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**FACULTY OF EDUCATION**

**DEPARTMENT OF APPLIED EDUCATION**

**Factors that lead to high failure rate in history subject in selected schools in**

**Mberengwa district**

**By**

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*A research project submitted to the department of applied education in the partial fulfillment of requirements of the Bachelor of Education Honours in history*

**GWERU,ZIMBABWE**

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**MIDLANDS STATE UNIVERSITY**  
**FACULTY OF APPLIED EDUCATION**  
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**APPROVAL FORM**

The undersigned certify that they have read and recommended to Midlands State University

For acceptance a research project entitled

Factors that lead to high failure rate in history subject at ordinary level in Mberengwa district.

A research project submitted to the department of Applied Education

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In partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Bachelor of Education Honours in History

Supervisor.....Date.....

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## **DECLARATION**

I declare that the work presented in the form of this project is my own work. All sources I have used have been indicated and acknowledged as reference.

## **ABSTRACT**

This study attempted to look at factors that lead to high failure rate in history subject at Ordinary level in Mberengwa district. The study centered on main reasons why pupils perform badly in History subject. Reasons that gave rise to the research are ,lack of resources in rural based schools ,negative attitude toward learning, lack of specialist teachers are some of factors that lead to high failure rate in history subject. Descriptive survey was used as a research design. Data was collected using questionnaire and interviews from history teachers, heads of history department, school heads. The size of the sample comprises of five school teachers, three heads of department, two school heads and forty students. The researcher established that there was high failure rate in history subject due to negative attitudes, shortage of resources, unqualified teachers, and unavailability of national school syllabus and absences of feedback from ZIMSEC. The researcher recommended that parents and schools should cultivate positive attitudes, curriculum planners should design a national syllabus and feedback should be issued to schools and seminars and workshops to be done at cluster level.

**RELEASE FORM**

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**DISSERTATION TITLE:** FACTORS THAT LEAD TO HIGH FAILURE RATE IN HISTORY SUBJECT AT ORDINARY LEVEL.

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**AUTHOR'S STATEMENT**

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## **DEDICATION**

This dissertation is dedicated to my parents, husband Brighton Nyika and my beloved sisters Nyasha and Nyardzai

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## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **THE PROBLEM AND ITS CONTEXT**

#### **1.1 Introduction**

This chapter looked at factors that lead to the high failure rate in history subject at ordinary level in selected schools in Mberengwa. The present chapter looked at background of the study; It describes the nature and context of the research problem, the objectives of the research questions, significance of the study, limitation, delimitations of the study, also definition of terms, as well as summary of the chapter.

#### **1.2 Background of the Study**

Ordinary Level Examinations constitute a very significant component of Zimbabwe's education process as they determine the future employment prospects of the learners (Chikowo, 2013). In spite of the importance of the Ordinary Level to Zimbabwe's education system the likelihood of high failure rate especial in rural secondary schools is a great cause for concern. This has not been an exception at Chemimwe and Chabwira Secondary Schools where there is a high failure rate of 'O' level History students. Lumphala (2012:22) postulates that whilst the national average pass rate at 'O' level since 1998 stands at 14.5%, the average of most rural districts is at 4.2%.

Chiwore (2010:16) argues that many reasons have been put forward to explain this high failure rate by a number of experts and stakeholders. The major reason is that the colonial era was done

on white supremacy, racial segregation and oppression of the majority African population by the white minority. The first ten years of independence were done to rectifying the social inequities brought by the former colonial era. The new government was worked to the creation of a socialist state which was controlled by the principles of social justice and equality. Education was declared a human right. It was countable as a potential tool for social and economic changes. As a result, the formal sector of education, system was expanded to high levels.

Lack of facilities and resources in the rural schools are always raised where there is serious high failure at these schools, Karande and Kulami( 2008). As Ralenala (2012) observes rural schools often serve disadvantaged learners who are from families that are not educationally supportive. According to Saiduddin (2011) lack of equitable distribution of social amenities within urban and rural areas is the main reason for poor performance of pupils from rural secondary schools. Harris (2013) attributes poor performance of rural secondary pupils to lack of parental support. Harris (2013) argues there is a correlation between parental support in homework activities and the performance of pupils. Learner with parental support in school work achieve better than those without parental support even if those without parental support had a higher intelligent capacity. Cooper (2009) also found out that there was a positive correlation between high achievement and quality time spent on homework.

Timothy (2010) suggest that the amount of instructional time affected learner performance and ignoring the fact results is less informative accountability system and lost opportunities for learning outcomes. Ndoro (2012) claims that the major cause of high failure rate in Zimbabwe rural secondary schools is lack of facilities.

Many scholars for example Karande and Kulami (2008) have cited a range of factors that can lead to high failure rate of history subject for example lack of resource in rural based schools .Ndoro (2012) argues that the major causes of high failure rate in Zimbabwean secondary schools include lack of funds to purchase necessary equipment especially textbooks, stationary, in some cases in rural areas they do not have national history syllabus hence this contributes to the high failure rate. In addition to the above enough time to study since some of learners come from far distance homes..Karande and kulami (2008) says that lack of equitable distribution of social amenities within urban and rural areas is the greatest cause of poor performance

Avital (2012) also open that attitude of rural pupils towards the school and its benefits negatively contributed towards their commitment to school work. A study by Ndebele (2008) in Plumtree district in Western Zimbabwe found that most secondary pupils thought it was better to cross either the Botswana or South African borders to come back in a few months driving good cars than concentrating on their education. This kind of negative attitude minimizes attention and dedication to academic work, (Ndebele). Bur master (2009) concurs that where pupils had no reason to be at school they frequently absented themselves from lessons to do other things they thought would help them in life like income generating activities. In view of the above, this study seeks to investigate the factors that lead to high failure rate in history subject at ordinary level in selected schools in Mberengwa

### **1.3 Statement of the problem**

Concern has been raised over the factors that lead to high failure rate in history subject at O level in Mberengwa Secondary Schools. The researcher also noted that history subject was not taken

seriously as compared to other subjects. This was supported by pupil's absenteeism from history lessons, they do exercises and tests. History is one of the core subjects in Zimbabwe which needs to be done so well but the situation is different so it is necessary to investigate factors which lead to high failure rate in history at ordinary level.

