**MIDLANDS STATE UNIVERSITY**





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**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION MANAGEMENT AND CURRICULUM STUDIES**

**EXPLORING TEACHERS’ AND COMMUNITY’S STRATEGIES OF EMPOWERING PUPILS ON THE IMPORTANCE OF EDUCATIONAL ADVANCEMENT: A CASE STUDY OF MABVUKU-TAFARA EDUCATIONAL CLUSTER IN EPWORTH, MABVUKU-TAFARA DISTRICT IN HARARE METROPOLITAN PROVINCE**

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**APPROVAL FORM**

The undersigned certify that they have read and recommended to the Midlands State University for acceptance a dissertation entitled:-

Exploring teachers’ and community’s strategies of empowering pupils on the importance of educational advancement. A case study of Mabvuku-Tafara cluster in Epworth, Mabvuku-Tafara district.

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**DEDICATIONS**

This research project is dedicated to the most important and inspirational people in my life, my husband Shaddie our children Tatenda, Thokozile, Mutsawaishe as well as my dearest friend Daina Gudo. I thank them for the love, patience and moral support they gave me during the course of my studies.

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**ABSTRACT**

The purpose of this study was to explore teachers’ and community’s strategies of empowering pupils on the importance of educational advancement. Data was collected in Mabvuku-Tafara educational cluster in Epworth, Mabvuku- Tafara district in Harare Metropolitan province. The researcher employed a qualitative research design. Data was gathered through the use of questionnaires from teachers, interviews for School Heads and drop outs and the focus group discussion for pupils. The target population were students, School drop outs, School Heads and teachers. Stratified random sampling was used to select teachers and students. School Heads and drop outs were purposively selected. The sample selected was made up of 44 subjects comprising 4 School Heads, 16 teachers, 16 students and 8 school drop outs. The results revealed that rate of girls are higher than boys who drop out of school in the Mabvuku- Tafara community. Teachers mostly help who bring educational capital to school and are from affluent homes on the expense of those from disadvantaged homes. The teachers mostly use the traditional methods such as prompt marking and giving of home work to enhance educational advancement. These methods only benefit those children who come from homes where there are books already as well as gadgets such as televisions, computers and the internet. The strategies to empower pupils for educational advancement currently used by teachers of Mabvuku- Tafara cluster only benefit children from homes who already have a reading culture. The country’s economic meltdown, socioeconomic factors and family displacements fuelled the low advancement in schools. The recommendations were that schools in Mabvuku- Tafara education cluster should hold career guidance and awareness campaigns targeting both school pupils and local parents. These should focus on the importance of educational advancement. Community mentors are needed for all children in senior classes to help them realise the importance educational advancement and to build their characters. The School Heads should organise workshops on gender responsive and inclusive teaching methods and multi- cultural approach to teaching. This will curb the problems of discrimination during the teaching and learning process which negatively affects the children from disadvantaged homes. Researches could be carried out by other teachers digging deeper into causes of low advancement in the cluster so as to nip the vice on the bud and disseminating information even to other teachers and school authorities.

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**CHAPTER ONE: THE INTRODUCTION**

**1.1 Introduction**

Chapter one focused on giving the background of the study, the statement of the problem concerning lack of advancement was derived from the background. Furthermore, objectives and research questions stated were stated. Significance of study was given and the importance of study. Delimitation of study indicating the geographical area, population and content was highlighted. Last but not least the limitations of study and assumptions were given. Lastly key terms were defined and a brief summary of the chapter was given at the end.

**1.2 Background of the study**

International community has committed itself to achieving universal primary education (UPE), as part of accomplishing the education for all (EFA) goals and the millennium development goals (MDGs) (Amnesty International, 2014). Remarkable progress, for example quantitative success of children’s access to school education has been made (Education for All Global Monitoring Report, EFA/GMR2011). Bringing children to school is a significant single first task and ensuring that they stay long enough in school to get advantage from complete course of quality primary education is another pivotal challenge, (United Nations Education and Scientific Organisation (UNESCO) and Institute for Statistics (UIS) (2013). Globally the number of children enrolling in school has gradually increased. However, many children are out of school or they come to school but leave school early, (EFA/GMR, 2011).

According to the paper commissioned for the (EFA/GMR) (2011) improving school progression and reducing numbers of children dropping out of school is critical if universal primary education (UPE) is to be achieved by 2015 worldwide. The report further notes that children are starting school in greater numbers but dropout rates are significant and this leads to low levels of primary school completion in many countries. In addition UN – MDGs and Beyond 2015 Fact Sheet (2013) pointed out MDG number 2 – to achieve (UPE) as its target. Thus, by 2015 children everywhere in the world, boys and girls alike will be able to complete a full course of primary school. The EFA/GMR, (2011) highlighted that early school leaving remains persistent. Among 137 million who entered first grade in 2011, 34 million are likely to leave before reaching the last grade of primary school. This scenario according to the UNESCO-IS (2013) translates into an early school leaving rate of 25 per cent the same level as in 2 000. The EFA/GMR (2013) cited poverty, gender and place of residence as key factors that make children drop out of school globally. More so, the reduction in international aid was cited as another contributing factor putting children’s education prospects at risk. To achieve UPE, new interventions are required to increase the completion rate UNESCO Institute of Statistics (UIS) (2013).

Despite the introduction of free education in African countries, which accounted for an increase in enrolment, a sizeable number of children still find themselves out of school owing to a number of reasons (UNESCO-IS, 2013). According to World Bank Development Report (2012) more than 350 million people in Africa are living below poverty line of one dollar a day. This implies that poverty to some extent make children dropout of school as their cohort moves up the educational ladder. EFA-GMR (2011) further notes that of the 250 million children in school at any given time girls are more likely than boys to drop out of school. Some girls face overt discrimination and even violence as the recent kidnappings in Nigeria and attacks in Pakistan. Amnesty International (2014) confirmed that in Cameroon girls suspected of lesbian sexual activity are expelled from their secondary schools. To add on to this Amnesty International (2014) pointed out that reports speak of Kenyan girls who have failed to advance with school. These girls were perceived as acting too masculine and as a result were expelled from school. This case indicates that girls are being treated as lesser human beings in some schools than boys.

UNESCO-World Data on Education (2010) pointed out that since independence 1980 Zimbabwe has considered education as a top priority. Hence, it adopted the policy of education for all. One of the basic principles in the education system is to give all citizens opportunity for full, gainful and meaningful participation and completion of basic primary education. It is against this background according to the UNESCO-World Data on Education (2010) that Zimbabwe enacted laws and is a signatory to a number of conventions concerning education. Echoing the same sentiments Hlupo and Tsikira, (2012) highlighting the key elements that are enshrined in the Zimbabwe Education Act as amended in 1991; are the abolition of all forms of discrimination in education and free compulsory education. According to UNESCO: World Data on Education (2010) report primary education was made compulsory for every in the age group 6-12 to remain a long term objective.

Thus the issue of retention and completion were a cause of concern as well. More than 190 000 secondary school children and 30 per cent of primary school pupils fall out as their cohort moves up the educational ladder each year in Zimbabwe United Nations Children Education Fund (UNICEF), (2011). Chinyoka and Naido (2013) purported that increased cost of living has an adverse impact on the education of students. Poverty is associated with high rates of grade retention with many finally dropping out. In addition, World Data on Education (2010) stated that in Zimbabwe girls are sometimes pledged for marriage when they are younger than eight years old.

The above factors were found to be a trend in most parts of the country (Chinyoka, 2013).World Bank Development Report (2012) conceded that majority of the people in Zimbabwe live below poverty line of one dollar a day. Chinyoka and Naidu (2008) concur with the above statement saying that economic meltdown has caused numerous vulnerable school children to drop out of school over the years. There is great pressure for children to contribute to the family economy in order to make ends meet. In addition World Bank Development Report (2012) cited poor nutrition as a factor that make children drop out of school because they find it difficult to learn on an empty stomach.

According to the Zimbabwe Education Management System report (2013) the number of drop-outs at primary education level increased from 23 percent in 2012 to 43 percent in 2013. In most cases girls are more prone to dropping out but increasingly often in poor and peri-urban environments Amnesty International (2014) identified poverty, abuse and cultural practices as causes preventing a third of Zimbabwean girls from attending secondary schools denying them a basic education according to a recent study which found alarming dropout rates for girls. Sexual harassment and abuse by even school teachers and parents, cultural issues, lack of school fees, early marriages, parental commitments and early pregnancy are some of the contributing factors to the drop outs by the girl child (Human Rights Watch, 2014).

According to Zimbabwe Education Management System (2013), the primary school dropout rate is higher in rural areas, which account for 78, 9% of the total number of dropouts. Many of these dropouts are teenagers, According to Mazire and Kusena cited in the Zimbabwean Sunday Mail Extra of September 28 2014 in an article, “Zimbabwe’s vice capital 12 year olds roped into prostitution in Epworth.”The article indicated that these children have engaged in these activitiesin order to earn a living for their selves and other members of the family. Living on less than dollar a day- adapt or die adage seems to keep residents of places like Epworth going.

The above intrigued the researcher to explore strategies of empowering pupils on the importance of educational advancement in Mabvuku- Tafara educational cluster.

**1.3 Statement of problem**

The researcher noted that the major problem was that children did not stay long in school Mabvuku – Tafara. There is a high rate of pupils dropping out of school as their cohort moves up the educational ladder. This problem is common as children get to the fifth grade up to secondary school. The researcher’s aim was to determine causes of low advancement and identify and explore the effectiveness of teachers’ strategies of empowering pupils for educational advancement in the community. Then suggest further strategies to change the attitude of the community on educational advancement. Having observed this disturbing scenario as indicated on the table below, the researcher decided to explore teachers’ strategies of empowering pupils on the importance of advancement in Mabvuku – Tafara educational cluster.

**Table 1.3.1: The table below shows the dropout rate of pupils in from 2012, 2013 and 2014 in the Mabvuku-Tafara cluster:**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| GENDER | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | TOTAL |
| FEMALES | 52 | 65 | 86 | 203 |
| MALES | 51 | 49 | 70 | 170 |
| TOTAL | 103 | 114 | 156 | 373 |

**1.4 Objectives of the study**

The study set out to:

* Determine the prevalence of dropouts in Mabvuku- Tafara educational cluster.
* Establish the causes for low advancement in schools from the fifth grade to secondary.
* Identify teachers’ strategies of empowering pupils for educational advancement in the community.
* Suggest strategies to change the attitude of the community in Mabvuku- Tafara on pupils’ educational advancement.
  1. **Research Questions**
* What is the prevalence rate of dropouts?
* What are the causes of low advancement in schools of pupils from the fifth grade to secondary school?
* How effective are teachers’ strategies in empowering pupils for educational advancement?
* What strategies can be implemented to change the attitude of theMabvuku- Tafara community towards pupils’ educational advancement?

**1.6 Significance of study**

The research is important in that it will bring out the dropout rate and the causes of low advancement in schools from the fifth grade to secondary in Mabvuku – Tafara educational cluster in Epworth, Mabvuku - Tafara district Harare Metropolitan province. It also identified the teachers’ strategies of empowering pupils on the importance of educational advancement in the community and explored effectiveness the strategies of empowering pupils on the importance of educational advancement. More, so the study established strategies to change the attitude of the community on the importance of educational advancement. The focus is on raising the status of orphans and vulnerable children from the marginalised group of the community. Where, in this respect the status girl child is most affected. This will be in fulfilment of the international education standards as enshrined in the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights (UNDHR) article (26), United Nations (UN): Conventions on the Elimination of all forms of Discriminations Against Women (CEDAW), the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Thus, reducing number of pupils who fall out while their cohort moves up the educational ladder

Furthermore, this research is undertaken to add on to the existing body of knowledge on effective strategies teachers can use to empower pupils on the importance of educational advancement with particular reference to Mabvuku – Tafara community. To add on, the research would benefit the researcher by exposing her to the challenges associated with social sciences research. However, these challenges enhance the researcher’s professional growth through first hand experiences and active participation.

**1.7 Delimitation of study**

The research was carried out in Mabvuku – Tafara education cluster in Harare Metropolitan province Ward 9 Harare, Zimbabwe. There are ten primary and three secondary schools in the cluster. Out of these schools four are going to be used as a sample, two secondary and two primary schools. The study will be focusing on exploring teachers’ strategies of empowering pupils on the importance of educational advancement in Mabvuku–Tafara. Data will be collected from the teachers and pupils of these schools in the cluster.

**1.8 Limitation of the study**

It was not easy to access all the primary schools in the Mabvuku -Tafara educational cluster to carry out this research. Two of the schools are located in uniformed forces camps. The security processes in these places made accessing them very cumbersome. A lot of protocols had to be observed. The researcher is employed by the ministry of justice legal and parliamentary affairs – Zimbabwe Prisons and Correctional service (ZPCS), so the demands of the employer posed time limitations in conducting the research. However, the researcher utilised weekends, after work hours and occasional leave days to succeed. If it was not for financial constraints the researcher would have involved more participants.

