revealed that school principals were showing lack of understanding on the needs of the new curriculum teachers. Because of that lack of understanding, whatever teachers asked was answered abruptly. In their work, school principals were harsh and not prepared to listen to the plight of these teachers. To abate the sour relations, the teachers implored the school principals to uphold humanness in their dealings (Interviews J2; S2). As crisply put by teacher J2;

School principals do not understand us in terms of the help we expect from them. As such each time we seek for help, they answer arrogantly and in a militia stance. We ask them to exercise due caution and respect our views as well. School principals must shun arrogance, impolite ad disheartening responses when asked for help. We expect them to show respect and love since they should offer us pastoral care. Above all, we need to share information on the requirements of the new Social Studies curriculum. This sharing promotes working together as a team. United we stand but divided we fall. We can share information at school, cluster or even at district level. The spirit of unity must prevail at all these levels.

This indicates that the relationship between the teachers and the school principal had to be characterised by respect and co-operation in which both the teacher and the school head work together in decision making for success to occur. It suggests poor relations in some schools. On the whole, the findings indicated that the heads of schools were to collaborate with the teachers and other stakeholders in mapping the best approaches to propel the implementation of the modified curriculum through proper feedback mechanisms. Each member must play a pivotal role to contribute for the whole education fraternity by assisting each other with ideas on teaching the learning area.

5.4.6. Teacher representatives in the construction of the new Social Studies content

What emerged from the voices of the teachers in the interviews and the FGD was that the rejuvenated Social Studies curriculum was chequered with new topics while the old topics had been altered to the dictates of Eurocentric views (Interviews C2; R1). The modifications and the changes presented problems of lack of knowledge of the content as well as the competence or skills to effectively put the policy in practise. As such, accounts of teachers suggested the use of training sessions in the two areas which had impeded the success of the new programme. In the words of C2:

Since I am not familiar with the extension of the Social Studies topics as well as the new topics introduced, I suggest that we get engaged in workshops meant to staff-develop us because our old knowledge, skills and values had been put to test by the changes. We still need more learning of the new content so that we practice the correct things that are in line with the dictates of the new curriculum. Group learning of the new content as well as how to teach it is critical so that we share the difficulties and then suggest some ways to rectify them.

Consistent to that view was the submission by a teacher in the FGD who suggested:

While we do not have time for gathering such as this, I think we need as teachers to meet regularly to share information and sharpen each other's' skills for the implementation of the new curriculum endowed with new content which is unfamiliar to us. As such, we desperately need training that covers those gaps.

The suggestions made by the teachers surmise that teachers accepted that they could not make use of yesterday's knowledge and teaching skills for today's Social Studies curriculum. This could be equivalent to putting new wine in an old bottle which means that, under normal circumstances new things are associated with new packages so that, they match. Thus, the new Social Studies curriculum was also calling for new approaches and practices that could address the demands of the new discipline.

The teachers in the semi structured interviews and FGD bemoaned the lack of African content in the Social Studies curriculum and enumerated that as a demerit for implementation of the learning area which has to be rectified. On that, S2 said:

I may say this new Social Studies is shallower in cultural content as compared to the old Social Studies. This new Social Studies is more on global issues which negate our cultural values in the Zimbabwean context. While it teaches learners issues correlated to our indigenous knowledge for instance, types of trees and their herbal uses it lacks on issues that promotes cooperation. I wonder why they purged off the topic "Living Together" which was very relevant in the promotion of

social living. Our moral fibre has to be strengthened through teaching of our values through Social Studies. When teaching is based on our knowledge of our values, then it is answers to the realities of our lives and that makes it easy to be cascaded. For instance, when Social Studies teaches about our heritage and the monuments of Zimbabwe it's worth teaching because it focuses on our history.

If content is Africanised, then teachers find it easy to teach since they would be teaching things that they grow knowing from birth, hence a plausible implementation of the new curriculum. Observations made confirmed that the topic that was mentioned by S2 was indeed missing and some global topics were incorporated for instance "*Entitlements and responsibilities*" and *"Global issues"*. There was no topic that was directly on aspects that promote *Ubuntu* values as was once reflected in the former topic of living together. The topics in the new Social Studies curriculum concentrated on the cultural history of Zimbabwe leaving the African values unexplored as expected and espoused by the philosophical base of *Ubuntu* which the Zimbabwean curriculum purports to serve.

5.5.   Chapter Summary

Theme one was concerned with the understanding of the teachers' representations of the challenges they met in the implementation of the newly updated Social Studies curriculum. Data obtained by means of observations, semi-structured interviews and the FGD, showed that there were many militating factors that inhibited the implementation of the 2015-2022 curriculum. Paramount among them was: The top-down approach and lack of teacher participation; inadequate educational materials and lack of funds; inadequate training for teachers; demanding workload and poor remuneration; minimal psycho- support from school principals; and the absence of teachers in the construction of the new Social Studies curriculum. These factors were interwoven and inseparable. For example, the lack of meaningful consultation and participation by teachers in the planning of the implementation process led to lack of knowledge, clarity and direction of the intended innovations (Fullan, 2015). What the policy makers did in the name of

consultation, training and provision of educational materials were done without concern, love, compassion and solidarity reflecting that the usable past engrained in the *Ubuntu* philosophy was not applied.

Then, theme two consisted of the suggestions by teachers on how to mitigate the teething challenges. Teachers raised interesting recommendations couched in *Ubuntu* values and Fullan's (2015) contributions. The teachers interviewed made suggestions on how to alleviate the challenges depicted by applying the useable past of the African culture and beliefs to change the face of curriculum implementation for the better. They all envisaged the application of team work, solidarity, compassion, love, dignity and respect by all and sundry in educational innovations and implementation as depicted in their representations. The idea which resonated in the teachers' rhetoric was to embrace the bottom-up approach in curriculum reform and enactment, which considers the teachers' concerns. In the next chapter I present and analyse data in conjunction with the literature and the theories. I explained how the theories were used to create new knowledge in the field of curriculum implementation using Social Studies as an example.

CHAPTER SIX

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

6.1. Introduction

The erstwhile chapter outlined the data collected through semi-structured interviews, observations and Focus Group Discussion (FGD) as directed by the research questions. It unpacked the data of the study as recounted by the teachers who took part in this research. This chapter seeks to analyse the teachers' representation of challenges of the new Zimbabwean 2015-2022 Social Studies curriculum implementation and the mitigation strategies to curtail the challenges thereof. A survey through literature detects that very few researches if there are any, had been undertaken on the Social Studies teachers' representations of curriculum change and implementation in the African context, using the Southern African teachers' views. From my research, *Ubuntu* philosophy had not gained prominence in curriculum proposal and implementation discourses. Interest in *Ubuntu* has been confined to business management and leadership (Bryn, 2017; Khambula, 2015; Letseka, 2016; Lutz, 2009; Khoza, 2018; Mbigi & Maree, 2005), overlooking its relevance in curriculum change and implementation. This chapter bridged this scholarship gap by using representation through narratives to listen to the Zimbabwean teachers' voices applying the *Ubuntu* lens as an analytical tool. The chapter presents the descriptions of the findings constructed on data generated from semi-structured interviews, FGD and observations using twelve teachers purposively picked from one urban primary school (S), one boarding school (R) one mission school (G), one rural school (M), one growth point school (J) and one farm school (C) giving a total of six schools from Zimbabwe. The chapter attempts to explain and construe the data that was presented in Chapter Five. It analyses the challenges and mitigation strategies from the teachers' perspective by

making use of both the Eurocentric analytical model represented by Fullan's (2015) theory and the Afrocentric model using the promises of *Ubuntu* philosophy.

The study contributes to the topical debates on decolonisation of the curriculum by integrating African philosophy and Eurocentric views to unpack the challenges of implementing the Social Studies curriculum and the mitigation strategies, in the context of developing countries like Zimbabwe. It argues that the use of western theories in many instances have limitations that left glaring gaps in understanding education reforms in the decolonised African context. As such, the current study uses the *Ubuntu* lens and Fullan's (2015) theories not to compete but to complement each other through buttressing issues related to curriculum reforms and adoption which have been limitedly explored. To that end, the decolonising philosophy and narratives of returns of love, respect, compassion, teamwork and participation on curriculum reform as put by Makuvaza (2018) remain a virgin area for the mainstream curriculum space and discourse into which this study considered and ventured. I made use of the *Ubuntu* philosophy and Fullan's (2015) theory to discuss the findings and answer the research questions which were:

1. *What are Zimbabwean teachers' representations of the challenges in the implementation of the new 2015-2022 Social Studies curriculum?*
2. *How do Zimbabwean teachers represent the mitigation strategies for the challenges they face on the effective implementation of the new 2015-2022 Social Studies Curriculum?*

The findings from the teachers' representations through silence, narratives and gestures revealed that the revived Social Studies curriculum implementation has trekked an abstruse and ambivalent landscape demonstrated by lack of consultation in curriculum approach, inadequate resources, poor relations among implementers, too much workload, less Africanised content of the curriculum and limited teachers' training among others (S1; S2; G1; G2; M1; FGD). The study indicated that the odyssey of

implementation could not had been beleaguered with challenges had the policy makers consulted the teachers and worked within the confinements of *Ubuntu* ethics. Grounded on the results, the problem infected curriculum implementation could be effectively put into practise through the participation of teachers in curriculum change and implementation as engraved in the work ethics of *Ubuntu* values that are centred on participation and communalism. It emerged that the past of Africans characterised by the *Ubuntu* values of communalism, participation, cooperation, compassion, survival, respect and dignity was missing in curriculum proposal and implementation. As such, that bred challenges in the African education system. I now hereunder present the teachers' representations of the challenges benefitting from Fullan's (2015) theory and the "Usable past" from the African societies enshrined in the *Ubuntu* philosophy.

6.2. Zimbabwean teachers' representations of the challenges of the implementation of the new 2015-2022 Social Studies curriculum.

In this theme, I analysed the findings outlined in the preceding chapter regarding the teachers' representations of the constraints of curriculum implementation to comprehend why challenges manifested in the way they did. I will tease out issues correlated to the top-down approach, teacher participation, educational materials, training for teachers, curriculum workload and remuneration, the psycho-social support from school principals and teacher representatives in the construction of the curriculum content alongside Fullan's (2015) theory and the *Ubuntu* values on educational change.

6.2.1. The Top-down approach in curriculum reform

From the FGD and semi structured interviews with teachers data gathered indicated that the top-down process that was followed in curriculum change of Social Studies was a sticking point. As such, it ignited vilifications from stakeholders as the participants

claimed that in the top-down approach changes were generated from the centre and then diffused to the periphery without their voices (Interviews R1; S1; J1; S2). As affirmed by Nziramasanga (2018, p. 36) that in Zimbabwe, "policies are generally formulated at higher levels without easy consensus." Hence, teachers interviewed revealed that they were told of the new curriculum at the dawn of its implementation. That finding confirms Zindi's (2018, p. 31) observation that, "not enough information was given to Zimbabwean teachers on how the new changes were to be implemented." Implied herein was that the teachers were seen as mere implementers whether they were informed of the vision or intentions of the changes. That alone questioned their understanding in terms of what to do in the implementation process. In his conceptual analysis on the new meaning of educational change, Fullan (2015) argues that lack of vision of the innovations creates a fertile ground for challenges to emerge during the infant stages of the adoption of any new curriculum. Then, when such a top-down approach is adopted where there is limited information, there is a high degree of the curriculum faulting because the end users will interpret it according to their level of understanding it as illustrated by the interviews (S1; G2; FGD). In support of that proclamation, Nziramasanga (2018, p. 36) substantiates that if the curriculum is generated from the top, then "each curriculum user is allowed to interpret the policy in terms most favourable to him/her irrespective of the relevance or irrelevance of those terms" and challenges will occur thereof. There is a high possibility of dissonance between intentions and practice as was narrated by teachers in the interviews and FGD (Interviews G1; S1; FGD). As noted by Ndawi and Maravanyika that "externally brewed innovation often suffer tissue rejection when the school resists being forced to change from their usual ways of doing things" (2014, p. 57). In view of the above, the study concurs with Simmons and Maclean (2018, p. 186) that "policies arrive in schools fully formed and the process of policy implementation involves teachers navigating the policy framework in a way that provides success." Education policy in most countries is centralised in nature and Zimbabwe presents a case in point as indicated by the views of teachers interviewed (J1; G1; S2). What is ideal is that teachers need time and opportunity to interact and to embrace the new ideas to acclimatise their own practice to

drive the implementation effectively which validated the existence of the teething challenges.

The new Social Studies curriculum intended to focus on *Ubuntu* values but in practice was not the case (Interviews R1; S1). The approach by the Zimbabwean policy makers was a demonstration of a power-coercive method because it symbolized a top-down movement of innovation which is anti-*Ubuntu* and did not support participation of all people in implementing whatever is suggested by the government. In terms of *Ubuntu*, this top-down style of participation is a violation of respect, teamwork, solidarity and cooperation. Hence the interviewees (Interviews J1; G1; S2; S1) disagreed with how they were consulted and saw that as breach of their rights as human beings entitled them to have a say in their societal activities. As crisply put by interviewees S1 and S2, the curriculum was an imposition by the government, and they had no say to change it even though they are part of the community. In that way teachers remained silenced by the policy developers. The participating teachers engaged in a spiral of silence to conceal their opinions for fear of victimisation because school principals were reported in Chapter Five as arrogant and inhumane for at one-point teachers were asked to shape up or ship out of the new Social Studies curriculum. That indicated the incompatibility of the findings of the study with the *Ubuntu* values. It is because, *Ubuntu philosophy* embraces harmonious thinking, talking and behaviour which in this context of curriculum implementation implies respect to teachers and also taking measures to involve them in effective participation in curriculum transformation and implementation of Social Studies (Letseka 2016, p. 34) of which this was not done. In the words of Teacher J1:

> *The curriculum change started from the top going downwards. At a very later stage, we were only told to come for the workshop for the new curriculum. Meaning the new curriculum had already been formulated and what was left was for us teachers to be passive consumers of the policy that was to be implemented. Then we were expected to deliver what we did not partake in the first place. No wonder we have many challenges.*

That verbal attestation showed that the top-down approach was adopted because the implementers were told to implement resolutions previously established by the powerful in the planning department rather than advice. Based on that observation, the top-down approach in curriculum policy and implementation presented problems in the implementation of the curriculum because it alienated the implementers from the formulation process which led them to be ignorant of the expectations of the new reforms.

The bottom-up approach which policy makers disliked for fear of losing power is linked with *Ubuntu* in that it celebrates participation, consultation, respect of involvement, working together and cooperation which are basic prerequisites. Seen from the *Ubuntu* lens, the bottom-up approach is anchored on consultative meetings in which ideas are shared in mutual respect and understanding. This style of consultation is part of decolonisation as it embraces the African Indigenous Knowledge that is normally silenced in curriculum implementation. Letseka (2016, p. 3) explained that *Ubuntu* embraces a hands-on approach and as such, "for a proper interconnectedness and interdependence to take place, coexistence and cohesion should be the connecting and linking factors in the communal action." Though the new curriculum in Zimbabwe is grounded in *Ubuntu* philosophy, the principles of respect by involvement of teachers was not adhered to as argued above. The teachers interviewed never mentioned the issue of *Ubuntu* but this research discovered that since the curriculum is grounded on such principles policy makers and implementers were supposed to follow the ethics engraved in *Ubuntu* philosophy of effective involvement of teachers and participation in curriculum reforms and implementation of Social Studies. That was indicated in the fact that the policy makers have now embraced *Ubuntu philosophy* as their philosophical base of the education system unlike their rejection of *Ubuntu* philosophy in the 1980s (Nziramasanga, 2018; Zvobgo, 1996; Samkange & Samkange, 1980).

6.2.2. Teacher participation?

If curriculum change is enforced without teacher participation then the issue of ownership by the teachers is belittled. As posed by S2, "Teachers perceive the reforms as a threat, which can challenge their beliefs, and tear their confidence in their established practices and the feeling of self-efficacy." That was the case with the Social Studies curriculum because it was centrally planned (Interviews, G1; S1; S2). As such, teachers remained quiet about the Social Studies reforms out of fear. This further attests that mental pictures of an event may be formed and then remain in the head without being expressed in verbal and non-verbal forms which is a form of representation through silence as explained by Hakokongas (2017). The ramifications of the non-participation of teachers accounts for the high level of their resistance against what could be a noble initiative by those who craft policies. So the non-participation of teachers in the reform induced negative attitudes that led to some sort of resistance among teachers. That was in sharp contrast to observation by Gudyanga and Jita (2018) that teachers no longer resist change. That form of resistance is not intrinsically driven but comes because of the alienation that they experience which stems from their non-involvement in curriculum design. I argue with Ngussa (2015, p. 246) that due to such non participation, teachers "might lose their sense of meaning and direction, their 'framework of reality', their confidence that they know what to do, and consequently they experience confusion and a kind of alienation." Fullan (2015) takes that further and argues teachers are important factors in the implementation of the curriculum because they: directly make use of the new or revised materials; and are involved in the application of new teaching approaches, their beliefs and understanding of the new dispensation about the new curriculum. Thus, the way decisions are made on curriculum change is often as important as the decision on the Social Studies implementation itself.