#### **1.4. Research questions**

The research was guided by the following main research question

##### **1.4.1 Main Research Question**

What are the factors which lead to high failure rate in history at Ordinary level?

##### **Sub research question**

**1.4.2** Which challenges are being faced in the teaching and learning of history?

**1.4.3** What are possible solutions to the high failure rate of history?

**1.4.4** What is the pass rate in history between 2014 and 2016?

#### **1.5 Significance of the study**

The research would be important to various stakeholders in the education sectors. It is believed that the researcher would bring possible solutions to the factors which lead to high failure rate in history ordinary level. By so doing pass rate would improve. The research would be useful to learners since they would know the importance of history, thereby increase in pass rate in history

subject at ordinary level. The research would be of great importance to teachers as it would help them with a clue on how to improve pass rate and it will also help since it would shade light on the best teaching methods that can be used, weakness of learners and teachers would be supplied with useful resources like text book. By so doing the pass rate would increase .UNESCO (2001) is of the view that the teacher are the implementer of the curriculum reforms .Hence the research would be useful to teachers to boost pass rate .The ministry of education would also benefit since they would be able to establish factors that lead to high failure rate in history at ordinary level and establish solutions. By so doing this would improve pass rate of history country wide since they would have solutions to the problems

#### **1.6 limitations of the study**

Limitations or weakness of the study is that it focused on the challenges of high failure rate at ordinary level history students at two schools in Mberengwa which may not necessarily represent the wide spectrum of the problems in rural schools in Zimbabwe .More so, It also covers one subject at O level which is history .In this case it may not represent problems encountered in other subjects at Ordinary Level.

#### **1.7. Delimitations**

This research was confined to the pass rate of O level students in selected schools in Mberengwa district only .This was meant to ensure a comprehensive analysis due to limited time in conducting this research.

#### **1.8Definition of terms**

- History – According to Kris (2013) history is the study of human past as it is described in written documents left by human beings.
- Performance- The accomplishment of a given task measured against present known standards of accuracy, completeness, cost and spread.
- Challenges –it refers to difficulties in a job or undertaking that is stimulating to one engaged in it.

### **1.9 Assumption of the Study**

The research was carried out on the assumption that

- There are factors which affect pass rate in History subject at O level.
- There can also be solution to the challenges faced in the teaching and learning of History.

### **1.10 Summary**

The chapter focused on background of the study, statement of the problem, research questions and significance of the study, Limitations, delimitation, definition of terms, assumptions were also discussed. From background, the researcher discussed some challenges which were encountered in the teaching and learning of history. Factors which affect pass rate in history at ordinary level found within the school environment and home environment although factors in the school environment mostly influence pass rate of pupils in school.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

The researcher focuses on written documents related to the factors which lead to high failure rate in history subject at ordinary level .It also focused on the factors which include challenges faced in teaching and learning of history and its possible solutions

#### **2.2 Challenges faced in teaching and learning of history**

##### **2.21 Shortage of resources**

Ndoro (2012) propose that the main causes of high failure rate in Zimbabwe rural secondary schools include shortage of well trained teachers ,inadequate teaching facilities ,lack of funds to purchase necessary equipment ,poor quality text books ,large classes ,poor motivated teachers, lack of laboratories and libraries ,incessant transfer of teachers and lack of proper classrooms .The schools had no copies for students .This means that for students to carry out their research work it becomes a night mare. Vundla (2012) say that textbook and other teaching and learning equipment are significant for high performance of pupil. He further concurs that high failure rate in secondary schools was caused by inadequate teaching facilities and lack of funds .Unavailability of library and internet facilities thereby worsening learner's attitude towards reading and the development of literacy skills .It is difficult for teachers and students to research homework and assignments due to the unavailability of library and internet facilities. Haris (2013) argues that lack of basic facilities and poor infrastructure amongst the contributing factors that influence student's performance.

### **2.2.2 lack of self efficacy and ability**

According to the education planning and research division report (2009) negative attitude towards learning are attributed to lack of basic skills in learning, weak mastery of language skills and language skills and poor self-efficacy that influence the success or failure of the students. The reports assert that self –efficacy is the belief that one possesses the capabilities to organize, plan and carrying out the course of action requires managing situation at hand. This belief is described as determinants of how people think behavior and feels. Hence a handful of research findings will indicate that self-efficacy influence academic achievements and motivation of students.

Arguing o a similar grounds, Anderson (2013) found that stressful life could significantly lead to anxiety and depression which could results in poor academic performance .Anderson (2013) proclaim that a study by Yasn and Dzulkufic, with the objectives to examine the level of psychological problem between low and high achieving revealing that there were indeed significant difference between low and high achieving students

### **2.2.3 Shortage of Qualified teachers**

Vundla (2012) points out that the reason why pupils in rural areas failed included largely a shortage of trained teachers amongst other causes. In rural schools history is being taught by unqualified teachers. It surfaced that schools had a trend of engaging untrained teachers thereby making it difficult for students to grasp the concept taught because of varying methodologies employed by different educators. Ndhlela (2008) suggest that a chain of untrained teachers have since replaced those on maternity and study leave and not academically qualified to teach.