**1.9 Assumption of study**

1. It is assumed participants (teachers of Mabvuku –Tafara educational cluster) are knowledgeable about strategies of empowering pupils for educational advancement and the will give their responses to questionnaires and interviews.
2. The researcher assumed that the school authorities will allow her to carry her research in Mabvuku –Tafara educational cluster.
3. The researcher assumed that the Heads of the schools will disclose the statistics and trends of the movements of the pupils as cohort from Early Childhood Development (ECD) to secondary school.
4. The researcher also assumed that teachers, students and dropouts are knowledgeable about causes of low advancement and possible strategies that can be used but the teacher and community to empower pupils for educational advancement.

**1.10 Definition of terms**

**1.10.1Cohort**

In education the term is typically according to the Oxford Secondary School Dictionary (2010), applied to students who are educated at the same period of time. Thus it is a group of pupils moving up the educational ladder.

**1.10.2 Educational advancement**

According to the UN- Millennium Development Goals Report (2013), this refers to a state where all children can complete a full course of primary schooling-both boys and girls. Thus it refers to moving up of children from enrolment to completion as a cohort.

**1.10.3Empowering**

UN-MDGs Report (2013) defines empowerment as a multi-dimensional social process that help people to gain control over their own lives. Thus, it involves creating an enabling environment and opportunities which will allow pupils to move up the educational ladder to prepare for the responsibilities, adulthood and occupational choices. It implies empowering the learner with skills and knowledge of seeing the value of educational advancement.

**1.10.4 Strategy effectiveness**

This is when the method used is hitting its target achieving the set objectives(Rumberger and Li, 2008).This can be measured by examining how the strategy links objectives and whether the strategies have managed to help the learner to benefit from the learning process.

**1.11 Summary**

In summation, the chapter has given the background of study highlighting what the issue of educational advancement is like in schools globally, regionally and in Zimbabwe for it to be under study. Furthermore, the researcher has given the statement of problem and stated objectives. Thereafter, the researcher has derived research questions from the objectives. In addition, the significance of study has been as well as the delimitation of study. Lastly assumption of study and definition of terms were given. The next chapter will be focusing on reviewing the related literature.

**CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW**

**2.1 Introduction**

This chapter gives a theoretical framework adopted in the study. The researcher is going to look at Symbolic Interactionist and Conflict Marxist theories as lenses through which to view the study. Furthermore the researcher will look at the empirical findings on the prevalent rate of drop outs world over as well as the causes of low advancement of pupils in schools. Thereafter, empirical findings on strategies of empowering pupils on the importance of educational advancement will be looked at as well as their effectiveness. Lastly literature is going to be reviewed on the strategies used to change the attitude of the community on the importance of educational advancement.

**2.2 Theoretical framework**

The researcher is going to use the Symbolic Interactionist theory and Conflict-Marxist perspective as lenses through which to view this study. The micro- interpretive sociological perspective called symbolic interactionist theory understands what goes on in the society by examining, explaining and attaching to objects, events and processes that occur as the child goes up the educational ladder (Schaefer, 2006). Interactionists emphasise that learning depends on the use of symbols and signs. Moreover, they support the idea of teachers being good role models on the building of children’s self-image, and or self-concept (Haralambos and Holborn, 2004). They regard social interaction as the process of shaping the self-concept in schools, families and the community. Symbolic interactionist theorists focus on dealing with phenomenon in its natural setting such as a home, school and community.

This involves defining, interpreting, understanding others through the language, dress, appearance and gestures (Gwirayi, 2010). It is because of this perception, why the theory argues that language used in schools, homes and communities should be one that facilitates the negotiations that take place during social interactions. In the context of low advancement in schools the symbolic interactionists believe the social interactions in which negotiations and empathising take place are the breeding ground of negative or positive self-images and self-concepts. They stressed that when a pupil is labelled whether positively or negatively his or her self-concept and self-esteem are affected (Schaefer, 2006). In the completion depends on interaction and meanings attached to schooling by pupils.

Another perspective the researcher is going to use is the conflict- Marxist. It is a theory about social classes as they are found in capitalist societies (Haralambos and Holborn, 2004). This perspective agrees with symbolic interactionists on how teachers classify pupils and knowledge. They both agree that sometimes the classification is done basing on the pupils social class background, (Gwirayi, 2010). According to Marxists, educational institutions are coercive in nature and oppressive. There is bound to be potential conflict among teachers and students which may eventually lead to low advancement.

The symbolic interactionists view and conflict- Marxists theorists including the neo- Marxists are similar in the sense that they believe that there are inequalities in societies which are also manifested in schools which are regarded as ideological state apparatus by Althusser a neo- Marxist (Schaefer, 2006). They both believe that social classes have something to do with low advancement as well the social interactions at school and in the classrooms. There are incidences of students are of students dropping out of school because they will have been frustrated by labels which teachers will have placed on them (Chinyoka, 2014). Social class playground is viewed as the pillar of retaining pupils in schools as well as social interaction at school.

It is therefore important to adopt the symbolic interactionist theory and the conflict- Marxist theory. Both theories advocate for methods or strategies to reduce the inequalities found in the education system. Children and knowledge should not be classified and more, so teachers to avoid labelling and avoiding any form of discrimination that can affect the learner’s self-concept. Moreover, the schools the symbolic interactionists still advocates for the school environment to be user friendly to reduce low advancement. The conflict- Marxist theory advocates that teachers should devise strategies to close the gap between different social classes there by reducing inequalities in educational opportunities.

**2.3 Empirical Findings: Internationally Prevalence of school Dropouts**

**2.3.1 Government Policies**

Research done by UNESCO: IS (2013) revealed that globally, governments of states assume that primary school will improve automatically as a result of interventions designed to improve initial access and educational quality, of which this is not always the case. Chinyoka and Naidu, (2008)in their research conducted in Zimbabwe pointed out that results in economic policies that results in some economic policies that results in economic downturn cause numerous vulnerable school children to drop out of school over the years, though new programmes aim to rectify the situation in some countries for example in Kenya.

According to the fact sheet released by EFA / GMR and UNESCO- Institute for statistics (2013) even before the economic down turn in most countries donors were off- track to fulfil the promise that no country would be left behind in education due to lack of resources. The fact sheet revealed that reductions in aid are likely going to jeopardise the chances of schooling for some millions of children worldwide. Human Rights Watch (2014) report revealed that the policies in most developing countries push the donor community away. The report further noted that such policies affect the implementation of programmes that promote equality of access and opportunity to education.

In a study conducted by Amnesty International (2014) in Serbia, it was revealed that pupils drop out of school because of poverty which were perpetuated by some economics policies of the Serbian government. Moreover a study carried out in Malawi by Chimombo et al (2000) revealed that Malawians are reacting to reacting to a situation where they see nothing good coming out of school. Local schools are in the business of producing failures. According to this study the Malawian parents ask themselves; what is the benefit of sending children to school. The study revealed that it was the school that was failing not the system. Internationally research findings conducted by Sebates (2010) revealed that policies and strategies to improve school progression and reduce numbers of children dropping out of school are critical if universal primary education is to be achieved globally. Furthermore, Sebates (2010) in his research highlighted that children are starting school in great numbers but dropout rates are still significant. Hunt (2008) noted that causes of low advancement are similar world over.

**2.3.2 Regionally**

The research carried out in Malawi by Chimombo, Chibwanna, Dzimadzi, Kadzamira, Kunkwenzu, Kunje &Namphota (2000) revealed that the design of education system itself puts students out of school. The system is explicitly structured. Hoppers cited in Chomombo et al (2000) observed that in Africa, though the curricula appear to be Afrocentric there are still some grains of western system of schooling which is too academic. The study further noted that the system of education is highly pyramidal and selective, designed to socialise children to be submissive and subservient citizens who do not question the status quo

**2.3.3 Current Trends in Education in Zimbabwe**

Republic of Zimbabwe government adopted the Education For All policy of education as a basic human right, and committed itself to universal and equal educational opportunity for all (Shizha and Kariwo, 2011).It was with this broad policy framework that the government buttressed by progressive bill of rights which democratised and expanded the education system (Shizha and Kariwo, 2011).The Bill of rights enshrined in the fundamental human rights and freedoms designed to guarantee equality of opportunity for all regardless of race colour, gender, creed, place of origin or any other considerations (UNESCO- World Data on Education, 2010). Thus, the public policy of Zimbabwe compels the state to ensure that there is equal opportunity for all. According to the Zimbabwe Education Management Systems(2013), education state policies have been shaped to a larger extent, by the principle of equality of treatment, and opportunity for all children. Several international conventions on human rights such as CEDAW, MDGs and UN – universal declaration of human rights have exerted tremendous influence on educational management and Zimbabwe is a signatory (UNESCO-IS, 2013).

The children’s rights to education as enshrined in the Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment(No. 20) act of 2013 (article 19 of chapter 2) stipulates that the state must take all practical measures to promote free and compulsory basic education for children. In addition the state must take measures to ensure that girls are afforded the same opportunities as boys to obtain education at all levels. Secondly the state stipulates that every child has the right to family or parental care, or to appropriate care when removed from the family environment. It further stipulates that children must be protected from economic and sexual exploitation, from child labour, and maltreatment, neglect or any form of abuse.

However, it is a matter of a historical fact that the economy of this country deteriorated, education suffered badly resulting in brain drain, deteriorating standards of performance in schools and this led to high rates of drop outs and low advancement.

**2.3.4 Zimbabwe**

Zimbabwean Herald of 1 March 2015 reported that more than13 000 children drop out of school in 2013 owing to early marriages and lack of school fees. According to Education Management System report (2013), the number of drop outs at primary education level increased from 23percent 2012 to 43 percent in 2013. At secondary level 2 289 dropped out of school comprising 1063 females and 1226 males because of school fees while 1191 failed to continue because of marriages, with 801 of them being females and 390 males. At primary level 2784 dropped out because of school fees, consisting of 1646 males and 1138 females. Others just absconded and some of them it was because of the death of parents or guardians.

Zimbabwean government in line with the UN-UDHR conventions and the MDGs adopted the EFA policy at independence 1980. This was in line with the UN vision that everyone has to benefit from education and training. However, the education act 25 of (1987) part 2 item (5) did not address the challenges of school dropouts fully because in this act there is section which states that it is the duty of the parents of such any child of primary age to ensure that such child attends primary school. Furthermore, Zimbabwe Education Management Report (2006) highlighted that policy circular number P77 of 2006 provided guidelines on the implementation of the new look curriculum initiative. More so the same report noted that circular number P77 of 2006 students can pursue general / academic and choose any two subjects from either technical or commercial pathway. This policy was adopted in some schools however in most schools it is still being hampered by lack of proper infrastructure.

However, Zimbabwe Education Medium Term Plan (2012) revealed that some of the recommendations of the Nziramasanga Commission 1999 are not being fully implemented as anticipated. The above scenario is still leaving the education system with some gaps that promotes and perpetuates low school advancement. Most of the graduates are not absorbed by the commerce and industry. The Nziramasanga Commission of Inquiry into Education (1999) recommended the continued expansion of education and facilities and equal emphasis of practical and technical subjects in the last two years of secondary schooling (Zimbabwe Education Advisory Board. 2009).

The review of gender issues in Zimbabwe carried out by Runhare and Gordon (2004) revealed that the pregnancy policy and corporal punishment P35 (Discipline in schools) which provides for girls who fall pregnant while at school is not being implemented fully in both rural and urban schools. Reasons cited were that most of the girls and parents are not aware of this facility, some teachers and administrative officers have reservations to it due to its alleged negative impact on other girls as well as stigmatisation of the affected girl (Runhare and Gordon, 2004).

As mentioned earlier in the EFA Global Monitoring Report (2011) reduction in donor aid are putting children’s education prospects at risk. The report revealed that just when a final push is needed to ensure that all children are in school contrary to this aid to basic education is declining. Zimbabwe MDGs Status Report (2010) reported that in the past years some non – governmental organisation (NGO) provided food supplements to children in schools but have since stopped doing so due to political as they were often of meddling in the country’s political affairs. The Human Rights Watch (2014) further revealed that nearly a million pupils risk dropping out of school after the government’s funding agreements with UNICEF and Department for International Development (DFID) for the benevolent programme expired in 2012 and last year respectively.

**2.4. Empirical findings on Reasons for low advancement**

**2.4.1 School Related Factors**

Sebates (2010) in his research singled out poor quality education, in adequate facilities, overcrowded classrooms, inappropriate language of instruction, teacher absenteeism, low teachers’ expectations, distance from school, safety and some classrooms dynamics as major cases of low completion rates in schools world over. In a research conducted in Combodia on quality of education, Hunt (2008) pointed out that children who do not do basics are often lacking essential literacy and numeracy skills and are far more likely to dropout in high school. Thus, Hunt (2008) research revealed that quality education is the one with content curricula that reflects skills for life.

