



Midlands State University

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Our Hands, Our Minds, Our Destiny

**THE CONTRIBUTION OF PUBLIC WORKS PROGRAMMES TO
POVERTY ALLEVIATION IN WARD 14 OF BIKITA DISTRICT,
ZIMBABWE**

BY

COSTAIN TANDI

(STUDENT NUMBER)

R14672Z

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SUPERVISER: MR CD HAHLANI

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ABSTRACT

In the context of alarming poverty rates in rural Zimbabwe, this research was carried out to assess the contribution of public works programmes on poverty alleviation in ward 14 of Bikita district in Masvingo province. The research has been influenced by personal concerns which i strongly believe have influenced the selection of the research problem. My main concern is the deepening of poverty in the ward despite the prevalence of public works programmes as a policy option for the government to alleviate poverty. The main purpose of public works programmes is to make the unemployed more employable through the provision of temporary employment and training opportunities to the beneficiaries. Data collection took the form of unstructured interviews, observations, focus group discussions as well as document analysis. The nature of the enquiry was purely qualitative with narrative and content analysis used to explain the data. A small sample size of 25 respondents was selected using purposive sampling targeting the beneficiaries of public works programmes and those excluded in the programme but have no means of securing their basic needs. It is quite genuine to make a standing fact that the study findings indicated the positive impact of public works programmes on beneficiaries even though challenges were still enamours. The main conclusions are that any meaningful rural poverty alleviation strategy must be properly designed such that the government would go into partnership with rural people to make implementation easier, thus engendering economic self-sustenance, growth and development.

Key words: Poverty, Unemployment, Poverty reduction, Poverty alleviation, Public works programmes

Declaration

I, Costain Tandi, do hereby declare that the work contained in this dissertation is entirely a product of my own original work with the exception of such quotations or references which have been attributed to their sources. I further declare that this dissertation has not been previously submitted and will not be presented at any University for a similar or any other degree award.

No part of this work may be published without my consent as well as the Department of Development Studies of the Midlands State University.

Signature.....

Date.....

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Dedication

This dissertation is specifically dedicated to my mother, Saruna, for making my dream come true by sending me to school. These are the fruits of your unfailing love. The dedication is also extended to my two sons, Nokutenda Costain and Kuitakwashe Costain. I have set the standard for you and I expect more from you. Remember the sky is the limit.

Acronyms

ESAP	Economic Structural Adjustment Programme
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
DA	District Administrator
GOZ	Government of Zimbabwe
IFAD	International Development Fund for International Development
IOP	Institute Of Poverty.
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
NGO	Non- Governmental Organisations
ODI	Overseas Development Institute
PAP	Poverty alleviation programmes
PWs	Public Works
PWPs	Public Works Programme
PWP	Public Works Projects
SLA	Sustainable Livelihood Approach
ZANU PF	Zimbabwe National Union Patriotic Front
PWS	Public works schemes

UNDP

United Nations Development Programme

VIDCOs

Village Development Committees

CHAPTER 1:

OVERVIEW AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.0 Introduction

“Facing poverty is better than living in poverty and by facing poverty you can overcome it at one point” Aulis Ice (2013)

“Poverty alleviation and its eventual elimination is a central objective of development” (Nyati 2012.)

It is important to note that delivering durable solutions to poverty has been the most debated issue in the current development discourse. Thus, the world confronts a lot of challenges in rural social development as it tries to transform into a global village. The World Bank has revealed that most poor people in the world reside in rural areas and the situation will remain like that as long as there is a pro-urban bias in most nations` development strategies and their allocation of public investment funding (World Bank 2003: 2). With this, one can opine that rural people and minority groups have little political clout to influence public investment in rural areas.

Although the world has been optimistic about rural poverty alleviation in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) , the world bank has revealed using statistics that by 2015 more than 600 million people will be poverty stricken mostly in sub-Saharan Africa (World Bank, 2006:v). With this, one can argue that progress in poverty alleviation remains slow. In an attempt to reduce poverty, the Public Works Strategy, together with other interventions was adopted by numerous countries in the world. What inspires this study is the fact that

despite the introduction of Public Works as a poverty alleviation measure in Bikita district of Zimbabwe, poverty remains a major problem in the area.

Thus, this chapter will cover the background of the study giving an overview of the origins of poverty in Zimbabwe and public works programmes in order to assess the failure of public works to prevent the worsening of poverty. Besides, the same chapter will also give the statement of the problem in this research as well as the overall aim and objectives. It is also important to note that the research questions and the significance of the study will again be given in the same chapter. Lastly the delimitations of the research as well as its limitations, organisation and conclusion will also be presented.

1.1 Background to the study

SESRTCIC, (2007) states that sub-Saharan Africa is the only region in the world where the number of people living below the poverty datum line is increasing. The Institute of Poverty (IOP) in 2010 stresses that; it is a fact that poverty has remained a major policy challenge in the Sub-Saharan Africa. According to Duigman and Gann (1975) poverty in Africa was caused by the exploitation of African people during the period of colonialism. Chinake (1977:16) notes that Zimbabwe's poverty situation can largely be attributed to the disintegration of traditional African society following the inception of colonialism. The white regime was ruthless in controlling African access to land and the means of production. Moyo and others (2014) argue that colonial policies in general promoted great inequalities and perpetuated poverty among blacks, leading to the liberation war and the attainment of independence in 1980.

1.2 The definition of poverty

“Don’t ask me what poverty is because you have met it outside my house.

Look at the house and see the number of cracks.

Look at the clothes that i am wearing.

Look at everything that you can see and write what you see.

What you see is poverty.” – A very poor widow in Bikita, April 2015.

“ The definition of poverty largely depends on the person who raises the question, the way it is understood as well as the person who gives the response” – Chambers, 2006.

The definition of poverty is a highly contested one in academic circles and this leaves it without non generic. Nevertheless, scholars seem to agree that poverty is a complex, multifaceted and multi-dimensional phenomenon. It can be noted that poverty is not a static phenomenon; it changes over time, across nations and changes within individual economic groups and at various economic levels, where there would be differences in the perception of men and women. According to Sen. (1999:43) poverty means lack of necessities important for a day to day living, for example, food and shelter as well as health facilities.

A more interesting definition of poverty was given by Saifuddin (2006:1), who states that;

“Poverty can be equated to hunger. Poverty is failing to have decent accommodation.

Poverty is falling sick and then failing to afford medication.

Poverty is inability to afford school fees and being illiterate.

Poverty is failing to get employment, is fear of the tomorrow.

Poverty is when your child dies owing to water born diseases.

Poverty is lack of a political muscle, and failure to influence policy.

Poverty is a varied phenomenon, which differs from societies.

Poverty always changes from time to time, across nations and has been defined differently”.

Owing to this paucity in literature, the 1990 World Bank report's definition of poverty will be used for the purposes of this research. The 1990 World Bank report defines poverty as the inability to attain minimal standard of living measured in terms of basic needs or income to satisfy them. With this, one can easily note that poverty refers to a lack or deprivation of basic needs. This study will treat poverty as being without a means of getting necessary requirements needed for day to day usage. Poor people's lack of shelter, food, education and health deprivations keep them at bay from the kind of life that everyone values, (Gaude and Waltz wick 1992:44).

1.2.1 The concept of rural poverty

It is quite authentic to say rural poverty is often discussed in conjunction with the inequality which is prevalent between rural and urban areas. IFAD (2001:15) states that three quarters of the poor people in Zimbabwe live in the rural areas. Matunhu (2011) concurs with these sentiments when he postulates that poverty in Africa is predominantly a rural phenomenon. Thus rural poverty, which persists in Zimbabwe, is evident in the difficulties experienced by many numerous poor people who reside in the rural areas to meet the day to day necessities of life, for instance, clean and reliable water as well as educational facilities and what to eat.

It can be noted that poverty in rural Zimbabwe increased at a tremendous pace during the first half of the 1990s, owing to the failure of the IMF and World Bank policies. Friedlander

(2010:56) seems to suggest that the poor people admire what the rich people have and it is their utmost goal to attain equality. According to him, the rural poor require more land for agricultural farming, a good road network to ferry their agricultural products to nearby markets, water which is safe to drink and readily available and access to clinics and hospitals as well as educational centres for their kids and above all jobs.

This seems to be a major theoretical loophole inherent in PWP. Community development projects are carried out and administered by the elite or over ambitious officials who claim to know what the rural dwellers need. Johnson (2003:57) feels poverty cannot be generalized when he states;

“Poverty is a multi –dimensional problem with its origins in both national and international arenas. It can be noted that up to the present day, there is no uniform remedy which is globally applicable. ”

Thus this study suspects that the alleviation of poverty through an interventionist approach like PWPs can be instrumental in bringing the people back to poverty as it stresses the view that development should be influenced by external forces.

1.2.2 Main features of rural poverty

- **Limited opportunities**–it can be noted that quite a number of people in rural Zimbabwe have got limited opportunities. For instance, they have limited access credit facilities, education as well as health. Owing to their poverty condition, it is very difficult for these rural dwellers to access loans from banks, as a consequence of lack of collateral security. Besides, limited opportunities may include little chances of being absorbed into industrial formal employment as well as chances to attain

education. Rauch et al (2001:46) opine that chances to have a decent livelihood through employment and market production are sometimes non-existent or they are insufficient and unstable. Moreover Rauch et al (2001) stresses that nowadays people in the rural areas remain in the vicious cycle of poverty due to the fact that they are unemployable and they do not have those skills that are required in the job market.

- **Inappropriate assets and capabilities**– IFAD (2005) points out that despite a diversified range of knowledge and the copying strategies among the rural dwellers, their capacities to take advantage of limited opportunities remain underutilised. For instance, the people in ward 14 of Bikita district have an advantage of some perennial streams nearby like *Mutora, Cheganda, Gande and Mujiche* as well as the likes of *Chinyamatunhwa dam and chikungurwi dam in Danha VIDCO*. Nevertheless, because they do not possess the know-how to run irrigation schemes, that precious natural resource (water) is wasted and underutilised. According to Rauch et al (2001) rural dwellers have at their disposal numerous livelihoods and a lot remain unexploited in order to earn a living. This owes much to lack of expertise.

- **Institutional deficiencies**– it is a genuine fact that most rural dwellers have little access to services, information and markets, which of late have turned to be basic necessities for securing a decent livelihood. Nyati (2012:32) points out that this applies to access to basic health services like hospitals and clinics, as well as up to date information about market centres for their field harvests. As a consequence of deficiencies in private and public service system, such services are not accessible to the majority of rural dwellers. This works against their capabilities to make effective use of their resources and to manage their natural resources in a sustainable manner

and cope successfully with changes, (Rauch et al 2001:47). Besides, it is important to note that many rural areas in Zimbabwe are not covered by media and this is another way that has detached rural areas from the rest of the world. According to the IFAD (2005) chronic poverty is more prevalent in rural than in urban areas like Ward 14 in Bikita district which is very remote and not connected to markets.

- **Unbalanced power structures** – quite a number of rural dwellers have neither the purchasing power, nor political clout to articulate their necessities to gain access to the private and public service system or to succeed in the struggle for limited chances and resources, (Nyati 2012:33). According to the IFAD (2005), poor rural people are in that condition owing to the fact that governing policies as well as laws and other regulations (or lack of them) define their opportunities. What is required is simply a change in policy. They often find it hectic to bear the organisational costs associated with empowerment (Rauch et al 2001). Owing to the unbalanced power structures, rural dwellers lack representation hence they miss quite a number of opportunities. It is a fact that some formulated policies may not be considered to the situation of the poor people who reside in the rural areas; hence they need to be changed.