### **2.2.4 Lack of Streaming**



It is difficult for teachers to execute their duties appropriately because students were not streamed when enrolment exercise was conducted. It seems that the schools were taking students with thirty-six units who have less potential to pass O level history .Harlem (2013) argues that schools authorities such as churches, government and private owned schools spell high expectation in pass rate to school heads, as a result they stream pupil in order to meet high demands for academic excellence that are imposed on them. On the contrary Chinyoka conclude that streaming is beneficial because students are placed in class in which they are working at a level and pace judged to be appropriate for the entire group. Lee (2015) suggests that streaming encourages healthy competition among students. Terwel (2014) also says that streaming promotes equality by recognizing and meeting student's different needs. By so doing the reason why O level history performance is always below 50%. The teacher may not be able to spent time on the slow learners and concentrate much more of the fast learners

### **2.2.5 Lack of parental cooperation**

There are challenges that students lack parental guidance on the importance of studying history and when they are doing their homework .Harris (2013) suggest that poor performance to lack of parental support .He argues that there is a correlation between parental support in homework activities and performance of pupils. Lumps den (2011) say that children home shapes the initial constellation of attitude they develop towards learning. He further says that when parents nurture their children's natural curiosity about the world by welcoming their questions , encouraging exploration and familiarizing them with resources that can enlarge their world they are giving their children the message that learning is worthwhile .Diaz (2010) claims that home environment and early experiences help to create curiosity ,help building self-efficacy and shape the individual

behavior factors like parents' expectation ,home environment ,discipline and parents involvement do affect students achievement.

More so in rural areas lack of public and private transportation in rural areas and the distance between home, work and school also prevented parents from becoming more involved in schools activities hence poor rural parents doesn't take education seriously .Bush (2010) is of the view that this requires degree of attention as parents academic aspiration for the students influence their children's academic achievement.

Harris (2013) attributes that poor performance to lack of parental support .He further stipulates that there is correlation between parental support in homework activities and performance of pupils. To ensure students positive –self –concept, parent need to create an atmosphere where students need to create an atmosphere where students love learning and providing necessities.

### **2.2.6 Cultural background / Socio-economic factors**

Bush (2012) pointed out that socio-economic factors have also been Inco-operated into challenges. There is correlation between poverty and cognitive development. Socio –economic factors play the important role in influencing academic achievement in both primary and secondary schools .Harris (2013) is of the view that family status on economic factors has an impact on the students aspiration, motivation, self-efficacy and involvement in co-curriculum activities .Ostein and Levin (2011) has examine the relationship between family income and schooling performance which the findings indicate that students from well provided family perform better

Harris (2013) notes that the impact of poverty on low academic achievement. The large size of the family especially where the family income limited ,also associated with lower academic

achievement which could be due to the availability of resources .Costello (2010) argues that 14% of the year students in a study that involved 1470 children and poor academic associated with social factors. Lavental and Gunn (2011) argues that learners from the economically disadvantaged families usually resides poor neighborhood.

### **2.2.7 Unavailability of history syllabus**

Unavailability of national history syllabus also causes high failure rate as it supported by Chikonyora (2014) suggest that effective and fruitful learning can only take place if curriculum implementers are guided by detailed syllabus. Mudzanire and Mazaruse (2013) stated that most teachers are of the opinion that the national learning and assessment guide as is expected of a normal syllabus .This shows that there is no effective learning without a detailed syllabus.

### **2.2.8 Absence from Seminars and Workshops**

Hodgkin son, Johnson and Schwarz (2010) portrays that workshops influence strategy development of organization by equipping individuals with current information on running the affairs of their portfolios .Teachers should be in- service training. They should attend seminars with other teachers and examiners so that they will know how to teach students how to answer question properly .Students supposed to have their seminars that will help to get skills of knowing how to answer examination questions.

### **2.2.9 Lack of computers**

The importance of technology in schools is another factors which lower performance in rural schools .According to Theobald (2015) technology can enhance the amount of information that students might be exposed to and can be real help in the extent to which can facilitate inquiring on the part of students and teachers .The importance of technology in the teaching and learning of

history cannot be over emphasized as technology become more and more a part of each of our live. Unfortunately, in some rural schools still find it hard to provide the latest technological trends that students need to excel in schools.

### **2.3 Possible solution to the high failure rate in history**

#### **2.3.1 Parents and teachers should cultivate positive attitude towards learning students**

Parents and teachers should play a prominent role in the capabilities development and academic achievements of the students. Family marks the beginning of children's leaning habit pattern and cultures. Lumps den (2013) says that children's home environment shapes the initially constellation attitude they develop towards learning when parents raised their children's natural curiosity about learning by welcoming and familiarizing them with resources that can be enlarge their world. Parental guidance is thus very crucial in cultivation the right culture amongst the students.

Apart from family support teachers and schools play a significant role in academic achievement of students. Teachers should foster positive relationships with their students create classroom environments, more conducive to learning and meet student's developmental, emotional and academic needs. Tylor (2010) suggest that teachers who experiences close relationship with students reported that their students were less likely to avoid school, appeared more-self directed ,more co-operative and more engaged in learning. Curbry and Abry(2014) pointed out that students reported liking school more and experiencing less loneliness if they had close relationship with teachers .McCormick and O Cornor (2014) viewed that teacher –students closeness linked to gains in reading achievement ,while teacher-students conflict related to lower levels of reading achievement .Factors associating with schools like teachers, relationship

between school and parents or the community have impact in the cultivation of knowledge – seeking culture which resulting in overall academic performance.