Other findings by Chimombo et al (2000) revealed that children are reacting to situation where they see nothing good coming out of school. Local schools are in business of producing failures. And so the children ask themselves, what is the benefit of going to school? The study done by Chinyoka (2014) revealed that these students end up engaging in clandestine and informal activities that generate income than schooling. The issue of inadequate facilities was perpetuated by the land reform programme in Zimbabwe from the year 2000 onwards which caused high population movement (Mutema, 2012).This resulted in children failing to find schools with proper facilities within walking distances in farms in which their parents settled. Research done by Mutema (2012) in Gweru, Zimbabwe indicated that schools have old dilapidated stables and garages as classrooms. As a result this has negatively impacted on the pass rate of children at Fairfields farm which also resulted in high school dropout rate.

The same study indicated that distance to school impacts negatively on the children’s completion rate. The schools which cater for Fairfield resettled farm workers children are located at Rhovil farm homestead which is 12 kilometres away from Fairfield farm. The research indicated that the distance is not ideal for the learning process; children end up getting to school tired and eventually get frustrated and drop out.

**2.4.2 Language of Instruction as an Inhibiting Factor**

The language of instruction in the early years can influence dropout rates (Hunt, 2008). EFA-GMR (2011) overview noted that Tanzania was experiencing dropouts as students in elementary grades were frustrated by the language of instruction. However they country later adopted Kiswahili as a medium of instruction. Zimbabwe according the research done by Chinyoka (2014) in Masvingo language spoken at home is different from language used at school. The participants in the same research also revealed that a learner can perform well when they are taught using a vernacular language as compared to a foreign language. In Chinyoka (2014) revealed that language of instruction impedes academic performance hence promotes dropout among learners.

Hlupo and Tsikira (2012) in a research conducted in Zimbabwe revealed that language spoken at home is different from language of instruction used at school and this affect student’s learning. Participants in a research conducted by Chinyoka (2014) in Masvingo, Zimbabwe revealed that language of instruction especially to children who come from disadvantaged homes without televisions, radios and reading material.

**2.4.3 Teacher and Classroom Dynamics**

In the Sub Saharan African countries UNESCO-Global Monitoring Report (2011) noted that failures of students to find positive social relationship in schools and lack of motivation and climate of caring support lead to early school leaving. World Bank Education Development Report (2012) in their investigation have considered the academic and social dynamics of typing, prejudice stigma, labelling, patriarchy and gender based abuse as major factors that contribute to low advancement. To add on Human Rights Watch (2013) carried out in India revealed that while nearly all primary school children are enrolled in school, many millions do not complete or remain in school or attend classes. The study revealed that often this is because of their caste, ethnicity, religion or gender act as a barrier to education.

In the Zimbabwe MDGs Status Report (2010) revealed that teachers morale was very low. It was noted that they were under motivated by the low salaries, lack of decent accommodation and shortage of teaching and learning resources. The report indicated that this situation is causing some pupils to drop out of school as they move up the educational ladder because they will not be getting the attention that the need from teachers.

Chinyoka (2014) in his study carried out in Masvingo, Zimbabwe noted inadequate time for teaching, poor teaching methods, failure to be good role models for the boys and girls and inconsistency in lesson attendance as causes of low advancement. Chawafambira (2010) in her in Harare, Epworth revealed that some teachers were frustrated by poor remunerations and went to neighbouring countries for greener pastures.

Some researchers such as Hunt (2008) in a research conducted in Ghana have alleged that low teachers expectations cause children to drop out of school. Children interviewed in this study highlighted that they dropped out of school because teachers always placed them in the last group in class. More so teachers never gave them a chance to take part in any classroom activities. To add on to this research done by EFA-GMR (2013) noted that lack of academic success- students who more often get low grades, fail subjects and those who retain grades are more likely to leave school before graduation. As a result the UIS-EFAGMR (2013) overview viewed lack of opportunities for success can be viewed as an imbalance between the academic demands of school and the resources students have to meet those demands.

Human Rights Watch (2014) indicated that the government of India has put in place the education act however it is lacking detailed plans to monitor and track each child’s progress up to completion of his/her education. One of the Ghasiya Indian children told the Human Rights Watch (2014:11);

*The teacher tells us to sit on the other side. If we sit with others, she scolds us and asks us to*

*sit separately. The teacher does not come anywhere near us because she says ‘We are dirty*

*The other children also call us dirty every day so sometimes we get angry and hit back or*

*we just stop going to school.*

In addition, Human Rights Watch (2014:12) noted an example of discriminatory attitudes and tribalism; one of the principals showed when he indicated that Ghasiya children in India come to school late.

*These children come when they want to no matter how much we tell them to come*

*on time. Their main aim is to come and eat, not to study. Just see how dirty they are*

As a result according to Human Rights Watch (2014) Priya’s neighbour-hood children in India admitted that they attend school irregularly because they do not like the unwelcome atmosphere eventually these children dropout of school. An educationist activist in India was reported in the Human Rights Watch (2014) saying “Dolit children are made to feel inferior in schools reinforce social classes and caste norms.

**2.5 Family and Community Related Factors**

**2.5.1 Poverty**

Research done by Sebates, (2010) in Ghana revealed that poverty and economic hardships appear to influence low advancement internationally. EFA-GMR (2010) overview stated that factors that promote low advancement rarely act in isolation within countries. Gender often interacts with poverty and place of residence. The research done by Amnesty International (2014) in three countries revealed that while majority of households, books are present though with differences (Belgrade90% - Central Serbia 69 % only 25% of Romani children live in households with books. Most of the children without cultural capital when they get to school they get frustrated because of lack of preparedness and dropout.

In the Sub- Saharan African countries for example a study carried out in Madagascar by Sebates (2010) revealed that only 12 percent of children from rich families dropped out of school as compared to 70 per cent who dropped out that same period from the poorest homes. Results from a research done by Rumberger and Lim (2008) indicated that in Uganda children in rural areas drop out of school in large numbers as compared to those in urban areas. The study gave the socio economic status of families as a contributing factor which leads marrying off girls at tender ages. Sebates (2010) in his research done as a case study of Ghana revealed that ill health and malnutrition as family related factors that jeopardise meaningful retention and advancement of pupils in schools. In his research Hunt (2008) in Tanzania identified poor family motivation as a poverty related factor. Rumberger and Lim (2008) further explained that as the child grows older, the pressure for leaving school increases especially in child headed families. Hunt (2008) highlighted that the children leave school and go to work and earn money for the family.

Mandina (2013) in his research done in Gokwe district Zimbabwe revealed that some dropouts highlighted that they did not see the reason of going to school because all their educated brothers and sisters are not employed. According to Chawafambira (2010:25) in her research on “Gender Sensitivity” conducted in Harare, Epworth, one of the respondents has this to say;

*Girls are quick to grasp concepts and mature more quickly especially at infant level than*

*boys.*

She attributed the above to the idea that as girls grow up there is an increase in domestic roles which curtails their performance and may finally lead to dropping out.

**2.5.2 Illness and orphanage related**

Mandina (2013) in his research done in Gokwe in Zimbabwe revealed that conflicts between work and school, having to work to support family mainly by parents who lost both HIV and AIDS. In the same study Mandina (2013) cited lack of family and community models or mentors and having peers and siblings with low educational aspirations as leading to substance abuse, pregnancy, school phobia and truancy as well as school violence which will eventually lead to low advancement.

Mavambo Trust annual report (2009) noted that in Mabvuku- Tafara community in Harare Metropolitan province many children drop out of school because of financial challenges. Furthermore, the report highlighted that most of the affected children are those from impoverished households, orphans and vulnerable and those infected and affected with HIV and AIDS. Chawafambira (2010) in her research done in nearby suburbs of Epworth noted that most of the boys from families whose parents succumbed to HIV and AIDS pandemic dropped out of school just after their completing grade seven to fend for their sibling and Kombi conductors, selling airtime or being bus rank. In support of the above Mavambo Trust Annual report (2009) noted that some parents in Mabvuku –Tafara community confessed using children in activities such as vending , boys selling airtime and girls selling employment as household maids some of the girls even end up trapped in early marriages.

**2.5.3 Education of Parents**

In the research done by Hunt (2008) in Uganda findings indicated that academic attainment of parents is a key factor that influences the chances of child dropping out of school in both rural and urban areas , and across all age cohorts. This was eluded by findings in Chinyoka (2014: 26) research done in Masvingo Zimbabwe when one of the respondents a learner said I dropped out of school because;

*Handina munhu anondibatsira kuita homework. (I don’t have anybody to help me in*

*in doing my homework.)*

In Chinyoka (2014) interviews revealed those learners whose parents are not adequately literate are disadvantaged because children need to be helped with assignments and homework. Research done by Hunt (2008) in California revealed that students are more likely to drop out if they have a sibling who dropped out Chawafambira (2010) in his research revealed that children are left under the care of grandparents when parents go to work in other countries. Teacher interviewed in Chawafambira (2010) study revealed that this lead to lose morals, especially among high school, girls high absenteeism boys stating smoking and abusing drugs, thus this will lead to lack of commitment and finally dropping out.

**2.6 Religious and Cultural Practices**

Sebates (2010) in their study in California, family structure, practices and resources influence dropouts. The study revealed that students living with both parent have lower dropout rates and higher graduation rates compared to student living in other family arrangements. The changes in family structure along with other potentially more illnesses, death, adults entering and leaving household and marital description, increase the odds of dropping out (Hunt, 2008). According to the research done by Chinyoka (2004) in Masvingo Zimbabwe both boys and girls are hit by home and community factors though in different ways. Chawafambira (2010) has highlighted that girls are economically deprived as compared to boys. Girls are exposed to risk or sexual abuse and are subject to harmful cultural practices such as wife pledging (kuzvarira) and wife substitution (chimutsamapfihwa) as well as genital mutilation and virginity testing. Chawafambira (2010) in her research done in Epworth Harare revealed that children living in the poorest settlements in the out skirts of Harare Metropolitan such as Epworth, East view, Caledonia and some parts of Mabvuku – Tafara are deeply affected by some of the primitive cultural practices motioned above.

**2.7 Strategies Used by Governments to Encourage School Completion**

**2.7.1 Declarations, Conventions, Protocols, Policies and Acts**

According to Human Rights Watch (2014) India in 2009 enacted the right to free and compulsory Education Act as enshrined in UDHR. The act provided for free and compulsory education to all children aged 6 to 14 based on principles of equity and non- discrimination. However, four years after it came research done by Human Rights Watch (2014) revealed that discrimination remains a major factor affecting access to education for children from marginalised communities, including Dalitis tribal groups and Moslems. Another case study done in Tanzania by UIS-EFAGMR (2011) revealed that the government put in place a political and budgetary focus on Universal Primary Education (UPE). Completion and enrolment were made compulsory since 2002 for all children from 7years upwards.

Results of the research done in Lesotho, Malawi, South Africa, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe by Gweshe (2004) stated that the Convention on the Right of the Child (CRC) was unanimously adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on the 20th of November and it entered into force less than one year later, on the 2nd of September 1990. Gweshe (2004) noted that countries who are signatories to this convention have domesticated the CRC. Gweshe (2004) further revealed these countries now have education as a basic human right which must be accessed by all children regardless of their backgrounds. The results of the study compiled by Gweshe (2004) stated that the above has resulted in these countries providing universal education there by adopting policies such as Education for All in countries such as Zimbabwe.

UNESCO Institute of statistics (2011) in its research in Ghana reported that policies or programmes such as capitation grant scheme appear to have helped reduce overall rates of dropouts. In the same report capitation was described as a free policy providing direct funding to all public schools based on enrolment. It removes the cost burden to parents enrolling their children including those who previously dropped out because of financial challenges. According UNESCO- Global Monitoring report (2011) capitation was effective in Ghana because enrolment in 2005 increased across primary to junior school 17 percent. Furthermore, capitation in Ghana was cited by Sebates (2010) as one policy which encouraged drop out to reenrol. About a fifth of school children come back to school in Ghana as a result of capitation.

In Zimbabwe, according to the Millennium Development Goals report (2010) the government budgeted for social assistance (safety net) targeting vulnerable children through Basic Education Assistance Module (BEAM). This programme was established in 2000 and targeted orphans and vulnerable children (OVCs) in both primary and secondary schools. However, it was highlighted in the same MDGS status report Zimbabwe (2010) that BEAM has been erratic and financially inadequate.

More so, according to the Zimbabwe MDG status report (2010) qualifications of primary school teachers have improved over the period 1990- 2009. In the same vein feminisation of the teaching service has taken centre stage. There was a significant rise of women primary school teachers from 44% in 1996 54% in 2009. This promoted the issue of the girls’ need of role models in education. In addition, Zimbabwe MDGs status report (2010) revealed that the government of Zimbabwe put in place policies to address some inequalities in the provision of education. One of them is circular P35 policy was put in place. The research done by Chawafambira (2010) Zimbabwe revealed that the policy was put in place to enable the girl child to continue with education in the event that she falls pregnant whilst at school.