1.3 The definitions of unemployment

According to the Economic Watch Magazine (2010), unemployment can be defined as a status in which an individual person does not have a job but is looking for one. Nevertheless, there is a broad definition of unemployment which regards it as a status where people are without jobs and have lost interest in searching for one. It further opines that unemployment can be categorised in 4 distinct classes which are as follows:

- **Cyclical unemployment**- this refers to a form of unemployment which is consistent with trade cycles. It usually transpires in times of an economic boom, and during these times unemployment reduces. The reverse is equally true during periods of an economic recession.

- **Seasonal unemployment** -this can be regarded as a form of unemployment which rises and fall with seasonal trades for instance hotel catering and the picking of fruits.

The frictional unemployment- First and foremost, this form of unemployment can be best explained as unemployment which occurs when one is between two jobs, where he/she has lost one job and is busy searching for another one.

- **Structural unemployment**- In simpler terms, structural unemployment can be explained as a form of unemployment which takes place owing to a change in the composition of some industries. It is crucial to take note of the fact that progress in technology may convert an industry which requires much labour to a capital intensive one. This reduces the need for much labour in the said industries. According to Guich and Rusticell (2010), structural unemployment is the rate of unemployment which is consistent with the inflation

1.3.1 Theories of unemployment

As Jacobs and Slaus (2011:56) note, employment is a basic human right and above all a major essential function of any economic system, as it makes a crucial contribution towards the economic welfare of people. It can be further argued that unemployment is a function of quite a number of variables which include investment, money supply, as well as the debt of consumers. According to Jacobs and Slaus (2011:56), the changes in all these variables have a corresponding relationship with levels of employment rates where these relationships are predictable.

John Maynard cited in Wray (2009:87) opines that a significant number of people residing in capitalist countries must work for a wage as a primary source of employment and income. Nevertheless, Wray (2009:88) stresses that the inability to obtain a job lowers the income of people and thus their inability to spend money. Owing to this, the growth of an economy is affected. Howell (2001) concurs with these sentiments and further stipulates that poverty and limited access to jobs decreases the productivity of most vulnerable groups and again lowers their capacity to have meaningful investments.

To get rid of the negative results of unemployment, Wray (2009) stresses putting unemployed labour to work in socially productive ways through government expenditure that would provide useful economic output which as a result, helps to alleviate market failures. According to Burger and Von Fintel (2009), in a mixed economic system, high unemployment is an issue of concern for the government and concerned stakeholders as well as labour market participants. This is because, lack of jobs precipitates high levels of poverty and inequality, which in turn impacts negatively on the socio-economic growth of a country.

1.3.2 The nexus between unemployment and poverty.

Most studies on poverty recognise unemployment as the most important cause of poverty. It can be noted that households whose head is unemployed have a higher risk of suffering poverty. This is so because the only productive asset that the poor have at their disposal is their labour power. Novak (1998: 25) stresses that while debates have been ongoing concerning the nexus between poverty and unemployment, there is need to reinforce the debates on the contribution of employment to poverty alleviation.

Besides, over half of the household defined as poor in Zimbabwe are headed by a person who does not have a job. Since household heads are likely to have dependants, there is therefore a high risk of poverty when the household head is unemployed for a longer period of time. Swanepoel and De Beer (2000:19) identify a complex relationship between poverty and unemployment. According to the duo poverty can be both a cause and a result of unemployment.

Owing to lack of clarification of these concepts, the debate has also spilled into the issue of PWPs. It is generally argued that while numerous socio-economic and cultural factors prevent the poor people from joining the waged employment, PWPs by virtue of their strategies and modalities facilitate their entry. Many scholars indeed support the view that it is one of the objectives of PWPs to alleviate poverty through employment creation. According to Ganier (1992:54), PWPs are a means of creating high volumes of employment in the short term in a situation of unemployment and underemployment. Islam (2005:90) strongly believes in the power of PWPs in transforming the lives of the poor people in rural areas.

However, the debate is interesting. It unveils one of the major gaps in the theoretical dimension of PWP. The study exposes pockets of intellectual vacuums that need to be urgently filled. If public works schemes in rural Zimbabwe can enrich the people with short lived employment opportunities, do they also equip them with some technical skills that render them marketable on the job market after the life of PWP. Equally prominent is the question of sustainability of projects after the life span of public works and whether there are measures to ensure that the people do not go back to poverty after public works.

1.3.1 The stake holders in poverty alleviation.

A stake holder is a person, group or organisations that have interest or concern in an organisation. It can be noted that stake holders can affect or be affected by the actions, as well as policies and objectives of the organisation. Additionally, Swanepoel and De Beer (2000:45) stress that, there are four main stakeholders in rural poverty alleviation which are the public sector (represented by government organs), the private sector, the non-governmental sector, (NGOs) and the popular sector (the local community). The local community according to Swanepoel and De Beer are the most important stake holder. It was further noted by Novak (1998:100) that the poor people in the rural areas have the potential to spearhead self sustainable development. This idea is quite interesting and raises intellectual curiosity that, if the local community has such capability, why does it not simply go ahead with development on its own?

Be that as it may, the government has the key role to play in the development process. Nevertheless, it has been observed that if the priority of the needs is not sorted out with the people, the government may spend millions of dollars on rural development projects that does not satisfy the people's basic necessities. According to Swanepoel and De Beers (2000:47),

programmes that fail to derive opinions of the stake holders in most cases do not yield the desired results. It is therefore worth mentioning that failure to consult local communities in project planning and implementation can lead to the failure of rural PWPs in achieving the desired results.

1.4 An overview of public works programmes

It is quite authentic to say Public Works Programmes came a long way in the history of development. Freedman (1989: 2) opines that they were used during the great depression by today's industrialized nations to rescue their ailing economies. In this regard, governments used to mobilise and pour their funds into public investment programmes in order to create employment for the people. Thus public works act as flagship programme for tackling poverty and vulnerability through employment. In Africa, the public works strategy was in use as early as 1903 where indigenous labour was mobilized for road and dam construction as well as land conversation. Thus according to Webb, (1992:4), most independent states implemented labour intensive projects in times of drought and famine as a crisis mitigation strategy. Such schemes play a very prominent role of alleviating both chronic and transient poverty (Ravallion 1990:2)

While most public works in Africa have been used as a mitigation measure in times of drought as well as famine, they were pushed into mainstream policy instruments for employment creation and poverty alleviation ever since the 1970s. It is argued that the schemes help to improve food security and standard of living by creating employment and assets necessary for future growth, (Derjadin 1996). When the idea of mobilizing indigenous labour to complete tasks that were meant for the government to carry out was adopted in

Africa, it was conceived in the modernization thinking where African societies had to develop in the same way that Europe had recovered from the effects of the great depression.

According to Karenga (2009), in Zimbabwe public works has often been associated with capital intensive construction projects in the country. These may include government buildings, hospitals, universities and small labour intensive efforts at community level like road maintenance, gully reclamation, water point rehabilitation and so on. However, the term public works has been increasingly associated with community level efforts to build assets and help people to cope with the impact of drought. It is important to note that participation in the works is intended to be self targeted with needy homesteads presenting themselves for work at any given time.

According to Karenga (1996), a public works register is kept locally. There are two distinct categories which are free public assistance and public works assistance. It is important to point out that, those individual households with young men and women participate in actual activities whilst those without can receive the same remittance for free. This helps to harmonise social assistance funding streams from head office down to the grassroots. Nevertheless, it is sad to note that targeting is very unfair and is driven by overambitious councillors and community leaders with limited knowledge on programme outcomes and benefits.

The public works policy is designed by the central government and imposed upon the local authorities to execute. The question remains, Can rural poverty be successfully alleviated using ideas that are made without the input of the intended beneficiaries. The idea interrogated the benefits brought by public works in relation to the people's basic needs. The question is that do the people really welcome some of the projects that are brought in by public works. It can be argued that an interventionist strategy such as public works conceived

in the mindset of modernization to alleviate poverty should be suspected of reinforcing the institution through the creation of the dependency syndrome.

In 1991, Zimbabwe joined a growing community of developing countries which implemented the IMF/World Bank structural adjustment programmes in an attempt to revamp their ailing economies, (Mlambo 1992). Zimbabwe turned to these multilateral lending agencies because she found herself facing balance of payment problems partly as a result of flawed economic policies in the past and external forces beyond her control. The adoption of ESAP reveals that there is an ambiguous relation in Zimbabwe's development policies.

The public works intervention policy speaks the same language with ESAP that is agitating for the reduction of budget deficit, as well as removing government subsidies on goods and services. It is important to point out that ESAP is more hostile to public works owing to the fact that they dig deeper into the pockets of the government. According to Moyo and others (2014), the fate of public works after the adoption of ESAP in 1991 hung precariously in the balance. Theoretically, after 1991 there was supposed to be no public works since ESAP stressed on the total disengagement of government from providing social service as well as public investment. Although the government continues to have the Ministry of Public Works which administer some projects aimed at poverty alleviation in rural and urban centres, Matunhu (2009) asserts that poverty is predominantly a rural phenomenon.

The Government of Zimbabwe in 2003 enacted a new statutory instrument which regulated the operations of NGOs. The policy on NGOs in humanitarian and development assistance stressed the need to integrate public works in humanitarian assistance (Moyo 2014). It stresses that no aid for the poor was to come as social welfare but people should be given development projects targeted at the construction of infrastructure as well as enhancing their lives through public works, (Government of Zimbabwe, July 2003:3)

It is therefore against this background that a research has to be carried out. The study will investigate the impact of public works in poverty alleviation using the case of Bikita district ward 14. It tries to draw attention to the idea that if poverty is a socially constructed phenomenon as suggested by the structural dependency theory, then why not look back at the society for its deconstruction. A question that remains unanswered is that can rural poverty be successfully reduced using programs that are made without the input of the intended beneficiaries?

1.4.1 The contribution of public works programmes in poverty alleviation

It is important to note that the major objective of public works programmes is mainly that of poverty alleviation through labour absorption. According to McCord (2012:76), it is quite authentic to say numerous governments try to achieve this by spending money in the generation of public assets through labour intensive methods. Besides, the Overseas Development Institute (2012) stresses that public works programmes are sometimes used as social protection strategy to address the needs of the working age poor. They are expected to lessen dependency on social protection and play a pivotal role in the economic development of a country. Additionally, Samson and Niekerk (2006:85) stress that, public works programmes appeal to policy makers in four main ways which are:

- First and foremost, vulnerable groups are less susceptible to dependency through public works programmes. This is in line with the ideology of not giving beneficiaries “something for something”.

- It was also deduced that public works programmes precipitate the creation of employment by providing a “win – win” combination of welfare transfers and the creation of productive assets.
- Besides, it may again be noted that the creation of productive assets helps in attaining the growth objectives of the government and poverty alleviation as well.
- Lastly, the low wage rates of PWPs efficiently target the poorest of the poor which in actual fact ensures that social protection is provided to the vulnerable groups especially those in rural areas thereby playing a pivotal role in poverty alleviation.