Kigotho (2009) articulates that as students spent most of their time everyday life at school apart from home, therefore school passes influence moulding students personality as the socialization process occurs mostly in schools. Factors associating with schools like teachers, relationship and parents or the community have an impact in the cultivating of knowledge –seeking culture which resulting in overall academic performance

### **2.3.2 National syllabus should be distributed to schools**

Zimsec should provide detailed syllabus of history to school. Gondo( 2008) indicated that without a detailed syllabus ,there cannot be any meaningful teaching and learning at whatever level. This means that absence of national school syllabus impact heavily in the content being taught .By so doing effective and fruitful learning can only take place if curriculum implementers are guided by a detailed syllabus .therefore Zimsec must provide marking guides.

### **2.3.3Zimsec Feedback to school**

Feedback is important in the teaching and learning process as teachers and learners can easily identify their area of weakness so that correct measures could be taken .Mudzanire and Mazaruse (2013) found that teachers were worried to as why Zimsec is not sending any feedback to the performance of learners .Dennis (2009) are of the view that performance feedback is important to any organization since by providing feedback errors will be corrected and performance improved ,Hence ,Zimsec should provide feedback so as to improve performance

## Summary

This chapter looked on literature related to the study .The factors that affect pass rate at ordinary level history was highlighted which include shortage of resources, unavailability of history syllabus, lack of streaming, lack of parental cooperation, cultural background .Also the possible solution were highlighted which are parents and teachers should cultivate positive attitude towards learning students, national syllabus should be distributed, Zimsec should bring feedback to schools. The next chapter will dwell on research methodologies

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGIES**

#### **3.1. Introduction**

Chapter three describes with methodology aspect that was used during the study which includes research designs, population, sample and sampling procedures, instrumentation, data collection procedures and data analysis plan. The chapter ended with a summary

#### **3.2. Research Design**

This study used the descriptive survey design. Macmillan and Schumacher (2010) defines that the research design as a plan for collecting subjects, research site and data collection procedures to answer research questions .Cohen and Manion (2007) define research designs as a plan or strategy employed to conduct a research project. Descriptive survey is a study designed to depict the participation in an accurate way. The researcher made use of descriptive survey because it provide a high level as general capability in representing a large population .However the descriptive survey has its disadvantages because the questions that bear controversies may not be precisely answered by the participant because of the probably difficulty of recalling the information related to them.

### **3.3. Population**

Fox and Bayat (2007) say that population is a group of individuals, events on subject that share common characteristics and represent the whole or sum total of case involved in study. Gay and Arason (2000) define population as a group that attracts the researcher's interest and the group which the researcher would like the results of the study to be generalized. This means population refers to two school heads, five history teachers, three heads of history department and forty O level history students at Chemimwe and Chabwira schools

### **3.4. Sample**

Chiromo (2006) defines sample as a smaller group or subset of the population .Thakur (2012) says sample is a portion or subset of total population. Barring and Stimpson (2012) describe that sample helps in getting results quicker and accurate than the involvement of whole population .Sampling is used since getting information from all subject is impossible .The researcher make use of sampling since it is expensive and time consuming to use the whole population. The sample size in this study comprised of fifty participant .These were two school heads ,five history teacher ,three heads of department and forty O level students.

#### **3.4.1 Sampling Procedures**

Sampling procedures according to Sidhu (2014) are ways of selecting a small number of subjects from population. According to Chiromo (2006) sampling procedure is a process of taking subset of the subjects that is representative of the entire population. Stratified random sampling was used in selecting pupils. Students were grouped according to ability and thereafter random sampling was used in selecting pupils .Students were grouped according to ability and thereafter random



sampling was used using hat system to pick 40 pupils, three head of history department, two school heads and five history teachers .Data obtained will represent the whole population and findings will be generalized to al form four pupils in Mberengwa. This the gives a total of 50 respondents

### **3.5. Research instruments**

Fox and Bayat (2007) say that a research instruments as data gathering device used solicit data for use in a research study .Flor (2009) describes research instruments as the tools that are used to obtain responses from respondents. The researcher made use of questionnaire and interview.

### **3.5 . Questionnaire**

According to Revilla (2015) questionnaire is a research instrument consisting of a series of questions and other prompts for the purpose of gathering information from respondents. Saris(2014) say questionnaire is a structured form either written or printed ,consists of a formalized set of question designed to collect information on some subject or subjects from one or more respondents .In this research questionnaire were used with history teachers and form four pupils as respondents. The questionnaire included closed-ended questions which enable the respondents to provide a tick on space provided. Open –ended questions which allowed respondent to say out their view were also included .The close-ended questions had an advantage that the respondents were simply choosing an appropriate answer from given ones. Mellenbergn (2008) say questionnaire are also sharply limited by the fact that respondents must be able to read

the questions and respond to them .Saccuzzo( 2009) suggests that questionnaire may give the freedom to respond in private ,in depth and with honesty. In this study, both teachers and students were very free to express their views pertaining factors that lead to high failure rate in history subject at ordinary level .In this research, questionnaire were administered to O level history students at two schools .The researcher managed to gather a lot of information and explain some of the concept which were not clear.