In addition, there is circular P77 which caters for the two path way system and gives students freedom to choose practical subjects of their choice regardless of their sex. Research done by Pedzisai, Tsvere and Nkhonde (2014) revealed that Zimbabwe is currently implementing a two-path way system in most government schools. The former minister revealed that the structure of education is skills based and enables children to benefit both academically and also in terms of technical vocational skills. The Board noted that marrying practice to theory was in line with recommendations in Nziramasanga commission of 1999. In addition to the two pathway initiative the government of Zimbabwe has other initiatives in place to help those children who will be lagging behind in grasping concepts, the Performance Lag Assessment Programme (PLAP) and the Early Reading Initiative (IRI).

**2.7.2Strategies used by Non- Governmental Organisations (NGO*)***

According to UIS- EFAGMR (2013), though the world has experienced reduction in aid from multilateral donors such as European Union (EU, World Bank, Netherlands and others are still playing a major role. The situation has improved by the coming in of Australia, Germany Sweden and United Kingdom in the donor community. UIS-EFAGMR (2011) in a study done as a case study of Ghana and Tanzania revealed that Global Initiative on out of school children was launched in 2010 by UNESCO Institute for Statistics and UNICEF. Its task is to release reports on findings on out of school children in some countries of the world over

Research done by UIS- EFAGMR, (2011) in Tanzania by reveals Action Aid’s Access (NGO) programme runs the Complementary Basic Education Project (COBET). According to the ministry of education in Tanzania COBET centres have promoted a downward trend of figures of students dropping out of school. This COBET is an informal school system set up locally by the ministry of Education and vocational training with no fees or uniform focusing on numeracy and life skills and times attached to a local primary. Another strategy used by NGOs in Tanzania was revealed in the study done by Sebates (2010) which was being funded by USAID. The strategy is Radio Instruction to Strengthen Education (RISE) which uses Interactive Radio Instruction (IRI) for children who do not attend pre- primary school in Zanzibar and the under privileged also those that live far from school. The main aim is to channel students into mainstream primary schools.

Zimbabwe MDGs status report (2010 revealed that government of Zimbabwe improved the pupil- text book ratio through the Education Transitional Fund (ETF) which was established by international partners such as UNICEF and UNESCO together with the ministry of primary and secondary education. In the Zimbabwe MDGs status report (2010) it was revealed that a total of 13 million primary school text books were obtained enough to provide about 5 text books per child. The ETF programme according to the MDGs status report (2013) is extending its services to cover curricula review, teacher training of teachers to teach subjects such as mathematics, science and English in secondary schools which started in 2014 in various universities dotted around the country. In addition, the ETF programme is covering provision of early childhood development (ECD) kits, school grants and education information systems Civil Society Organisation (CSO) report, 2014). Zimbabwe Medium-Term- Plan report (2014) has revealed that the government through the ministry of primary and secondary education has introduced e- learning as its flagship. The programme is centred on teaching and learning mathematics and science and has started with pilot schools. This will put Zimbabwean education in line with the global trends.

According to the study by Hunt (2008) Ghana employed a school feeding scheme as way of promoting the movement of pupils as a cohort up to graduation or completion of a learning programme. This policy solved two problems, malnutrition and improved retention and completion in schools. Sebates (2010) noted that such policies encourage children to enrol at the correct age for their grade, remain in school and complete their course. Hunt (2008) carried out a research in South Africa and revealed that in that country a foster care grant is available to the OVCs country wide. In the same research it was revealed that Amnesty International provide food rations as well and different kinds of support material to the disadvantaged school going age to promote school completion

According to Mavambo Trust Annual Report (2009) the trust was formed in 2001 to assist children in accessing education and promoting retention and completion of education of the underprivileged children in Mabvuku, Tafara and Bhobho areas as well as those in Caledonnia farm in Harare. Among other provisions Mavambo Trust provide school lunch to orphans and vulnerable children. In addition, Mavambo Trust annual report (2009) revealed that it helps the families of the OVCs to maintain nutritional gardens; these will go a long way in alleviating malnutrition problems in this community.

According to Mavambo Trust annual Report (2009) the Trust was formed in 2001 to assist children in accessing education and promoting retention and completion of those children from underprivileged homes in Mabvuku- Tafara community. More so Chiedza Child Care Centre was established in 2001. Among its objectives there is one to ensure the retention and completion school of all OVCs of school going age in the Harare suburbs of Mbare, Sunningdale, Waterfalls and Ardbennie and the attainment of quality education (Chiedza Child Care Centre, 2013).In its education activities Chiedza Child Care Centre offers OVCs school fees, uniforms, books and they have a resource centre. This is where children who are out of school are exposed to various reading material including specific school text books and computers (Chiedza Child Centre annual report, 2013).

**2.8 Strategies Used by the Communities**

**2.8.1 Improving Level of Parents’ Education**

Hunt (2008) in their research done in Uganda recommended programmes of adult education as a way of improving parental attitude towards schooling. The programme was envisaged to aide in enhancing attitudinal change among illiterate and ignorant parents in favour of child education. Furthermore in this regard the study recommended the expansion of lifelong education and introduction of technical vocational subjects. The technical vocational subjects were to enable parents to carry out projects in the community which were in turn going to create employment for their children.

**2.8.2 Parents’ School Management Committees**

Research done by Human Rights Watch (2014) in India revealed that parents who are members of the management committees (SMCs) work with block resource staff, community members and local authorities to make regular school visits and hold meetings for school development plan and ensure the special training programmes are properly designed and implemented for out of school children so that they can be readmitted to age appropriate classes. Human Rights Watch (2014) in a study done in India revealed that there are councils called Panchayat (local village council) The Panchayat are responsible for monitoring schools and implementing the education law. However, most of them rarely receive training to carry out these responsibilities. One of the major responsibilities is to keep records of school- going children and those will have dropped out.

A study carried out by Chimombo et al (2000) in Malawi revealed that chief and school committees possess power which they channel towards helping the OVCs back into school. They are the driving force behind the Mwambo (chief) of the village. However, the study revealed that there was need to sensitize these key stake holders and empower them with appropriate support to take a lead in encouraging drop outs to come back to school or engage in lifelong learning programmes. In an annual report for Zimbabwe Mavambo Trust a non- governmental organisation it was revealed that community members are spearheading awareness campaigns. These campaigns were held in Harare metropolitan province in Mabvuku- Tafara community on enacted laws of Zimbabwe that aim at redressing cultural practices that normally lead children to drop out of school. More so Chawafambira (2010) in her research done in Epworth, Zimbabwe noted that Mavambo Trust is working with parents and children in the Girl Education Movement (GEM).

According to Hunt (2008) pre-school centres can help prevent drop outs, as elder children (usually girls) with child care responsibilities are frequently removed from school to look after younger siblings Moreover evidence in the same study suggest that children attending pre-school in some contexts remain in school longer and are less likely to drop out of school

Research done by Chinyoka (2014) in Masvingo revealed that studies indicated that a positive family climate favours the development of a well-adapted, mature, stable and integrated learner. The study revealed that homes promote educational advancement through helping students with their homework. The study recommended clear lines of communication between parents and teachers through consultation days and open days. Gwirayi (2010) highlighted that parental support build students’ high expectations.

**2.9 Strategies by the Schools**

**2.9.1 Support teaching and learning materials and environment**

According to Sebates (2010) in a research done in Tanzania learning was made more beneficial to young children by making schools user friendly. It was revealed in the research that children with special needs such as visual impairments had some rumps and rails built around most schools to their movement. In the same report it was noted that the proper sanitary facilities were put in place for older girls to use during their menstrual cycle. Furthermore, UIS- EFAGMR (2011) noted that teachers in Ghana have promoted dropins or retention and completion rates by providing writing material on condition that children attend school regularly. The study recommended this proactive approach to the problem of retention and completion.

**2.9.2 Teaching methods and classroom dynamics**

UNESCO-IS (2013) noted that in Portland, a teacher can identify a student’s problem for example a student may behave in such way to indicate that she or he is not benefiting from the process. The teacher can recommend such a student to transfer to what they term ‘alternative schooling’. This is sort of a vocational school where students are awarded high school diplomas as well as learning skills of the careers the want to pursue in future.

Amnesty international (2014) revealed that in California to reduce the number of students who dropout out of schools, schools should make the whole learning process pupil centred. Amnesty International (2013) further noted that in California to curb dropping out teachers were addressing all forms of knowledge surrounding the learner. The results of the study revealed that teachers were educating the whole child using the multi- cultural approach to teaching. The study revealed that schools in California and New York have policies for social and emotional learning. Students are exposed to subjects as music dance and drama, history and literature. In the research done by UNESCO- World Education Data (2010) in Tanzania teachers’ teaching methods included the use of multicultural approach to teaching. The teachers, according to the report revealed that, teachers derived their learning content from the diverse cultural backgrounds of the pupils.

Sebates (2010) to reduce dropping out of school because of various forms of discrimination, teachers need to adopt multicultural approach to teaching. Sebates (2010) postulates that multi-cultural approach to teaching enables the teacher to accommodate students from diverse cultural backgrounds. In addition, the Zimbabwe MDGs Status Report (2010) noted that meaningful interaction is important for effective teaching hence the need to have a reasonable teacher pupil ratio.

**2.9.3 Teacher- pupil interaction**

The study carried out in Malawi by Chimombo et al (2000) revealed that classroom discourse and questioning styles were still the traditional ones. The teachers still confine themselves to the front only. The only time that the teacher interacts with pupils is when pupils are answering questions or when teacher is marking exercise books. However, Hunt (2008) highlighted that teachers play an important role in the trajectory of students throughout the formal schooling experience. UNESCO- World Data on Education (2012) further stated that positive teacher student relationships enable student to feel safe and secure in their learning environments and provide scaffolding.

Sebates (2010) echoed the same sentiments pointing out that teachers who support students in the learning environment can positively impact on their social and academic outcomes which are important for the long term trajectory of school and eventually employment (Hunt 2008).

**2.9.4 Language of instruction**

Fact sheet-UIS EFA -GMR (2011) revealed that Kiswahili spoken by majority of Tanzanians as a second language became the language of instruction in the first few grades and an official language as well as English. The report revealed that experienced teachers are allocated first grades in the primary schools. The report further revealed that standard 1 and 2 as well as 5 are given extra lessons in mathematics and English instead of grade retention or repetition to those who fall behind to minimise withdrawal or dropping out because of frustration.

Zimbabwe Education Management Report (2013) noted that the mother tongue was to remain the language of instruction at Early Childhood Education Centres (ECEC) level and shall continue to be the language of instruction in the three years of formal education (Education (Amendment) Act 1991). Zimbabwe- Education Medium Term Plan (2012) revealed the primary schools are implementing the language policy. Though Zimbabwe education system is a product of colonial masters, in the primary schools most instructions at infant level are given in the local language then from the third grade upwards children are exposed to English as a medium of instruction.

**2.10 Summary of the chapter**

Having explored the two perspectives conflict –Marxist and symbolic interactionist, the researcher noted that there are still glaring gaps in literature to be filled in. Although there is literature that explains strategies used by other teachers there are still gaps that remain a rich area for research. The researcher explored literature on causes of low advancement but intertwining these strategies need to be researched in detail. Thus, the research seeks to fill in grey areas identified in the reviewed literature. The next chapter is going to deal with the research methodology.

**CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

**3.1 Introduction**

This chapter’s main thrust is to focus on research methodology that is going to be used in the study. The qualitative research design has been selected. Thereafter, the researcher highlighted the population. The sample and sampling methods are going to be defined and samples given. The research instruments are to be highlighted including the reliability and validity of the chosen instruments. Last but not least ethical considerations are going to be given. Finally data and analysis procedure will be highlighted.

**3.2 Research Design**

The research design according Kumar (2012) is a basic plan for a piece of empirical research, and it includes main ideas, strategy, conceptual framework, who or what will be studied, tools and procedures for collecting and analysing empirical materials. This was supported by Kombo and Tramp (2011 saying a research design is a plan or structure or guideline for data collection. They further described it as the glue that holds all elements in a research together.

The research design is the programme that guides the investigator in the process of collection, analysis and interpretation of observation, Greenfield cited in Kumar (2012) concurs with Kombo and Tromp (2011) when he says a research design “is the overall plan for how the research was conducted.” Thus it is the scheme outline that is used to generate answers to research questions.

There are several designs that are used when carrying out research. Some of the designs are developmental, experimental, action, correlation, case study cross cultural and descriptive. These designs can be qualitative or quantitative in nature, Cohen and Manion cited in Kombo and Tromp (2011). From these types of designs the research used the phenomenological case study design. The quantitative research is the one which tends to use unstructured and direct questioning. It also uses large samples and uses very specific data meant to reach to some conclusions. In addition to that Cohen and Manion (1994) cited in Kumar (2012) opined that is a quantitative research data collection instruments are questionnaires, interviews, ad hoc rating scales or observation schedules and focus group discussions. Thus, the researcher can use existing instruments or can construct ones specifically for the study.