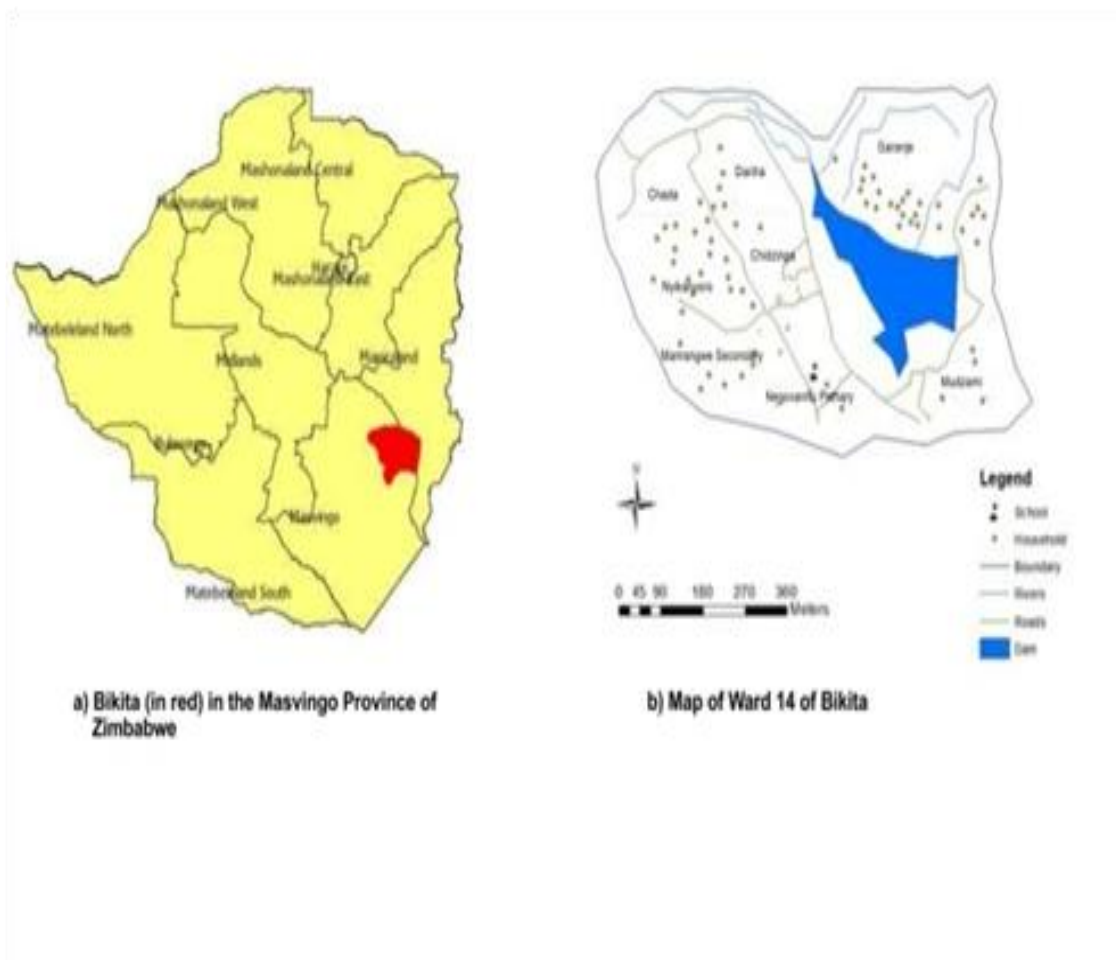
Nevertheless, PWPs are in most cases regarded as a short-term emergency strategy to cyclical shock in labour markets and are not generally considered as a suitable response in addressing structural employment challenges and chronic poverty (Kostze et al 2010:66). Be that as it may, the varying success of public works programmes around the world is mainly due to variations in their design features and the implementation methodology (Howell 2003:46). It is interesting to note that the assertion is identical to McCord’s perspective that the achievement of the objectives of public works programmes relies much on the institutional capacity for implementation and the addition of social development considerations to PWPs that are conceived and executed.

1.5 Area of study

My area of study is Bikita district which is found in the Masvingo province of Zimbabwe. The area is located about 80km east of Masvingo urban. Besides, the area is mountainous and characterised by steep slopes with sand –loamy soils. According to Unganai (2010: 19), the district is subject to seasonal droughts and was seriously affected by droughts in 1992,

2002, and 2008. The district covers an area of approximately 10000 square kilometres and has a population of about 200000 people. It is quite authentic to say 81% of Bikita district is classified as belonging to the natural regions (4 and 5) with mean annual rainfall ranging from 400mm to 700mm. Agricultural farming is the major livelihood activity in the area, with maize being the major crop grown. The geographical location of and map of Bikita district in general and ward 14 in particular can be shown by **Fig 1.5.1** below:

Fig 1.5.1



1.5.1 An overview of Ward 14

Ward 14 encompasses areas around Marirangwe high school, Negovanhu primary school, Negovanhu clinic, Diyo as well as Danha business centres. The majority of people in ward 14 are pastoral and agricultural farmers. They practice peasant farming and only produce food enough to feed their families. It is a true fact that, some of them have livestock though of a limited number. Besides, it is important to note that the ward is arid, and is characterised by poor sand soils that are not conducive for crop production.

Thus the people produce food that is adequate to feed them from May to October. It can be deduced that people in ward 14 mostly depend on other wards for food supplies especially the mountainous ward 16. The poor people in ward 14 rarely manage to buy grains from other wards hence they starve. Additionally, in times of drought and acute food shortages, some people in the ward practise barter trade that is exchanging their livestock for maize, millet and sorghum. Moreover they depend on wild fruits like baobab fruits.

1.6 Problem statement

It can be noted that the Government of Zimbabwe (GOZ) came up with Public Works Programmes as a development policy that was aimed at developing both rural and urban areas. This has been done through the creation of the Ministry of Local Government under chapter 29 of the existing constitution that came into being in April 1980. This development is measured by the people's way of life and infrastructural development of the places which they live in. Nevertheless, the central statistics office of Zimbabwe reveals that the majority of the rural folk in Zimbabwe live far below the poverty datum line. One wonders whether public works programmes strategy is contributing to the reduction of poverty.

According to the FAO (1989:45), a World Bank study shows that in a sample of 14 countries which had adopted the public works strategy only one showed progress in facing the challenges (FAO 1989: 45). Besides, the study by the World Bank in 2006 indicates that in sub-Saharan Africa the progress of reducing poverty especially in the rural areas is “stubbornly slow”. The study has some projected statistics which assume that by 2015, poor health, education, deprivation of productive employment, environmental degradation, bad governance and conflict will be the greatest challenges for Sub Saharan Africa. It can be further argued that Zimbabwe cannot be totally excluded in this assertion. Hague (2007) opines that misguided policies and maladministration have brought the Zimbabwean economy to the verge of collapse. Although this comment carries overtones of sarcasm, criticism and caricature, this justifies the suspicion by this study that there is a problem with public works programmes and other poverty alleviation strategies being employed in Zimbabwe.

While the Zimbabwean government has been approaching the issue of poverty through several interventions including public works schemes, it is sad to note that poverty tops the rankings among numerous economic and social challenges facing the country. According to Matunhu (2012), in Zimbabwe just like in most states in Africa poverty is predominantly a rural phenomenon. Under these circumstances, one wonders whether the public works strategy is misguided, misconstrued or mismanaged. Garnier (2009:5) postulates that public works create employment in the short run and responds to crisis situations. Whether Zimbabwe has realized success for such great expectations raises eyebrows. Given the above realities, this raises important questions that can public works programmes be an avenue to poverty alleviation in rural Zimbabwe.

1.7 Aim of the study

To examine the contribution of Public Works Programmes on poverty alleviation in rural Zimbabwe in general and Bikita district ward 14 in particular.

1.7.1 Objectives

- 1 To examine how public works are implemented in rural Zimbabwe.
- 2 To establish the reasons for undertaking public works programmes in Zimbabwe.
- 3 To explore the perception and attitudes of rural people towards these projects.
- 4 To assess the effects of these projects on skills development and poverty alleviation.

1.8 Research Questions

- 1 How are public works programmes implemented in Zimbabwe?
- 2 Why did the government of Zimbabwe adopt public works programmes?
- 3 What are the perceptions and attitudes of rural people in Zimbabwe towards public works projects?
- 4 How effective are the public works schemes in Zimbabwe in developing skills and poverty alleviation of the local communities?

1.9 Significance of the study

The recognition of this study by policy makers in Zimbabwe, Government officials and the local community in Bikita district will bring poverty alleviation strategies that are based on the aspirations of the people. Besides, the study hopes to serve as a toolkit to the Government of Zimbabwe and other stakeholders to reorient all poverty alleviation strategies to sustainable The development. It is hoped that the research will also benefit fellow academics and all stake holders in the field of poverty alleviation by helping to establish reasons why poverty is still prevalent despite the implementation of various projects in the district.

1.9.1 Study delimitation

The study will cover Danha, Chidzinga and Nyikanyoro VIDCOS of ward 14, Bikita district and will concentrate on household poverty. The VIDCOs are near each other and cover areas around Marirangwe high school, Negovanhu clinic, Diyo as well as Danha business centres. These VIDCOs are arid and characterised by poor sandy soils that are not conducive for crop production. Besides, they are among the most poverty stricken in the ward and regular beneficiaries of PWP.

1.9.2 Limitations

Funding – This will be a major hindrance in covering the whole district. Therefore, instead of covering all the wards in the district, only ward 14 was chosen and three VIDCOS in that ward will be selected because in a qualitative research, it is still a good sample.

1.9.3 Organisation of the study

The dissertation is organised into five chapters. In chapter one, the broader context of the study is introduced. The introduction is a combination of the problem and its setting. Under this, a general outline of the study in relationship to the problem is presented. The sequence is the context in which the said problem manifests itself in. After that, there is the problem statement as well as the objectives and importance of the research. Besides, the constraints as well as physical and conceptual boundaries will be looked at in this chapter. The key terms will be discussed as well. In the second chapter, previous works related to the study will be critically reviewed to come up with a justification for the study. Chapter three will expose the methodology employed and give a descriptive summary and justification why in each case the method was chosen. In chapter four, data that has been collected will be presented, interpreted, and analysed to derive meaning from the data. Finally, chapter five presents the conclusions.

1.9.4 Chapter summary

The aim of this chapter was to give a brief background to the study. Thus the chapter has outlined the background of the study. Besides, the geographical area and some debates surrounding the topic have been looked at as well. The problem statement, objectives, and significance of the study have again been outlined. Lastly chapter one has managed to envelope the structure of the study. The next chapter reviews the related literature.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

The chapter reviews literature as it applies to the impact of public works on poverty alleviation. According to Boote and others (2005:1), the review of literature means an evaluative report of studies found in the literature related to the selected area of study. It is important to note that literature review endeavours to give a theoretical basis for the study and also help in the determination of the nature of the study. In this research, the literature review seeks to contextualise the study as well as to illustrate how the subject has been studied by other scholars who wrote previously on the same topic. It is of great significance to note that the research will not be a carbon copy of previous studies on the subject. Besides, the study shall be guided by a theoretical frame work premised on the theories of development.

2.1 The conceptual frame work

The conceptual frame works seeks to define key terms and explain prominent aspects related to the study as well as linking them to the aim, objectives and research questions of the study. Poverty alleviation will be defined as well as the difference between poverty reduction and poverty alleviation. Besides, the conceptual frame work will also give as background of the history of PWs, design issues in PWs, why national governments undertake PWP, the

effectiveness of public works in imparting the beneficiaries with important skills as well as poverty alleviation and any analysis of PWP in Zimbabwe.