### **3.5.2 Interview guide**

In this study, interview were used to the history teachers and headmasters because much of the information required from this group of respondents required much explanation .Chisi (2010) says that a structured interview has question which are arranged before ,which may be open ended with research insisting for clarification. According to Bless and Smith (2013) the advantage of an interview schedule is that the researcher has the chance and flexibility to pursue a point or elaborate and redefine a response if it appears in complete or ambiguous .The researcher made use of face to face interviews. However, much attention is required for a good interview .According to Masudur and Ornov (2014) indicates that time constrain is one of the major limitation of the interview process. However, the researcher countered this by making an appointment with the participants.

### **3.6. Data collection Procedures**

Fox and Bayat( 2007) postitulates that ethics in research involve getting informed consent of those who are going to be interviewed, questioned ,observed or from who material are taken. In this research, the researcher sought permission from the Ministry of Primary and Secondary

Education to get permission to carry out research in Mberengwa district in selected schools. Questionnaires were given to the respondents by researcher. Interviews were conducted with key personality. The questionnaires were hand delivered to the respondents so that they reached the targeted respondents to make sure them of anonymity and confidentiality. Descombe (2009) say that many people for sake of scientific progress ,are prepared to divulge information of a private nature on condition that their names are not mentioned .In this research anonymity was very important. The researcher sought informed consent so that respondents gave out their views freely.

### **3.7. Data analysis and Presentation**

According to Cohen et al ( 2007) data analysis means the process of simplification of data in order to make it meaningful and comprehensive. This means that researcher had arrange data in a logical manner so that it became easy to interpret .Statistical data was presented in form of graphs and tables .Quantitative data analysis is the range of processes and procedure whereby have from the qualitative data that have been collected into some form of explanation, understanding or interpretation of the people and situation which investigated (White 2005). In this study, the researcher used descriptive and statistical survey because it enabled clear interpretation.

### **3.8. Summary**

This chapter clearly outlined and discussed the methods used in collecting data for the study .This includes the research design which in this case is the descriptive survey .The population and sampling procedures were also highlighted. The chapter indicated that random sampling and stratified random sampling were used to select respondents. Research instruments such as questionnaire and interview were used for school heads and heads of history department .Data collection procedures and how data were analyzed were also discussed in this chapter. The next chapter is on data presentation, analysis and discussion.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

#### 4.1. Introduction

Chapter four is concerned with presentation, analysis and interpretation of data found by the researcher through questionnaire and interviews. The chapter strives to present what has been collected from respondents so that conclusions on factors lead to high failure rate in history subject at ordinary level can be established. Presentation of data was done following the sub-research questions.

#### 4.2 DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION.

##### 4.2.1 DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

The researcher found it necessary to capture the demographic details of the participants.

**Table 4.1 showing demographic data for history teachers (N=8)**

<b>GENDER</b>	<b>ACADEMIC QUALIFICATION</b>	<b>PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATION</b>	<b>TEACHING EXEPRIENCE IN YEARS</b>	<b>SUBJECT OF SPECIALIZATION DURING TRAINING</b>
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FEMALE (3)	O LEVEL(2) A LEVEL(1)	DIPLOMA(1) BED(2)	0-5(3)	GEO (1) SHONA(1) HISTORY(1)
MALES(5)	O LEVEL (3) A LEVEL (2)	CERTIFICATE(1) DIPLOMA(1) BED(1)	0-5(3) 6-10(1) 11-15(1)	MUSIC(1) BA SHONA(1) ACCOUNTS(2) AGRIC(1) ECONOMICS(1)

For the study, it was necessary to find out how many males and female history teachers responded to questionnaire and interviews since it was important to know who have responded among the given population. Also, it was important to know responses of women as compared to man.

Academic qualifications of teachers were important for the study since it enabled the researcher to know whether problems are emanating from the level of education of history teachers .It was also necessary to get information on professional qualifications since differences in qualifications would result in different education background thereby allowing a comparative analysis of findings.

In addition, establishing the teaching experience of history was necessary so as to determine the causes of failure rate in history since it is believed that experience is the best teacher. Also, findings out subjects which teachers specialized in during training would provide an overview and background to reasons why performance in history is bad. Subjects' specialization can determine whether teachers are motivated to teach the subject or not.

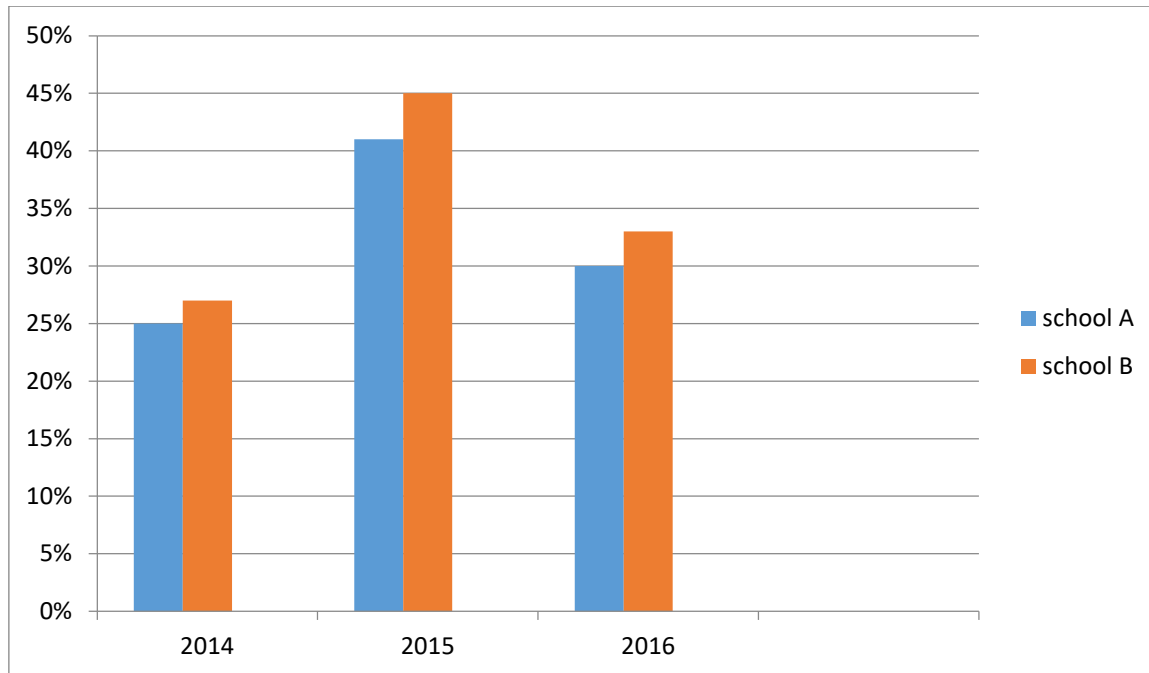
#### 4.2.2 Demographic data for school heads