Because of the disrespect and non-conformity to *Ubuntu* work ethics of participation, it emerged from the verbal and gestures representations that teachers had negative

attitudes of the implementation process. Moving hands up and down and laughing S1 said:

> *When we were being oriented to the new curriculum, which was at one point described as "new" and later as an "updated one" we thought it was going to take long to be implemented. We took them not seriously. It was their curriculum which they externally brewed without us and therefore was their baby.*

Such gestures of representation are defined by Gilbert (2010) as non-verbal representations which are used as an addition to the employment of extra styles and methods of representation to offer descriptions and chronicle of events as was put across by S1. That attestation found support from the two teachers' verbal representations, one from G school and C school who corroborate that "we were faced with new mandatory changes and we navigate under unfavourable terrains of unfamiliar directions of the teaching journey because they just imposed the new curriculum to us for implementation." The sentiments echoed by the teachers confirm Zindi's (2018, p. 25) observations that teachers in Zimbabwe "generally harbour negative and unconstructive feelings about the curriculum which negatively impact their involvement in and commitment to implementing reforms."

Literature validates that most countries dictate the curriculum to be taught and teachers' representations are not sought at all (Castro, 2013; Fullan, 2015; Ntumi, 2016; Vandayer, 2017). This is taken further by Syomwene that the institutions of committees and commissions have in some cases been used by political establishments to lend credence to policies and systems that are devoid of teachers' representations (2013, p. 81). Considering this view, it is credible to assert conclusively those teachers' beliefs and perceptions are critical in understanding and accepting the reforms which then can direct the implementation process if they are meaningfully involved. As clearly argued by Bantwini (2010) and Vandayer (2017) teacher's perceptions and beliefs influence and shape the meaning of curriculum reform and the acceptance ultimately leads to sacksful classroom implementation. From the findings of fieldwork as mentioned by (R1;

G1; S1) and as supported by extant literature, it follows then that the teachers' views and beliefs are shaped by either their participation or their non-involvement in curriculum change and implementation (Castro, 2013; Ntumi, 2016; Vandayer, 2017). From the teachers' views, for their perceptions to be positive concerning the teaching of Social Studies, then their participation is important (S1; J1; G2). This means that lack of participation by teachers was a challenge that worked against the implementation of the new Social Studies curriculum because their beliefs of the reforms were not compatible to the policy makers'. Non participation led to a lack of vision as advanced by Fullan (2015). That thickened the challenges of Social Studies curriculum implementation because the teachers had no clear direction to follow. As argued by S2 who lamented that she was not informed of the new changes, vision and its thrust in depth of Social Studies. To this end, the study acknowledges that there were no forums which were made to orient the teachers as entrenched in the *Ubuntu* philosophy. The essence of *Ubuntu* is participation and its limited application curtailed the Social Studies implementation because the focus and clarity of the innovations were lacking in the teachers' conceptual maps. That shows an area of congruence between *Ubuntu* philosophy and Fullan's (2015) theory, for both argue that the vision and clarity of the change operates as a teacher's compass and hence help in negotiating the dark and problematic landscape of the reform process. Extant literature also supports that if the teacher is not clear about the nature of the change, the reasons behind it and how it is supposed to be implemented, and more importantly, if the teacher is not knowledgeable about the change, then there is little chance that it will be implemented (Lovat & Smith, 2003, p. 212 cited in Bantwini, 2010). To ensure clarity of the vision, the bottom-up approach can be adopted. If that is not done then teachers are likely to preserve and entrench their original and old practice in the concealment of their classrooms as a form of silence representation because if a teacher misses the meaning and intention of the curriculum, something totally different will be transmitted (Maravanyika & Ndawi, 2014, p. 68). In that way, this study is consistent with Fullan's (2015) claim and argues that new curriculum changes without their engrossment may result in the teachers sticking to their old approaches in teaching in which they adhere to their old skills and practices, more like using old materials on new changes.

Fieldwork shows that the Social Studies implementation was being done silently by the teachers in their classrooms without their audible complaints of the challenges - a clear demonstration of silence representation. Similarly, this is linked with *Ubuntu* philosophy that if people are not involved to participate in issues that affect them, they feel dehumanised and disrespected (Kgari-Masondo, 2017). That state of being dehumanised by the policy crafters is *anti-Ubuntu* and presents the teachers with the chance of engaging in a silence mode of passive resistance in Social Studies curriculum implementation. As explained by Hakoköngäs (2017) that when mental pictures of an object, people and events are formed and remain in the head without being expressed in verbal and non-verbal forms, it becomes representation through silence. This raises the possibility that teachers may end up using both new and old techniques in the secrecy of their classrooms resulting in different interpretations of the curriculum and so may end up at different reform goals. The vision of the innovations ought to be embraced by all and sundry in the education sector if the reforms are to be uniformly and effectively implemented. To this effect, the fieldwork and literature indicates that the teachers are very important agents of policy implementation (J1; M2; S1; R2; Zindi, 2018, p. 27; Prendergast & Treacy, 2017, p. 1; Loflin, 2016; Smit & du Toit, 2016). As such, they must be clear on the educational changes and the course of actions to follow in an effort to make it a success which can be done by embracing the *Ubuntu* values that celebrate the importance of participation of all people in community activities. So lack of that meaningful participation as engrained in the *Ubuntu* values remained a trenchant hindrance.

The teachers' non-participation in the curriculum change suggests that the *Ubuntu* value of interconnectedness through the use of consultative forums such as seminars, conferences, workshops and meetings which are likened to indabas (African indigenous traditional meetings) in the context of *Ubuntu* philosophy were not adhered to. The link between the basic principles and vision of the curriculum was not adhered to which poses a problem because tokenistic involvement occurred instead of allowing teachers

to fully participate in the implementation of the curriculum. As argued by Mnyaka and Motlhabi in 2010   each person has self-respect which brands him/her as somebody who has to be valued regardless of the fact that person has a known or unknown social standing or is known or not (Letseka 2016, p.34).   Teachers were supposed to be afforded respect by making them participants in the reforms, despite being at the lowest level of the education sector as embedded in the *Ubuntu* values. As such, teachers ought to be treated with respect in curriculum change and implementation. Hence Bekker in 2006 mentioned that disrespecting or ill-treating other persons was to be glared at (Letseka 2016, p. 34). There is an indication that tokenistic involvement of teachers in the implementation process through a silence approach from the Education Department and policy makers for most teachers was the sign of disrespectfulness and anti-*Ubuntu.*

The *Ubuntu* philosophy mentions that participation is critical and if people are not involved they tend to engage in passive resistance. As Ngubane (1999, p. 90) argued that *Ubuntu* is, "a philosophy of a definition of a human person succeeded or failed in proportion to the degree that it harmonized the personality". It means that if a person is not happy they can lose their positive worth and not participate effectively in a project at hand. This is illustrated by teachers' interviewed (S2; J1; G2; FGD) who indicated that they were demotivated by the new changes and hated them. Ngubane takes this further by arguing that African culture supports the idea that a person defines him/herself in everything he / she does (1999, p. 92 cited in Kgari-Masondo, 2013). This clarifies why the non-participation of teachers interviewed led into ideas of being unhappy about the new Social Studies curriculum and ended up saying they despised it. Their strategy could be interpreted as a signal for drawing attention of policy makers to consider them so that implementation can be improved by involving them.

In summary, the findings indicated practising educators were not asked for their views on the educational reforms. From the construction of the new Social Studies curriculum they were just told to implement even at the all stakeholders meeting conducted at

school level (R1; J1; S2) which shows that, the policy makers did not display respect and dignity when they enlisted teachers for the duty. Had they respected them as humans they could have sought the teachers' contributions of their concerns and issues. In terms of content to be taught or how it was to be implemented it remained vague and silent implying that, the implementation matrix was left to the imagination of the implementers. Findings that emerged in the study indicated that teachers did not meaningfully participate in the initial stage of curriculum change except that all teachers were involved in the final stage of implementation. Yet the teachers' involvement in curriculum change and implementation has been pointed as key by participants in the study to the implementation of the curriculum. This submission resonates with the findings by (Gudyanga & Jita, 2018; Nziramasanga, 2018; Yidana & Aboagye, 2018) that implementing the curriculum successfully hinges on the active participation of teachers. In view of that, I agree with Rahman, et al., (2018, p. 1121) who advise that policy makers should seek "teachers' consent and participation in curriculum development and implementation," regardless of their schools' geographical locations. This may be because the new reforms and their forms of assessment need to be developed with different teachers. However, that participation was missing which led to misfiring of curriculum implementation.

6.2.3. Inadequate educational resources

From both the interviews and the FGD, the participants indicated that the lack of the syllabus, textbooks, teaching and learning media and standardised classrooms plagued the implementation of the curriculum and presented many challenges (Interviews M1; M2; C1; FGD). Observations at M and C schools located in rural and farm areas respectively confirmed the acute shortages of educational resources. Zindi backs that up by stating that there were "no adequate textbooks in most of the learning areas to be used in the implementation of the new Zimbabwean curriculum" (2018, p. 31). Findings from the teachers' verbatim narratives indicated that the modified Social Studies curriculum was impacted by the essence of not having sufficient instructional materials,

facilities and funds. As put by several scholars (Fullan's, 2015; Wilde, et al., 2018; Karim, et al., 2018, p. 438) educational resources affect how teachers are to practise their teaching of the Social Studies curriculum. As such, one might deduce that unavailability of adequate resources presented challenges to full curriculum implementation. If proper consultation could have taken place where teachers were involved some of such challenges could have been averted since policy makers could have been told of the scarcity of resources and non-viability of the new reforms.

The findings of this research regarding the provision of educational resources pointed out that, the economic position of the country is important if putting into practice of any educational change is to take off smoothly. Teachers interviewed blame the roll out of new Social Studies curriculum as wrongly timed because of the economic plunge the country was going through. This is summed up by S1:

> *I think this new Social Studies curriculum came at the wrong time. Our economy does not permit us to make new changes. Educational changes are often more expensive than the programmes they replace. As such, changes in education without a strong economic base are more often a pipe dream.*

Such teacher's narratives are examples of language which is perceived as key in representation because it has a central role of being an interactive process through which we understand the challenges of Social Studies curriculum implementation, our world and ourselves (Gablin, 2015, p. 82). As aptly argued by Murray (2002, p. 7) it is within the social medium of language that we "articulate our most individual memories in the mode of narratives. We live in a sea of time and narratives provide a map of that sea" which suggests that, the roll out of the new curriculum was somehow affected by time characterised by the unfavourable socio-economic factors. Most of the teachers mentioned that the launch of the revised curriculum could have waited until the government had detected a permitting context which could promote changes.

Substantial research (Badugela, 2012; Dziwa, et al., 2013; Kigwilu & Akala, 2017; Saidu & Saidu, 2015) also confirmed funding was very important in the entire education system as it aided in the production and purchase of instructional materials. This shows that lack of consultation leads to failures in curriculum implementation because consultation could have exposed that the schools were incapacitated to implement new Social Studies reforms. From the above, it can be claimed that curriculum change and implementation hinges on a stable economy of the country because it is the economy that allows for the funding of resources. Teachers interviewed indicated that lack of funds had the audacity to cripple the availability of other resources because with funds it was possible to equip schools with educational resources (Interviews M1; M2; C1). As posed by Karim, et al., (2018, p. 438) "inadequate teaching and learning resources is a major challenge to teaching of which resources include finances…" In addition, they further point out that due to diversity of content and the wide curriculum, some disciplines require enough funding to purchase educational resources and to undertake field trips.

From the interviewed teachers, it emerged that the reference materials such as the syllabi and textbooks were important since these provided the spring from which the subject matter of Social Studies was to be drawn. Verbal representations by teachers indicated that the textbooks were not only important for the learners but were useful to teachers as they guided their operation. Furthermore the narratives revealed that, the Social Studies textbooks' scarcity was more severe as compared to other forms of resources because textbooks in other learning areas had been donor funded. Teacher S2 in the interviews expanded that point further and affirmed that, "for Social Studies curriculum, we just have one textbook for the two teachers and two classes. We share that textbook as compared to other subjects, which were donor funded." The interviews and observations reveal that the state of Social Studies textbooks' in schools became critical because the subject had new topics introduced unlike subjects such as Mathematics and English which only received some minimal panel beating in terms of changes of topics and content. Hence one teacher in the FGD group stated that, "Some

of the topics provided in the new Social Studies are new. New things had been added and old things had been rejuvenated unlike in subjects like Mathematics and English which retained most of the topics."

Observations made at M and C schools located in rural and farm areas respectively revealed that physical facilities and equipment were inadequate, hence posed challenges to curriculum implementation. This study considers Wilde, et al.,'s (2018, p. 6) submission that "the challenges imposed by the limited availability of material resources and funding were more apparent in schools that were facing budgetary constraints" as evidenced in M and C schools. That confirms Fullan's (2016) submission that the unavailability of physical resources plagues the implementation of educational reforms since the instructional materials and facilities make the curriculum practical. The study's findings also validate the observation that appropriate educational materials and facilities are a prerequisite for instructional purposes to attain the envisioned educational goals (Kigwilu and Akala, 2017; Ntumi, 2016; Zindi, 2018).

Resources do not only connotes instructional materials but include human capital of which teachers in urban schools affirmed that there were classes which were too large, with few teachers which constrained the implementation of the curriculum (Interviews J; R; G; S). That scenario was created because the government of Zimbabwe had frozen the recruitment of teachers in the wake of budgetary constraints. The findings in this section of the study indicated that without adequate resources in schools the Social Studies curriculum implementation was constrained. That is confirmed in Fullan's (2015) theory which argues that resources are critical to effective execution of any new curriculum because they affect how teachers are to practise their teaching.

6.2.4. Training for teachers

All the participants in the study were trained teachers who specialised in Social Studies. What they depicted as representations was therefore based on what they knew best as specialists. While the teachers in the study were specialists in Social Studies, the findings from the interviews and FGD revealed that none of them received specific training about the new Social Studies curriculum before its adoption and adaption. Instead they received a combined training at either cluster level or school level that was general and not subject based. As argued by G2:

> *A handful of hand-picked teachers were called to attend some three days' workshop which was not for a particular learning area but the whole updated curriculum. These workshops were not detailed as such because they intended to cover all subjects in those three days. As such, teachers did not gain much on specific subjects.*

In such cases, as information was relayed from one stage to another there were chances of distortions and exaggerations of the intentions of the curriculum. In the end, teachers could acquire diluted knowledge on the aspects that the training was meant to impart (Interviews FGD; G2). Hence, the training they received did not address their concerns since only a few members out of a thousand teachers in schools were trained. That confirms the importance of training a large number of teachers of which several authors (Fullan, 2015; Kisirkoi & Mse, 2016; Makunja, 2016) argue that, the more knowledge most teachers possess about the new curriculum; the greater the chances of disseminating the curriculum into practice. Equally, if teachers possess less knowledge it would then follow that the greater the chance is, of cascading the incorrect dream of the curriculum because ineffectively trained teachers have limited content knowledge and are poor in comprehending the implementation matrix. Implementation of the changes is affected by lack of skilled and knowledgeable teachers to articulate the changes.

Teachers in the FGD revealed that the trainers had incomplete knowledge and some of them were non-classroom teachers who were training people from their perspectives and understanding. As such, teachers in the interviews frowned and showed bitterness as they explained and castigated the use of not well-versed people as facilitators of the training sessions of the new curriculum. Behind that façade came the narration of one teacher in the FGD who described thus:

> *Both the management team and the hand-picked trainers did not have knowledge. They did not understand the new Social Studies curriculum and were not conscious of the demands of it because they were not involved in the first place. We undertook the same training with the heads of schools. What they got as information with regards to the new Social Studies curriculum was what we got as teachers.*

Considering that view, research (Yidana & Aboagye, 2018; Troudi & Alwan, 2010) cautioned against the use of incompetently taught change facilitators whom they claim can extremely influence on how material is conveyed to the implementers. Hence the interviewees did not have confidence in the curriculum at hand. African societies placed training of the youth in the hands of the experienced old folks which is a good practice to avert such challenges. Such an approach of using experienced personnel was meant to ensure proper skills are drilled that would be expertly used in the community. The impact of being trained by less knowledgeable people as was the case implied that, what the teachers got as training was insufficient to satisfy their needs. As noted by teacher R2 who testified:

> *A general training was conducted which was meant to give insights into the new curriculum's dictates across all ten learning areas. The training we received was short and hurried. It was just enlightening us on the new changes without giving us detailed information on how to go about it in each learning area.*

According to Mtetwa the re-tooling of the teacher for any new curriculum is often "inadequate, delayed or ignored altogether" (2018, p.143). Certainly, the re-tooling of

the teachers to implement the dictates of the changes in the Social Studies curriculum was therefore shaky because of the limited training which teachers underwent. That might had been so because of the simplistic observation that concentration had been confined to policy formulation without considering the implementation process. However, the Social Studies curriculum by virtue of its newness in terms of its content, methodologies and assessment (MoPSE, 2015) demanded a comprehensive adjustment of teacher's thinking and practice. As a result training deficit that emerged from the teachers' narratives which Fullan (2015) also makes mention as a threat to effective curriculum implementation was pivoted on their teaching competencies and subject matter. The Social Studies curriculum implementers were not conversant with its syllabus interpretation which was caused by the faulty training and orientation of the reforms as articulated by the teachers interviewed (C1; S1; S2; G2; FGD) which culminated in an ineffective and superficial training of the teachers. From the teachers' representations, it was evident that training lasted between three to five days and it combined all Zimbabwean teachers from both the primary and secondary sector (R2; G2). This finding was consistent with findings from a study in Malaysia which also revealed that "despite the teachers' commitment many felt that the short courses they attended had not met their needs" (Lewin & Stuart, 2012, p. 93). As such, this evidence suggests that time for training was an important factor. What was unique in this finding on the training for teachers was that educators were combined together in the workshop (secondary, primary teachers and their school heads were given the same training) and the training was not subject specific but was a one-size- fits-all approach which was a fast fix to meet the urgency of the implementation of the new curriculum. Thus, the training was window dressing which indicates that curriculum interpretation conducted was general and lacked a particular subject focus. Yet that interpretation is supposed to be the fulcrum of the implementation. Without a comprehensive interpretation being done well, it translates into learning that is not useful and meaningful- an off-topic of what was intended. As for the subject matter, some initiatives made were not within the knowledge of the implementers as put across by J1 in admittance that: "The Social Studies curriculum change is a challenge to us as educators because of the new requirements of the subject which we do not have the knowledge on content and

implementation thereof." The teachers interviewed claimed that some additions made were not within the available textbooks that they were using in the old Social Studies curriculum. Furthermore, not so many experts had written books that addressed the new curriculum. That was a challenge as teachers had very few sources to consult in a bid to address the demands of the new curriculum since these were deemed as sources of instructional content (Kigwilu & Akala, 2017).