The study adopted a qualitative phenomenological case study design because the researcher described feelings, attitudes and perceptions of the students in school, dropouts, school heads as well as of the teachers to explore the teachers’ strategies of empowering pupils on the importance of educational advancement in Mabvuku-Tafara area. The case study enables the researcher to focus on a specific and interesting case for example in this case low advancement of children in school of the Mabvuku- Tafara community.

The researcher used the case study because the study was focused on a particular area with a peculiar problem. In this case Mabvuku-Tafara cluster has a pertinent problem of low advancement in education by pupils. The case study enabled the researcher to get an in depth description on the issue of low advancement in the Mabvuku – Tafara cluster. A case study enabled the researcher to analyse and synthesize the issues that are specific to low advancement in schools and strategies employed by teachers to empower pupils for educational advancement.

More so when informing others of the findings about the study of Mabvuku- Tafara cluster, this enabled the researcher to make more interesting topics than purely statistical survey. More so the case study results can have a strong impact than pages of statistical calculations to the general community in the cluster. A case study enabled the researcher to classify attitudes, feeling and perspectives that cannot be quantified. In addition, case studies are regarded as a step to action. Case studies also contribute to world of action. In this case, the insights of this study may be directly interpreted and put to use by the schools, teachers on individual students in Mabvuku- Tafara community and even at national level when formulating educational policies.

The language the researcher used in the case study and form of the presentation of data is capable of serving multiple audiences. Therefore, the case study is going to be used to promote democratization of decision making on educational issues in Mabvuku-Tafara community since this allows readers to judge the implications of study for on their own. Therefore this led the researcher to adopt the case study to explore the teachers’ strategies of empowering pupils on the importance of educational advancement in Mabvuku-Tafara cluster Epworth, Mabvuku-Tafara district in Harare Metropolitan province.

**3.3 Population**

Population according to Kombo and Tromp (2011) is a group of individuals, objects or items from which samples will be extracted for a research project. According to Chiromo (2006) population refers to all the individuals, units, objects or events that will be considered in a research project. Thus population is a group of individual items that share one or more characteristics from which data can be gathered and analysed. The target population in this research was the twenty eight schools found in Mabvuku- Tafara cluster from these schools teachers, school heads, students in schools and students who dropped out of these schools were included.

**3.4 Sample**

A sample consists of a subset of the population. According to Chiromo (2006) it is a smaller group or a subset of the population selected from the entire population. This is a number of individuals or objects from population of which the selected group contains elements representative of the characteristics found in the entire group, (Cohen and Manion cited Kombo and Tramp, 2011). Van Daten cited by Kumar (2012) pointed out that in a case study a sample of ten to twenty percent is representative and this means four out of the twenty eight schools is 14.2% and this can be generalized to a larger population.

***Table: 3.4.1 The total sample size***

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Sample** | **Number** |
| Schools | 4 |
| Heads of schools | 4 |
| Teachers | 16 |
| Students | 16 |
| Dropouts | 8 |
| Total sample size | 48 |

The 16 teachers were selected four from each of the four schools in Mabvuku- Tafara cluster as well as four school Heads of these schools. A sample of sixteen students was selected from the one hundred and sixty from grade five, six and seven as well as form three and four in the Mabvuku- Tafara cluster to be used as respondents. The researcher selected 8 drop outs from a number of children who were loitering doing various informal activities at Kamunhu Shopping Centre and in residential places in Mabvuku- Tafara cluster.

**3.5 Sampling Procedures**

According to Kombo and Tromp (2011) the researcher uses various techniques to get people places or things to study. Thus, sampling involves selecting a number of individuals or objects from a population such that selected groups contain elements representative of the characteristics found in the entire group. Kombo and Tromp (2011) divided the procedure into the broad areas. These are probability and non-probability sampling. Probability sampling is further subdivided into simple random sampling, stratified sampling and cluster sampling. The other broad area is non-probability where we have quota sampling and purposive sampling (Kumar, 2012).

In this research both procedures were used to select respondents needed for the research. The researcher used the stratified random sampling method so that the sample has the characteristics of the whole population. The population was heterogeneous hence was need to capture those unique characteristics peculiar to each stratum. Thus the researcher used stratified random sampling to select teachers as well as students in school. This was to accommodate the peculiar characteristics from each stratum. The schools, Head of schools and dropouts were selected using purposive sampling.

**3.6 Data Collection Instruments**

Kombo and Tromp (2011) define a research instrument as any device for systematically collecting data such as interviews, questionnaires, focus group discussions and observations. Borg and Gall cited in Kumar (2012) argued that research instruments can be referred to as data collection tools.

**3.6.1 Focus Group Discussions**

The researcher used the focus group discussion. A recording was made of the discussion. According to Kumar (2012) a focus group discussions as a research technique implies a semi-structured group interview moderated by the discussion leader, held in an in informal setting with the purpose of obtaining information from school children by group interaction on the causes of low advancement and other related issues that promote empowerment of pupils on the importance of educational advancement. The researcher through the use of focus group discussion will be able to explore and generate a widening of responses concerning the strategies of teachers of empowering pupils on the importance of educational advancement. By so doing the researcher will enable the students to release inhibitions that might have otherwise discouraged them to disclose important information (Kombo and Tromp, 2011).

The researcher used the focus group discussions because they allow the students an opportunity not just to respond in short but also to provide justifications and evaluations of issues contained in the questions. The focus group discussions enabled students to build on each other’s’ ideas and comments to provide in depth add value to insights (Creswell, 2012). Thus, the researcher was able to get within a short space of time from students. The focus group discussions enabled the researcher to assess the needs, develop interventions or suggest ways of improving existing programmes that promote educational advancement in Mabvuku- Tafara cluster in Harare Metropolitan province. Therefore the researcher used this instrument to get information from students/learners in terms of progression, retention a completion and dropping out in relation to strategies used by teachers and the community as they move up the educational ladder as a cohort.

**3.6.2 The Unstructured interviews**

The researcher used the unstructured interviews to collect data from school heads and from children who dropped out of school. According to Kombo and Tromp (2011), unstructured interview is an instrument where the researcher had some idea in mind of the topics to cover. In this case the researcher had interview guides to conduct the interviews of the two different groups of respondents. The unstructured interview in this study the research had a guide on concepts and or loose questions on pupils’ progression, retention, dropping out, dropping-in and interventions in place in schools to empower pupils on the importance of educational advancement which the researcher converted to spontaneous questions during the interview session. The unstructured interviews are in-depth interviews that probed head of schools and schools drop outs to get them express detailed views, perceptions and beliefs about the importance of empowering pupils for educational advancement hence the tool was ideal good for this qualitative research.

With the use of unstructured interviews the respondents were given as much freedom to express themselves as necessary. This enabled the researcher to have accurate information since this is going to be a face to face contact. The respondents are going to have the opportunity to seek clarity for understanding thereby promoting flexibility (Kumar, 2012). The purpose of this instrument is to get the respondent’s reaction and to uncover the fundamental reasons underpinning the attitudes, perceptions and views on school and classroom dynamics that have an impact on the importance of empowering students for educational advancement. The researcher moved around schools to collect data from Heads of schools and in places where school drop outs carry their informal activities.

**3.6.3 Open-ended Questionnaire**

According to Creswell (2012) a questionnaire is a method used to collect data using a list of questions to which a person responds in writing. More so a questionnaire can be defined as a form which consists of a series of questions and prompts for the respondent. The researcher used the questionnaire to collect data from teachers on teachers’ strategies of empowering pupils on the importance of educational advancement.

It was designed to capture perceptions, opinions and attitudes of teachers on students progression, retention, completion, dropping-out and strategies they use to empower pupils on the importance of educational advancement. More so to capture teachers’ perceptions, views and attitudes on school and classroom dynamics that can be used to empower pupils on the importance of educational advancement. The questionnaire elicited the effectiveness of the strategies that are being used by teachers to empower pupils on the importance of educational advancement.

Open-ended questions can be used in used in a qualitative research because they provide a response format that gives respondents the freedom to provide any answer. The researcher made sense of all responses given, constructed appropriate categories and then coded the categories so that data could be analysed. Open-ended questions are the most important tool in a qualitative research since they offer important and unpredictable insight into human behaviour (Kumar, 2012).The researcher benefitted from Cohen and Manion (1994) view that open-ended questionnaires should be flexible to allow the teachers to give their real responses on low advancement causes, teachers strategies used to empower pupils to move up the educational ladder, the effectiveness of these strategies and the attitudes of parents and community.

In light of the above advantages, the open ended questionnaire was used as a strategy to collect data in this research. The questionnaire was administered to teachers. The researcher made a follow-up after seven days in order to give respondents time to answer in full.

**3.6 Reliability and Validity**

Validity as defined by Creswell (2012) is viewed as the meaningfulness and usefulness of research findings. The researcher increased validity of the research by subjecting the research instruments to some pre-tests. Eight colleagues at the work place were tasked with answering questionnaires. Pilot testing of interviews was carried out using the students at Courtney Selous primary school. Discussion was further carried out by the supervisor before the instruments were used.

According to Kombo and Tromp (2011) a place of research is reliable when replicated (Repeated under exactly the same conditions) it produces the same result. In this research the presence of the interviewer for clarity to the meaning of confusing questions ensured reliability of the research findings. Cohen and Manion (1994) view triangulation as characterised by multi-methods approach to a problem in contrast to a single method approach. There are various types of triangulation namely time, space and investigator, theoretical methodological and combined levels of triangulation.

The researcher used two types, methodological and combined levels of triangulation. Methodological triangulation involved the use of the same instrument on different situations or different groups of respondents to collect data. In this research the interview was used to collect data from teachers and drop outs. This type of triangulation within method concerns the replication of a study as a check on reliability.

In addition the researcher used combined levels of triangulation according to Cohen and Manion (1994) involves the use of analysis from the three principal levels namely individual level, interactive level and the level of collectivises such as organisations. Thus the researcher collected data from teachers and dropouts who gave individual views, perceptions and opinions.

To add on to that, the researcher used a focus group discussion to collect data from students in school was an interactive approach. The researcher collected data from the Heads of schools who gave their views, perceptions and opinions on behalf of their organisations on teachers’ strategies of empowering pupils on the importance of educational advancement. This lead to more valid and reliable data because the weaknesses of each level were strengthened by using this combined approach.

**3.7 Data Collection Procedures**

The researcher used an introductory letter that was collected from the university to seek authority from the Ministry of Primary and Secondary education to get into schools. The researcher purposively selected schools to visit. These four schools represented the larger population in the cluster. Thereafter, at each school the researcher used stratified random sampling to select pupils for the focus group discussion from the grade five, grade six and seven at primary schools and from form threes and fours at secondary schools. The researcher stratified the students by gender. Then from each stratum the researcher randomly selected students using the hat system. Only two cards were written Yes and the rest No. Pupils picked cards randomly from the box and those who picked Yes were considered for the focus group discussion. The teachers were selected using the same sampling technique to complete the questionnaire.

The focus group discussions were done in an interactive manner with a group of four students. The researcher led the discussion being guided by the focus group discussion guide. The researcher jotted down notes on the contributions of students in the discussion for fifteen minutes during their break time or lunch hours the discussion did not disrupt lessons. The questionnaires were hand delivered to the teachers selected. The teachers completed the open ended questionnaires either by putting a tick or by filling in on blank spaces provided on the questionnaire. Thereafter the researcher collected the questionnaires after three days personally.

For the unstructured interviews, the researcher made an appointment with school Heads and ring leaders of the drop outs who do informal activities at Kamunhu – Shopping centre in Mabvuku-Tafara community. The researcher used the interview guide to interview the school Heads and drop outs and used the spaces provided on the interview guide to write down the responses of the interviewees.

**3.9 Ethical Considerations**

According to Kumar (2012) research ethics are a complex construct, essentially concerned with principles of right and wrong conduct. Kombo and Tromp (2011) highlighted that researchers whose subjects are people or animals must consider the conduct of their research and give attention to ethical issues associated with carrying out their research. The researcher informed the respondents the purpose of the study.

The interview sessions unfolded with the researcher clarifying the purpose of the research and the interviews so as to alert participants to the principle of informed consent as well reassuring them of their rights during participation in the study. Participants were assured of the confidential nature of their responses as well as their rights to withdraw from the research any time should they deem in fit and that there would be no penalty should they decide to withdraw from study. As mentioned earlier the researcher obtained necessary ethical clearance for the permission to conduct the study from the Ministry of Primary and secondary schools. These measures formed part of the researcher’s advance protocols.