2.1.1 The definition of poverty alleviation

Poverty alleviation can be best described as a process which attempts to ease the level of poverty in a community or amongst a group of people or nations (Greenburg 2005:31). According to Riddel and Robinson (2002:12) poverty alleviation means;

“Any strategy aimed at improving the economic situation of the poor households by raising incomes and creating new opportunities for employment which in turn bring about increased consumption, savings and investment”.

The above definition reveals that any measure or strategy aimed at alleviating poverty must be sustainable and creating more employment opportunities for the poor in order to improve their economic status.

2.1.2 Poverty alleviation and poverty reduction.

Greenberg (2005) opines that poverty alleviation is usually used interchangeably or confused with poverty reduction. It is important to note that the difference between poverty alleviation and poverty reduction is that poverty alleviation emphasizes on those assets and resources that have a bearing on the livelihoods of the poor. On the other hand, poverty reduction concentrates on knowledge and rights.

Mullen (2005) is also of the view that poverty reduction is also understood as a process of enabling human beings to gain access to basic goods and opportunities. Thus, the major

noticeable difference between poverty alleviation and poverty reduction is that poverty alleviation seeks to provide immediate solutions in the short term where as poverty reduction refers to systematic approaches which eventually lead to the eradication of poverty.

Besides poverty reduction conceptualises poverty as a multiple deprivation of basic necessities of life. These include sufficient food as well as enough houses. It can be noted that poverty alleviation programmes (PAP) may aim to address economic or non economic issues. One can therefore define poverty alleviation as a short term improvement of the poor's capital endowment. According to Webster (2008) poverty reduction means the long term elimination of the poor's dependency on social relations and of vulnerability in respect to changes in the environment.

2.1.3 The Poverty Alleviation Action Plan (PAAP).

According to Chinake (1997:45), the PAAP was a commendable strategy by the GOZ, to deal with poverty from a broader conceptual level through targeted social reforms and reorganisation of priorities. Besides, the PAAP was a national policy and strategic framework under which all poverty alleviation strategies were designed and implemented. The main thrust of the PAAP was involving the poor in their own well being. Additionally, it puts much emphasis on asset monitoring and targeting as well as community action plans and a partnership approach with other stake holders. The World Bank (1997) postulates that the PAAP summaries the GOZ's strategy to reduce poverty through targeted social reforms and re-organisation. Its major components included its introduction to the civil society through a social and political, mobilisation process (GOZ, 1994).

Besides, community based PWPs was another component of PAAP. For example the development of targeted social programmes, in formal sector and enhancement of social policy development and monitoring were key issues to be addressed by PAAP. The PAAP also in cooperated activities such as labour based PWPs and facilitation of youth and women's own projects. Be that as it may, according to Chinake (1997:45) these efforts were directed towards employment creation. Failure of the PAAP was mainly attributed to lack of funding as well as over politicisation.

2.2 The history of PWPs

A PWP is the one where a federal or provincial government or donor agency or an NGO finances and or implements a programme that create temporary jobs for workers (Wilcock 2009:60). It is quite authentic to say the theoretical and empirical literature on PWPs is vast and raises prominent issues that relate to targeting, remuneration, determinants of participation and their impact on employment and poverty. PWPs, according to Carlo and others (2009), generate durable assets which can improve the standards of living of rural communities where they have been implemented. It is important to note that the infrastructure can lead to local economic growth, creation of jobs and alleviation of poverty.

It can be noted that PWPs are not a new phenomena; they have been carried out in numerous states over years (Phillips 2005:16). Some PWPs were targeted on relief where as others endeavour to create employment. It is important to note that PWPs can not necessarily absorb all the jobless people in the society but add to the range of initiatives to address the challenges of unemployment.

The output of such programmes is twofold, that is, to increase the income earnings of the beneficiary communities and the creation of public goods such as new infrastructure or the improvement of existing infrastructure or service delivery. Besides, PWPs with a variety of aims such as protecting people from large covariate shocks (for example floods and famine as well), to protect rural people especially if they lost their jobs, fight against poverty or to help the poor people to gain more temporary employment.

Zimbabwe has a long history and experience with PWPs to fight against chronic poverty and address unemployment during periods of economic crisis. Above all, in Zimbabwe PWPs have been undertaken as part of government job creation efforts and as a poverty alleviation measure as from 1984. It is important to note that the training aspect and assumption that it will enable beneficiaries to find employment at the end of the life span of PWPs are pivotal to the implementation of PWPs as a strategy of poverty alleviation. PWPs have become a vital facet to deliver humanitarian assistance in post disaster, post conflict situations or slack agricultural seasons.

The primary rationale of PWPs is that of poverty alleviation through labour absorption. McCord (2002:34) opines that governments achieve the objective of poverty alleviation by spending money on the generation of public assets through labour intensive methods. The overseas development institute (2012) stipulates that PWPs are expected to reduce reliance on social protection and contribute to economic growth as well as poverty alleviation. This is what makes them an alternative policy option for the government of Zimbabwe.

According to Howell (2003:90), the success of PWPs world over depends on their design features, and the implementation aspect. It is interesting to note that this assertion is similar to that of McCord (2003:35) who pointed out that the achievements of the objectives of PWPs depend largely on programme design, institutional capacity for implementation and the

addition of social development considerations to public works projects that are undertaken and implemented. Besides, according to Queen and others (2006:19), PWPs which aim to address chronic poverty should also provide a chance for beneficiaries save and accumulate assets and permit these beneficiaries to take part in other government initiatives such as training for permanent employment and establishing income generating activities.

2.3 Design issues in PWPs

This refers to the manner in which PWPs are planned, executed, administered and implemented in order for the beneficiary communities to yield the maximum results from them.

2.3.1 Nature of the projects, skills requirements and targeting.

PWPs have been implemented in numerous countries with different objectives and design features. According to Ravalion (1991:155), in the eighteenth century PWPs were undertaken in times of deprivation and poverty. In this case, individual households were provided with relief support in exchange for labour provision. The World Bank (1990) stresses that during the great depression; PWPs were also implemented in order to contain high levels of unemployment. It can be noted that, in South East Asia, PWPs have been undertaken to contain famine in particular and poverty in general.

Ravalion (1991:156) again opines that in Southern Africa PWPs have aimed at the provision of relief (in cash wage or in kind) to targeted disadvantaged groups of individual households on condition that they provide labour to rehabilitate infrastructure in their local communities.

PWPs' major thrust is on labour –intensive infrastructure development activities that play a crucial role in the development process of a nation.

According to Gaude and Watzlawick (1992:8), infrastructure is one of the major areas of public sector investment in developing nations with construction, as well as, maintenance works accounting for a significant share of gross domestic fixed investment. It can be further noted that the nature of these infrastructural investments makes it easy for the government to create unemployment for unskilled labour in rural societies which hitherto have very limited employment chances. It is quite genuine to make a standing fact that the infrastructure created can have a direct productive role such as drainage, irrigation and environmental conservation while other investments play a prominent economic role such as market development, roads and other transport network development.

2.3.2 Classification of PWPs

As Clay (1986:1238) notes, PWPs interventions can be classified into four main categories based on the way they address the objectives of employment and income generation to participating individual households and the creation of economic and social capital. According to Holt (1983), we have relief works which are primarily rapid responses to food insecurity during years of drought and famine. Under this, provisional employment is offered on the creation of local infrastructure and in return the means of survival are provided to the participating vulnerable individual households

Besides, there are incomes augmenting PWPs often undertaken in response to seasonal fluctuations in income earnings which first and foremost serve as safety nets for those whose income fall below subsistence levels. Be that as it may, we have long term employment

generation programmes designed to cater for employment needs among the unemployed, particularly those caught in structural unemployment trap where alternative livelihoods are not there. It can therefore be noted that the last type of PWPs is the infrastructure programme which put much emphasis in the creation of infrastructure rather than income augmentation.

2.3.3 Targeting

It is important to note that the targeting of PWPs largely depend on the type of intervention and the relative emphasis in the objectives of the intervention. Nevertheless apart from the need to develop infrastructure in disadvantaged societies, the PWPs tend to put emphasis on income generation through employment as a poverty alleviation measure. Furthermore, programmes that are premised on poverty alleviation tend to target the rural poor in disadvantaged communities.

In societies where poverty is rampant, it is often problematic to adopt specific targeting criteria for public works employment due to imperfect information about the poor available to implementers of the projects. It was noted by Ravalion (1991:156), that the use of the wage rate that is not higher than the minimum wage for PWPs act as self targeting device that eliminates those that are not poor in the area by targeting those with low reservation wage rates.

Subbaro (1997:678) opines that while a low wage rate is likely to keep those that are not poor out of these programmes, it is quite authentic to note that, it may result in low transfer earnings per poor participant. In nations with higher inflation rates in which minimum wages are rarely adjusted, the use of minimum wages may not be socially acceptable and may lead to exploitation of the poor and disadvantaged people by the government.

2.3.4 Determinants of participation in PWPs

It can be noted that the decision to take part or not to take part in PWPs lies within the individual household or individual time allocation model based on relative income that could be earned in a particular activity. The time allocation model postulates that an individual will allocate available time across several activities to maximise utility which is a function of income and individual or household characteristics. Datt and Ravillion (1994:1346) stresses that the individual decides to work on a PWP as long as the work exceeds alternative income from other activities.

In Zimbabwe, the likelihood of participation increases with the number of adult members in the individual household and the age of participant. Above all, participation usually reduces with the wealth in a family (livestock ownership). Besides the likelihood to participate also largely depend on income transfers such as remittances and gifts, level of education, weakness of the participants and in villages with higher wages for unskilled labour , (Tekla and Asefa 1997:187),

2.3.5 Determination of wage rates and forms of payment.

The principal benefit received by an individual from participating in PWPs is income earned from the labour service rendered. The determination of the wage rate in PWPs is critical both for targeting and the benefits that the poor generate from their participation but may also have wider implications on the local economy, (Subbaro 1997:677). According to Mvula (2000:87), there are numerous other ways to calculate the wage rates in PWPs. Firstly; the lowest wage for people without the necessary skills is mostly used as a maximum wage that can be paid to those who chooses to participate in public works employment.

Be that as it may, others such as Subbaro (1997) advocate a wage rate that is no more than the prevailing market wage rate for unskilled labour. The issue of whether the minimum wage is more or less than the ruling wage rate remains a critical question. Basu (1987:83) advocates for a wage rate that is consistent with the available budget such that all those who are willing can be employed at that wage. As Ravallion (1991:59) opines that, the wage rate can be set at a higher level, which is considered socially acceptable, although this requires a very generous budget and generates less employment.

In any case it is prominent to strike a balance between the objectives of self-targeting and ensuring that the workers receive meaningful transfer. Too low a wage helps to keep the overall participation rate low while simultaneously ensuring a misappropriate number of poor workers than would be observed if the wage rates were higher.

2.3.6 The implementation of PWPs

It is important to note that the implementation of PWPs largely rests on the institutional context in which they are undertaken as well as the social development process in which they are embedded, (McCord 2003:35). If PWPs are poorly planned either institutionally or in the social development context, it will be virtually impossible for them to realise their objectives. Howell (2001:92) came up with five tools that can be used in the successful implementation of PWPs which he states as follows:

- Goal setting
- Financial sustainability
- Integration and partnership building
- Management, coordination and administration
- Monitoring and evaluation
- Governance, the politics of the day, accountability as well as corruption of officials.