In addition, the interviews and FGD revealed that the teachers were still not acquainted with the new skills required in assessment of Social Studies learners (Interviews M1; M2; J1; G1). As such they were practising their old methods. In light of the above, training was therefore to be done before the roll out of the new curriculum focusing on the content inherent in the Social Studies discipline and procedures for assessing the learners (Interview J1) which indicates not enough preparation was made on how to implement the Social Studies curriculum which points to the source of some challenges the teachers faced. Furthermore, not enough information was provided. No sufficient in-service training was done before the introduction of the hurriedly imposed curriculum. This is also indicated by the speed taken on the imposition of the new Social Studies curriculum to the implementers without their contribution which became a fertile ground for the mushrooming of challenges in implementation.

Two negative things mushroomed from the hurried education change and implementation: fragile course documents and lack of collaboration. Similarly, Simmons and Maclean (2018, p. 1) also argue that "revolutionary change was somewhat stagnated by potent inhibitors such as lack of collaboration with policy makers and vague-course documentation." Thus the quick pace at which the new curriculum was introduced gave the implementers little time to comprehend yet they were expected to translate it into practice. When the implementers were in such a precarious position, they had no option at all, instead they pretended as if all was well. As substantiated by Zindi (2018) and Nziramasanga (2018) teachers may accept the reformed and reviewed curriculum, and then choose to go along with the proposed policies but intrinsically fear

of losing their comfort zones or worse still fear of the ambiguities of the new policies and programmes. As corroborated by G2, S2, R1 and the participants in the FGD changes challenged their knowledge hence pose a threat to their jobs. Faced with such a situation, the teachers indicated that they had no option except to implement the Social Studies curriculum though at their discretion because it was a policy. With a frown on the face indicating dissatisfaction gesture S2 explained:

> *Our job is at stake. Some of the topics provided in the new Social Studies are new. New things had been added and old things had been rejuvenated. We have limited knowledge with regards to the content of Social Studies and the skills which we are to use to deliver the knowledge to pupils. We learn as we teach.* ….. What we teach therefore rests with us in the confines of our teaching rooms.

That verbatim representation and the gestures suggest that what actually transpired in the classroom was only known by the teachers who could be silent on what they are doing and can possibly neglect the new changes. Such representation of silence is defined by Hall (1997) as the tendency of people to keep silent when they feel that their views conflict with most views of those in power. Noelle-Neumann (1991) takes this further by explaining that the reasons for the silence may be ignited from fear of seclusion when the group or public realises that the individual has a contradictory opinion from the status quo; and fear of retaliation or more extreme isolation in the sense that voicing said opinion might lead to a negative consequence beyond that of mere isolation for instance loss of a job or status (cited in Hall, 1997). As argued by Kgari-Masondo (2015, p. 98) job security is normally the core consideration when dealing with the reorganization of the curriculum. To avoid that, teachers engage in silence and practice ritualism in which they adhere to the acceptable ways of achieving school's acceptable goals of implementing the Social Studies curriculum implementation but without interest in the achievement of goals.   Teachers became ritualistic by following the book to the letter in teaching but in reality would have given up striving for success leading to poor curriculum implementation.

The uniqueness of this finding on the training for teachers lies in that the training was window dressing, a one-size-fits- all training that combined the school principals with the secondary and primary teachers and was not subject specific but rather general. That form of training created a fertile ground for the breeding of barriers of implementing the curriculum as explored in the preceding paragraphs.

6.2.5. Curriculum workload and remuneration

The interviews and the FGD revealed that curriculum change was a burden as it manifested in too much paperwork, very large class sizes, too many lessons per day and congested timetable for no extra remuneration at all. When teachers were faced with excessive work, some teachers even frowned as they explained how the government froze recruitment of new teachers when the class size ballooned (Interviews S1; J2). Such gesture of representation is defined by Wagner (2017), Berger and Luckmann (1996), Galbin (2015), Hall (1997) as a social construct in which meaning is attached to events considering the context in which they appear. This is indicated in the words of G2: "The time table is congested with too many learning areas that demands lots of scheming and planning. …and the number of learners had ballooned such that we cannot effectively manage and control them." This confirms the findings in Kenya by Syomwene (2013, p. 80) that the execution of the modified curriculum as from 2003 had burdened the teachers due to the increased enrolments which had resulted in increased work load thereby impacting negatively on curriculum implementation." It was also evident that the timetable was congested with more learning areas to such an extent of having lessons well after lunch. This reveals that that time plays an important role in representation of narratives according to Durkheim (cited in Murray, 2002).

Furthermore, the data from participants revealed that, the new Social Studies curriculum was depicted as a burden which demanded more clerical work against poor

remuneration (Interviews M1; S2; J1; R2; S1). These teachers ended up relating the issue of Social Studies workload to the question of salaries in comparison with their counterparts in neighbouring countries because most of their provisions were bought from those countries. It could therefore be deduced that the teachers did acknowledge the increased work load but their complaints were made worse by the meagre salaries which they were getting per month. The poor salaries were attributed to the economic power of the country which was on the demise (Interviews S1; G2; S2; G1). Of importance to note was that their voices in the workload against the poor salaries was somehow calling for more incentives to address the remuneration package which had dwindled due to the economic crisis in Zimbabwe. Poor salaries were working against the successful implementation of the curriculum because without motivation from their remuneration packages, they would look for other means to supplement the poor salary leaving no time for research and further commitment to the implementation process. Seen from this angle, the issue of incentivising teachers for motivation purposes in enacting the new curriculum was a pipe dream. However, this aspect was not confined to Zimbabwean teachers alone but extended to and appeared in developing countries like Uganda who are victims of this scourge (Ngussa, 2015, p. 245).

One of the issues that emerged was that there was too much preparatory work for people who wanted learners to benefit from the implementation of the curriculum before the actual implementation because teachers concentrated on the production of schemes of work and lesson plans. For clarity, schemes of work is a termly prepared document for a specific class that outlines the detailed procedures a teacher has to take when teaching learners the new concepts. It is therefore a guide for the teacher which spells out the methods the teachers are to employ and the activities in which learners are to participate to develop the various skills as spelt out in the national policy document. Teachers revealed that much of their energies are spent on preparations of these schemes of work instead of the actual teaching as evidenced from the representations from the interviewed teachers (Interviews, G2, J2, and M1). In response to that overwhelming workload the teachers revealed that they bought schemes of work

from non-educators who made a profit by publishing guides for the teachers at a cost (Interviews J2; M1; S2). The uniqueness of the finding lies in the fact that teachers because of the workload resorted to buying schemes of work from the streets. What was planned by the people in the streets as schemes of work might be a deviation from the standard as enshrined in the national documents. Therefore, what appeared as a solution to the teachers carried some negative aspects on the implementation process. This was because the commercialised schemes they bought were created by untrained people and failed to capture the intentions of the new curriculum. The people involved in the scheming were not worried about the effectiveness and applicability of their work but were more interested in making money in a country besieged by the economic crisis. As such, they took advantage of the work load placed on the teachers to make money. That point was taken further by S1 who argued that the workload was exacerbated by very large classes which had increased beyond the stipulated ratio of one teacher to forty -five students. That emerged because the government of Zimbabwe had frozen the recruitment of teachers (Interview S1; Mugadzaweta, 2017) to arrest the wage bill which was gobbling the budget. However, the freezing of teaching posts in Zimbabwe, a time when a new curriculum was rolled out created larges classes in schools which were manned by few teachers and that worked against proper implementation of the new curriculum.   I thus concur with the findings by Zindi (2018, p. 31) that the implementation of the 2015-2022 Zimbabwean curriculum was not tasting success because of financial liquidity. Because of the financial crisis, teachers worked under stressful conditions. This is explicitly put by Oder and Eisenschmidt (2018, p. 6) that "organisational and social factors, such as excessive workload and classroom management issues are important causes of teachers' stress". The sizes of classes as well as the amount of work they undertake have a bearing on the happiness and execution of duties by the teachers. Thus, whenever the curriculum goes under renovation human resources have to be factored in.

The participants from interviews and FGD revealed that other barriers which avail in the implementation of the improved curriculum included the congested timetable in which

lessons for the day spilt into hours after lunch, something new especially to primary school students (Interviews G2; M1). Hence Fullan (2015, p. 23) argues that one of the greatest problems in education reform is not resistance to change but the introduction of too many innovations to be done at once, which are instructed or adopted uncritically and superficially. There were too many changes in the new Zimbabwean curriculum that could not be accommodated and effectively managed under the usual working hours. This led to excessive workload of teachers which resulted in stress and burn out to both teachers and learners (Interviews J1; J2). As clearly put by Fullan (2015, p. 137) a challenge in the implementation of the curriculum is that, "classroom teachers are bombarded with paperwork. They spend so much time on useless paperwork such that the planning, evaluating and teaching time is seriously impacted." However, faced with such workloads, how then did principals of schools react to these challenges?

6.2.6. Psycho-social support from the school principals

From the study, it emerged that a sense of rupture in the teachers' attachment to the Social Studies curriculum implementation was felt by the teachers owing to the school principals' failure to sow good relations in schools. Hence, the principals' poor support to staff emerged as a challenge to effective curriculum implementation as generated from interviews and FGD. The school principals offered minimal professional support chequered by poor relations of arrogance, disrespect and lack of love (Interviews J1; S2; FGD). As such, recent studies support that this is a problem because implementation of programmes and initiatives have the greatest chance of success if they are supported intellectually and emotionally by the management (Dube & Jita, 2018; Fullan, 2015, p. 97; Oder & Eisenschmidt, 2018). Surprisingly this study revealed that school heads were themselves not in the picture as to how they were to supervise the implementation because their orientation of the new reforms was similar to that of the teachers because they were trained under one roof and were taught the same initiatives with their teachers they had to supervise. The school heads offered minimal support and could not give them direction of what was to be done (Interviews J1; S2;

FGD). An extension of their orientation was therefore necessary to execute their leadership roles effectively during the implementation process. What the school heads experienced as training was contrary to what Fullan (2015) suggests that management was to be made visible through assigning priorities and through its use of resources, timetables and social support. This challenge shows that the teachers interviewed experienced difficult situations in terms of Social Studies curriculum implementation. Thus what Fullan (2007) mentioned as key in implementation was that the principal functions both as a leader and administrator for the implementation process was missing in the six schools I worked with which led to challenges in the implementation stage of the curriculum.

Teachers also bemoaned the fact that the school heads had limited knowledge on syllabus interpretation and the continuous assessment tools of the reformed curriculum (Interviews FGD). As Milondzo and Magongoa (2018) claim many heads of schools are presently missing curricular and instructional proficiency which then had bearings on the implementation of the revised curriculum because the competence based education which was the focus of the new curriculum remains packed as a policy document. Informants mentioned that unpacking the curriculum was a mammoth task without expertise generated from consultation and debates on how best to implement it being led by the principal who lacks the know-how. The lack of knowledge by school heads warranted complaints by teachers because literature suggests that "if curriculum planning is to be successful in a school, principals must have some degree of knowledge of curriculum management and implementation" (Milondzo & Magongoa, 2018, p. 62). As indicated by Fullan (2007) the curriculum is significantly swayed, by the managerial configuration of the school and the tone of the implementation rests on the school principal's ability to coordinate implementation activities. A good Social Studies curriculum could bloom into a tremendous one if the administrative arrangement assisted it however, that curriculum could be ordinary if the structural pattern was weak.

That observation is not compatible with the findings of this study in that the school principals in their discharge of duties displayed unruly behaviour in which they lacked respect, love, dignity and professionalism (Interviews S1; S2; FGD). That again is not corroborated by the tenets of *Ubuntu* which makes a clarion call to have servant leadership and co-operation in the learning institutions which is an indication that as leaders they themselves felt that their self-esteem was violated as they were not given the respect they deserved by the policy makers who trained them with teachers. As the study of Kgari-Masondo (2015, p. 92) indicated if people feel aggrieved they tend to feel less human and resort to negative behaviour. As such, elitism and exclusion faced by the teachers made them feel a sense of rupture in their attachment with curriculum change and implementation.

6.2.7. Teacher representatives in the construction of the Social Studies curriculum content

Most of the participants agreed that there were several changes in terms of content of the subject and assessment forms that were made in the Social Studies curriculum with which they were not familiar. In addition, the syllabi, the teaching approaches, the planning and scheming had also been altered. From the teachers' interviews, it emerged that most of them were not familiar with what was expected to be done as some of the addendums of the recent curriculum drawn from the western view were new to them and they were learning just like the learners (Interviews J1; S1; S2; G2; R1).That revelation finds resonance with the findings of Zindi (2018, p. 26) who observed that "Zimbabwean teachers were slowly finding their way around the new syllabuses and many were fascinated by the new stuff they were learning, things they were more familiar with and those which had a direct bearing on their lives." But this study depicts that the portrayal of the new Social Studies curriculum was seen as a purge of irrelevant materials, an extension of the old curriculum and addition of relatively new themes, on which they did not receive training since its inception.

From the FGD and semi-structured interviews, it emerged that the content of the resuscitated curriculum was beyond the primary learners and was more suitable for secondary school learners (Interviews S2; G2; C2; FGD) and the process of the changes did not take into account the cognitive level of the learners. As such, the content was tallying with the age level of learners from the secondary sector, rendering the concerns of the primary learners unattended to. In light of that, the content was therefore not commensurate with what was expected in primary schools for example topics like sovereignty and governance and global issues were cited as well above the primary school learners (Interviews, FGD & C2).

The teachers in the study exposed that the Social Studies content was Eurocentric in its bias since it concentrated in equipping learners with skills and competences demanded by the global village at the expense of African values that bind communities together. This was explicitly explained by J2:

> As I said earlier, new topics were added for instance the topics "Global issues" and "governance" were added yet they are too difficult to be delivered by teachers. I am clueless of what to teach and how to teach it. I wonder why they left out a topic like "Living together" which promotes humanity and African values for instance respect and tolerance. They brought in Eurocentric topics which are not necessarily helpful in the African way of life.

This suggests that the reformed Social Studies content has limited African values engrained in topics such as global issues and governance while topics like cultural heritage and history of Zimbabwe had traces of African values. As such, values underpinned by the spirit of living together as people were thus not adequately articulated in the Social Studies curriculum. Yet Kgari-Masondo (2017, p. 95) argues that Social Studies is an important discipline whose purpose is to allow citizens to live together harmoniously as one people. It was evidently clear that the Social Studies content lacked in this respect, as represented by the teachers who critique it as a

subject that has directed more effort in democratic societies that are powered by western thinkers. The nature of topics in the new Social Studies curriculum as represented by teachers in the study reflects bias since the topics are coloured by a European slant. Curriculum planners overlooked the importance of *Ubuntu* values though they claimed it as the guiding philosophy in the Zimbabwean education system (MoPSE, 2015). *Ubuntu* philosophy is rooted in sharing, co-operation, group cohesion, communalism and communitarianism which could be articulated in the topic "Living together" which regrettably was purged. This indicates that decolonisation and "*ubuntulising"* of the curriculum was used as window dressing when constructing the new curriculum. Such representations from teachers had far reaching implications. It pointed out that most teachers if not all were somehow not consulted on the content and nature of the new curriculum which led to a situation whereby learners were exposed to non-African values.

Data gathered from the semi structured interviews; FGD and observations suggested that contextual factors constrained the Social Studies curriculum implementations. These factors included issues centred on the top-down approach, lack of consultation and teacher participation; inadequate educational materials; limited training for teachers; demanding workload; poor support from school principals; and lack of teacher representatives in the construction of the new. Upon being juxtaposed with Fullan's (2015) theory on educational change and *Ubuntu* philosophy, it was apparent that most of the challenges could have been avoided if policy makers had taken a leaf from both the African tree of wisdom - the African perspective on community endeavours and Eurocentric views. It is against this background, that the mitigation strategies suggested by the teachers are presented below.

6.3. The Zimbabwean teachers' representations of the mitigation strategies of the challenges of the Social Studies curriculum implementation

From observations, interviews and FGD, this segment presents the teachers' representations of some austerity measures that could be employed to circumvent the mentioned challenges of Social Studies curriculum implementation of which the phrase that gained currency in their representations was teamwork. From teachers' interviews, it was mentioned that to deal with challenges that Zimbabwe is experiencing in implementing the curriculum, it was important to focus on: teacher participation and the bottom-up approach; partnership in the provision of educational resources; training for teachers; teamwork in curriculum workload; psycho-social support from school principals; and teacher representatives in the construction of the new Social Studies content. The strategies suggested hereunder answered the research question: How did Zimbabwean teachers represent the mitigation strategies for the challenges they faced on the effective implementation of the new 2015-2022 Social Studies curriculum?"