As a measure of confidentiality the names of participants were not included during the collection of data. The researcher made more generic, specific details or references which could lead a reader to deduce identify of the participants. Thus ethical considerations are of particular concern in my research since it has sections which deal with potentially sensitive issues such as interviewing the school drop outs. In addition the researcher expected teachers to give their views and opinions on the strategies they use to empower pupils on the importance of educational advancement.

**3.10 Data analysis**

**3.10.1 Procedure**

Creswell (2012) described data analysis procedure as involving analytic procedures; “It provides a way of drawing inductive inferences from data and distinguishing the signal (the phenomenon of interest) from noise (statistical fluctuations) present in data.” Thus, this data analysis involves uncovering underlying structures, extracting important variables, detecting any anomalies underlying assumption. The researcher sieved through all instruments namely questionnaire, interview notes and focus group discussion noted manually to identify similar variables and then categorize them under thematic areas. Thus in this research the researcher used data collected from focus group discussions, interviews and questionnaires. The notes collected were analysed thematically.

The themes were in line with the research objectives and research questions. Topics or major subjects are the ones which were called themes, for example dropout prevalence rate, causes of low advancement, strategies used by teachers, the effectiveness of strategies in place and attitudes of parents and community on the issue of low advancement of pupils in Mabvuku- Tafara cluster in Epworth, Mabvuku- Tafara district in Harare Metropolitan province.

**3.10.2 Steps to be followed**

A number of steps were involved when analysing the data. Firstly the researcher analysed the collected and notes that were relevant to the research objectives and questions. Then the researcher developed a coding system of tallying using data and themes developed. Thereafter, the researcher then classified issues covered using the themes and revisited the highlighted texts and key quotations as well as insights and interpretations. Coded material was placed under the major themes or topics identified. The researcher put all material relevant to a certain theme together and presented it in tables, pie charts and bar graphs to make it easier to interpret the information.

**3.11 Summary of the Chapter**

This chapter mainly concerned itself with identification of the main research design. A sample of teachers was selected using stratified random sampling, heads of schools and school drop outs were purposively selected. Then lastly stratified random sampling was used as well to select students from primary and secondary schools. The focus group discussions, interviews and questionnaires were considered for triangulation. Ethical considerations were highlighted and lastly data collection procedures and analysis procedures were presented. The next chapter is going to be on presenting the data, analysing and presenting the findings.

**CHAPTER FOUR: DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**

**4.1 Introduction**

This chapter focuses on the presentation, analysis, interpretation and discussion of the research findings. The aim is to draw conclusions and meanings from an array of data. Thus the researcher is going to make use of data collected during field work from the 44 respondents comprising sixteen (16) teachers, four (4) School Heads, sixteen (16) students and eight (8) dropouts in Mabvuku- Tafara educational cluster. From the data, the researcher coded categories which later led to themes which were used to present data on the basis of the research questions the uncoded data was also presented in a narrative form.

**4.2 Prevalence of School Dropouts**

**Figure 4.2.1 Checklist table on prevalence of drop outs at the four schools under study per year.**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **School** | **2012** | | **2013** | | **2014** | | **Total** | |
|  | **M** | **F** | **M** | **F** | **M** | **F** | **M** | **F** |
| **W** | 20 | 20 | 20 | 25 | 27 | 33 | 67 | 78 |
| **X** | 19 | 17 | 14 | 21 | 23 | 30 | 56 | 68 |
| **Y** | 12 | **-** | 15 | **-** | 20 | **-** | 47 | **-** |
| **Z** | **-** | 15 | **-** | 19 | **-** | 23 | **-** | 57 |
| **Total** | 51 | 52 | 49 | 65 | 70 | 86 | 170 | 203 |

More girls than boys are dropping out of school each year in Mabvuku- Tafara educational cluster. Teachers revealed that in their classes they lose more girls than boys as reflected by the number of girls who return to school after every school holiday which is always lower than that of boys. The school Head associated this trend to economic hardships, level of education of parents. In addition the value that is placed on the girl child as compared to the boy in issues to do with empowerment in the family has an effect. The school Head stated that most of the reasons cited by the girls for being absent from school are to do with family responsibilities. The focus group discussion held at one of the schools revealed that more girls are dropping out schools than boys. The students indicated that there are a number of girls who were no longer coming to in their locality. The majority are girls who are now working as house maids or baby miners in the nearby affluent suburbs and military camps. One of the students indicated that her sister who was doing form three dropped out of school with her two friends and are now working as vendors at the local shopping centre. However, another member of the group was quick to reveal that even boys are leaving school to engage in informal activities such doing some piece jobs in the construction sites within the community. One of the students gave this comment;

*We started losing our friends in class especially those who come from illegal*

*settlements when we were in grade five especially girls.*

The above findings revealed that boys were also dropping out of school though not in large volumes.

The interview responses from the dropouts indicated that in the community the number of children in the streets especially those found doing informal and illegal activities at the local business centre has risen. One of the dropouts respondent stated that of though boys engaged in informal activities at the business centre appear to be more than girls, the number of girls who dropped out of school is higher because most of them are employed as housemaids or baby minders (child labour) in the nearby military camps and affluent suburbs. To add on to that one of the School Heads indicated that as male children;

*As they get older they are expected to carry out some family responsibilities. These responsibilities automatically exert more pressure on them and will fail to balance the two and will automatically drop out of school.*

During the focus group discussion students pointed out that they have friends who are no longer coming to school who dropped out first term form three because they failed to get complete school uniform. One student indicated that his friend dropped out to join his brother who dropped out the previous year who is a kombi conductor. He is now touting for passengers at the bus terminus at the shopping centre. The students in the focus group discussion revealed that most of the students who drop out of school are from the impoverished catchment areas of Mabvuku- Tafara educational cluster.

The interview responses from dropouts revealed that some of the are former students of one of the schools. One dropout cited that;

*We made up our mind the three of us when we were in form three and left school because most of other who were before us who passed with flying colours are still in the streets jobless. Now we are making fast money here.*

The above findings indicate that boys are not being spared by the forces that are pushing students out of school in Mabvuku- Tafara cluster though in smaller numbers.

The majority revealed that they lose their friends in class starting from form two second term, and the numbers gradually increase as we move up the educational ladder. One of the group members stated that;

*In form two, only two girls dropped out of school but in form three they lost five and in form four five did not turn up first term because of pregnancy and financial constraints.*

Responses from other group members indicated that some the students fail even turn up for examinations after having registered. One of the female dropouts indicated that;

*Vanasikana vazhinji varipano vakarega chikoro vachibva pachikoro ipapa uye varikutowanda. [Most of the girls who are doing informal activities and clandestine activities are former students of this school.]*

The above findings reveal that the number students dropping out of school is going up on yearly basis.

**4.3 Causes of low advancement in Education**

**Figure 4.2.1 Teachers and Students responses on causes of low advancement**

N= 16 Teachers N = 16 Students

**Key**

A - Low academic achievement and teachers and pupils’ attitude

B - Classroom dynamics and teaching methods

C - Early marriages, religious and cultural reasons

D - Government policies and economic hardships

E - Family structure, poverty and child labour

The above data shows that more School and teachers pointed out different causes of low advancement from those identified by pupils and drop outs. Teachers and School Heads considered government policies and economic hardships to be the most major causes whereas the pupils and dropouts indicated classroom dynamics as the most prevalent causes whereas the drop outs and pupils indicated classroom dynamics as the major cause of low advancement in schools in Mabvuku- Tafara community. Both students and teachers revealed that early marriages, religious and cultural practices are the minor causes of low advancement. The data reveals that the factors that are regarded by teachers and School Heads as major causes of low advancement are regarded as the least causes of educational advancement by students and dropouts. One School Head indicated that;

*The government grants are so erratic and the number of pupils benefiting from BEAM per*

*school is so small as compared to the number of children impoverished or disadvantaged*

*homes in school.*

The roles given to girls and responsibilities were identified as the major cause of low educational advancement in the focus group discussions. Another student in the focus group discussion was quick to identify early marriages and cultural practices. However, the majority of students concurred with school dropouts that low academic achievements, teachers’ attitudes and classroom dynamics where aspects that frustrates them out of school.

The interview responses from dropouts and students indicated that to a certain extent family structures, poverty and child labour contributes to children’s dropping out of school in Mabvuku- Tafara community. One of the dropout respondents reported that;

*I lost my parents from HIV and AIDS. I am the eldest child and my brother and sister are getting old I feel I should stop going to school and get a job so that I keep them in school and will have food on the table.*

This clearly indicates how the family structures are also contributory factor on low advancement in schools in Mabvuku –Tafara educational cluster.

**4.4.0 Teachers strategies of empowering pupils on the importance of educational advancement**

**4.4.1The strategies used by teachers in empowering pupils**

The teachers were further requested to indicate the strategies they use to empower pupils on the importance of educational advancement.

**Figure 4.4.1 Strategies used by teachers (N=16)**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Strategies** | **No. of responses** |
| Prompt marking of children’s work | 16 |
| Giving encouraging comments to pupils | 8 |
| Use of government initiatives such as PLAP AND ERI | 6 |
| Use of multi-cultural teaching approaches | 6 |
| Using the inclusive education initiative | 9 |
| Consideration of individual differences | 6 |
| Involvement of pupils in decision making | 7 |
| Giving opportunities to children to grow educationally through giving them freedom to explore learning opportunities | **7** |

Strategies suggested by teachers do not help the orphans and vulnerable children move up the educational ladder most teachers indicated prompt marking of children’s work as the best way to help children move up the educational ladder. Giving comments which are encouraging, considering individual differences and pupil involvement in decision making were the ones that are rarely used by teachers to help children move up the educational ladder. However, these proved to be only the traditional methods which do not put into cognisance the needs of the children from poor homes.

The data collected from the School Heads interviewed indicated that very few teachers are conversant with government initiatives such as inclusive education, PLAP and ERI. One of the School Heads indicated that on inclusive education teachers at his school always sight lack of expertise. One of the School Heads cited;

*One of my teachers told me that, I am not trained to teach visually impaired student, I cannot.*

The above responses showed that attitude of teachers towards other methods they use do not help learners to move up the educational ladder. In most instances, the responses of school Heads indicated that teachers are still using the traditional methods of teaching which eventually are frustrating the disadvantaged children out of school. These teachers do not consider the fact that children from the subordinate class in the community have many disadvantages in matters of education. Most of these children do not have cultural capital that is provided by the home environment and is needed at school for educational advancement. The teachers therefore create a breeding ground provide unequal opportunities to learners. They do not cater for children from both dominant and subordinate classes by using the same strategies to empower pupils for educational advancement.

Furthermore, revelations from the discussion in focus groups indicated that teacher –pupil relationship is not collegial. One of the students was quick to respond that, “Our teacher assign children from affluent homes tasks and duties that brings them closer to him .They are given tasks as taking books to his car, cleaning the teachers table and cleaning the chalkboard. Children from poverty stricken homes are tasked to sweeping floors cleaning windows and watering the flowers.

The discussions from the focus groups revealed that teachers rarely involve them in decision making. One of the drop outs said that during her school days they only chose class monitors but class rules were put on the wall by the class teacher just like any other learning material. Thereafter, the teacher would make the learners read them out whilst the teacher explained them one by one. These findings show that the students lacked ownership of the whole learning process.

**4.5 Effectiveness of teachers’ strategies**

**Figure 4.5.1 Pie chart showing the effectiveness of teachers’ strategies on helping children to move up the educational ladder.**

Amongst the 16 students 64% respondents of the students revealed that the strategies used by teachers to help children move up the educational ladder were not effective because every term they are students who drop out of school in their classes. Very few students only 11% noted the strategies are very effective because in their classes they rarely experience drop out as they move up the educational ladder. The school Heads interview responses had the same view that the strategies used were not effective because in their schools the number of children dropping out of school is increasing since 2012.One of the School Heads noted;

*Most of these teachers seem to be demotivated by poor remuneration hence they do not implement most of the initiatives that help pupils to move up the educational ladder.*

The other School Heads indicated that the strategies used by teachers are not very effective in the sense that the number of children who are loitering in the streets has increased as compared to the previous years during school time. The students’ contributions during the focus group discussion indicated that the strategies used by teachers in helping children move up the educational ladder are not effective. One student pointed out that;

*Our teacher sends all those who come to school late regardless of the distance some of us travel on foot to get to school. If allowed to get into class you will not be allowed to do the work that will have done during your absence*.

The majority of students indicated that the strategies used by teachers instead frustrated the students out of school as most of their friends who dropped out of school indicated that the teachers treated them unfairly in class and though some indicated economic hardships and poverty. Some students indicated that the school system is coercive in nature as can be seen by the hierarchical authority structure. One of the students indicated that it is very difficult for a student with a problem which he or she feels that the School Head can solve it to get permission to get to the office.