2.3.6.1 Goal setting in PWPs

According to Howell (2001:93), it is very important for governments to put in place specific, realistic and achievable goals and also deciding on what levels of , vulnerability, deprivation of the people and the poverty situation in their country. For instance, according to Alam (2006:16), the Gonokondra which is regarded as a more focused and well planned poverty alleviation in Bangladesh was very successful as a consequence of its focus on objectives like the improvement in the standard of living in that community.

2.3.6.2 Financial sustainability

It can be noted that the financial challenges faced by governments usually work against the large scale implementation of PWPs and some cutbacks in government expenditure have again worked against the quality of service provision, (Howell 2001:93). Besides Howell (2001) came up with cost recovery and increased privatisation as remedies. Additionally, according to Phillips (2004), to avert the challenges of financial stability, there is need to introduce a multi-year budget of public works programmes. Be that as it may, the Overseas Development Institute (ODI) (2012) again stresses that the cost effectiveness of PWPs is very prominent. PWPs are a more costly method of providing the much needed cash to households as compared to other social protection strategies. This owes much to the need for a lot of capital as well as technical and managerial expenditure precipitated by employment on asset creation. According to the ODI (2012) this expenditure can only be less costly if the skills and assets generated by PWPs will play a role in economic benefits and productivity gains for the nation in general and beneficiaries in particular.

2.3.6.3 Integration and building of partnerships in PWPs

Islam (2001:30) pointed out that PWPs endeavours to raise the productive and income for the poor rural dwellers. They have the best opportunities of success when they are undertaken within a macro policy environment which is ideal to their operation. Philips (2004) opines that this ensures that adequate resources and time are confined to the planning phase of the PWPs and developing the capacity to ensure effective implementation of the programme.

Howell (2001: 94) argues that there is need to establish partnerships amongst all the stakeholders and stresses that it is more ideal for the implementation and durable sustainability of PWPs. This means partnership between the government, private sector and social welfare organisations should be put in place paying special attention to regulation and facilitation in order to direct the provision. Thus interaction and partnership ensures more capacity to undertake PWPs at a higher level, (Pellisery 2008:40). The World Bank (1986) recommends that the early involvement of the localities which are intended to benefit from the public works schemes (PWS) is a mandatory obligation.

2.3.6.4 The management, coordination and administration of PWPs

First and foremost, the institutions to manage, coordinate, administer and implement PWPs must be set, (Phillips 2004). According to Howell (2002:94), public works programmes that are effective require a capable, more competent and accountable administrative system. In this regard, Howell (2002) postulates that governments must put in place a consistent and transparent evaluation system and again monitor the progress of PWS quarterly or annually. Besides, effective planning is a pre-requisite obligation in order to ensure that the rate of

implementation is aligned to the rate of development of the much needed implementation capacity.

2.3.6.4 Monitoring and Evaluation of PWP

Phillips (2004:95) advocates for an effective monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of PWS. This is a quite significant aspect to make sure that PWS is achieving the objectives it is meant to achieve. M&E according to Kusek and Rist (2004:18) helps to build greater transparency and accountability that is resource utilisation and improve project planning and development. The M&E aspect therefore cannot come at the end of the planning process but it cuts in almost every phase of the programme and project planning, For instance, it is a prominent requirement to monitor whether the benefits of the PWP are reaching the intended beneficiaries, (Howell 2002:95). According to McCord (2003) M&E is vital in the collection of data and baseline information about the impact of PWP.

2.3.6.5 Governance, politics accountability and corruption in PWP

Phillips (2004) opines for PWS to be successful and to attain the desired outcomes, political support is a basic requirement. Nevertheless, the bad aspect of this is that PWS are normally associated with the ruling clique or political figures as a consequence of the government claim of generating employment for their citizens. According to Giraud (2007:90), a study of emergency employment programmes in Argentina found that politics itself had a hand in the targeting of beneficiaries and that these programmes were manipulated by political figures owing to the fact that they were not conducted with clients or beneficiaries at heart,

2.4 Why governments undertake PWPs.

There are numerous reasons why countries undertake PWPs. First and foremost PWPs are implemented with the objective of providing to poor households a source of income by creating short term employment. Besides, PWPs also help to achieve complementary objectives of creating public goods for the community which may in turn lead to secondary employment and income benefits.

2.4.1 PWPs as mitigation for covariate shocks

According to Carlo and others (2000:12), PWPs provide an income transfer via wages to smooth consumption of poor households in the wake of a major shock such as economic meltdown , (including stabilization programmes or other reforms causing sharp rise in unemployment and income) or natural disasters like floods , drought or in times of a poor agricultural season. Above all, third world countries do not have formal unemployment insurance programmes for a variety of reasons which include feasibility (underdeveloped financial markets) and inability to finance the projects. In these countries, public works programmes run at a sporadic pace after the occurrence of the crisis or a few months in a year and then scale down in better times.

2.4.2 PWPs as mitigation for idiosyncratic shocks (insurance guarantee).

In this pretext, the main objective is to guarantee employment at a low wage demanded by workers. In other words would enjoy the leverage to move in (when market wage is low) and out when the market wage is higher than the public works wage. According to Wilclock

(2009:18), it is vital to note that in countries where there is no formal employment insurance, public works programmes are capable of performing an insurance role.

2.4.3 A poverty alleviation strategy.

It is worth noting that PWPs as a poverty alleviation strategy provide substantive income support to poor households in those nations with a huge segment of poor unemployed people. In fact, it can be noted that against that background, PWPs are undertaken throughout the year and are also likely to engage people for a longer period of time, (Mvula 2000:12).

In Zimbabwe, where food insecurity and poverty both in rural and urban areas is evident particularly in drought prone districts like Bikita, a potentially more effective way to alleviate poverty has been recently introduced. With financial support from donors , the government has recently launched production safety net programmes , a public work programme that contributes to improving the productive and efficiency of transfers to food insecure households , reducing household vulnerability , improving resilience to shocks through multi-year predictable resources rather than through a system dominated by emergency humanitarian aid (Karenga 2009:34).

According to Carlo and others (2009:15), the anti-poverty objective does not motivate workfare programmes only in developing nations but also the developed ones facing structural unemployment challenges, especially widespread among third world countries. In these countries, the anti-poverty objective is intended to provide income assistance to the poor, as the state's levels of income increases, a public work programme is still intended to help the poor but its focus is different such as countering a situation of structural or rising unemployment or to help specific fragments of the population.

2.4.4 A bridge to employment.

PWPs may include a training aspect on top of the income transfer to help workers in the acquisition of skills needed to gain more permanent employment or able to do piece jobs. The other requirements needed for workers may include saving some of their wage earnings , learning technical skills and eventually obtain a credit and begin an activity other programs have explicit training component thereby enabling workers to acquire the needed skills to transition into a more regular empowerment, (Carlo 2009:15).

2.4.5 Other objectives of PWPs

It is worth mentioning that PWPs have played an important role in fragile countries coming out of years of conflict. According to Carlo (2009), these countries face severe development challenges such as weak institutional capacity, bad governance, as well as political instability and political violence and street fighting. Therefore, for the said countries to effectively deal with these challenges, several fragile states are using public works as a poverty alleviation method. Countries such as Sierra Leone successfully implemented PWPs soon after a civil war in order to rebuild infrastructure damaged soon after the war.

Besides, PWPs can play a pivotal role in reducing and mitigating the risk of changes in climate by generating environmentally friendly public assets. According to Wilcock (2009:76), some of the assets generated can increase the resilience of the societies like water storage and embankments. Not only that, other projects such as forestation and soil conservation projects can help to protect the environment from the diverse impact of changes

in climate. Be that as it may, it is important to note that projects which help to conserve the soil were carried out in semi-arid environments have been instrumental in slowing down the desertification, erosion and creating new forest areas.

2.5 The effectiveness of PWPs in skills development and poverty alleviation.

In line with the principal objectives of the PWPs, immediate results can be observed on participating households and communities. PWPs can have some positive impacts on incomes through the provision of employment to poor households and individual participating in the public works projects. Owing to this reason many countries have integrated PWPs in their poverty alleviation methods. It can be noted that the extent of the impact on poverty depends nevertheless on the wage rate, the timing of the programme, the social benefits of the project and costs associated with the forgone opportunities, (Datt and Ravallion 1994:1347). Thus the empirical evidence on the positive employment and net income effects on participants in PWPs in third world countries is quite noticeable. One can argue that access of poor households to PWPs employment appears to improve their net income and decrease poverty among the rural poor.

Besides the second and most vital direct effect of PWPs is the development of the physical infrastructure in rural areas by communities. These physical infrastructures include road networks, construction of bridges as well as, irrigation facilities and water storage tanks. Carlo and others (2009:16) opine that the availability of these facilities uplifts the social status of the communities and promotes rural development that is necessary for durable and sustainable livelihoods.

It is important to note that the two direct impacts of PWP generate indirect benefits and costs that have to be captured in the beneficiary assessment. According to Wilcock (2009:23), PWP can have what we call a multiplier employment effect in the local economy in the long run particularly where the incomes saved are invested in further activities that are economically sound and again productive. It is of great significance to note that some of PWP may impart skills to the participants in the form of management and organisation work as well as skills in construction activities.

The incomes gained from public works employment (PWE) can again be used to buy food requirements and this helps to improve the nutritional status of the participating individual households. In addition to that, socially reduction in poverty improves social well being by limiting situations of helplessness and by stabilising the incomes of the poor. According to (Mvula 2000:32) the development of infrastructure in rural areas may create a favourable atmosphere for productive and economic activities. For example the construction of a road that links the rural area to market centres may encourage on farm production and agriculture based public works like irrigation and soil conservation are likely to impact positively on agricultural productivity.

Besides Moyo and others (2014:1747) stresses that although PWP have some demerits, they are largely associated with benefits warmly embraced by rural beneficiaries. It appears as if many poor people in rural Zimbabwe rely on the public works for house hold incomes and household food source. Be that as it may, PWP are very useful as a poverty alleviation strategy as they increase house hold food security and cash flow as well. It is also worth mentioning that cash flows would allow beneficiaries to spend their incomes on any combination of food and other needs of their choice. In the event that they are given money, it means that income would be assured to the most vulnerable while encouraging able bodied

men and women to be gainfully employed. It promotes the incentive to work and would eliminate the tendency to continually depend on aid.

PWPs can help beneficiaries to develop skills which can be of great use to them even when the life span of the projects expires. This is because of the fact that some PWPs have a training aspect where beneficiaries can get valuable skills at the full expense of the entire programme. When the project ends, the beneficiaries will be able to use the skills and be gainfully employed in other sectors of the economy.

2.6 Community involvement in the selection of the project.

Community involvement in the selection of the project is quite vital. First and foremost, it will result in the creation of infrastructure or assets that are most needed by the community. PWPs would then become a genuinely demand driven activity. Furthermore, it creates ownership of the assets created and obviously leads to better maintenance of the asset such as community water outlets. Carlo (2009:15) opines that it may also help in the site supervision of the project by the community and this contributes to better quality of the asset created. It can be noted that community involvement can be built in into the design of the projects. For instance, sub project selection could be done at open village meetings or by the elected representatives of the village.

2.7 An analysis of PWPs in Zimbabwe.

In Zimbabwe the term public works (PWs) has become increasingly associated with community level efforts to generate assets and at the same time help people to cope through and with the impact of drought. According to Samson and others (2006:98), PWs refers to the regular payment of money or in kind benefits by government or NGOs to individuals in exchange for work aiming to decrease chronic poverty or that kind of poverty which is normally caused by a shock by providing social protection as well as taking note of social risky or reduce economic vulnerability.