6.3.1. Teacher participation.

Voices of the teachers in curriculum reform and implementation are silent world-wide (Carl, 2005; Fullan, 2015; Makunja, 2016; Ngussa & Waiswa, 2017). As explained by Yidana and Aboagye (2018, p. 42) "teachers complain about a lack of proper consultation on the part of the Ministry of Education represented by the Curriculum Research and Development Division". That sentiment was experienced in the new Social Studies curriculum as represented by teachers in the interviews and FGD in Zimbabwe. Hence, this submission validates the findings since teachers in the FGD and those who took part in the semi-structured interviews complained that they were not consulted in issues that were associated to the content of Social Studies as well as on the implementation matrix (Interviews G1; S1; S2). As such, participants vehemently called for their concerns to be heard as inherent in the *Ubuntu* philosophy. One vital

axiom of *Ubuntu* is the spirit of unity or communism (Seroto, 2016). One lesson flowing from this component of *Ubuntu* is that of a collective forum which is necessary for a person to develop as a component of the society to enhance the development of that community through unity. Fullan (2015) also affirms the essence of cohesion in educators when dealing with curriculum design and implementation.

To avert challenges that emanated from non-involvement of teachers in educational reforms, the participants in the FGD as well as in semi structured interviews mentioned one essence of *Ubuntu* which is participation (Interviews S1; G1; FGD). Participation by all people in community tasks is common in African societies and is aptly etched in the *Ubuntu* philosophy expressed in their proverbs. One such idiomatic expression couched in the *Nguni language goes "Okuhlula amadoda kuyabikwa".* This means what is a challenge to the individual, is declared to the community (Khoza, 2018, p. 6) which suggests that whenever, there is a community task people must assemble together to work for solutions. This according to participants also includes the initial stage of the start of the reforms that teachers must have input and also direct curriculum change. Representations of the mitigation strategies by the teachers revealed that there was consensus among them, as evidenced from the interviews and FGD, that implementers of the reforms must participate in the early stages of planning those reforms so that they get a good picture of the curriculum to implemented, how that is to be done or the directions of the changes. That claim resonates with the contributions of Fullan (2015, p. 20) on the need to involve the change agents so that they have an "image of what to do to get there," otherwise a curriculum that lacks clarity will result in failure. Prendergast and Treacy (2017, p. 15) take that further and advise that "if teachers are to implement an innovation, it is essential that they have a thorough understanding of the principles of the proposed change through their participation." The inference is that if teachers are active partners in the improvement of the educational reform, that will promote a sense of ownership of the innovation by them and that will also increase their commitment to it (Okoth, 2016; Pansiri, 2014; Shilling, 2013; Yidana & Aboagye, 2018). That would make necessary educational changes easy in terms of the different forms of knowledge which

are knowledge of: content, pedagogical processes, educational contexts and educational philosophies, which are fundamental drivers of curriculum implementation.

In this study, teachers interviewed indicated that opportunity was not availed to them to participate in curriculum reform about the new Social Studies curriculum and its implementation (Interviews J1; S2; R1). Evidence collected revealed that participation of teachers in curriculum change and implementation is minimal and teachers are rarely listened to. While teachers' participation in curriculum change and implementation is minimal, the importance of their involvement is too loud to ignore because the teacher involvement in curriculum development can increase their participation and dedication, so that when implementation does not work as planned, no one is to blame. Teachers are also empowered to navigate the implementation journey with the same rigour if they take part. To ensure teachers take part in the curriculum change, the study grounded on the findings from the interviews and FGD suggests the use of discussion forums which is linked to the *Ubuntu* philosophy, in which the educational changes and the implementation strategies are tabled. That confirms what communal life advocates. Thus from the above findings, it can be argued that the idea of *dare/imbizo* (African indigenous traditional council) being the usable past as enshrined in the African culture can be used to guide people on the direction of the curriculum implementation. This argument stems from the realisation that when community members sit down to deliberate on the course of direction to take when they make a decision, African elders were known for inviting members concerned to share their views. I agree with Ndawi and Maravanyika (2014, p. 58) who advise that the implementers will need to internalise the spirit of the project in order for ownership to be embraced. In that way, hegemony on the subject to be changed can be reached. As posed by Mtetwa (2018, p. 143) the discussion can be useful in equipping the teachers "with appropriate awareness of adjusted goals, visions and skills which then promotes value consensus."

So, drawing insights from the hallmarks of the *Ubuntu* principles of communalism and sharing, participation of teachers in Social Studies curriculum change and

implementation is critical to its success. Fullan (2015) also talks about the importance of involving stakeholders in educational change for collective decision making of which teachers are such people but fails to include values of respect while *Ubuntu* philosophy regards that as a cornerstone in the participation process. Thus both views can be merged to ensure a quality process in curriculum improvement and implementation is embraced. As put by Ntuthuko (2015, p. 1) "consultation and transparency on all community activities demonstrate *Ubuntu* dialogue and collective decision-making values." That ensures success of any activities. The importance of these tenets of *Ubuntu* is based on the premise that meaningful participation of teachers could go a long way in sharing best ideas and practice before the actual translating of the curriculum to reality in the African way. Msila (2014) and Letseka (2016) submit that Africans are cultured in the early years of their lives to construe and appreciate that challenging goals and tasks can be accomplished jointly. It suggests cooperation through participation of all members in curriculum change and implementation which can involve listening to one another, sharing and respecting one another. Hence, the involvement of teachers at the planning stage is moving away from the top-down approach. As argued by Carl (2005, p. 223) successful education curriculum development emphasizes the "need to move away from the top-down policy making style towards a participatory process that involves practitioners and other stakeholders right from the planning stage."

In the context of the findings obtained from FGD data, there was now need for policy makers to decolonise their western way of thinking and resuscitate their African way of life if implementation was to take place effectively in educational institutions. Blame was placed on curriculum implementers who took teachers as machines. As posed by Prendergast and Treacy (2017, p. 4) "there is a false expectation that teachers will implement the new curriculum as envisioned because teachers, just like machines, will change their behaviour because they are commanded on what to do" of which several studies (Carl, 2005; Pansiri, 2014; Rahman, et al., 2018; Shilling, 2013; Yidana & Aboagye, 2018) report that the top-down approach is no longer workable. Such studies

further note that the teachers' non-implementation of curriculum was because they were not involved in the curriculum development process. Consequently, the teachers' voices had to be incorporated in curriculum development thereby challenging the traditional and uncontested top-down approach in curriculum change. Previous studies in the Sciences and English from China, Atlanta, Malaysia and Bangladesh (Chen & Whei, 2015; Mansour, 2010; Ni & Guzdial, 2010; Rahman et al., 2018; Yinghui, 2016) also applaud the employ of the bottom-up approach which Zimbabwe can emulate to perfect her curriculum reforms. As suggested by Rahman, et al., (2018, p. 1121) there is "need to change to a participatory approach" in which teachers are part of the process so that their voices are listened to. Besides, teachers are people with feelings and beliefs. These people have concerns that need to be addressed as pointed out by the teachers in the FGD who indicated that their challenges emanated from failure by policy makers to take note of their concerns on how to implement new changes in educational reforms through teamwork. There is need for team work because without team work during the process of implementation, the unfolding uncertainties and success stories of the implementation of the curriculum will remain unresolved. As such, Pansiri (2014, p. 28) calls for "partnership of all stakeholders," the same way the teachers had suggested in this study.

Seen from that African view and approach, once a nation sees it fit to make curriculum innovations and implementation, it becomes the onerous duty of the policy makers to invite all members to a consultative meeting, from which pertinent issues are gathered and collated in the spirit of survival. The ideas from all people could then be solidified to make one critical thing for the use by all. Survival is one value of the *Ubuntu* philosophy that runs through all Africans' activities. African people do whatever they do, based on survival. From that view, if curriculum reform and adoption is for the survival of the society, then consultation of all stakeholders is necessary as enshrined in the African institutions which believe staunchly in the power of sharing through consultation. Education has been there in these societies and as such its curriculum change was done through participation of all through rituals, ceremonies and work parties which can

be aptly applied to the education system of today. Thus issues such as interdependence and interconnectedness that are engrained in the *Ubuntu* philosophy can guide in the revamping of the Social Studies curriculum and its implementation because *Ubuntu* embraces collective thinking, harmonious thinking and behaviour (Letseka, 2016). I therefore consider participation by teachers, a trait that stems from the *Ubuntu* tree of wisdom very vital in curriculum change and implementation. This is because the *Ubuntu* philosophy embraces unity of purpose in which diversity of ideas are celebrated, respect and dignity are cherished of which consultation is the cornerstone of success. If participation by teachers was not for all teachers as reported, then that diminished their values as beings, which then was anti *Ubuntu* in nature (Interviews G1; S1; S2).

6.3.2. Bottom-up approach

The teachers in the interviews and FGD echoed that a bottom-up approach or some dilutions of top-down approach must be adopted for effectiveness of implementation. More importantly, they pointed out that their participation as well as other implementers was vital if implementation was to be successful (Interviews J1; J2; FGD). In the words of J1:

> *A bottom-up approach in curriculum change that takes the views of the agents of change is better than the top-bottom approach, which is a prescription. Policy makers should come down to mother earth and not to take for granted that teachers will implement what they think and feel has to be implemented. We should work together as a team. The teachers' voices are needed to get their concerns of what is to be implemented. It is them who implement and should be listened to.*

The bottom-up approach finds support by all teachers in the interviews as key in mitigating challenges met during the implementation stage of the curriculum. I agree with Prendergast and Treacy (2017, p. 15) that if teachers are to implement an

innovation, it is essential that they have a thorough understanding of the vision of the proposed change which could be done by adopting the bottom-up approach which is linked to participation. Fullan (2015) apprises that the vision of the curriculum has to be known by implementers, which the *Ubuntu* philosophy also embraces. This suggests that a combination of these views is helpful in effecting educational reforms because Fullan (2015) in his ideas makes mention of teamwork as an important virtue in educational change while the *Ubuntu* philosophy also supports that.

The study also considers the Science Education model in which teachers describe the top-down approach as unworkable as it is fraught with teething problems in the Social Studies curriculum. The Science teachers are of the view that a teacher model of curriculum implementation is sounder (Elliot, 2006; Ni & Guzdial, 2010; Schneider, 2002) which co-opts the teachers' concerns. In this case, the voices of the implementers are taken into consideration when the innovation is developed and implemented. The usefulness of *Ubuntu* values centred on solidarity, respect and self-respect has great implications for the type of approach that has to be used in curriculum development. Drawing from the *Ubuntu* lens, the spirit of solidarity can translate to "blocks of cooperation in which teamwork is built" based on *Ubuntu* philosophy which can permeate the education sector (Mbigi & Maree, 2005, p. 93). Correspondingly *Ubuntu* relationships are based on team work packed with respect and dignity (Poovan et al., 2006, p. 17). An essence of unity instantaneously supports collaboration and effectiveness amongst the group by permitting persons to back their greatest efforts for the improvement of the whole cluster. That is possible when the bottom-up approach is adopted in curriculum development. This finds supports in several works (Letseka, 2016; Mbigi & Maree, 2005; Poovan et al., 2006; Sereto, 2016) who argue that spirit of *Ubuntu* leads to supportive and concerted effort settings, because the public is invigorated to partake, share and care for the group followers.

The findings from teachers depict and appraise the bottom up approach as their representations of their approach they would want to adopt to minimise the challenges

of new Social Studies curriculum implementation. As such, teachers (Interviews C1; S1; J1; M1; G1; G2; C2) reported that the top-down approach was a disrespect of their concerns as change agents because they were not machines who work to the shout of school principals in offices. As such, benefiting from the teachers' representations, the advantages of the aforesaid approach rested on taking aboard all stakeholders and listening to their voices as enshrined in the *Ubuntu* philosophy. Such an approach in community work is not new in African villages. Each time the community had a task at hand; they would assemble and make decisions together. Thus, my argument, which concurs with Oloruntegbe and Collins (2017), is that successful reforms are initiated from the grassroots (bottom-up), particularly by teachers who are in the field and know what and where changes are needed. To this effect, I reason that the teachers are very important agents of policy implementation (Loflin, 2016; Prendergast & Treacy, 2017, p. 1; Smit & du Toit, 2016; Zindi, 2018, p. 27). As such, they have to be involved in the educational changes so that they become clear on the course of actions to follow in an effort to make it a success. The teachers' concerns were to be addressed and used to catapult the implementation of the changed curriculum to great achievement. What this study terms as "listening to the voices of the ordinary people" is a return to the past. To address problems that emanate from a top-down approach in curriculum change and implementation, I argue for the use of both the Afrocentric and Eurocentric views to lessen challenges of implementing the Social Studies curriculum. The Afrocentric view offers a bottom-up approach while the Eurocentric view suggests the top-down approach as evidenced through the teachers' representations (Interviews, J1; G1; S1; FGD).

However, while the bottom-up approach in which teachers actively participate in decision making, has strengths in that it improves acceptance and ownership of the new curriculum (Dube & Jita, 2018; Nziramasanga, 2018; Simmons & Maclean, 2018), it is time consuming and expensive to be undertaken by a third world country reeling in abject poverty like Zimbabwe. In that context, while the top-down approach is not preferred by the teachers, an extract of the strengths of the approach and those of the

bottom-up approach could be merged together to come up with a balanced approach which attends both to the teachers' concerns as well as answering to the policy makers' aspirations. An implementation of the curriculum which combines Fullan's (2015) ideas and *Ubuntu* tenets becomes a middle ground approach which is termed in this study "*Ubuntulising* curriculum implementation" that embraces both the European views and the African views in curriculum reconstruction and implementation (Personal discussion, Kgari-Masondo, 2019).

Relying on the top-down approach in curriculum design and implementation is likely to fail because it lacks ownership by the implementers and what implementers demand from the centre surpasses what the centre possesses. On the other hand, the bottom-up approach lacks in terms of standards because it is not centrally directed and controlled. So an integration of the two approaches promises success of Social Studies curriculum implementation. Thus, the study argues for an approach that considers the strengths of both the top-down approach and those of the bottom-up approach to come up with a balanced approach of which I propose the use of the middle ground approach which this study terms "a semi- top-down approach' or "*Ubuntulising* approach" which literature and interviews did not mention. This approach incorporates the strengths of both the top-down approach and the bottom-up approach because it involves the control and directives from the policy makers but at the same time embraces the views of teachers from the grassroots.

6.3.3. Partnership in the provision of educational resources

From the FGD and semi-structured interviews the word "teamwork" gained currency as a strategy to abate the challenges of lack of resources which had bogged down all schools. Teachers voiced that players in education had to be collectively committed to lessen the acute shortages of resources in schools of which interviewee J1, R2, M1, M2 and G1 concurred that the teachers had to partner with others stakeholders in the

provision of educational and instructional resources. For M2, "schools have to look for help from the international community and well-wishers to fund the provision of resources" thus involvement of people from all corners of the world is critical if provision of educational resources is to be achieved. This is important as the world is now focusing on globalisation. According to interviewee R2 her school got some assistance from well-wishers after asking for assistance from the international community.

The FGD suggested other options that teachers could assist in getting teaching resources. Among these options, teachers were urged to be resourceful and scavenge for instructional materials from their communities and to author books for use in the schools. While teachers were helping in that way, schools were implored to introduce a book levy and to undertake fund raising activities such as raffles to beef up their coffers. On the other hand, the government must resuscitate the per capita grant for all schools on a needs analysis basis and has to establish minimal infrastructure required per school. As posed by Makunja (2016, p. 35) the duty of the government is to provide adequate educational materials to schools but it fails dismally as teachers interviewed declared. She recommends that the government must escalate the per capita grant to increase the financial ability of the schools.

From both the extant literature and the teachers' representation it can be inferred that the provision of educational materials has to be the responsibility of not only the government but everyone else (Interviews, J1; FGD). The government, teachers, donors from the international community as well as rich schools had to work hand in hand to source the educational materials. Failure to provide resources results in the decline and or death of the Social Studies curriculum implementation which can also lead to death of the education system. To curtail that demise of the curriculum change and implementation, this study considers the values of *Ubuntu* to guide educators. At the core of *Ubuntu* philosophy is survival of which Poovan et al., (2006) describe as the ability to live and exist in spite of difficulties. Africans in different parts of the continent experienced various levels of hardships such as drought leading to shortages of food

and water due to disparities in weather conditions and geographical locations. In times of difficulties like these, Africans regarded survival as the biggest need among them. The lessons that the African communities learnt from such experiences were that survival can only be realised through dependence on each other through brotherly and sisterly care. Shortages of resources as narrated by the teachers could only be sourced if all key players develop a collective psyche characterised by the values of love and care embedded in *Ubuntu* which encourages stakeholders to combine their resources for the sustenance of the any new curriculum implementation (Broodryl, 2006). For Seroto (2016, p. 48) that compassion is a fundamental component of *Ubuntu* which entails "giving or sharing without expecting anything in return" and those who are better placed financially from all nooks of the world have to contribute in the provision of educational resources through making use of the collective and collaborative spirit. This illustrates the Social Studies objective which is on studying societies and its values as envisioned in the 2015-2022 Social Studies curriculum.

Hence, compassion has to be regarded as a shared routine that is not new to Africans. They learnt how to "survive by sharing resources over many years" (Seroto, 2016, p. 47). This also indicates that it is possible for all stakeholders to share the scarce resources which had negated the success of curriculum implementation following the African traditional way. Taking into consideration the principles of the *Ubuntu* values, I agree with Poovan, et al., (2006) that the sharing of possessions among Africans is a "collective psyche" and this spirit can still permit Africans to continue to portion the resources that are essential for effective implementation of the new curriculum. While Letseka (2016) observes that sharing of resources is anchored on shared concern for the survival of others, Poovan et al., (2006) argue that survival, being at the epicentre of *Ubuntu,* presumes the sharing of possessions regardless of difficulties. It is therefore evident from the above that the problem of unavailability of resources that dented the implementation of the curriculum could be abated by the employ of *the Ubuntu* value of compassion. The significance of this finding rests on the pretexts of globalisation and

the axioms of *Ubuntu* that demonstrate that resource mobilisation can be done through partnership with both the local and global community.