N=(2)

NAME OF SCHOOL	EXEPRIENCES
A	11years
B	15years

It was necessary to find out experience of school heads at their school in determining research outcomes since they would give an insight about performance of their schools through focusing on what they have experienced thereby providing factors which lead to high failure rate in history subject at ordinary level.

**4.2.2Sub- research question 1: What is the pass rate in history between 2014 and 2016 at this school?**



**Fig 4.1: showing head’s responses**

All school heads indicated that the performance in history has been fluctuating all these years since they failed to reach 50% in both schools

The history pass rate for the past three years never reached 50% in both schools, although school B performs better than A. Both however failed to reach the required percentage.

**Discussion**

The two school heads indicated that O level history performance was very poor because the pass rate had been below 50% during the last three years. Out of forty students which were asked to



rate the performance of O level history, twenty stated it was on average whilst the other twenty were of the view that it was poor. Teachers also responded that O level pass rate for the past three years was poor compared to other subjects. Lumphala (2012) mention that in spite of the noble idea of availing secondary schools who need it, there is a widespread outcry across the country about the low performance of pupils from these schools in Olevel history subject examination.

### **4.3 Sub-research question 2: Challenges faced in teaching and learning of History.**

From the findings, school heads, teachers and pupils indicated that challenges faced in teaching and learning of history subject

#### **4.4.1 Responses from school head (N=2)**

CHALLENGES	FREQUENCY
Textbooks	2
Unavailability of library	2
Lack of internet facilities	2
Unavailability of history syllabus	1
Absence of feedback from Zimsec	2

All heads commented that the main challenge being faced in the teaching and learning process of history is the absence of national history syllabus and examiner feedback of performance of learners.

#### 4.4.2 Responses from teachers

**Table 4.3 showing teacher views on challenges encountered in the teaching and learning**

**(n=5)**

CHALLENGES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
-Absence of national syllabus to guide in the teaching.	3	10%
-No feedback from Zimsec.	5	15%
-Streaming	2	10%
Lack of specialized teachers	5	25%
-Lack of parental co-operation	5	25%

As curriculum implementers teachers showed various challenges which they faced in the teaching and learning of history subject at ordinary level.

#### **4.4.3 Discussion**

From the findings, it has been noted that absence of history syllabus and shortages of resources are major challenges which have been mentioned .Gondo (2008) indicated that without a detailed syllabus there cannot be any meaningful teaching and learning at whatever level. This means that absence of syllabus impact heavily on the content being taught as teachers indicated that the aspects covered in history subject are too broad .This shows that absence of history syllabus had negative effects mostly to those school without Zimsec markers hence impacting on performance of learners .

Stakeholders within the schools also said that unavailability of feedback from Zimsec is another major challenge since teachers cannot see where they went wrong hence mistakes cannot be corrected. Mudzanire and Mazaruse (2013) says without this important feedback on performance of learners .This implies that absence of feedback is a matter of concern to school stakeholder .Kluger (2011) is of the view that performance feedback is crucial in the organization since by providing feedback , errors will be corrected and performance improved.

More so, teachers mentioned that they were having difficulties to execute their duties appropriately because the students were not streamed when enrolment exercise was conducted. It seems that the schools were taking students with thirty-six units who have less potential to pass O level history. Harlem(2014) argues that school authorities such as government ,churches and private owned schools spell high expectation in pass rate to school heads ,as a results they stream pupils in order to meet the high demand for academic excellence that are imposed.

In this study, school heads also mentioned the absence of qualified teachers. This was also evident from questionnaire that the researcher gives to history teachers pertaining their professional qualifications .Only one teacher out of eight had specialized in history. Vundla discovered that the reason why pupils in rural schools failed included largely a shortage of trained teachers .It surfaced that the teachers thereby making it difficult for the students to grasp the concepts taught because of varying methodologies employed by different educators.

From the study it has been noted that lack of library and internet facilities thereby worsening learners attitude towards reading and the development of literacy skills .Students highlighted that it is very difficult for them to research their homework and assignment due to the unavailability of library and internet facilities. Harris (2013) notes that lack of basic facilities and poor infrastructure students' academic performance.