The responses of school dropouts interviewed on effectiveness of the teachers’ strategies indicated that majority concurred that they were not effective. One of the drop outs who from the Nyawu cult cited that;

*The teacher instead of calling me by my name in class used to say, “Iwe Chinyawu iwe”. This did not go well with me and I failed to say out my feelings because the teacher did not freely interact with us. This went on for some time and some students were even calling me Chinyawu at school. I got frustrated and eventually dropped out of school and now selling some wares at the market.*

The other responses from drop outs indicated that they were affected by poverty more so the teachers’ strategies did not play any part in any way to accommodate them in their state and eventually dropped out of school. Another dropout girl indicated that her last term at school frustrated her because the teacher did not give her chance to work out challenges exercises in mathematics. They were only worked by boys because the teacher said they are the ones who are very good in Mathematics. These findings indicated that the teachers’ strategies were not very effective to help children move up the educational ladder. Children were frustrated by classroom dynamics and eventually dropped out

**4.6 Strategies to change the community’s attitude on pupils’ educational advancement.**

All the 16 teacher respondents revealed that they invite parents to school during consultation days as well as other members of the community to open and prize giving days. More so 10 teachers responded that they involve parents and community on empowering learners on the importance of educational advancement by making monitor their children’s home work. The teachers further noted that parents also are invited for sitting in sessions during the learning process as well as introducing the Busy Books.

However, only four teachers revealed that they carry out home visits to homes of orphans and vulnerable children. More so some teachers suggested that if they could be permitted they would want to hold awareness campaigns involving the community mentors and leaders

The findings reveal that teachers associated changing of the community’s attitude towards educational advancement with inviting the community to the school not vice versa. The responses from the School Heads interviews revealed that most teachers interact and share ideas on the importance of educational advancement only when parents come to school during consultation sessions. One of the School Heads indicated that;

*Teachers only request a parent to come to school when an issue to do with disciplinary matters crops up.*

From the above findings it shows that teachers rarely invite parents or members of the community on issues to do with advancement in education of pupils except on consultation and open days. More so, the School Heads revealed that teachers rarely go into the community to interact with them and enlighten them on the importance of educational advancement.

The focus group discussions findings concurred with teachers on parental and community involvement so as to change their attitude through the supervision of the homework given to learners. One of the members of the focus group pointed out that;

*My teacher is so strict on giving homework and he wants it signed by parents to acknowledge that they have monitored me when I was doing it before I take it to school for marking.*

From the above revelations it is clear that teachers in Mabvuku- Tafara educational cluster involve parents and the community through giving homework to change their attitude towards educational advancement. The will only if the teachers would have hold awareness campaigns enlightening the community on the importance of advancement in education of their children. Teachers need to co-opt influential members of the community to carry out the campaigns. This will go long way in helping parents as those of one of the focus group members who whom the child said he commented that;

*Iwe teacher vakovanodandivaitirebasa. Ivo vozongopiwamari. Vanobhadharirwei? [Your teacher wants me to do her work. What is she paid for?]*

In addition the responses from focus group discussions revealed that the Sitting Ins seem not to be used by the majority of teachers because they lack cooperation from the community. One of the focus group members passed a comment on this saying;

*My mother said that she was too busy at the market place that she has no time to come to school and spend 30 minutes just sitting in your class to watch your teacher teaching.*

The data collected from the interviewed dropouts revealed that teachers’ efforts to make the community change its attitude towards educational advancement were inclined to the inviting of parents to school and not the other way round. The drop outs indicated that they have only seen teachers interacting with parents on consultation and prize giving days. One of the dropouts at the shopping centre suggested that;

*Teachers should hold awareness campaigns with students and community mentors moving around the community conscentizing the community on the importance of educational advancement.*

The findings from drop outs interviews reveal that more needs to be done by teachers to make them aware of their important role they should play on empowering pupils on the importance of educational advancement.

**4.7 Discussion of findings**

Economic hardships encountered by families, economic meltdown in the country, family structure, poverty and child labour were noted by teachers and School Heads outs as the ones that led to low educational advancement. The majority of children drop out of school because of failing to get the school needs from parents. Some of the children are forced into the streets by family structures and poverty. These findings were supported by Sebates (2010) who researched in Ghana and found out that poverty and economic hardships influence low educational advancement. A child from a poor home background, were the level education of the parents is low the child is most likely to go to school with a restricted code in terms of language or without educational capital to utilize during the learning process that is normally gained from rich home environments (Gwirayi, 2010) Children from the subordinate class of the Mabvuku –Tafara community were most affected. Children from the minority cultural groups are discriminated and prejudiced during social interaction in classrooms. This was supported by Human Rights Watch (2015) when they highlighted some discriminatory attitude and tribalism in a Ghasiya Indian child who told Human Rights Watch (2013);

*The teacher tells us to sit on the other side. If we sit with others, she scolds us and asks us to sit separately. The teacher does not come anywhere near us because she says we are dirty everyday so sometimes we get angry and hit back or we just stop going to school.*

The students and school dropouts suggested that teachers and the community should come together to make some awareness programmes of enlightening the community on the importance of educational advancement. The teachers can work together with community leaders and come up with programmes such as school lunch. Those children who will not be attending school because of not having food at home will be catered for with this one midday meal. This strategy will reduce the number of school dropouts found loitering at the shopping centre looking for cheap labour, girls will be working as baby minders or house maids in the homes of the working class. This was supported in the literature reviewed, that children as young as twelve years are roped into prostitution in Epworth (Mazire and Kusena cited in the Zimbabwean Sunday Mail 28 September, 2014).

Most teachers are not conversant with government initiatives to help pupils move up the educational ladder or they do not have appropriate resources to use. Teachers have negative attitudes towards empowering children using these initiatives. Teachers mostly use prompt marking and giving encouraging comments to help pupils move up the educational ladder. The do not use methods or strategies specifically to empower children from vulnerable homes for educational advancement. However, teachers also use the social record books to identify pupils to benefit from social funds, donations and or scholarships. This is a very important strategy because it paves way for the donor community to assist the deserving students. Literature reviewed revealed that Non- Governmental Organisations such as Mavambo Trust according to Mavambo Trust (2009) were formed to assist children in accessing education and promoting retention as well as completion of education of the underprivileged children in Mabvuku- Tafara community. Such organisations often rely on the information provided by the teachers and the community.

Much more needs to be done to improve the teacher pupil interaction and classroom dynamics such as the grouping styles, questioning techniques and sitting arrangement so as to create a user friendly environment for all the children regardless of their backgrounds. The above views were supported in the reviewed literature by Rumberger and Lim (2008) that positive teacher – student relationship enable students to feel safe and secure in their learning environments there by provide scaffolding.

The community is only involved in the education of their children through Non- Governmental Organisations such as Mavambo Trust, Chiedza Child Care and local industries such as Larfarge. This was revealed in the literature review in Mavambo Trust Annual report (2009) that the trust helps families of OVCs to keep nutritional gardens. These gardens will go a long way in alleviating the problem of hunger and under nourishment among learners. Community volunteers prepare lunch at schools in the cluster for OVCs and the donor community provide the food to be prepared.

School Heads do not have school based strategies for teachers to use to empower students for educational advancement. The School Heads mostly relay on government initiatives to empower pupils for educational advancement. The teachers use Performance Lag Assessment Programme (PLAP) and Early Reading Initiative (ERI). However, more needs to be done in terms of staff developing teachers on how to implement the initiatives. More so, School Heads need to adopt an open door policy towards parents as way of making them part and parcel of the school activities. Parents will then develop a sense of ownership of the whole learning programme. The parents will then develop a positive attitude towards educational advancement. This was supported by Gwirayi (2010) who noted that parental support in learning builds the student’s high expectations. Studies by Human Rights Watch (2013) in India pointed parental involvement as a way of changing the attitudes of the community when they pointed out that parents who are members of the school management committees (SMCs) work with school staff, community members and local authorities to make regular school visits.

**4.8 Summary of the chapter**

In this chapter data collected was presented, analysed and interpreted thematically in line with the research problem. Mainly tables and a pie chart as well as bar graphs were used to present the data. The findings dealt with prevalence of school drop outs, causes and teachers’ as well as community’s strategies of empowering pupils for educational advancement. Lastly discussion of findings was done relating to the literature reviewed in the study. The next final chapter is going to summarise the entire study, give conclusions as well as the recommendations.

**CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

**5.1 Introduction**

This chapter summarizes the whole research in line with the findings on exploring teachers and community’s strategies of empowering pupils on the importance of educational advancement. Discussions were done with regard to the research objectives and the questions. Conclusions and recommendations in relation to the study were also highlighted.

**5.2 Summary**

The main objectives of the study were to determine dropout prevalence rate, determine the causes for low advancement in schools from the fifth grade to secondary school, as well as identifying teachers’ strategies of empowering pupils on the importance of educational advancement and suggesting strategies to change the attitude of the community on pupils’ educational advancement. The research was done in Mabvuku- Tafara cluster in Epworth, Mabvuku- Tafara cluster in Harare Metropolitan province using qualitative research design. Questionnaire was administered to 16 teachers, interviews were administered to 4 School Heads and 8 school dropouts and lastly focus group discussions were conducted with 16 students. The sample for the research was 44comprised of 16 teachers, 16 students, 4 Schools Heads and 8 dropouts .The teachers and students were selected using stratified random sampling procedure. School Heads and school drop outs were purposively selected for the study. To collect data the researcher employed the questionnaire, focus group discussion and the interview guide.

According to the school administration and teachers the government policies and economic meltdown and the home poor home background are the major causes of low educational advancement in Mabvuku –Tafara. Teachers felt that the children come to school already frustrated with the economic hardships hence were not easy to motivate and they do not make it up the educational ladder. Thus, teachers felt that their strategies of empowering pupils for educational advancement were not very effective. Contrary to the above, dropouts and students identified the school environment, teaching methods and classroom dynamics as major causes of low advancement. The teachers are using traditional methods to empower children for educational advancement of which these will make one group of this community benefit from the education system. Only those children from the rich and working class families who bring to school educational capital which helps them to grasp concepts will benefit. The teachers give children home work of which children from the disadvantaged homes do not have anyone to help them and they always bring it back to school to finished a or poorly done. The teachers invite parents to school for consultations and Sitting In sessions. Parents from disadvantaged homes do not know the importance of these strategies and normally they do not come to attend. This will make the children from the disadvantaged homes discriminated from the whole learning process. The findings revealed that improvement on the teachers’ intervention strategies on empowering pupils on educational advancement will go a long way in reducing number of school dropouts in Mabvuku- Tafara community. To empower pupils for educational advancement both teachers and members of the community should create an environment which promotes equal participation in the educational activities. Community and teachers should be aware of the impact of their involvement in the learning of their children. Teachers should be aware of the impact of classroom dynamics such as issues related to discipline, issuing of rewards and punishment, sitting arrangement, grouping and interaction in and outside the class. Teachers should employ teaching methods that put the child at the centre of the whole learning process.

**5.3 Conclusions**

There is a higher prevalence dropout rate of girls than boys in the Mabvuku –Tafara educational cluster. This is caused by the socially constructed roles of the girl- child in the community and unequal treatment at home. Teachers only assist those children from the affluent homes to move up the educational ladder not paying attention to the needs of the orphans and vulnerable children from the underprivileged homes. Teachers do not use any other methods besides the traditional ones to empower the disadvantaged group of learners for educational advancement. The school’s organisational structures and expectations did not provide needed support to these children hence they became frustrated and dropped out of school. The country’s economic meltdown and socio-economic factors fuelled the situation by the government failing to implement fully its initiatives such as the BEAM for the benefit of all the disadvantaged and PLAP. Teachers lack adequate knowledge of implementing the inclusive education and ERI initiatives. The teacher low morale because of poor remunerations leads to disengagement which has led to poor performance that pushes children out of school.

Parents’ level of education made it difficult for children to benefit from extension work given to them by teachers inform of homework. Parents in this community because of poverty hardly have that time to attend school functions because most of the time they will engage in activities that bring food on the table, At times parents send their children especially girls to carry out informal activities to generate income instead of going to school. These children end up engaging in clandestine activities such as substance and alcohol abuse and prostitution.

Teachers use approaches that were discriminative in nature and this resulted in some children frustrated and eventually dropped out of school. Normally they got frustrated by negative labelling, stereotyping and prejudice perpetuated by the school environment. The community needed to have community mentors to help parents and teachers in character building and enlightening pupils on the importance of moving up the educational ladder and completing the course.

The strategies used by teachers to empower pupils on the importance of educational advancement were did not cater for the empowerment of children from the disadvantaged homes. Parents from rich and working class families came to school when invited at functions. The teachers’ strategies that had something to do with improvement of teacher-pupil relationship and creating a user friendly learning environment were given less attention. The members of the community were involved in empowering pupils for educational advancement through working with NGOs such as the Chiedza Child Care Trust and Mavambo Trust. Communities were assisted to maintain nutritional gardens at homes of OVCs. These gardens were introduced as a way of supplementing nutritional food for the school going children in these homes. More so volunteer parents prepared food for the children from poor homes during the school feeding programmes that were sponsored by Mavambo Trust.