6.3.3.1. How then can the survival of the Social Studies curriculum implementation be realised through provision of resources?

From the findings of the study, the teachers suggested working together as a team (Interviews J1; R2; M1; M2; G1) as captured in the finger theory of *Ubuntu* by Mbigi and Maree (2005, p. 103) who illuminate that "a thumb working on its own is useless" and thus the thumb work jointly with other fingers to get strength in order to achieve anything. Drawing insight from this sentiment, the essence of *Ubuntu* is therefore team work and collective solidarity. Hence, teamwork through partnership which is an application of the *Ubuntu* philosophy may help to abate the challenges. As aptly put by C2 heads of schools sought assistance from the international community in areas that seemed insurmountable for them. The *Ubuntu* values centred on teamwork celebrates cooperation as also captured in the African proverb "*Ditau tsa go tlhoka seboka di sitwa ke nare e tlhotsa"* (An uncooperative pride of lions fails to bring down a limping buffalo). The Social Studies curriculum change and implementation is an easy task if collectively enacted. This is because teamwork as an African belief system considers that "collective supersedes the individual and that interdependence is a superior value in all community operations" (Khoza, 2018, p. 8).

It also emerged that the provision of teaching resources is dependent on the economic circumstances (interviews S1; G2; M2; S2; FGD), I agree with Fullan's (2016) and Yidana & Aboagye's (2018, p. 50) submission that school management teams should steer vigorous fundraising activities, to enable schools to purchase the required educational resources so as to warrant a successful change of the curriculum. While several studies (Karim, et al., 2018, p. 438; Wilde, et al., 2018; Zindi, 2018, p. 31; Kigwilu & Akala, 2017, p. 372; Ntumi, 2016) depict that "curriculum implementation is

anchored on resources", I argue that having material resources in schools alone is not enough to drive the success of Social Studies curriculum implementation. This is so because material resources can be found lying idle and unused in storerooms if there are no teachers who are adequately taught on how to use them to the fullest. So, material resources alone fall too short in determining the success of the curriculum. This indicates that curriculum implementation is a complex issue whose success is not confined to one factor but a number of them which are intrinsically interwoven.

6.3.4. Training for teachers

It emerged that adequate teacher training was necessary to effectively implement the Social Studies curriculum (Interviews, C1; C2; J1; S2). A number of studies confirm that if the teachers receive training on the application of new initiatives, there is a greater likelihood that they will keep to and fulfil the objectives of the chosen initiative (Esau & Mpofu, 2017; Mezieobi, et al., 2014; Ntumi, 2016; Okoth, 2016; Prendergast &Treacy, 2017; Jerotuh, et al., 2017; Zindi, 2018; Mtetwa, 2018). That view also finds backing in Fullan's (2015) theory which envisions that implementation relies on the Professional Development of the teachers. As such, this further demonstrates the importance of Professional Development workshops which must be conducted for teachers to enable them to convert the changes into practice. It follows then that training for all teachers remains a fundamental stage that propels successful implementation of the curriculum. As crisply put by (Fullan, 2015; Mtetwa, 2018, p. 143; Rahman, et al., 2018; Zindi, 2018) to mention but a few the issue of teacher competencies and their re-equipping with appropriate awareness of adjusted goals, visions and skills is critical; or else the new curriculum is not enacted as expected.

To mitigate the challenges of lack of knowledge and expertise, teachers called for continuous and vigorous training to be undertaken during the holidays in Social Studies (Interviews, C1; S2). As posed by teacher R1 who pointed out that human capital needs to go under surgery and needs to be re-serviced to align it to the new changes of Social

Studies**.** In light of that view, I argue that training of teachers that is based on *Ubuntu* values of love, respect and participation is important because it boosts their confidence and skills for implementing the curricula. Thus, training of the teachers is linked to the hallmarks of *Ubuntu* values which submit that training is not a one man task as depicted in the Nguni saying that "*Izandla ziyagezana*" meaning that one hand washes the other. To borrow from Khoza (2018, p. 8) on *Ubuntu* principles, the Xhosa says "*Akukho qili lino kuzikhoth emhlana* (No genius is so clever that he can lick his own back). This implies that teachers with different levels of Social Studies knowledge and experiences have to meet regularly to sharpen each other's skills through workshops and seminars at various levels of the educational structures because no one has the monopoly of knowledge. An iron sharpens another. The teachers' different levels of experiences when combined together can become a weapon to destroy the challenges of Social Studies curriculum implementation.

Benefitting from *Ubuntu* values, the issues of inadequate training was because of the neglect of what is entrenched in the African village. Using *Ubuntu,* on the problems of inadequate training, educationists must return to the African villages and extract relevant elements on how villages trained their members and then bring that to the education system. As put by Mbigi and Maree (2005, p.105) training and development in an African village is based on collective action where leaders of such training must be collective in their approach and practice. As such, the whole village is accountable for raising and training the child. Thus, training has to change from collective talk to collective action through harnessing the combined energy and support of the key stakeholders in the education sector. This implies that, no one has to be left out in terms of aspects to be learnt and applied during the implementation stage if the *Ubuntu* values are embraced.

This study argues that, whatever one does in any field of work should be based on training because without relevant and comprehensive training, chances of failure are high as illustrated through teachers' representations. The training is not to be hurried as

such to give room for teachers to comprehend the complexities of the challenges. It is thus not a quick action to identify problems but somewhat long-permanent training meant to address the needs of teachers adequately. Similarly, Rahman, et al., (2018, p. 1123) argue "a teacher cannot implement the new curriculum successfully unless he/she has a thorough training of the subjects he should teach, a good general knowledge, the ability to apply active teaching and learning methods effectively, and the will to learn and implement new practices." This suggests that the implementation of the curriculum often demands some adjustments which are encapsulated in training sessions on the part of the teacher's knowledge, skills and practices. Also Zindi (2018, p. 31) concurs that "there is need for re-training of teachers prior to the introduction of the new curriculum," so that teachers become prepared for navigating the implementation odyssey. Hence, "preparation of teachers through training is important for a fruitful implementation, so that they comprehend what the modifications are and how they can implement them" (Yidana & Aboagye, 2018, p. 41).

It follows then that training and developing competence of teachers had the potential to act as the base from which the school management and the teachers reflect on the new curriculum within their own school. In that way, what Maravanyika (2018, p. 75) describes as the "dissonance between official policy and the aspirations of key stakeholders" could be averted by such training undertaken before the adoption and adaption of the new curriculum as also hinted in Fullan's (2015) theory on educational reforms which state that training bridges the gap between intended and actual curriculum. Findings on the importance of teachers' training offered some insights into the need to train teachers thoroughly on the Social Studies content before adoption and adaption of the new curriculum so that teachers could come to terms with the subject matter of the new programme. This view emanates from the assumption that any reform is packed with new or revised materials, new teaching methodologies and new teaching beliefs. Teachers are capable of scoring in implementation if they have mastery of that subject in terms of its content, assessment tools and the appropriate methodologies.

Lack of appropriate training for the teachers was thus a challenge which had to be mitigated through thorough training.

While Professional Development takes place as pre-service, on-service or in-service training, the major challenge associated with the training is its effective coverage of all teachers in a country. If all teachers are to be uniformly and effectively trained then the implementation process ought not to be a hurried process. However, that was in stark contrast to findings from the current study which revealed that training for teachers was short and as such did not address the teachers' needs because it was hurriedly done leading to unevenness in the orientation of the curriculum document as put by teachers in the FGD. That position finds advise in the works of Bantwini (2010, p. 89) who cautions that we need to avoid seeing changes as a quick fix answers to exiting pitfalls, but as a long term solution. In congruence to that advice, Rahman, et al., (2018) further point out that PD must be in line and grounded on the weaknesses of the teachers. The participants in the FGD pleaded for regular training that could be conducted on a termly basis. Some teachers went on further to articulate that it was imperative to discuss the following terms' work during the holidays at workshops as preparation of the implementation process (Interviews G; R2). In view of the above, adequate preparations of the implementers during a time when schools are not operational become imperative because it is the time when learners are away so that they get adequately trained to identify what to teach and by what method when schools re-open. This could be done at school, cluster, district and provincial level as suggested by the teachers in the FGD.

This study argues, however that while Professional Development is important in curriculum implementation, we have seen instances where well trained teachers fail to execute their core duties (Lewin & Stuart, 2012). Thus, we can have experts without resources and subsequently when faced with such a scenario, teachers may fail to implement the curriculum to expected standards. A combination of experts as well as resources is a plausible move in the right direction towards the implementation of the revived curriculum though that does not assure us of a hundred per cent results as

envisaged on the intended blueprint of the curriculum. A number of factors are at play if we are to effectively implement the new Social Studies curriculum of which teamwork is one such factor.

6.3.5. Teamwork as a mitigation strategy in curriculum overload

From observations, semi structured interviews and FGD; teachers revealed and confirmed that the Social Studies curriculum implementation was constrained by too much workload in terms of bloated content, limited time to cover timetabled work within a day, too large classes and too much paperwork (Interviews J2; R2; G1). To ameliorate these challenges teachers in the study suggested teamwork, cooperation, recruitment of more teachers and the introduction of subject specialisation in primary schools (Interviews R1; R2). Similar observations were made in several studies (Fullan, 2015; Ngussa, 2015, p. 245; Oder & Eisenschmidt, 2018, p. 6; Zindi, 2018, p. 31). To some extent certain challenges of Social Studies curriculum implementation in Zimbabwe find resonance with others in the world over and therefore were generic problems.

In the face of too much work, African societies had devised ways in which the work could be made easier. For instance, the *Ubuntu's* traditional structures such as *letsema* in Setswana, or *nhimbe* in Shona which means work party (Is when an individual would call neighbours to help in carrying out a certain task) is able to complete a perceived hard task in matters of hours. It is the conviction of this study that too much workload could be shared through teamwork. Borrowing from Mbigi and Maree's (2005) conceptual framework of *Ubuntu* which they coined the Collective Finger Theory (CFT), anything challenging could be dealt with in groups through cooperation. Mbigi and Maree's (2005) theoretical structure is well implicit if one uses the African proverb from the Shangaan clan which goes "*rintilo rimwe a ri nusi hove*" (One finger cannot pick a grain). Meaning to say community tasks like educational change and implementation are easier done in a group rather than as an individual. "A finger, working on its own is

useless. Therefore, the finger has to work collectively with other fingers to get "strength and then be able to accomplish whatever task" (Mbigi & Maree 2005, p. 103). For instance, the *Ubuntu'*s social work structure which is a work party is able to lessen the difficult tasks of implementing the Social Studies curriculum when teachers share themes (Interviews, R2; FGD). As suggested in the FGD, this could be done through assigning individuals tasks that culminate in one big job. Teacher collaboration, team planning or even mentoring allows teachers to work together to lessen the workload and feelings of isolation (Nevenglosky et al., 2018, p. 11). In the pretext of the Zimbabwean 2015-2022 Social Studies curriculum change and implementation, the representations of teachers suggests the sharing of subjects in primary schools through subject specialisation as was the case in secondary schools (Interviews, J2; R1; G1). If each teacher becomes a specialist in a particular subject, that could decrease the workload of that teacher who in turn produces and promotes quality of work for the whole education system. That could be a deviation from the norm because in Zimbabwean primary schools teachers are generalists who teach all subjects that are offered in the primary sector. A surge in class enrolment, that resulted in large classes and overloading of teachers could be dealt with by recruiting newly qualified teachers who were roaming the streets of Harare as argued by R2. As for paperwork which includes scheming and planning, the teachers could do team scheming and planning during the school holidays in which they share themes and topics that constitute the Social Studies curriculum. This again would be a relief for teachers as they would not purchase commercialised schemes which were crafted by unscrupulous and untrained people who were selling these in the markets to eke out a living (Interviews, J2; M1; G1; S2).

6.3.6. Remuneration as a mitigation strategy

Teachers interviewed revealed that they worked under harsh conditions and receive poor salaries (Interviews C1; S1). As such, they suggested that remuneration had to be matched with the loads they were teaching. Incentives for teachers especially those undertaking new initiatives and programmes were key for the implementation of those

changes, if taken from a Eurocentric perspective that focuses on individual benefits which also received support from the teachers who took part in the FGD. Benefiting from that western lens, it implied then that the economic configuration of a country was of paramount importance as a determinant to be considered each time a nation was to revamp her education system, so that the teachers are rewarded commensurate with their workloads, qualifications and experience. Since this study is anchored on both the African approach and Eurocentric approach, there is need for an integration in which individual teachers' benefits must be accepted because once an individual is rewarded, and then the community inherently benefits from that.

However, on the issue of paying teachers handsomely, this study moves away from Fullan and suggests an African approach takes precedence because the African perspective has it that Social Studies teachers cannot be motivated by paying those incentives to individuals. Instead, they can be motivated by being part of a group. In the midst of such ambivalence, I concur with Mashile, Matshepo and Matoane (2016, p. 57) that "reward systems that are aimed at individuals are however not necessarily effective in contexts where the worldview is communally based and sense of belonging is based on the interests not of an individual but of the group". As such, leadership in such contexts requires an *Ubuntu* approach which seeks to bring the educational innovations information to the teachers through warranting the group welfare is made crystal clear. Surmising that, teachers had to be motivated on the change initiatives and the reasons for them which will primarily benefit their community and then the country. That would negate the issue of incentivising teachers for their duties in implementing the newly formulated curriculum if the *Ubuntu* values are embraced. Borrowing from Mbigi and Maree (2005, p. 99) the study argues that giving employees "additional" rewards is an imported idea. The Afrocentric view of rewards based on *Ubuntu* indicates that whatever one earns is for the collective good of the community and not for individual gain. This study therefore scoffs at one who is African who laments for incentives targeted at oneself.

6.3.7. Psycho-social support from school principals

The findings of the study indicated that support from school principals as illustrated by participating teachers lacked love, respect and dignity hence the schools heads did not "understand them". While literature focuses on professional support characterised by communication and feedback; management and supervision of teachers as key to avert pitfalls of curriculum implementation, interviews indicate that emphasis is on psycho-social support, meaning that *Ubuntu* is at the core of the needs of teachers in terms of curriculum support. Thus one can argue that care for teachers is important and all other things will follow. Contrary to that, some of the school principals offered minimal professional support chequered by poor relations of arrogance, disrespect and lack of love. In the words of S2:

> *Each time I knocked on the door of our principal, I received a cold welcome punctuated with a "what is it again" expression on the face. When I explain the purpose of the visit, the school principal usually reminds me of my laziness and then an elaboration that we received the same training and as such was not even cognisant of how to deal with my problems. That is again followed by a serious lecture on why the school cannot honour my requests because of financial constraints. Their behaviour is likened to that of the then Prime Minister of Primary and Secondary Education who once said: "the new curriculum has now come to stay, shape up or ship out."*

The sentiment by the teacher reflects poor relations and therefore denotes lack of concern, love and dignity from the school principals which are central to *Ubuntu* values on which the Social Studies curriculum is anchored. Significant about this finding is that several studies concentrated on the roles school principals play in coordinating curriculum implementation (Milondzo & Magongoa, 2018; Oder & Eisenschmidt, 2018 Pansiri, 2014; Yidana & Aboagye, 2018) but overlooked the issue of relations practised by school principals. As such, poor relations have not been considered as a factor that can enhance or inhibit curriculum implementation. This study thus fills this lacuna, by

unpacking the calibre of school principals in terms of their personalities and analyse the impact it has on curriculum implementation.

It arose from the teachers' construction of the mitigation strategies that there was need to have a management team with a humane heart to power the Social Studies curriculum changes (Interviews R1; C1; M1; M2). Without this humane heart attributes, school principals could be likened to a structure that appears beautiful outside whilst the inside is a sore sight with unfinished parts. Confirming a *Swahili* saying which goes, "Knowledge without good deeds is like a beehive without honey". In this context of the new curriculum implementation, respect was expected from the school principals. Frei and Shaver (2002) in Seroto (2016, p. 47) describe respect as a social or attitudinal construct that guides people's social behaviour toward others and in most instances, it regulates relationships. As such, practising respect and dignity is core to the the axiom of *Ubuntu*. Poovan et al., (2006, p. 26) describe respect as *Ukuhlonipa*, which in an African word that demonstrates its centrality in the values of *Ubuntu* world view since it specifies the social station of an African in society and permeates an entire positions of social standing that are evident within an African culture in general and educational culture in particular. As suggested by the teachers in the FGD that if school principals make use of respect and dignity in their operations with teachers, then teachers will view school principals as understanding people. The application of respect and dignity in the school context implies that it tolerates communication to take place between teachers and school principals. Once there is mutual understanding, then the arrogant attitude is purged and replaced by collaboration and collegiality which Fullan (2015) advocates and supports as key to curriculum implementation though he overlooked values of love, dignity and respect which *Ubuntu* emphasises.