It also surfaced that there were challenges that students were facing such as lack of parental guidance on the importance of studying history and when they were doing their homework. Research alluded that lack of parental guidance as one of the factors inhibiting the performance of O level students. This in line with literature reviewed. Harris (2013) pointed out that poor performance of parental support. He further argues that there is correlation between parental support and homework activities and performance of pupils. Thus parental guidance is very crucial in cultivating the right learning culture amongst students to enable them to perform better in history.

#### **4.5 Sub-research question 3: *What are possible solutions to the high failure rate of history?***

##### **4.5.1 Responses from school heads**

From the interview, school heads gave the following responses.

School head A commented that, "An examination controlled curriculum is a misnomer. Examination must be drawn from curriculum not curriculum from examination therefore curriculum planners should issue syllabus to schools."

School head also said that, "National syllabus and exam feedback are important to schools so as that mistakes can be corrected."

School heads suggest that curriculum planners should provide history national syllabus to schools. Also they suggested that feedback from Zimsec should be sent to schools as soon as results are out so as to correct mistakes.

**Table 4.4 Teachers suggested solutions to the challenges faced in teaching and learning of history.(N=5)**

<b>SOLUTIONS</b>	<b>FREQUENCY</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
-National syllabus should be distributed in schools.	2	25%
-Feedback from Zimsec.	3	30%
-There is need for seminars and workshop at cluster level.	1	10%
-Ministry should provide qualified teachers	4	35%
<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>100</b>

Teachers suggest that a lot of solutions since they are curriculum implementers. Solutions were given as to improve performance in history

**4.2.1 Students suggested solutions on challenges faced during learning and teaching of history.(N=40)**

<b>SOLUTIONS</b>	<b>FREQUENCY</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
-Availability of library	10	17%
-Internet access	15	33%
-Ministry should employ more qualified teachers	10	40%
Electrification of classrooms	5	10%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100</b>

Most pupils indicated that ministry of primary and secondary should collaborate with schools to employ qualified teachers and provide history textbook to schools

**4.5.4 Discussion**

From findings ,all history heads and history teachers suggest that history syllabus be distributed to schools and examination feedback be issued as soon as results are out .Mudzanire and Mazaruse (2013) support this saying that curriculum development Unit should provide a detailed syllabus which states aims ,goals and objectives of the content being taught .Stakeholders says

that feedback be given to curriculum planners as soon as results are out since feedback provide corrections of errors made before .This means the provision of national syllabus and performance feedback can improve performance of learners as teachers will have right direction by basing on these two documents .Teachers also indicated that parents and teachers should help students in cultivating positive attitude in order to increase performance .This implies that there is need for motivation form both teachers and parents in order for pupils to have the right attitude about history subject.

Most teachers expressed that seminars and workshops should be done at cluster level so that history teachers be updated on a yearly basis and to accommodate those schools which did not have exam makers. Johnson and Schwarz portrays that workshops influence strategy development of organizations by equipping individuals with current information on running the affairs of their portfolios. Also history markers should visits schools time and again so as to discuss with candidates and teachers on what is required of them by Zimsec since there is no feedback.

Findings indicated that schools and parents should cooperate for the availing of library and internet facilities as it improve students' academic performance. Vundla (2012) indicates that textbook and other teaching and learning equipment are significant for high performance. Students would research on web current information. The headmasters should negotiate with the ministry of education sports and culture to recruit more qualified teachers to address the high teacher-students **ratio**.

## **4.6 Summary**

From the findings, the researcher noted that factors that lead to high failure rate in history subject are lack of resources, absence of feedback from Zimsec, absence of history syllabus, lack of specialist teachers among others .Suggested solution to the challenges faced have been highlighted in this chapter .The chapter tried to present and discuss findings which was allocated through questionnaire and interviews while guided by the sub research questions



## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **CONCLUSION, SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1. Introduction**

The chapter focuses on summary of the research on the factors lead to high failure rate in history subject at Ordinary level. Data collected from various groups involved in the teaching and learning of history enable the researcher to reach some conclusions and recommendations on how the teaching and learning of history can be improved in order to obtain quality results.

#### **5.2 Summary**

The research found out factors that lead to high failure rate in history subject at Ordinary level in Mberengwa district. The researcher centered on what are the factors lead to high failure rate in history at Ordinary level.

Chapter one looked at the background of the study that reasons gave rise to the research. This include poor performance in history subject as reflected by history percentage pass rate overally, lack of resources in rural based schools ,negative attitude towards school and it negatively contributes towards school work, lack of parental motivation. For this study the attempt to answer the following questions.1.What challenges being faced in teaching and learning o history? 2. What are possible solutions to the high failure rate of history?3 What is the pass rate in history between 2014 and 2016?.

To add on, significance of the study to students, research benefited various stakeholders in the education sector. It brings possible solution to the factors which lead to high failure rate in history at Ordinary level.

Chapter two looked at review of related .It focused on some scholarly documents and writings that already been researched and presented by others. The literature review showed that challenges faced in teaching and learning of history subject include shortage of resources, shortage of specialist teachers, absence of ZIMSEC Feedback ,lack of parental motivation.

Chapter three focused on research methodologies used for the purpose of this research. The descriptive survey was used in this study. Questionnaire and interviews were used to collect information on the factors lead to high failure rate in history subject at Ordinary level. Random sampling was used in selecting pupils for the study .All history teachers; head of department and school heads were included in the research. Forty history students, five teachers and three heads of department giving a total of fifty respondents were used for the purpose of this study. Two schools were used in this study. With the permission from Higher Education Offices, Ministry of primary and secondary education, the researcher collected data in person through hand delivering questionnaire and interviewing participants.