Teachers’ initiatives such as the Sitting In sessions and Busy Books needs parental support for them to bring about positive results on empowering pupils on the importance of educational advancement. On the other hand government initiatives such as PLAP and ERI and inclusive education can be very effective if the teachers are equipped with necessary skills and expertise.

**5.4 Recommendations**

In light of the findings of the research the current researcher advances the following recommendations directed at school authorities, teachers, parents, the community at large and policy makers:

* Schools in Mabvuku-Tafara education cluster should hold career guidance and awareness campaigns targeting both school pupils and local parents. These should be focused on the importance of educational advancement by pupils.
* Mabvuku-Tafara based industries like Larfarge as part of corporate social responsibility should plough back profits to schools in the cluster targeting school children from disadvantaged homes. This can be done through forming scholarship selection committees comprising School Heads, teachers, parents and captains of industries.
* The Ministry of Primary and Secondary education should run workshops, seminars and conferences targeting teachers in the cluster on government initiatives such as Performance Lag Assessment Programme (PLAP), Early Reading Initiative (ERI) and inclusive education. Through that way all students in a school environment would feel involved and as such would want to complete the educational cycle.
* The School Heads in Mabvuku- Tafara cluster should organise workshops on gender responsive and inclusive teaching methods and multi-cultural approach to teaching.
* Ministry of Primary and Secondary education experts on teaching methods that empower pupils for educational advancement such as gender responsive and inclusive methods and multi-cultural teaching to be invited to workshops to share experiences with teachers in Mabvuku-Tafara cluster.
* Government authorities should put in place policies that enforce parents to keep pupils in schools as well as sensitizing them with the existing one such as the P35 and P77 that promote educational advancement.
* A revolving fund pooled by parents, local authorities and government should be set aside for disadvantaged children.
* Further researchers could be carried out by other teachers digging deeper into causes of low education advancement in the cluster so as to nip the vice on the bud and disseminating information even to teachers and school authorities.

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**Appendix I**

**Focus group discussion guide for students**

This focus group discussion is on an educational project which seeks to explore the teachers’ strategies of empowering pupils on the importance of educational advancement.

1.(a) In this community/ school do you have any sisters and/ or brothers who have dropped out of school?

............................................................................................................................................

................................................................................................................................................

................................................................................................................................................

(b) Which gender drops out of school more?

Male Female

(c) What opportunities are there for those who drop out?

(i)...........................................................................

(ii)...............................................................................

(iii) ...........................................................................

2. a) Do you wish to advance with your schooling?

Yes No

(b) Give reasons.

(i).............................................................................

(ii)..............................................................................

(iii)..........................................................................

(iv).........................................................................

3. What might be the barriers that may hinder you to advance with your schooling?

(a).............................................................

(b)................................................................

(c)......................................................................

(d).............................................................................

4. What are the benefits of advancing with your schooling?

(a).............................................................................

(b) ..............................................................................

(c).................................................................................

(d)............................................................................

5. (a) What type of support do you get from :

(i) parents/home ...........................................

(ii) community .........................................................

...........................................................

..................................................................

to keep you in school?

b) (i) Are there any challenges that are faced by parents and community when trying to support you?

Yes No

(ii) If yes, briefly explain. ..............................................................................................................

6. What type of strategies are used by teachers to make it easier for you to climb up the educational ladder as a cohort?

7. What other strategies are used by your teachers to make the community change its attitude on educational advancement?

(a)...................................................................................

(b)........................................................................................

(c)..................................................................................................

(d)...............................................................................................

(e)...........................................................................................

**APPENDIX II**

**Interview guide for administrators/ School Heads**

This interview is of an educational project which seeks to explore teachers’ strategies of empowering pupils on the importance of educational advancement. Answer the following questions honestly. Your names and information you provide shall be treated with much confidentiality and the information shall be used in this research only.

1.How old are you in years?

2. Professional qualification

C. E.

Dip. In Education

Degree

3. Experience: a) 0 – 5 years

b) 5 – 10 years

c) 10 or more years

4. Dropout figures per sex

Females

Males

5.a)Which gender drops out of school frequently?

Females

Males

b) Suggest reasons for dropping out of school.

i).............................................................

ii)............................................................

iii).......................................................

iv)..........................................................

6. Common informal activities carried out by the dropout:

a)..............................................................

b).............................................................

c)...............................................................

d)..............................................................

7. What is done by the teachers in particular to promote the completion of the educational cycle?

..........................................................................................................................

............................................................................................................................

8. What strategies do you have in place to empower pupils to complete the educational cycle?

i)....................................................................

ii)..................................................................

iii)..................................................................

iv).................................................................

9. What can be done by teachers to change attitudes of : a) pupils ................................

b) parents .................................

c) community ............................

on the movement of pupils as a cohort up the educational ladder?

**APPENDIX III**

**Interview guide for drop outs Interview guide for dropouts**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| male |  |
| female |  |

1. Gender:

2. Age in years

3. Level of education. ......................................................................

4. Whom do you stay with? ................................................................

5. Highest level of education of the people you stay with including that of your brothers and sisters: ........................................................

...............................................................

....................................................................

6. What factors caused you to stop attending school?

a)

b)

c)

7. Are there other members of your family who dropped out of school?

Yes

No

b) If yes, how many? Males

Females

c) If yes in a) give reasons: i) .......................................

ii) ......................................

iii) .......................................

8. What made you to be here?

a)...............................................................................................

b)...................................................................................................

c).......................................................................................................

d)...........................................................................................................

|  |
| --- |
| Female |
| Male |

9. a) Are there other boys and girls who dropped out of school?

b) Give reasons .......................................................

................................................................

....................................................................

10. What type of activities are you carrying out here?

a)----------------------------------------------------------------------

b)--------------------------------------------------------------------

c)--------------------------------------------------------------------------

11. a) Do you think what you are doing here for a living is better than going to school?

Yes

No

b) If yes, explain? .................................................................................................................

12. Who was paying your school fees?........................................................................................

13. a) If an opportunity arises, do you want to go back to school?

Yes No

b) Give reasons to your answer in a) .................................................

...................................................

......................................................

14. a) Are there any efforts from the community and other organisations to put you back to school?

Yes

No

b) Explain. ..................................................................................................................................

15. a)Did the school environment frustrate you out of school? Yes

No

b) In what way? ( i ).............................................................................................

( ii ) ...........................................................................................

( iii ) ...........................................................................................

16. a) Did teachers during your school going time make any efforts to keep you in school?

Yes

No

b) If yes what steps did they take?

i)..........................................................

ii)..............................................................

iii)..................................................................

iv)..................................................................

17. a) Were parents in your community involved in educational activities during your school days?

Yes

No

b)If yes , in what way? i)....................................................................

ii ) ....................................................................

iii)..................................................................

iv)................................................................

18. How do parents and local community view educational advancement in your area?

.................................................................................................................

......................................................................................................................

19. Where do you see yourself in the next five years doing these activities?

.......................................................................................................

...........................................................................................................

....................................................................................................

**APPENDIX IV**

**QUESTIONNAIRE GUIDE FOR TEACHERS**

You are requested to respond to all questions by placing a tick in one box to indicate your suitable response or by filling in the spaces provide. Do not write your name on this questionnaire. The results of this study will be used for educational purposes only.

1. Sex: Female

Male

1. Highest professional qualification: C. E

Dip. in Education

Degree

1. Causes of low pupil advancement at your school.

....................................................................................................................................

..........................................................................................................................................

..................................................................................................................................................

1. Causes by sex:

Females Males

1. .............................. a) ..............................
2. .............................. b) ...............................
3. .................................. c) ................................
4. ................................ d) ...............................
5. How do you interact with students inside or outside the classroom?

............................................................................................................................................

..............................................................................................................................................

...................................................................................................................................................

1. Forms of motivation

..................................................................................................................................

................................................................................................................................

.................................................................................................................................

1. How do you maintain discipline in your class?

.................................................................................................................................

.......................................................................................................................................

.........................................................................................................................................

1. a) Do you involve pupils in decision making in your class for example rule formulation and choosing of class monitors? Yes No

b) If yes, in what ways?

i) .............................................................................................................................................

ii) ...............................................................................................................................................

iii) ............................................................................................................................................

1. How do parents of students you teach support their children in their learning?
2. ....................................................................................................................................
3. .........................................................................................................................................
4. .......................................................................................................................................
5. .............................................................................................................................................
6. a) Are you actively involved in social clubs that involve pupils at schools?

Yes No

b) What are some of these clubs?

i) ...............................................

ii) .........................................................

iii) ..............................................

11. Do you provide constant feedback to pupils on their school performance?

Yes No

1. Do you give pupils opportunities to fulfil their full potentials at school?

Yes No

1. a) How effective are your teaching strategies towards helping children to move up the educational ladder?

Very effective

Effective

Not effective

b) How? ...............................................................................................................................

14. How do you rate the level of difficulty of the work that you give to pupils?

Very difficult

Moderate

Not challenging

15. Which strategies do you use to change the community’s attitude towards the educational development of the pupil in your class?

a) .....................................................................................................................................................

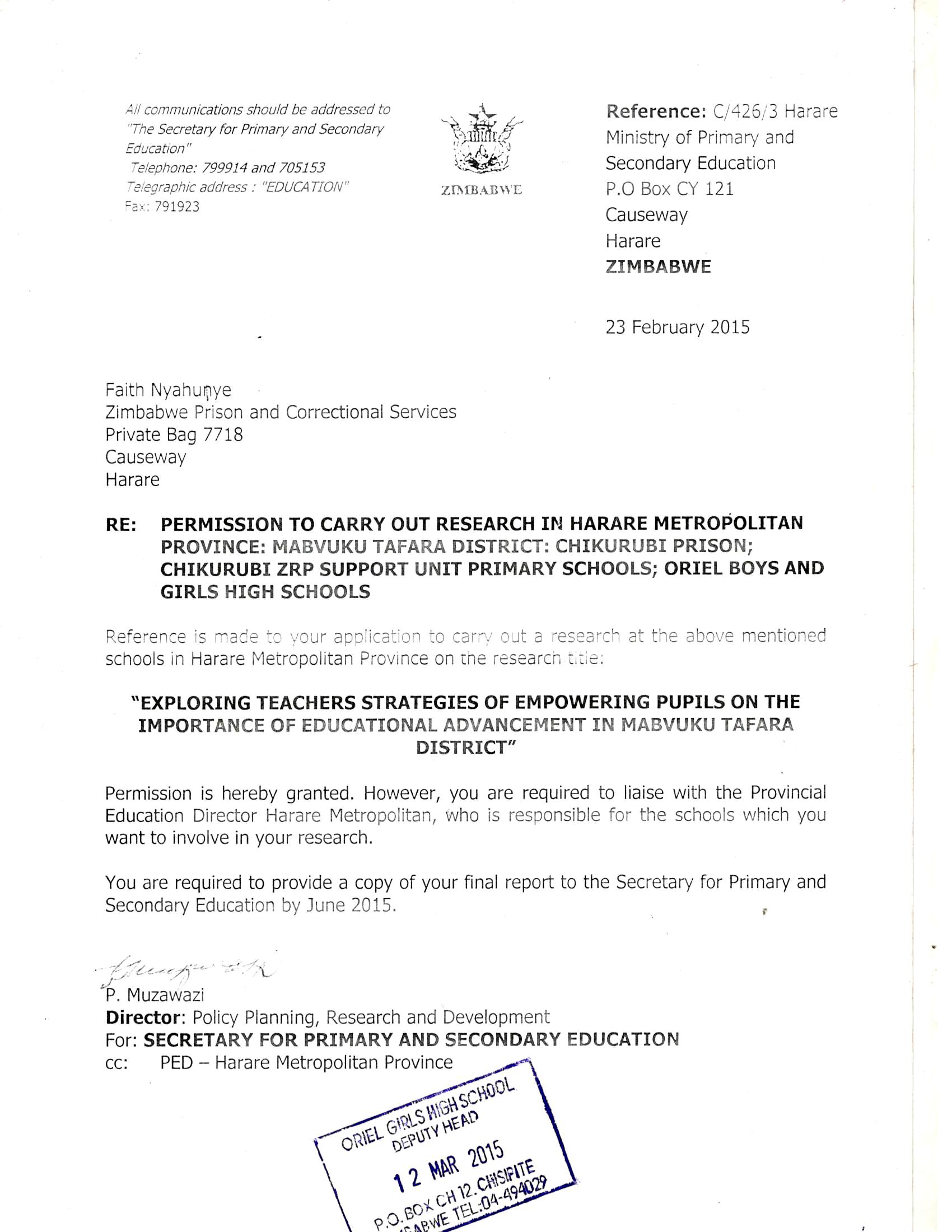
b) ...................................................................................................................................................

c) ....................................................................................................................................................

d) ...........................................................................................................................................

e) .............................................................................................................................................

**APPENDIX V : Clearance Letters from the Ministry**

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