Faced with challenges of disrespectful school heads that are devoid of love and respect, the *Ubuntu* spring is overflowing with values the school leaders can draw from, for inspiration and guidance on curriculum implementation. One such value is a value based leadership style which includes all people from all walks of life and inspires the

group affiliates to make sacrifices for the community's goals first before considering their own values. In this value based leadership, are embedded values which include inventive collaboration, open communiqué, solidarity and give-and-take moral responsibility (Booysen, 2001 cited in Poovan *et al.,* 2006, p. 39). Indeed, the leader becomes the glue that holds the team members and their values together which enable members to coalesce and accomplish tasks collectively rather than putting each other asunder. School principals are at the epicentre of any curriculum implementation. Their good relations with their subordinates are significant in determining the level of success of curriculum implementation unlike what was revealed in the study which indicated that the school heads were *anti-Ubuntu* (Interviews S2; C1; M1*).* As such, Rahman, et al., (2018, p. 1122) caution that rather than the egotistical "we-know-what is good for you" attitudes from the school principals, the teachers should be active participants rather than being passive recipients; they ought be respected rather than be dehumanised. Similarly, Mingaine (2013) advises that school heads should be involved concerned and supervise the whole process harmoniously. The heads of schools' negative attitudes on the teachers' perceived skills had to be altered for them to embrace the essence of sharing of ideas.

Sharing is an African belief applied whenever there was need. This is so because sharing in educational reforms is based on the premise that a teachers' learning is socially located in a system of co-teachers, school principals, district administrators, parents and other relevant participants. The sentiment confirms Fullan's (2015, p. 284) submission that "new meanings, behaviours, skills, and beliefs depend significantly on whether teachers are working as isolated individuals or are exchanging ideas, support, and positive feelings" about curriculum change. To further fortify that, Oder and Eisenschmidt (2018, p. 6) argue that "the quality of collegial relationship and personal support for the teachers are all critical components in the sustained commitment of teachers and their motivation to either remain in or quit the profession," The quality of working relationships among teachers is strongly related to implementation. Collegiality, open communication, trust, support, and help, learning on the job, getting results, and

job satisfaction and morale are closely interrelated (Anortt, 1994; Fullan 2015; Milondzo & Magongoa, 2018; Oder & Eisenschmidt, 2018; Yidana & Aboagye, 2018) and these features are inherent in the *Ubuntu* philosophy. Drawing insights from the *Ubuntu* philosophy, all community work is established on cooperation, sharing experiences, learning from others and participating in decision making. Hence, Simmons and Maclean (2018, p. 1) assert teachers need "support, collaboration and direction," to enable and reinforce their way through the new journey of Social Studies curriculum. Sharing information is affinity to the *Ubuntu* values and subsequently is also entrenched in the curriculum implementation process in which teachers share their experiences in cordial relations, for the betterment of the process.

By using the *Ubuntu* approach, schools principals have to have a sense of empathy as engrained in the *Ubuntu* values in which they are expected to up their relations to empower their subordinates with dignity. The current study considers Mbigi and Maree's (2005, p.58) submission that the workers in their democracy have to respect and value each other, which is the tradition and spirit of the African people which they often used to sanctify the values of respect and human dignity in their lives. In the context of the new curriculum, this suggests that school principals and curriculum constructers must be endowed with the leadership values that promote cordial social relations so that team spirit is cultivated during implementation of new changes. This is connected to *Ubuntu* philosophy which agitates for the need to make use of every member's contributions for the betterment of the society which is based on respect for others' view. As explained by Pembroke, 2019, p. 5) Ubuntu affirms "positive interpersonal relations and commitment to the common good." According to Mugumbate and Nyanguru (2013) *Ubuntu* stresses collectivism and consensus, allowing every individual to have their equal say in any discussion and in ultimately reaching an agreement acceptable to all. This then would lead to collaboration in any new curriculum implementation.

6.3.8. Teacher representatives in the construction of the new Social Studies curriculum content.

It materialised from the semi-structured interviews and FGD that teachers were not represented in the construction of the Social Studies curriculum. As such, new topics with a European slant were introduced while others were modified (Interviews, J2; C2; R1; S2). This confirms reports in several studies (Samkange & Samkange, 1980; Zvobgo, 1996) which claim that *Ubuntu* philosophy was rejected by the Zimbabwean government in the post-1980 era in favour of the ideology of scientific socialism. Interest in *Ubuntu* only re-emerged after the Nziramasanga Commission of 1999 which gave birth to the new Social Studies curriculum. That explained why some themes in the Social Studies curriculum overlooked African values in their scope. This according to participants made the change agents fall short with regard to the subject matter of the subject as well as the competence of delivery of the discipline (Interviews C2; R1). This aspect on teachers' lack of content is not new because it is reported in several studies (Makunja, 2016; Mtetwa, 2018; Okoth, 2016). The teachers reiterated that their knowledge gap had to be filled by training that embraces issues not only to do with content of the subject but also the teaching competence. Teachers in the study indicated that fidelity to curriculum implementation of the new curriculum could have been made easy through involving them in drafting the Africanised content of the Social Studies curriculum (Interviews S2). The finding tallies with representation as a social construct as characterised by Kgari-Masondo (2017, p. 87) that Social Studies is located in the activities of the world and reflects communities it serves and empowers learners with critical lifelong learning skills. This is an agreement with the characterisation of representation as a social construct as explained by Berger and Luckmann (1996) that human beings as a group create and sustain all social phenomena through social practices. Hence, it is represented as a curriculum that can have outcomes based on common models from society. That could have been achieved because the teachers could draw from their knowledge of African values which they grew practising in their communities. As explained by Bollinger and Warren (2007) that

theme such as "culture and cultural diversity" requires that students and the teacher draw information from their own cultures and from other groups' culture. When it comes to implementing what they know and lived by, it was going to be an easy task because the content will be reflecting their real world not imaginary global villages which some learners may never visit. The teacher representatives could promote the multi-perspectivity approach in curriculum construction as argued by several authors (Kgari-Masondo, 2017; Mira, 2017; Ross, 2013) that diverse views are vital to the implementation of the newly designed curriculum.

Borrowing from the *Ubuntu* epistemology, which strives on oneness and is concerned with the meaning, source and nature of knowledge, this study argues that the content of Social Studies could have been derived from the community as a whole so that it addresses the realities of the community (Dube & Jita, 2018, p. 907). FGD exposed that the curriculum was supposed to articulate the social realities of people, offer answers to their plight and enable the upgrading of human lives. The community members (teachers included) had to contribute to the subject matter of the curriculum since *Ubuntu* epistemology is experiential as reflected and embedded in the Shona proverb that goes "*Takabva nako kumhunga hakuna ipwa*" meaning we passed through the millet field and we know that there are no sweet reeds there (Mangena, 2018; Ramose, 1999). In cognisant of that view, participants interviewed argued that teachers have vast experiences in the content of the old Social Studies curriculum which they can use to decide themes be taught and how that is to be taught (Interviews C2; J2; FGD). As people, the Social Studies teachers have knowledge of the life aspects that they deem are important and can be incorporated into the Social Studies curriculum. If that was done through consultation of teachers, the challenges of having new topics that were beyond the teachers' knowledge and comprehension could not have surfaced. The experiences the teachers accumulated in the progression of their lives and duties were enough to determine the Social Studies content in the African context. Informed with the 2015-2022 Social Studies, curriculum change and implementation is deemed a long process similar to life, where teachers make meaningful contributions towards making

the content of the subject relevant by tailoring it to "address lived realities" (Dube & Jita, 2018, p. 907). In that way, unwanted content materials could have been purged, relevant concepts could have been incorporated and more African values could have been added, which however was not done, indicating a source of impediments to effective curriculum implementation which could be averted by creating space for educators to contribute in curriculum reform and implementation.

The importance of this finding hinges on the fact that teachers' roles had been confined to the implementation of curriculum policy. Nowhere had teachers been reported in research that indicated they had voiced to become part of the team that designs curriculum. Instead, studies had only pointed to the importance of their involvement in implementation in classrooms (Carl, 2005; Gudyanga & Jita, 2018; Mingaine, 2013; Nziramasanga, 2018; Pandian & Kaur, 2018; O'Donoghue, 2007; Rahman, et al., 2018; Shilling, 2013; Yidana & Aboagye, 2018; Zindi, 2018). This study is the first in Social Studies as far as I researched to listen to their voices in which teachers themselves propose that their roles could be extended to become curriculum implementers-developers, a new role altogether. The fact that the teachers did not partake in drafting the subject matter of the Social Studies curriculum meant that they were alienated from their society in which they served. J2 takes that further by stating that "teachers are potent source of the curriculum content." The significance of this finding is the fact that scholarship is scanty that reported that teachers are eager to be originators of the curriculum content. This demonstrates that, teachers by virtue of the fact that they belong to the community had knowledge of values that had to be inculcated in children of the village and had vast experiences of what should constitute the Social Studies curriculum content which addresses the concerns of the community. As such, their role could not be limited to implementing the Social Studies curriculum but also developing the content. Teachers can be designers of the curriculum because they know the local situation and the local dynamics in their communities. Thus, fulfilling Eisner's view that individuals have to become the "architects of their own knowledge" (Sanchez, 2010, p. 14).

Another unique observation which emerged from the current study is that *Ubuntu* had been identified as the philosophy which guides the Zimbabwean education system. Its significance rests on the premise that it is the right direction in reviving and resuscitating the usable past, made up of African values and beliefs. However, its application in the construction of the new 2015-2022 curriculum is flimsy and not visible which bred challenges of Social Studies curriculum implementation which stemmed from lack of consultation and cooperation. To mitigate these challenges, a return to the usable past provides promises of success since people connect their interpretation of the old events and objects with the present and future events to "give a progressive forward trajectory" (Murray, 2002, p. 15).

6.4. Chapter Summary

It has been shown throughout the chapter how the teachers represented the hurdles they encountered in implementing the 2015-2022 Social Studies curriculum and the attachment that developed from the experiences. They also averred the mitigation strategies to avert the challenges they were experiencing. Even though the challenges hounded them, teachers depicted the new Social Studies curriculum change as a noble initiative. Their representations of the challenges and mitigation strategies were girded by the Eurocentric values and the *Ubuntu* values. The chapter discussed the collated data in reaction to the research questions founded on what barriers were encountered by educators in implementing the new Social Studies curriculum and how these challenges could be averted. It appeared from the research that the implementation process adopted the top-down approach, leaving very little room for teachers' participation in Social Studies curriculum change and implementation. Hence, it was fraught with teething challenges that demanded a refocus on the implementation matrix that calls for the application of both the *Ubuntu* values and Fullan's (2015) theory for it to taste success. Lack of consultation, teacher participation, educational resources,

training for teachers and cordial relations from the school principals constituted big barriers to teachers' representations of Social Studies curriculum implementation through silence, gestures and narratives. It was not only the non-Africanised content of Social Studies and non-participation of teachers that frustrated the implementation process but also the great workload that stressed teachers. From the discussion, it was noted that some of the findings on challenges of implementing a new curriculum confirmed previous studies in different contexts. These challenges were presented from the policy makers, administrators and curriculum constructers' perspectives and none was from the teachers' views. New findings were reported for example: the need to employ the usable past and to "buntulise" the curriculum; the new Zimbabwean 2015-2022 Social Studies curriculum was anchored on *Ubuntu* values but in practice it was not the case; the training for teachers was window dressing since it combined all the subjects of the new curriculum and was a quick fix to meet the urgency of implementing the new curriculum; that teachers because of the workload resorted to buying schemes of work from the streets; teachers and school principals' self-esteem was violated during the training period; cordial relationships are non-existent in schools; the global village can assist in sourcing materials and Social Studies teachers are potent sources of an Africanised Social Studies curriculum. This indicated that curriculum implementation has some generic challenges as well as unique challenges for a specific discipline in a specific context. While generic challenges from non-teachers' views were noted from literature, little evidence was there on how to mitigate them using the Eurocentric world view combined with the Afrocentric perspective. I argue that the context and approaches used to abate the challenges from previous studies were different from this study and have been Eurocentric in nature, leaving the African perspective untapped. As such, those studies did not go much further than pointing out the challenges of curriculum implementation that are met in Zimbabwean schools and the reasons for having these challenges (Esau & Mpofu, 2017; Gasva & Moyo, 2017; Mangwaya, et al., 2016; Mtethwa, 2018; Nziramasanga, 2018). This study did identify the challenges, justified their manifestations and provided insights into how to avert them.

Thus, my analysis probed deeper into the representations of teachers on how to mitigate the challenges met in the African context using the *Ubuntu* lens. Following that observation, the *Ubuntu* philosophy was adopted as a "return to the useful past" to unpack the mitigation strategies thereby complementing the Eurocentric views. The study made suggestions of the mitigation strategies drawing from the application of the *Ubuntu* values such as participation, compassion, solidarity, respect, love and dignity to mention some, as a strategy to better the Social Studies curriculum of which the following features were made mention namely: the teacher participation; the "*ubuntulising* approach"; a comprehensive training for teachers; teamwork in teachers' work, and the use of compassion and partnership on the mobilisation of resources; psycho-social support from school principals and teacher representatives in the construction of any new curriculum. The study also indicated that the school principals ought to have a humane heart and must improve school relations among staff members during the Social Studies curriculum reforms and implementation because in African society, the king owes his status to his subjects and as such he has to respect his subordinates. Next chapter is on the summary of the research where I draw some conclusions and suggest some implications of the study to other future studies.

CHAPTER SEVEN

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1. Introduction

In the preceding chapter, I presented and analysed the research findings in the context of extant literature, drawing insights from *Ubuntu* Philosophy and Fullan's (2015) theory on educational change by answering the research questions which were:

1. What are Zimbabwean teachers' representations of the challenges in the implementation of the 2015–2022 Social Studies Curriculum?
2. How do Zimbabwean teachers represent the mitigation strategies for the challenges they face on the effective implementation of the new 2015-2022 Social Studies curriculum?

This chapter confirms that the research questions which guided this study have been answered and the research objectives were achieved. This thesis was premised on the impromptu roll out of the new Social Studies 2015-2022 Zimbabwean curriculum under a difficult economic environment, leaving it deeply entangled in trenchant challenges. The socio-economic configuration of Zimbabwe ignited public outcry from the stakeholders which affected the education system in all schools. Among the stakeholders affected were the teachers, whose voices had been overlooked in issues linked to curriculum reform and implementation. As such, this study, unpacked the teachers' representation of the challenges which they met during the implementation odyssey. The remarkability of the study was based on the amalgamation of Eurocentric and Afrocentric views to construe the challenges as perceived and interpreted by the Zimbabwean primary school teachers. The curriculum used as a model exposing the challenges of implementing the Curriculum 2015-2022 and mitigation strategies thereof was Social Studies and the teachers who were aligned with its teaching. The two

analytical tools interrogated why the challenges manifested the way they did and suggested austerity measures as stop gaps for the challenges of curriculum implementation. This thesis has demonstrated that the Social Studies curriculum implementation traversed a bumpy terrain chequered with various challenges due to: lack of consultation and teachers' participation in curriculum innovation, adequate resources, training for teachers, minimal psycho-social support from school principals and existence of excessive workload coupled with poor remuneration and poor representation of teachers in the construction of the new curriculum content.

In concluding, I present firstly the summary of the empirical findings, interrogate the theoretical framework, secondly discuss the practical reflections on the use of the *Ubuntu* philosophy and the methodology and then thirdly reflect on the contributions of this study. Lastly I wrap up the chapter with a discussion of the implications and recommendations of the study.

7.2.   Summary of Findings: Challenges and Mitigation strategies of Social Studies curriculum implementation

I hereunder present the salient challenges of the Social Studies curriculum implementation and the mitigation strategies which emerged in the study. Evidently, the Department of Education in Zimbabwe adopted a rigid adherence to a unified and centralised education system which both Fullan's (2015) theory and *Ubuntu* philosophy see as a hitch to the success of the reforms in education. Subsequently the teachers felt dehumanised and disrespected by the policy crafters who adopted a silent approach in cascading the new Social Studies Curriculum. Consequently, they engaged in several forms of representation to demonstrate the challenges they met in implementing the new Social Science reforms. The study demonstrated that teachers faced challenges in implementing the Social Studies curriculum which were depicted through silence,

gestures and narratives as forms of representation. The challenges confirmed Fullan's (2015) contributions and *Ubuntu* which celebrate the involvement and participation of teachers in curriculum change and implementation. Implementation challenges which emerged in this study emanate from the way the curriculum was disseminated which tended not to support teacher engagement and was not sensitive to the context of the needs of a decolonised country whose objectives in education are to have a relevant education that embraces African humanity and concerns. As such, the remedy to those challenges lies in embracing *Ubuntu* values as a return to the "usable past" as proposed by the current debates on decolonisation.

7.2.1. The consultation process: top-down approach and teacher participation.

It came out that the government of Zimbabwe adopted the top-down approach in disseminating the new Social Studies curriculum which posed as a trenchant challenge because it was devoid of the teachers' voices and professional advice. The Department of Education in Zimbabwe adopted a rigid adherence to a unified and centralised education system which both Fullan's (2015) theory and *Ubuntu* philosophy see as a hitch to the success of the new reforms. It came out in the study that the teachers felt dehumanised and disrespected because the policy makers adopted a silent approach in cascading the new Social Studies. In response to that approach, they engaged in passive resistance as a form of silence representation to demonstrate their unwillingness in implementing the new Social Studies reforms. The findings were thus incompatible with the tenets from Fullan's (2015) contributions and *Ubuntu* which celebrate the involvement and participation of teachers in curriculum design and implementation.