2.7.1 Importance of PWPs in Zimbabwe.

It is important to note that PWs approaches in this country have moved from reactionary strategies aimed at mitigating drought and dependency in the early 1980s to more integrated humanitarian efforts by both the state and non-state sector in 2009. In addition to that, payment in cash or kind has largely addressed immediate or short term needs of the poor and vulnerable communities in rural Zimbabwe. Karenga (2009:12) stresses that the assets created or rehabilitated have longer term merits for those people who earn low salaries, in terms of livelihood viability coping .It can be noted that community based PWs through state and non-state actors have introduced formalised element of protection by providing relief from deprivation during drought and other shocks in the form of cash and food transfers and promotion by enhancing incomes through useful public assets.

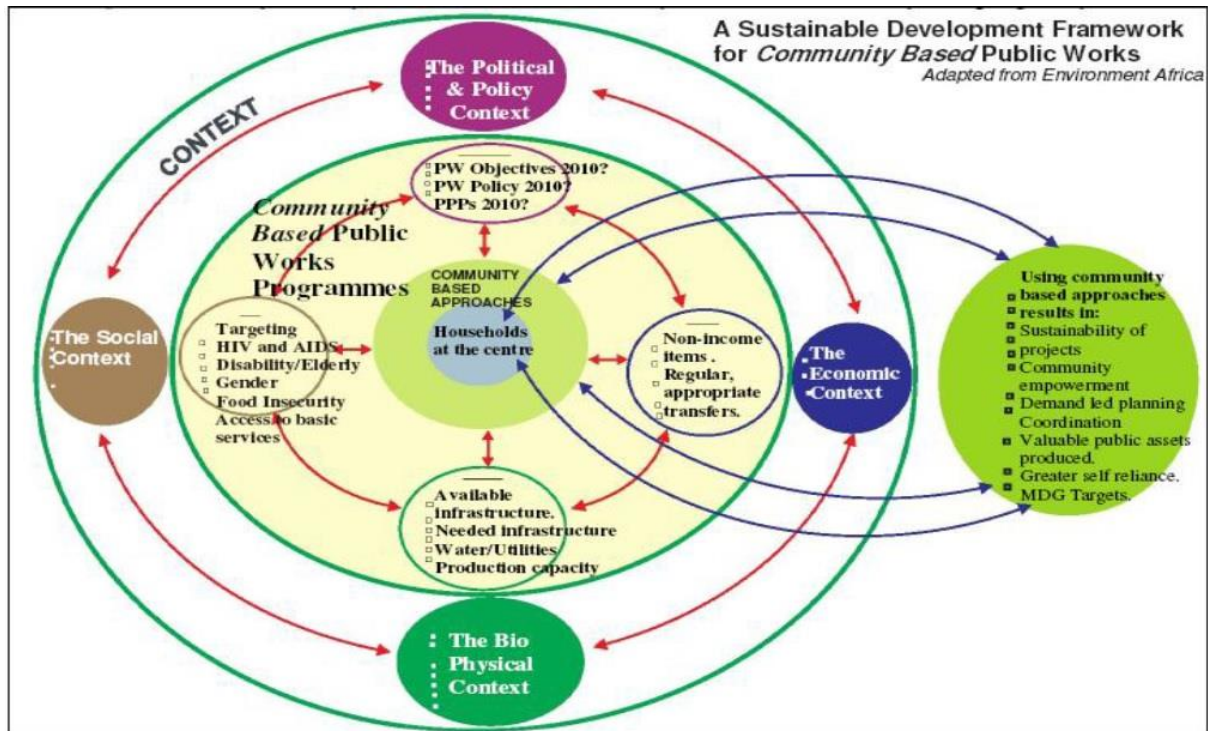
2.7.2 PWPs and the sustainable development frame work in Zimbabwe.

The United Nations (1987:7) came up with a widely accepted definition of sustainable development. It states that sustainable development is that type of development with the potential to meet current needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Besides , sustainable development may relate to linking what is to be sustained and developed. According to Kates (2005), another way of defining sustainable development is by its goal, that is, what it endeavours to achieve. The pillars of sustainable development according to the United Nations (1987:8) are economic, social, and environmental sustainable development.

It is quite authentic to make a standing fact that the sustainable development frame work can be applied to PWs in Zimbabwe as shown in fig 2a below. Thus, using the sustainable development frame work to look at PWPs in Zimbabwe moves it from an emphasis on political and donor cycles towards long term investment that will benefit the underdeveloped and marginalized communities in rural Zimbabwe.

The frame work shown **in Fig 2.7.3** below places poor rural people and their areas at the centre and show the correct pro-poor individual poor house agenda for successful outcomes.

Fig2.7.3 The sustainable development frame work.



Source Karenga (2009:12)

From the given sustainable development frame work, the following conclusions can be drawn:

- The policy environment for PWs is very weak and offers little capacity or guidance for coordination.
- It can also be deduced that without a clear policy, co-ordination and strong political will from the elite for reforming public works programming, the economic context is weakened. The government avails resources every year, but little impact has been made and documented. Thus the local community structures are not yet empowered within this programme (RUWP manual 2004).

- The categorisation of PWPs by type and according to the objectives can help to see good approaches within the influencing context and allow different programmatic objectives.

- Besides, the changing social context should influence both the programme objectives and its strategy for support, for example targeting is quite prominent. It is important to note that self targeting strategies do not work effectively when the competition is high for little resources nor does it work in political structures.

- The biophysical context relates to what the majority of the poor people in rural Zimbabwe and most vulnerable individual households rely on for their living. Quality and effective social safety nets need good access to basic services and the capacity to cope with shocks in both short and long term. Karenga (2009:13) opines that focusing on intermittent income transfer leaves communities poor. Thus, it is logical to argue that enhanced livelihood systems are therefore imperative for Zimbabwe's many communal farms and regular and decent work opportunities are needed for the country's unemployed.

2.8 The theoretical frame work

It is important to take note of the conventional debates surrounding the research in order to put social development in its proper context. The study does not intent to develop new theories but social development will be analysed and assessed as a possible theoretical approach for the development of rural Zimbabwe.

2.8.1 The modernisation theory of development

Modernisation movement is an economic theory of development that is rooted in capitalism and it emphasizes that all nations are characterised by modernisation as their ideological model of development. As Haines (2000:32) notes, modernisation theory assumes that all societies tend to follow one prescribed path to development; hence societies not yet developed are yet to pass through stages passed by the developed countries. According to Matunhu (2011), modernisation is about Africa following the development footsteps of Europe (largely the former colonizers of Africa).

Besides, the linear stages of growth model propounded by Rostow suggesting that development should follow a linear style with nations emerging from traditional stage and then move to the pre-conditions of take off, the take off stage, drive to maturity, and the stage of high mass production also falls under the modernisation theory. According to the modernisation development theory, the third world poor nations can achieve the same status as their developed counterparts if they would accept modernisation as their goal.

Haines (2000:32) postulates that the modernization approach promised a guided transition towards a developed industrial society to developing countries. In this regard, development is seen as a global process aimed at producing the image of a highly developed society.

Besides, the structural change model which emphasizes the transformation of developing nations' economies from a heavy dependency on subsistence agriculture to urbanized industrial economies from a heavy dependency on subsistence agriculture to urbanized industrial economy is also another modernisation theory. The two sector labour model by Lewis and patterns of development model by Chenery again falls under modernisation theory. According to Todaro (1981:71) underdeveloped economies consist of two sectors which are the traditional rural subsistence sector with surplus labour and a second high productivity urban industrial sector that relies on labour b from the rural sector. Thus the core assumption is that transformation of the economy would have occurred when rural labour is transferred to urban centres until it is absorbed in industries.

2.8.2 Criticisms of the modernisation theory

The theory is criticized for failing to consider the poor as the centre piece in poverty reduction (Matunhu 2011: 72). It is important to note that by ignoring the involvement and participation of the intended beneficiaries, modernisation theoretical approach achieves the marginalization of poor people and their commitment, initiative and aid to the intervention strategies. Matunhu (2011) opines that the strategy becomes an imposed strategy and such a strategy fails to construct adequate notions of both the casual powers of social structures and the role of human agency in shaping social relations in general.

The modernisation theory implies that the standard of living is likely to go up as poor countries industrialise (Moyo et al 2014). Industrialisation has however had some negative impact on the lives of rural women and children who are left by men to fend themselves.

It can be noted that another criticism of the modernisation theory is that it is based on deterministic reason which states that within the linear model of socio-economic development, changes are initiated externally. This encouraged foreign powers to prescribe their route to the development of the African continent. It is important to note that in the 1980s, Africa was a victim of failed Economic Structural Adjustment Programmes (ESAP). According to Mlambo (2002), ESAP was dubbed as the Eternal Suffering of the African people (ESAP). In addition to that, Matunhu (2011) states that ESAP did not succeed because the programme was imposed and totally disregarded socio-political and the traditional values of the African people. Thus ESAP failed owing to the fact that it was a European experiment and as a result it failed to pull the continent out of poverty.

2.8.3 The basic needs approach to development.

The basic needs development strategy became popular in the 1970s. Numerous scholars concur that this was after states became fully aware of the fact that economic development would not address the problems of underdevelopment and that the gap between the rich and the poor is widening at a sporadic pace. According to this theory, human societies should not follow luxurious ways of living. It further stresses that according to Kothari (1993) if the focus was on fulfilling “basic needs” of all people, on this planet would have enough resources to meet these needs, (Kothari 1993:12).

As Haines (2000:32) notes, the basic needs theory is premised in the idea of shifting from a grant theory to more practical approaches aimed at poverty alleviation through the provision of social services like schools and colleges, as well as hospitals, clinics and welfare programmes. It can be argued that the approach supports the view that no development can take place using the ideas made in isolation of the intended beneficiaries. According to Moyo

and others (2014), development of the community should begin with the rise of the people at grassroots level towards their own emancipation. It is important to note that the basic needs development approach was the first people centred approach to development.

2.8.4 Criticisms of the basic needs development approach.

The main goal of the basic needs development approach was to provide the basic needs of the poor people within a very short space of time. It can therefore be noted this approach is hailed for unveiling the fact that meeting the needs of the poor people would not only help to reduce poverty but also improve on the education and skills levels of the population.

Nevertheless, the basic needs development approach never developed a methodology on how the basic needs of the people would be met. Besides, the approach focuses on improving public services which is virtually impossible for financially overstretched communities. The basic needs approach eventually lost its appeal in the early 1980s, due to the emergency of a separate approach to ending poverty and enhancing human potential towards the development of poor countries, (De Beer and Swanepole 1998:5).

2.8.5 The neo-liberalism approach to development.

Neo-liberalism development approach gained currency in the mid 1970s. The approach favour market liberalism and a competitive market economy. According to this approach market competition is important and acknowledged as the motive power behind economic growth. As noted by Chani (2008), that neo-liberal scholars believe that market economy is an important ingredient of democracy because by dispersing the ownership of property, it limits the confinement of power in the hands of the law.

Besides, neo-liberals subscribe to the rule of law that is the doctrine that the powers of government should be limited by a higher constitutional law, that the exercise of power should be based on predictable laws rather than discretionary commands. They also content that there is a higher command to which governments are subject and which in extreme cases may justify rebellion against dictators. Haines (2000:48-49) postulates that the global economic recession of the 1980s, declining commodity prices and mounting third world debt were decisive of this policy shift in third world.