Finds revealed the challenges hampering the teacher and students in the performance of Ordinary level history .Some challenges ranged from shortage of resources and learning facilities such as library and internet facilities .It can be concluded that shortage of resources e.g. textbooks have negative impact on performance of learners.

Results revealed that history does not have a national syllabus and mostly schools resort to school syllabus which they design on their own. The curriculum Development Unit in collaboration with Zimsec have a major role to play in determining pupils performance in history at Ordinary level .Absence of national syllabus leaves the platform for schools to make their own syllabus which may not suit Zimsec requirements hence performance in history will be affected.

Findings revealed that feedback from Zimsec is not available in schools. Zimsec is failing to provide feedback on performance of learners to schools. It can be concluded that the absence of feedback on performance affect performance in history.

#### **5.4 Recommendations**

- Schools and parents should cultivate positive attitude towards history subject through motivation by creating a conducive environment for learning both home and at school.
- Curriculum planners should design a detailed national syllabus which can be used by teachers for betterment of results.
- Feedback from ZIMSEC should be issued to schools as soon as results are out.
- The school heads should negotiate with the Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture to recruit more specialist teachers.
- Seminars and workshop with examination markers should be done at cluster level by students and teachers so that they will know what is required by ZIMSEC.

#### **5.5 Recommendation for further studies**

- It is recommended that further research on effective ways of motivating pupils to study History seriously at Ordinary level be carried out.

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## **APPENDIX 1**

## **INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR THE HEADMASTERS AT CHEMIMWE AND CHABWIRA SECONDARY SCHOOLS**

1. What is the pupil ratio in Ordinary level history at this school?
2. Does the school have history textbooks which are enough to students?
3. In your own view ,what could be the factors that lead to high failure rate in history at Ordinary level.?
4. What are the challenges that are faced by students and teachers in the teaching and learning of ‘O’ level history at this school?
5. In your view how can these challenges are addressed to improve ‘O’ level history performance?

## **APPENDIX 2**

### **INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR THE HEAD OF DEPARTMENT AT CHABWIRA AND CHEMIMWE SECONDARY SCHOOLS**

1. For how long have you been a history teacher?
2. What is the student's attitude towards history?
3. What do you think are the factors that lead to the high failure rate in history subject?
4. Can you explain the actual challenges which you face in the teaching of history? 'O' level history at home and at school?

#### **APPENDIX 4**

#### **QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS AT CHEMIMWE AND CHABWIRA SECONDARY SCHOOLS ON THE FACTORS THAT OF LEAD TO HIGH FAILURE RATE IN ORDINARY LEVEL HISTORY.**

My name is Melody Zhou .I am doing BED honours degree at Midlands State University .I am carrying out a research on “factors that lead to high failure rate in history subject at ordinary level”. I will be grateful if you assist me by filling in this questionnaire .Please do not provide name on the questionnaire .Thanks for your cooperation

1. (a) What is your sex?

Male

Female

(b) Age range

12-15 years

15-18 years

18 and above

2. In your view, how do you rate the performance of 'O' level history students at Chabwira/Chemimwe Secondary School?

Please tick the applicable

Good  Average  Poor

3. Are there any challenges that you are facing in learning and studying' level history at home and at school?

Yes

No

4. If you ticked yes above, list these challenges that you are facing in learning and studying 'O' level history at home and at School

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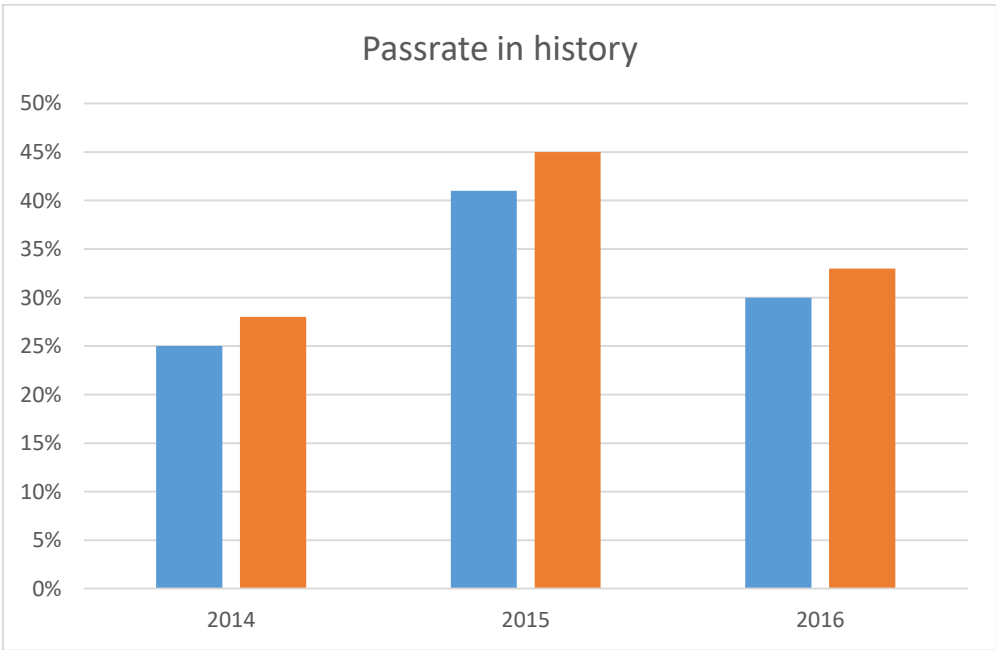
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5. In your opinion how can these challenges be addressed

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