To mitigate the misfiring of the new Social Studies curriculum implementation, the teachers therefore suggested a replacement of the top-down approach with a bottom–

up approach which draws input from the teachers. However, while the bottom-up approach suggested by the teachers had limitations in that it is time consuming and unaffordable especially in an emerging country like Zimbabwe, the top-down approach lacks stakeholders' representations and ownership. Consequently, a middle ground approach (the semi-top-down approach) in curriculum design and implementation which benefits from the integration of the top-down approach and the bottom-up approach was suggested as appropriate as reflected in Fullan's (2015) theory and the *Ubuntu* philosophy. The study moved further and showed that there was need for integration of the Eurocentric and Afrocentric, imploring the policy makers to return to the usable past by "*ubuntulising*" curriculum design and implementation through decolonising the curriculum by resuscitating the African way of life in educational reforms. As such, it emerged that the success of Social Studies curriculum implementation is anchored on "*ubuntulising*" the curriculum design and implementation by engaging teachers in consultative forums.

7.2.2. Partnerships in the provision of educational resources

The teachers' narratives in the study showed that schools were poorly resourced at the time that the Social Studies curriculum was rolled out as evidenced by shortages of educational resources in the form of instructional materials, physical facilities and human resources. That shortage was impetus to faulty curriculum implementation. It came out that the shortages of materials were driven by the volatile economic plunge the country was experiencing. As argued in Chapters Five and Six curriculum change and implementation is an expensive endeavour that requires a stable economy.

Teachers in the study recounted that it was not the government's responsibility alone to source resources but the community as a whole through partnerships. Mitigating the unavailability of educational resources could be done if the global village plays a

collective obligation by giving a hand and sharing what it has. That practice hinges on globalisation and the *Ubuntu* values of compassion and sharing which demonstrates a collective psyche wherein stakeholders partner with others to source critical resources.

7.2.3. Training for teachers

One pestering and pertinent issue that was common from the teachers' representations of the challenges of implementing the Social Studies curriculum was non-existence of training for teachers in the subject matter and the teaching skills or competences. It emerged that the training that the teachers received after launch was window dressing which was a "one-size- fits- all" training that was general, inadequate and not subject specific. That training was a quick fix meant to meet the urgency of the adoption of the Social Studies as a learning area which did not seal the gaps in the subject matter and pedagogical skills and as such frustrated the Social Studies curriculum implementation. Teachers in the study suggested continuous and comprehensive training, which is not "a one-size- fits- all" training but a Social Studies specific training or not "quick fix training" that is hurriedly done for window dressing but rather a comprehensive training that captures the concerns of teachers and addresses them effectively.

7.2.4. Team work in curriculum workload and remuneration

From the study it emerged that the Social Studies curriculum implementation in Zimbabwean schools was constrained by too much workload which was related to swollen content, inadequate time to cover timetabled work within a day, large classes and too much paperwork because of too many innovations. To ameliorate the workload and stress associated with the new Social Studies curriculum, teachers voiced that there was need to work together as a team in all their duties. The teachers envisioned

that they could do team planning and teaching by sharing Social Studies topics and themes during the school holidays. Teamwork which was envisaged in the study is embedded in the *Ubuntu* philosophy and is also engrained in Fullan's (2015) theory which suggests that, effective curriculum design and implementation can be made easy by merging the Eurocentric and Afrocentric views. The teachers suggested the practice of team collaboration as a way of sharing the workload in primary schools in Zimbabwe by sharing Social Studies topics and themes as well as team planning and teaching. Findings in the study reveal that the teachers wanted remuneration commensurate with the workloads, experience and qualifications taking cognisance of the new reforms which were introduced in schools.

7.2.5. Psycho-social support from school principals.

The findings of the study indicated that some of the school principals offered professional support characterised by poor relations of arrogance, disrespect and lack of love. Both Fullan's theory on educational change and the *Ubuntu* philosophy cite poor relations as an impediment to implementation of new changes in education. The teachers' representations of the mitigation strategies proposed the creation of cordial and symbiotic relations between school principals and teachers based on *Ubuntu* values as a plausible strategy that could effectively reduce the encountered challenges during implementation of the curriculum. This is because *Ubuntu* is about hiring leaders who understand the workplace and lead "with the heart and soul" so that teachers who are followers are motivated to contribute to an organisation if they feel that they are valued (Makka, 2019, pp. 77- 82).

7.2.6. Teachers as co-developers of Social Studies curriculum content.

Based on the teachers' stories, it emerged that the Social Studies content was modified with new Eurocentric topics that were added without any consultation by policy makers

which in turn challenged the teachers' previous knowledge because they did not have background on its content. The policy makers did not consult implementers on the nature of the content as engrained in the *Ubuntu* philosophy which acknowledges consultation as key to the success of community activities. The study discovered that the basis of *Ubuntu* that the Zimbabwean curriculum claims to hinge on is just on paper but practically it was not applied.

To mitigate that impediment, teachers pointed out that there was need to harness the ordinary teacher's past experiences and merge it with the policy maker's input to come to an agreeable African Social Studies content that captures the realities of the Zimbabwean community in line with the *Ubuntu* philosophy and Fullan's (2015) ideas which respect consultation and participation. Thus, it came out that teachers can not only be implementers of the curriculum but can also be potent developers of curriculum content, premised on their life experiences in the communities in which they live. As such, the usable past of teachers was not considered during the construction of the new 2015-2022 Social Studies curriculum, which can be utilised in future endeavours.

7.3. Personal reflections on the use of *Ubuntu* philosophy and Fullan's (2015) ideas on curriculum change and implementation

My study's thrust was on the teachers' representations of the challenges of Social Studies curriculum implementation with regard to their voices on challenges they were facing and their suggestions of the mitigation strategies which could be embraced to circumvent them. I took consideration of the *Ubuntu* philosophy to unravel the mitigation strategies as an addition to the Eurocentric world view that had dominated education circles. Consequently, the employ and application of *Ubuntu* values of participation, survival, solidarity, teamwork, brotherhood, respect, love and dignity was a return to the narratives of the *usable past* that are established and entrenched in African societies which kept the African village progressing despite difficulties. Because of variations in

interpretations of *Ubuntu* philosophy in different discourses, I made use of Mbigi and Maree's (2005) theory on *Ubuntu* which they coined the Collective Finger Theory (CFT).

Admittedly the *Ubuntu* philosophy had received attention in discourses that were aligned to management (Khoza, 2018; Mbigi, 2005; Thsika, 2014; West, 2014), school leadership (Ntuthuko, 2015) and in social work (Mugumbate & Nyanguru, 2013). A substantial search did not identify any study on *Ubuntu* and educational change and implementation. That presented a challenge because when I wanted to align the theory to an area of curriculum change and implementation I had nowhere to benefit from. What I then did was to dismantle the components that constitute the *Ubuntu* philosophy namely its ethics and epistemology (Mangena, 2018). While the *Ubuntu* ethics, which is centred on moral behaviour, provided me with the work ethics expected in curriculum change and implementation, the *Ubuntu* epistemology is concerned with the meaning, source and the nature of the knowledge; which I therefore used to unpack the nature of the Social Studies curriculum. The epistemology of *Ubuntu* is experiential and as such was related to issues that were correlated to the type and nature of the content which was derived from the society; so as to align it to its definition "the science of all the community it purports to serve" (Kgari-Masondo, 2017, p. 95).

Armed with the work ethics and the source of the knowledge, I then delved deeper into the characteristics of the CFT as advanced by Mbigi (2005) of which he mentions as: respect, dignity, solidarity, compassion and survival. These axioms make up the *Ubuntu* values and each one of them represents the finger of a palm. The five fingers work as a team. None of them can work on its own effectively hence the Shona proverb that "*Chara chimwe hachitswanyi inda* (A thumb, although it is strong, cannot kill aphids alone). Drawing from that feature, I permeated into the tenets which I applied to curriculum change and implementation. As such, I argued that all stakeholders despite their social standing, their wealth and their experiences were insignificant unless integrated. This surmises that their experiences though vital are regarded worthless

unless holistically used together. Curriculum change and implementation is an area where the case for returning to yesterday's known landmarks is vital (Mbigi and Maree, 2005, p. 104).

Fullan (2015) helped me as he focussed on curriculum change. His theory on educational change was the definitive compendium to some aspects of this study on educational change. I drew insights from Fullan (2015) on the choice of teachers as sources of data following his advice that educational change depends on anything teachers prepare and contemplate. Because educational reform is characterised by ambivalence and uncertainty, I turned to Fullan's (2015) contributions on the elements that were impetus to successful implementation of the new curriculum of which he mentions issues linked to the need, vision and clarity of the reform, local characteristics such as the community, teachers and principal just to mention a few. It was these factors that provided the base for the interviews and FGD questions which I used to collect data. From the explanations above, the study shows that a combination of Fullan's (2015) theory and *Ubuntu* philosophy provided an opportunity to examine holistically the barriers that teachers confronted in implementing the Social Studies curriculum in particular and how the challenges could be averted. It was from such an analysis of the *Ubuntu* values and Fullan's (2015) ideas that helped me shape this study in which I had extensively shown their application and relevance.

7.4.   Reflections on Methodology

It was not the tenacity of this thesis to explore the challenges of Social Studies implementation from all stakeholders in Zimbabwe but rather the research was limited to the teachers from six schools in Masvingo Province. Only the data from these schools were considered. Resource constraints could not allow a large scale investigation that could cover the whole country. As such the study was aimed to generate detailed information from the sample that represented the context of the phenomenon without the use of a large team of researchers which could have demanded a colossal budget.

The sample for the study made up of twelve participants was relatively small to cater for all the variables. Though a small sample is the demand of qualitative research (Patton, 2015; Cropley, 2015), there were chances that some participants with useful and relevant information were omitted due to sample size and procedure. However open-ended questions were utilized in interviews to obtain rich data from the selected participants because in a qualitative study, quality information is the life blood of research rather than numbers.

Participants were unwilling to partake in other people's studies and as such posed as hindrances which I overcame by seeking consent from their supervisors and persuaded them to take part. Another limitation of the study emanated from my background. As a Social Studies teacher and teacher educator, I was not value free hence bias distorted the credibility of the study. This is because no one is value free. However, a high degree of neutrality was exercised using reflexivity as a strategy to deal with value laden research. On the other hand, my function as a former Social Studies teacher and later my current practice as a Social Studies teacher educator placed me at an advantage in negotiating access in Masvingo Province since I was familiar with the gate keepers and where to find them. That was not the case with the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education, who took over three months to grant me permission to enter into her schools. Such was the power of oligarchy in use that was embedded in bureaucratic organisation. Patience was key in this instance.

The case study approach was employed. Yin (2015) cautions that the weakness of using a case study lies in that it is inappropriate for making generalisations of the results, which became the limitation of this study. However, the study aimed to develop comprehensive understandings of the teachers' representations of challenges of Social Studies curriculum implementation which is a particular case not concerned with worldwide generalization. As aptly put by Cropley (2015) the actual essence of a case study is particularisation.

7.5.   Scholarly contributions of this research to knowledge

The exceptionality of this study emanates from the fact that it is the only study, as far as I have ascertained to date, that has been undertaken to unpack the challenges of Social Studies curriculum implementation in Africa in general and Zimbabwe in particular using the *Ubuntu philosophy* and Fullan's (2015) theory as lenses and tools for analysis of data on curriculum change and implementation. Instead, the *Ubuntu* philosophy has been prominently used in the leadership and management of the business sector by many researchers (Letseka, 2016; Khoza, 2018). In the context of Zimbabwe, *Ubuntu* philosophy was rejected by the Zimbabwean government in the post-1980 era in favour of scientific socialism (Zvobgo, 1996; Samkange, 1980). Interest in *Ubuntu* only resurfaced after the Nziramasanga Commission of 1999 which gave birth to the new Social Studies curriculum. Thus, none of the studies from my survey of literature in Zimbabwe had applied the *Ubuntu* values on curriculum space. As such, this study as far as I researched, is the first of its kind to sensitise the policy makers that our return to the usable past through "*ubuntulising*" curriculum change and implementation as engrained in African institutions is long overdue.

While several studies (Kanham, 2016; Karim, et al., 2018; Kigwilu & Akala, 2017; Makunja, 2016; Ndhlovu, 2018; Ntumi, 2016; Rahman, et al., 2018; Zindi, 2018) provide critical and meaningful understanding on general challenges faced by teachers in the implementation of a new curriculum, the present study provided important contributions on how the challenges of Social Studies curriculum could be mitigated through the integration of Eurocentric and Afrocentric views. Whence, I claim that we have to return to the African usable past characterised by the *Ubuntu* values in the development and construction of the education system and then merge that with the Eurocentric approach to better our practice and policy. Thus, this study is the resuscitation and repositioning of the *Ubuntu* philosophy alongside other world views on the curriculum space other than merely complementing the Eurocentric values.

Several scholars did research on curriculum change and implementation in Zimbabwean schools of which (Dzimiri & Marimo, 2015; Esau & Mpofu, 2017; Gasva & Moyo, 2017; Mangwaya, et al., 2016; Mtethwa, 2018; Mufanechiya, 2015) concentrated on the teachers' preparedness, incompetence, beliefs, frustrations and resistance without listening to their voices, concerns and their perspectives on how to reduce the challenges they met during implementation of a new curriculum. Thus, the limitation of these studies was that their major thrust was on uncovering the incompetence of teachers blaming them for the failure of curriculum implementation without exploring their voices and listening to their representations of the challenges of curriculum implementation. Limiting the source of the problems of implementation to teachers' competence and getting the perspectives of other stakeholders without consulting the teachers themselves at the grassroots level is educationally myopic. Factors that have impetus to curriculum change and implementation cannot be confined to what others tell us about teachers' incompetence alone. As such, holistic strategies cannot be moored if teachers' voices are not listened to because they are equally important just as are those of policy makers. To bridge this lacuna, the study focused on exploring the teachers' representations of the challenges of Social Studies curriculum implementation in Zimbabwean primary schools. It added on what other's studies had already contributed to the understanding of challenges faced by nations in implementing a new curriculum by roping in the teachers' views and concerns on why curriculum implementation fails despite it being well documented. This study is therefore a departure from the old narratives which blame the teachers whenever the implementation of the curriculum falters.

My extensive exploration of scholarship did not find any study that reports on Zimbabwean teachers' representations of challenges of the Social Studies curriculum implementation during the times of the 2015-2022 curriculum reform. Instead, previous studies in this field have been restricted to unpacking challenges of implementing some learning areas in Zimbabwean schools such as Geography, Food and Nutrition, National Strategic Studies and Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics

(Mtetwa, 2018; Dzimiri & Marimo, 2015; Mandina, 2012). Regional and international studies overlooked the Social Studies curriculum for instance in South Africa, Milondzo and Magongoa's (2018) study was on the National Curriculum Statement while Gudyanga and Jita (2018) concentrated on Physical Sciences teachers. Elsewhere, Leavy and Houtigan's (2018) reported on Mathematics, Rahman et al.,'s (2018) on Languages and Simmons and Maclean's (2018) on Physical Education, hence the Social Studies area received little attention and was hardly noticeable. As such, challenges specific to Social Studies curriculum as perceived and experienced by Social Studies teachers in Zimbabwean schools and beyond remained a grey area for exploration. Hence, this study unpacked the challenges that were specifically related to the Social Studies curriculum in the Zimbabwean context. Researching the teachers' representation of the challenges of curriculum implementation and the mitigation strategies thereof added to the growing body of work on educational change and provide answers to the trenchant question on what policy makers can do to drive the fidelity to the Social Studies curriculum implementation.

The study demonstrated that not only the dominant western paradigm on education reforms should be considered but also other ideas and paradigms such as African ideas hence the idea of the "usable past" which captures traditional African customs, work ethics and beliefs. As such, the study considers and appraises the return to the "usable past" which is in line with the decolonisation of the curriculum that is emphasised globally in education.

7.6.   Implications of the Study

From the findings and the discussion made, the top-down approach lacking the teachers' participation proved to be a powerful source of scathing challenges. As such, policy makers are urged to study how teachers work so as to capture their

representations of the challenges which they should decipher and then attend to. Policy makers have to be alert to identify the forms of representations which are portrayed by teachers in their daily activities to understand their meanings and implications to perfect policies and practices. Neglect of this aspect will widen the gap between policy and implementation.

In view of the findings and the discussion made, the top-down approach was a potent source of trenchant challenges. Therefore, a bottom-up approach is slightly sounder than a top-down approach of which policy makers are urged to consider. I go further and I argue that neither the top-down approach nor the bottom-up approach is purely without any limitations. Thus, a middle ground approach which draws the strengths from Eurocentric and the Afrocentric values which are engrained in the top-down approach and the bottom-up approaches respectively can be tried to polish practice and policy, thereby "*ubuntulising*" curriculum design and implementation by listening to the teachers' representation of challenges. Since the new 2015-2022 Zimbabwean curriculum is milled around the *Ubuntu* philosophy, policy makers and implementers are encouraged to *ubuntulise* curriculum design and implementation to refine practice. "*Ubuntulising*" the curriculum is returning to the usable past so as to hone today's education.

Built from the findings, training for teachers in knowledge and pedagogical skills is considered a critical factor in the implementation of the curriculum (Nevenglosky et al., 2018; Quyen & Khairani, 2017, p. 165). As such, a comprehensive training of implementers is so important that policy constructers have to relook into this area before launch of any new reform. The policy makers had to run away from combined training which is a one-size- fits- all approach and plan the training sessions so that the training package is subject specific and is targeted to defined teachers. This is to promote effective implementation of the new curriculum.

Taking cognisance of the pain and agony experienced by the teachers under the guidance of the arrogant school principals as indicated by interviewee S1, R1 and C1, it is imperative to evaluate leadership styles in schools to create leaders who are sensitive to the psycho-social plight of the teachers whose responsibility is to implement the new changes. This study argues that this could be made possible by altering the attitudes of heads of schools positively through some management training that are drawn from the *Ubuntu* ethics such as sharing views. Teacher evaluation of school heads can work in ensuring humane treatment or aligning it with incentives for school principals annually. Consequently, the government has to direct its effort towards improving relations in schools. School heads are implored to undertake studies that empower them to understand their subordinates, in terms of their needs to promote cooperation from teachers.