According to Mlambo (1992:18), SAPs require the borrowing country to restructure its economy through demand management, currency devaluation, trade liberalisation, elimination of price controls, and reduction of budget deficit, removal of government subsidies on goods and services and increasing interest rates to their natural market levels to discourage capital flight. It is important to note that, other requirements are that the borrowing country should reduce state investment in the economy, privatise public operations such as government parastatals and the opening up of the local economy to foreign investment.

2.8.6 Criticisms of the neo-liberal approach

It can be noted that the neo-liberal approaches in the structural adjustment era came as a poverty reduction strategy but proved to be against the poor as it destroyed the welfare programmes and cuts back on social services. Mlambo (1992:83) opines that ESAP proved harmful to Zimbabwe since all the impressive gains made since independence was eroded. Schuurman (1993a) states that liberalism the effect of destroying welfare programmes and hence poses a disadvantage to the majority poor. A follow up on neo-liberalism leaves

academics doubtful as to who should be players in rural development as it removes the idea of collective ownership of assets and state investment in public institutions.

2.8.7The African renaissance approach

According to Matunhu (2011:71), the antithesis to the modernization theories is the emerging African renaissance theory. It is therefore extremely crucial to note that, the African renaissance approach to development is premised on African values, beliefs and norms that are the very building blocks of African life. African life is based on unity; communalism and shared purpose and this can be a panacea or avenue to true development. Matunhu (2011:71) alludes that the African renaissance theory advocates for local solutions, pluralism, and community based solutions and reliance on local resources. With this, it is quite authentic to say poverty reduction measures that have been influenced by the modernistic theories have failed to yield desired results in an African set up.

2.9 Development theories and the poor people in rural Zimbabwe.

It is important to note that the failure of development theories in Africa in general and Zimbabwe in particular is evident in the failure of SAPs to yield desired results. Zimbabwe is one of the victims of the IMF and World Bank imposed SAPs. Zimbabwe adopted SAPs in the early 1990s with the aim of resuscitating her ailing economy but to no avail.

2.9.1 Conclusion.

The chapter has presented a review of related literature on the contribution of public works programmes to poverty alleviation. The literature reviewed above depicts that PWP can be a better strategy for poverty alleviation. It can be noted that while public works have been applauded for their positive outcomes, it appears they also have some demerits. For example public works have been subjected to severe criticism owing to their micro focusing. It can be noted that few people end up benefiting from the programmes which pay little dividends. Some of the important aspects were covered in this section for example development theories, objectives and rationale of public works in Zimbabwe, the impact of public works to beneficiary communities and the nexus between public works and the sustainable development framework. The next chapter will deal with the research methodology.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

The previous chapter dealt mainly with the review of related literature. This chapter will outline a set of logical procedures that were followed by the researcher to obtain evidence to determine the extent to which he was accurate or inaccurate. It can be noted that, the chapter presents the methodology of the study detailing aspects like research design, composition of the population from which samples of respondents were selected. In addition, the chapter goes on to examine the research instruments used to gather data and how the data was collected, presented and analysed. The research instruments namely interviews, focus group discussions (FGDs), observations and document analysis are briefly examined. The ethical considerations will also form part of this chapter.

3.1 Bikita district

As indicated in chapter 1, the study was carried out in Bikita district, a rural area in Masvingo province covering an area of approximately 10000 square kilometres. According to the Zimstat statistical records (2012), the district of Bikita has a total number of 32 wards. The total population of Bikita district according to Zimstat (2012), is pegged around 200000 people. In addition to that, it is believed that the total number of households in Bikita district is around 47056. The Zimstat (2012) also states that a single household has a rough estimate of 5 people. Most areas in the district are prone to seasonal droughts some people plant drought resistant crops like sorghum, millet and rapoko. It is important to note that poverty

the main cause of vulnerability to food insecurity is one of the defining features of the district.

3.2 Population.

This study's population involves all the three VIDCOs in ward 14 that is Danha, Chidzinga as well as Nyikanyoro. Furthermore, the research targeted all the people who are currently employed by PWPs operational in the area. Besides, those who were excluded but are without any means of securing their basic needs will also be targeted by the study. A research population refers to the total set from which the individuals or units of the study are chosen. It is important to note that, a research population sets boundaries on the study units and it refers to individuals who possess specific characteristics under study (Vos et al 2005:11). According to Babbie (2007:33), population can also refer to a specified aggregation of study elements. Welman and others (2005:21) defines population as a group of potential participants to whom you want to generalise the results of the study. The duo further view the population as the study object that consists of individuals, groups, organisations, human products or events or the conditions to which they are exposed. Thus, it is a full set of cases from which a sample is taken. Nevertheless, the research failed to study the total population with respect to this attribute as it is too large or simply unavailable for study. Furthermore, the research consequently used a sample (a relatively small section) from within the population of ward 14 of Bikita district based on the sampling procedure outlined below.

3.3 Sampling methods

Borg and Gall (1989:16) define a sample as a given number of subjects from a defined population which is representative of it. Judgemental/purposive sampling was used in the study. Purposive /judgemental sampling involves researchers handpicking using his own expert judgement, the cases to be included in the sample. A sample was drawn from village representatives in ward 14 of the district. It can be noted that representative samples were drawn using non-probability sampling methods. The researcher used his expert judgement that is aspects like level of education, position in the society and economic status to select participants that are representative of the population in Danha, Nyikanyoro and Chidzinga VIDCOs. The researcher considered factors that might influence the population such as social and economic position as well as intelligence, and educational qualifications. The researcher purposefully selected a sample that adequately represented the target population using the variables stated above. It is of great significance to note that a sample size of 25 households was chosen for the purposes of the study. According to Patton (2001:85), purposive sampling is best suitable for researches that are purely qualitative because it is less costly and time consuming and ensures proper representation of the universe when the investigation has full knowledge of the composition of the population and is free from bias in most instances. It is again vital to note that judgemental sampling technique prevents unnecessary and irrelevant items entering into the sample per chance and ensures intensive study of the variables which have been chosen. In addition to that, three VIDCOs were chosen from the six VIDCOs in the ward. Owing to time and resources the sample was manageable for the researcher.

Before gathering data from the respondents, sampling frames were obtained from the headman. It is quite genuine to say the sampling frames included registers that were used in PWPs in the ward in order to select the beneficiaries. These registers are usually compiled by

the village heads. In addition, it is important to note that obtaining sample frames from kraal heads made it easier to select the sample, than gathering people first in order to do the sampling which was going to be time consuming and strenuous.

Thus in qualitative researches, there are no rules for sample size. Sample size depends on what the researcher wants to know, the purpose of the inquiry, what the stake is, what will be useful, what will have credibility, and what can be done with the remaining time and resources (Patton 2002:86).

Key informants like chief Negovano and Mr Mugarira, the local councillor, were informed about the research before going to the field by the District Administrator, Mr Mutingwina. It can be noted that these strategic informants were chosen purposely on the grounds of their roles in the ward and villages, and letters were sent to them to inform them about the ongoing. As noted by Babbie (2007:93), sometimes it is appropriate to select a sample on the basis of knowledge of the population, and also as well as elements and the purpose of the study.

3.3.1 Research design

According to Darvil (2002:78), the term design usually refers to a plan. Therefore, in this case, it means a plan of research. It can therefore be pointed out that a research design can be best explained in its simple form means putting together numerous components of a research study to enhance its validity. Besides, De Vos (2005:268) defines a research design as the options available for qualitative researchers to study certain phenomena according to certain formulae suitable for a specific goal. Makore –Rukuni et al (2001:19) say:

“A research design is a plan or structure for an investigation. It is a set of plans and procedures that reduce error and simultaneously help the researcher to obtain empirical evidence (data) about isolated variables of interest”

Chisi et al (2004:16) say that the term design and plan mean the same thing in research as both refer to a description of the format and theoretical structure under which the study will be done. It is crucial to note that, research designs also include the discussion of steps to be taken in order to safeguard the validity and authenticity of the research findings/results.

The study will use the case study research design. Merriam and Simpson (2004:16) define a case study as an intensive description and analysis of a particular social unit such as (an individual or a community), that seeks to uncover the interplay of significant factors that are characteristic of the sampled unit. According to De Vos et al (2005:272) , a case study aims at the exploration or in-depth analysis of an aspect. Therefore, it is quite genuine to say the intrinsic case study was seen as the most appropriate as it focused solely on gaining better understanding of the individual case which in this study is the contribution of PWPs to poverty alleviation in ward 14 of Bikita district in the Masvingo province of Zimbabwe. Best and Kahn (2003:19) opine that a case study is normally concerned with the investigation of many if not all variables in a single unit. In this context Bikita district is a chosen case.

The research was evaluated using qualitative methods to analyse and address the objectives of the study. Ereaut (2007:18) postulate that qualitative research is used to gain insight into the people's attitudes, behaviours as well as what they value and again their concerns. In fact, it is used to sharpen our understanding of complex social and human factors in ways that could not be understood with numbers, (Kielin 1999:23).

Leedy (1993:142) stresses that qualitative approach relies on direct observation as well as the summary of numerous different documents on facts, observation and unstructured interviewing. This therefore denotes that its main goal is to get an understanding of social or human problems from a number of perspectives. Mason (1996:19) says qualitative research is conducted in a natural setting and involves a process of building a complex and holistic picture of the phenomenon of interest. The qualitative research design have got various methods of collecting data like interviews , and use of information from text books and reports and official documents , as well as the print media.

3.3.2 Data collection

Data collection entailed visiting sampled areas in order to gather views from all categories of respondents about how they perceived the contribution of public works on poverty alleviation. The data required for the research included demographic details of households, ownership of assets, educational qualifications of interviews and employment status.

3.4 Data collection tools.

It can be noted that four types of data collection tools were used in this research and these are interviews as well as observation and lastly focus group discussions (FGDs) and document analysis. In order to minimise bias, the researcher was careful not to put forth his opinions, perceptions and feelings to the interviews.

3.4.1 Interviews

This refers to the procedure of soliciting responses/answers from respondents to enable the researcher to answer specific research objectives. It can be noted that many people are more willing to communicate orally than in writing, (Van Delan 1979:16). According to Sidhu (1997:32) an interview is a two way method which permits an exchange of ideas and information. It is quite authentic to say an interview is an opportunity for the researcher to probe deeply into the study, to uncover dimensions, open up new clues of a problem under investigation and secure a vivid, accurate and inclusive account that are based on personal experiences.

For this study unstructured interviews were chosen in order to gain as much information as possible and to give interviewees the opportunity to express their own opinions. Flexibility represents the major advantage of interviews since they allow one to make follow ups and explain questions. Interviews were conducted with the communal people of ward 14 in Bikita district. The study managed to interview the people who are currently employed in the PWPs operational in ward 14. Be that as it may, those who were not given an opportunity to take part in the programmes but are without any means of securing their basic needs were also targeted.