From the findings; it was clear that the success of curriculum reform and implementation hinges on the political and socio-economic configuration of any nation. As such curriculum change and implementation should be undertaken if and only if the economy of the nation is strong because introducing new programmes is more expensive than running the old system. The government and the policy makers therefore should take note of when to change and implement policy.

Subject specialisation is one way teachers can share the load of implementing the new curriculum. Consideration on subject specialisation in primary schools is food for thought for the the government of Zimbabwe. Subject specialisation must be extended to primary schools to relieve primary educators of the burden of teaching all learning areas. If this is not done, then some teachers are compelled to instruct in areas in which they are not competent. The policy makers are urged to consider team planning and teaching through sharing Social Studies topics and themes to improve on the implementation aspects.

The policy makers are reminded to acknowledge that the Social Studies content has to be drawn from the community of stakeholders so that it addresses the community realities and can then get matched to the grade level for which it was intended. Use of teachers in the construction of Africanised Social Studies content is useful here though unique. Thus, a review of Social Studies with teachers as developers is therefore important to align the learning area to the demands and dictates of the African community.

The study validated that not only the prevailing western paradigm on education reforms should be considered but also other ideas and paradigms such as African ideas hence the idea of the "usable past" which embraces traditional African customs, work ethics and beliefs. As such, the study considers and appraises the return to the usable past in curriculum design and implementation to ensure educational leaders allow contribution of the community members and not to disregard their cultural aspects since those values are the crucial "usable past" (Kgari-Masondo, 2013, p. 90).

7.7. Recommendations for further research

The thesis has concentrated on the Zimbabwean primary school teachers' representation of the new 2015-2022 Social Studies curriculum implementation with special reference to the challenges and mitigation strategies. As such, the study could not unpack everything embedded in the research topic. Based on the empirical evidence of the current study and the reviewed literature, some aspects demand more scrutiny in further research.

The participants were Social Studies primary trained teachers. Therefore this study confined itself to the primary school teachers' representations leaving a gap in

secondary and tertiary uncovered. Such a study will help to give voice to other educators to understand their representations of challenges as implementers of the suggested curriculum so that proper decisions to hone the implementation process can be considered.

While the top-down approach is limited in that teachers are answerable for the faulty implementation; the bottom-up approach is also habitually branded as grassroots-initiated and devoid of a centralised management and control of which the implementation is then blamed for lack of standards. There is no specific study that has been undertaken on the middle ground approach on curriculum design and dissemination which incorporates both the strength of the top-down and bottom-up approach. Such a study will close that lacuna and improve practise and policy formulation.

Ubuntu philosophy has been used in this research to unpack aspects in curriculum discourse. However, very few and limited studies in Zimbabwe had shown that it had been rejected and it has only resurfaced recently as a philosophical base underpinning Zimbabwean education. No study, in the Zimbabwean context has been taken to explore *Ubuntu's* existence in the textbooks that are in use in primary schools. Thus, a study on textbook analysis can also be done to analyse how *Ubuntu* is represented in the Zimbabwean education system. That understanding can help policy makers to avail textbooks that match their aspirations and vision as a nation.

A qualitative approach was adopted in this study on a small scale, to understand the teachers' representations of the challenges of the Social Studies curriculum implementation and the mitigation strategies thereof. A large-scale investigation using either the quantitative approach or the mixed method approach could possibly be undertaken to get a better understanding of the teachers' representations of the

challenges and the mitigation strategies. Such evidence can help policy makers evaluate the challenges and the mitigation strategies at national level.

7.8.   Conclusion

The aim of this study was to unravel the teachers' representation of the Social Studies curriculum implementation focusing on the challenges and mitigation strategies using the *Ubuntu* philosophy and Fullan's (2015) theory on educational reforms. The study demonstrates that African values that have been devastated by colonialism could be rehabilitated as it is a beautiful thread that can be woven into practical and scholarly strands that address the dehumanisation and erosion of African institutions in the construction of knowledge (Zamora, 1997). As explained by Letseka (2016) the *Ubuntu* philosophy of education draws from concerns, experiences and aspirations of Africans and how they construct knowledge.

This study demonstrates the need to adopt and reconnect the "usable past" in curriculum design and implementation. The idea of the "usable past" is essentially concerned with the knowledge systems of African societies located in their past which captures traditional African work ethics and values such as participation, sharing, compassion, love, respect and dignity to inform the present in curriculum design and implementation (Kgari-Masondo, 2013, p. 73; Stump, 2013, p. 280). The *Ubuntu* values and work ethics cherished in the African past can be employed to construe the present educational reform which is relevant because understanding African values and practices on their approach to community tasks such as curriculum reform will give insights on the approach and strategies that can be adopted in curriculum design and implementation. This study proves that the past is both usable and relevant to the present and thus argues that the "usable past" is to revive the past of African culture and beliefs for progress in the educational circles because the usable past is the bearer

and realiser of human progress since it is a public empowering tool (Zamora, 1997, p. 15). Our past is our treasure from which our today is shaped and on which our tomorrow rests.

Powered by both the Eurocentric and Afrocentric views, I had the impression that engagement of *Ubuntu* values and Fullan's (2015) ideas in the curriculum reforms presented an opportunity to draw guidance and wisdom from these world views on how best to tackle educational changes. Using the CFT and the theory by Fullan (2015), I managed to construct the teachers' narratives of their concerns as change agents which stand as their representations of the challenges of Social Studies curriculum implementation and the mitigation strategies they envisaged. Through an analysis of the teachers' verbal representations, this study attempted to construe the nature of challenges teachers met during the implementation of the new Social Studies curriculum and why the teachers' represented the challenges the way they did. The findings showed that change agents like teachers are key players in the implementation of an educational endeavour but their voices which constitute their contributions had been silent. I argue that the neglect of the teachers' voice in curriculum design and implementation creates rough terrains in the implementation journey that inhibit effective curriculum implementation. Therefore, unless the teachers' voices are listened to, these challenges will remain. As such, dissonance between what the policy makers intends to relay and what actually happens in classrooms during curriculum implementation will widen.

I argue that the *Ubuntu* values of communalism, compassion, participation, survival, solidarity, love, respect and dignity are cornerstones for embracing the teachers' concerns. Fidelity to curriculum implementation as seen from the *Ubuntu* lens depends on teamwork in which all these values are practised. Their application in a modern education system, their relevance in times of difficulties and opportunities during the changing period presents any country considering educational change with an ample

chance for the improvement of practice and policy in schools. The major values of *Ubuntu* can illuminate how best education systems can draw lessons from African epistemology, thereby deconstructing and decolonising the curriculum that had been diluted instead of being strengthened by Eurocentric views.

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Turnitin Report

Teachers' representations of the implementation of the Zimbabwean Social Studies 2015-2022 curriculum: Challenges and mitigation strategies

ORIGINALITY REPORT

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3	researchspace.ukzn.ac.za Internet Source	<%1
4	mafiadoc.com Internet Source	<%1
5	Submitted to University of KwaZulu-Natal Student Paper	<%1
6	Submitted to Midlands State University Student Paper	<%1
7	www.iier.org.au Internet Source	<%1
8	Submitted to International Islamic University Malaysia Student Paper	<%1

Appendix A: Ethical clearance approval

UNIVERSITY OF ™
KWAZULU-NATAL

INYUVESI
YAKWAZULU-NATALI

5September 2018

Mr Pfuural Chimbunde 217039423
Scool of Education
Howard College Campus

Dear Mr Chimbunde

Protocol reference number: HSS/0855/018D
Project title: Teachers' representations of the implementation of the Zimbabwean Social Science 2015-2022 curriculum: Challenges and mitigation strategies

Full Approval – Expedited Application

In response to your application received 3 July 2018, the Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee has considered the abovementioned application and the protocol has 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

....
Professor Shenuka Singh (Chair)
Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committe

/pm

cc Supervisor: Dr MC Kgari-Masondo
cc. Academic Leader Research: Dr SB Khoza
cc. School Administrator: Ms Sheryl Jeenarain

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 / snymanm@ukzn.ac.za / mohunp@ukzn.ac.za
Website: www.ukzn.ac.za

1910 - 2010
100 YEARS OF ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

Founding Campuses: ▬ Edgewood ▬ Howard College ▬ Medical School ▬ Pietermaritzburg ▬ Westville

Appendix B Permanent Secretary Permission

All communications should be addressed toT.
Telephone: 799914 and 705153
Telegraphic address : "EDUCATION"
Fax: 791923

ZIMBABWE

Reference: C/426/3 Masvingo
Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education
P.O Box CY 121
Causeway
Harare

30 August 2018

Pfuurai Chimbunde
Seke Teacher's College
P O Box Sk 41
Seke

RE: PERMISSION TO CARRY OUT RESEARCH IN MASVINGO PROVINCE:
MASVINGO DISTRICT: ▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓
SCHOOLS; MWENEZI DISTRICT: ▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓ **PRIMARY**
SCHOOLS; CHIVI DISTRICT: ▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓ **SCHOOLS.**

Reference is made to your application to carry out a research at the above mentioned schools in Masvingo Province on the research title:

"TEACHERS REPRESENTATIONS OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE
ZIMBABWEAN SOCIAL STUDIES 2015-2022 CURRICULUM: CHALLENGES
AND MITIGATION STRATEGIES"

Permission is hereby granted. However, you are required to liaise with the Provincial Education Director Masvingo Province, who is responsible for the schools which you want to involve in your research. You should ensure that your research work does not disrupt the normal operations of the schools. You are required to seek consent of the parents/guardians of all learners who will be involved in the research.
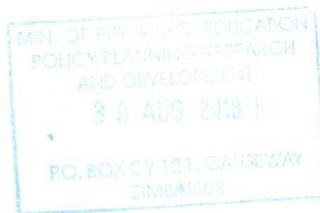
You are required to provide a copy of your presentation and a report of what transpired to the Secretary for Primary and Secondary Education.

E. Chinyowa
Acting Director
FOR: SECRETARY FOR PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION
cc: PED – Masvingo

Appendix C Provincial Education Director Permission

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

ZIMBABWE

Ministry of Primary and Secondary
Education
P. O Box 89
Masvingo

09 October 2018

Pfuurai Chimbunde
Seke Teacher's College
P.O. Box SK 41
Seke

RE: PERMISSION TO CARRY OUT RESEARCH IN MASVINGO PROVINCE: MASVINGO DISTRICT: ▄▄▄▄▄▄▄▄▄▄▄▄▄▄▄▄▄ **PRIMARY SCHOOLS; MWENEZI DISTRICT:** ▄▄▄▄▄▄▄▄▄▄▄ **SCHOOLS; CHIVI DISTRICT:** ▄▄▄▄▄ **SCHOOL.**

Reference is made to your application to carry out a research at the above mentioned schools in Masvingo, Mwenezi and Chivi Districts on the research title:

"TEACHERS REPRESENTATIONS OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ZIMBABWEAN SOCIAL STUDIES 2015-2022 CURRICULUM: CHALLENGES AND MITIGATION STRATEGIES."

Please be advised that the Secretary for Primary and Secondary Education has granted permission to carry out your research.

You are also advised to liaise with the District Schools Inspector who is responsible for the schools which are part of the sample for your research.

Z. M. Chitiga
Provincial Education Director
MASVINGO PROVINCE
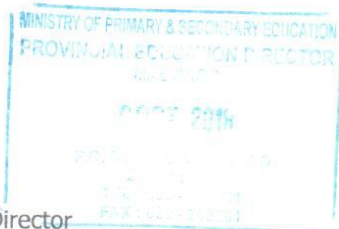
Appendix D: Informed consent letter

Social Sciences, College of Humanities,
University of KwaZulu-Natal,
Edgewood Campus,

Dear Participant

INFORMED CONSENT LETTER

My name is Pfuurai Chimbunde; I am a PhD candidate studying at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Edgewood campus, South Africa.

I am interested in learning about "**Teachers' representations of the implementation of the Zimbabwean Social Studies 2015-2022 curriculum: Challenges and mitigation strategies."** I am studying cases from Masvingo Province. Your school is one of my case studies. To gather the information, I am interested in asking you some questions.

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 challenges teachers are facing in the implementation of the Heritage-Social Studies curriculum and the mitigation strategies which can be employed to mitigate the challenges.
- Your involvement is purely for academic purposes only, and there are no financial benefits involved.
- The results of the study will be released in the form of a thesis handed in to the College of Education at the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

- The results of the study will also be made available to you in the form of a hard or electronic copy, depending on your preference. Once the study is published, you will be made informed of this occurrence and will be given access to the published article.
- If you are willing to be interviewed, 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		

I can be contacted at:
Email: chimbundep@gmail.com
Cell: +263 773 262 363

My supervisor is Dr M.C Kgari-Masondo who is located at the School of Social Sciences, Edgewood Campus of the University of KwaZulu-Natal.
Contact details: email: Kgarimasondo@ukzn.ac.za   Phone number: 031 260 3454

You may also contact the Research Office:
University of KwaZulu-Natal
Research Ethics Offices: HSSREC
Private Bag x54001
Durban, 4000
Telephone +2731 260 3587
Email: ximbap@ukzn.ac.za / HssrecHumanities@ukzn.ac.za
Thank you for your contribution to this research.

DECLARATION

I………………………………………………………………………… (Full names of participant) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project, and I consent to participating in the research project.

I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time, should I so desire.

SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT   DATE

…………………………………….   …………………………………..

APPENDIX E: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Title: Teachers' representations of the implementation of the Zimbabwean Social Studies 2015-2022 curriculum: Challenges and mitigation strategies.

Section A: Biographical Information

May you introduce yourself (No name)

_____

Date of Interview _____   Gender_____
Age_____

Which subjects do you teach

_____?

For how long have you been teaching?

_____

Section B: Attitudes and Vision of the Social Studies innovations of implementers

1. 1. In your view explain what Social Studies curriculum is all about:
   A. Old Social Studies
   B. New Social Studies
2. Are you conscious of the Social Studies changes in the updated curriculum? What are the changes that occurred due to the new Social Studies curriculum?
3. In general what do think of this curricular change?
4. Explain the process that was followed in curriculum change of Social Studies
5. How were teachers involved in the initial stage of curriculum change and later stage?
6. Was there any effort made to robe in your views in deciding to adapt and adopt the Social Studies   curriculum?
7. How did that involvement/ non-involvement impact on your teaching of Social Studies?
8. Explain the positive and negative side of the implementation of the new Social Studies curriculum?

Section C: Resources and facilities

1. Explain the implementation process of the Social Studies curriculum?
2. Which resources and facilities are required in the new Social Studies curriculum?
3. Are the above resources and facilities available at your school?

4. How are these resources and facilities affecting your teaching of the Social Studies discipline?
5. From your own point of view, which resources and facilities can enhance the fidelity of Social Studies implementation?

Section D: Capabilities of implementers

1. Were you trained as a Social Studies teacher?

2. Did you receive any training before, during and after the adaption and adoption of the new Social Studies curriculum?

3. Do you see any challenges of handling the new changes emanating from the training or training deficit?

Section E: Provision of management support

1. How is the school management team involved in the implementation of the new curriculum change?

2. How do they assist in the Social Studies implementation?

3. What challenges are "management related" that impede your Social Studies teaching?

4. What other challenges do you face in the implementation of the Social Studies curriculum?

Section F: Mitigation Strategies

1. What strategies do/would you employ to lessen the challenges you have mentioned?

2. Given the chance to implement another new curriculum, how would you go about it?

3. What is your general overview of the implementation of the new curriculum?

FOCUS GROUP SCHEDULE

Title: **Teachers' representations of the implementation of the Zimbabwean Social Studies 2015-2022 curriculum: Challenges and mitigation strategies.**

 Section A: Introductory remarks

You are all welcome to this discussion meeting. I am Pfuurai Chimbunde Lecturer at Seke Teachers College and currently enrolled with the University of KwaZulu- Natal as a PhD. student. May you kindly assist in my research work by participating fully and freely during this discussion on the challenges teachers are facing in the implementation of Social Studies curriculum and the strategies that can be taken to lessen these challenges. I will also be writing brief notes during the discussion. Please you need to express your opinions freely, openly and honestly. All the information given and collected from this discussion will be treated with great care and utmost confidentiality. Participation is voluntary. If you are, therefore, agreeable to participate in the discussion, kindly read and sign the attached consent letter.

Topic for discussion: Teachers' representations of challenges and mitigation strategies of the implementation of the Social Studies curriculum.

Thank you in advance for your co-operation and voluntary participation.

Section B: Open questions

1. Can we summarise the challenges we are facing in the implementation of the Social Studies curriculum.

2. Now looking at each of these challenges, can we suggest possible solutions to avert them?

 a) The vision and decision making in curriculum planning
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

b) Resources and facilities

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

c) Training for implementers

_____
_____
_____
_____

d) Feedback, communication and management support

_____
_____
_____
_____

e) Partnership (Teamwork)

_____
_____
_____
_____

f) Others

_____
_____

Thank you very much for participating in this discussion as well as sharing your views and ideas on this topic. May God bless you all?

OBSERVATION SCHEDULE

The following issues will be observed:

1. The socio-economic situation (status) of the schools

2. Availability of a standard classroom against the class enrolments

3. Physical location and surroundings that either inhibit or enhance the learning of Social Studies curriculum

4. Availability of learning centres with learning media meant for Social studies

   subject

5. Availability of textbooks and other instructional resources that promote the

   learning of the subject.

6. Any relevant information that enhances learning of the subject.