3.4.2 Advantages of interviews

- Van Dalen (2007:35) opines that interviews involve a friendly interaction on a face to face meeting and researcher is able to encourage interviewees and help them to probe deep into the problem. This helped the researcher to gain as much information as possible on how public works programmes contributed to poverty alleviation in ward 14 of Bikita district.
- In interviews the investigator is able to encourage the interviewees to feel at home and speak out their minds. According to Shumbayawonda (2006:87), the face to face interview approach allows respondents to bring out what will be in their mind as well their feelings and attitudes. In ward 14, the interviewees were able to speak out their minds in a free and relaxed environment.
- Gall and others (1996) postulate that interviews are more flexible than closed questionnaires in that respondents are given an opportunity to speak and explain in their own words. This helped there researcher to probe deeply into the problem and again gain valuable information which helped him to answer specific research questions.
- In addition, Sidhu (1997:13) stresses that interviews have the advantage of probing into factors that could have caused the problem. With this, one can safely argue that interviews help to find out the attitudes of the people and discover the origin of the problem and involve the interview in an analysis of his/her own problems and

secure his/her cooperation in this analysis. This helped the investigator to explore the perception and attitudes of people in ward 14 towards public works projects.

- It is also important to note that interview schedules or guides yield data that are more crucial than those obtained from questionnaires owing to the fact that they reflect reality of subjects, (Finch 2006:17). The data obtained enabled the researcher to answer specific research questions.
- Besides, direct contact with those people being studied is essential for the understanding of reality of the existing situation by researchers, (Kapfunde 2001:11). The researcher gained prominent information through face to face interaction with the people of ward 14 in Bikita district.
- Lastly, Chisaka and Vakalisa (2000) opine that a face to face interview method gives background information on participants. Thus the researcher will gain access to information that cannot be accessed through a questionnaire. The researcher managed to get information such as that which relate to ownership of assets that enabled him to assess the poverty situation in the area to justify the contribution of public works in poverty alleviation.

3.4.3 Disadvantages of interviews

- According to Sidhu (1997:14), interviews tend to obtain data that agree with personal convictions of interviewees. Thus the presence of the interviewer may affect the responses. This was noted during the ward 14 field visit.
- It is important to note that the interviewer may be biased where the researcher probably unwillingly influence the responses through verbal or non verbal cues that

data may be affected by the characteristics of the interviewer that include personality, the researcher's motivation, skills and experience, (Robson 2003:24).

- According to Shumbayawonda (2006:88), interviews are more time consuming than administering questionnaires. The researcher took a long time to meet all the key informants and other respondents.

3.4.4 Observation

The field of observation is another method of collecting qualitative data in its natural setting. According to Weick (2005:30), observation refers to the methodological observing of social situations of the people in relation to their naturally occurring contexts. Makore-Rukuni and others (2001:23) mention that observation techniques allow the researcher to observe the participant, record what is going on either verbatim or field notes. The researcher observed people in ward 14 of Bikita district as they carried out PWPs projects like gulley reclamation in the area. The poverty status of the individual households who had a privilege to be involved in PWPs for a period of five years and above were also observed in order to find out if their lives have changed for the better. On top of that, the investigator also observed whether the area in general has benefited from PWPs currently under way in Ward 14.

3.4.5 Advantages of observation

- Weick (2005:31) opines that observation enables the researcher to obtain people's perception of reality in their actions and expressed feelings, thoughts and beliefs.

Owing to observation the researcher to explore the perceptions and attitude of rural people towards public works projects.

- Observation can again provide an objective picture as there is no bias from the use of respondent words or interviewer intervention. Through this , the researcher managed to assess the effects of public works programmes on skills development of beneficiaries and poverty alleviation.

3.4.6 Disadvantages of observation

- Gall and Corg (2006:15) point out that observation method are more time consuming than other methods of data collection. This is true because in ward 14 of Bikita district, it took quite a long period for the researcher to draw conclusions as he was observing the contribution of public works programmes on poverty alleviation.
- Observation is not purely objective and functional as all seeing is selective , and all report of what is seen is interpretive, (McMillan and Schumer 1997:19)
- It can be argued that the observation method is not good at answering the why question and logistically difficulty to organise as numerous actions are private and over a long period. Thus the researcher had to rely on interviews to answer the why question as this was not sufficiently dealt with through observations.

3.4.7 Focus group discussions

FGDs refer to a qualitative method of assessment that encourages a free flow of ideas. A focus group is made up of small numbers of carefully selected people who are recruited to discuss a subject based on commonality of their experience, Barker (2002:16). The common characteristic features of focus groups are that they usually involve people. Above all, the people attending the group usually possess an experience / common interest and that they provide in depth qualitative data. The discussions were focused to help the researcher to understand what is going on. The researcher conducted FGDs with selected households. The households were made up of 5 people on average.

3.4.8 Advantages of FGDs

- According to Barker (2002), FGDs are the back bone of qualitative research owing to the fact that they provide clients and researchers with a powerful tool that yields a considerable understanding of a subject in just a couple of hours. This helped the researcher to have an in depth understanding on the contribution of public works programmes to poverty alleviation.
- Besides, the brain storm effect generates ideas as one person's view sparks ideas in others. With this, the researcher was able to explore factors that led to the failure of public works programmes to alleviate poverty in ward 14 of Bikita district.
- In focus group discussions the participants normally feel safe in a group than as individuals hence they relax and talk. During the FDGs in ward 14, participants were

quite confident in expressing their views and as a result, the researcher gained valuable information that enabled him to answer specific research questions.

- They are good for resolving differences of opinion between respondents as well as encouraging spontaneous comments.
- Tuckman (2002:22) stresses that almost always FGDs give a real understanding of the issues even if there are measurements of how many think what.

3.4.9 Disadvantages of FGDs

- It is important to note that success of FGDs depends very much on the moderator skills and these can be variable. The skills of the researcher enabled the FGDs to be quite successful and as a result the researcher gained valuable information on the contribution of public works programmes to poverty alleviation.
- In FGDs, minority view can be lost and it is difficult to know to what extent there has been contamination of views from the debate, (Tuckman 2002:22).
- Lastly, it can be deduced that FGDs are prone to bias from those individuals dominating the discussion. It is true that the researcher encountered some circumstances where some members in the FGDs were dominating all the proceedings.

3.4.9.0 Document analysis

Document analysis is a form of qualitative research in which documents are interpreted by the investigator to give voice and meaning around a topic under investigation. According to Chisaka and Vakalisa (2000), the analysis of documents usually fills the gaps that may be left open by interviews and observations or the researcher may pick up some aspects he/she

would like to verify with respondents through interviews. The researcher managed to get and analyse documents like registers of people undertaking public works projects in Danha VIDCO of ward 14 in Bikita district.

3.4.9.1 Secondary data sources

The research made use of published literature on the contribution of PWPs to poverty alleviation. It can be noted that, more recent journals as well as published scholarly articles, some research papers which were of significant value to the study were used together with any other written material of substance to the research problem.

3.5 Data analysis

It is important to note that data was sorted, coded, organised and indexed in a way that made it easier for the researcher to interpret, analyse and present findings. Besides, text findings were summarised by checking major themes, phrases that were used in the study. Additionally, the entire process was guided by the aim of the study.

3.6 Validity and reliability of the study.

There is a debate in academic circles on using validity and reliability when using qualitative methods. Babie (1983) defines reliability as a matter of whether a particular technique applied repeatedly to the same object would yield the same result. According to Chivore (1994:46) opines that reliability of research depends on its stability, which means ability to give similar or near the same results if a different test were to be carried out on the same sample. On the other hand, Manhein (1997:65) perceives validity as the degree to which the recorded description of the set of data conforms to its referent. Besides, Chivore (1994) opines that validity refers to whether the researcher is observing or measuring what is intended by given instruments or procedures.

Some scholars say that validity and reliability should be totally ignored owing to the fact that they are aligned with quantitative research methods and that there are no agreed standards of validation. On the other hand, scholars like Babie (1983) argue that validity and reliability are critical to represent reality and the truth of qualitative research. Thus data obtained by the research was compared with the information obtained from the literature review.

3.7 Limitations of the study.

The study was limited to Ward 14 of Bikita, and therefore, the results obtained may not be applicable to other wards in the district. The study is done during a period of political and economic crisis. Therefore the main challenge for the researcher included suspicion from the people as they always live in fear owing to the political situation. Thus it is important to note that the research might be confused for a non academic but political undertaking aimed at manoeuvring a certain political agenda. Owing to this the respondents may have withheld certain crucial information. The ward was not accessible due to poor road network and at

times the researched had to walk a distance of 15km to interview Chief Negovano and his household.

To deal with some of the obstacles above, the investigator told the relevant people the purpose of his presence in the ward. It was relatively easy for the researcher to be accepted since it was his home area.

3.8 Ethical considerations

It can be noted that research ethics have occupied a pivotal role in conducting an effective and meaningful research. Owing to that, the ethical behaviour of any researcher is under unprecedented scrutiny, (Best and Khan 2003). Thus the researcher considered key ethical issues such as freedom of respondents to participate or not to participate in the study. The objectives of the study were clearly spelt out to them. Besides, the respondents were not coerced to participate in the research, and were told that they have the right to withdraw from the study at any given time. In order to adhere to the privacy of respondents, identification was not required. The interviews were done in the language best understood by the respondents. The researcher tried to honestly report data, results and procedures to avoid falsifying information. The respect of intellectual property and confidentiality of information collected was always a guiding principle.

3.8.1 Informed consent

It is important to note that the ethical principle of autonomy is contained in the idea of informed consent wherein the respondent should be allowed to choose to participate or not to participate in the research after receiving all the relevant information about the risks or harm that could arise if they participate in the research, (Makore-Rukuni 2001:16). It is quite genuine to make a standing fact that the principle of voluntary participation was explained to the subjects and they were informed that they have the right to withdraw from the study at any time.

3.8.2 Confidentiality and privacy

According to McMillan and Schummer (2001:34) the confidentiality can be regarded as the researcher's ability to manage private information shared by respondents. Chikoko and Mhloyi (1995:54) believe in fairness, honesty, respect for the integrity and dignity of respondents and the confidentiality of particular information. Tuckman (1978:45) identified the following right to privacy and non-participation:

- The participants have the right to decide not to take part in the study.
- The subject has a right to have some of the information he/she provides kept secret.
- To obtain consent for children's participation.
- Respondents have the right that their identities are not highlighted in the study.
- Respondents have the right that their answers be confidential.
- Above all, the investigator has to protect the anonymity of research subjects and the confidentiality of their disclosures unless they consent to the release of personal information.

In this study, the participants were given assurance that the collected information would be used for the purposes of this research and would be availed to them upon request.

3.8.3 Avoidance of harm to subjects

According to De Vos et al (2005:66) participants can be harmed in a physical or emotional manner especially during or immediately after interviews. He further pointed out that harm to subjects in social sciences will be mainly emotional in nature although physical injury may also happen. It is important that the investigator clearly explained to the subjects to beforehand about the potential impact of study.

3.8.4 Reporting results

According to Makore-Rukuni (2001:17) ethical codes state in clear terms that it is the responsibility of the researcher to accurately report and prevent misuse of research results. For example, it would be unethical to allow generalization from results from a small sample unit. In this study the investigator tried to report the results accurately and in a professional manner.

3.9 Conclusion

The chapter presented prominent information which justified the significance of the study that includes the type of the study, sampling techniques and data collection. In addition, aspects like data analysis and interpretation as well as ethical considerations and

confidentiality of information gathered from respondents were also covered. The study was conducted in ward 14 of Bikita district in the province of Masvingo in Zimbabwe. It targeted beneficiaries of PWPs within the ward in the Danha, Chidzinga and Nyikanyoro VIDCOS.

3.9 1 Chapter summary.

The chapter focused on the research methodology covering aspects such as the research design, the sample, research instruments and the population. Data collection procedures were dealt with and the choice of the method of analysis was based on the potential to yield relevant and valid results within the time available to the researcher. The next chapter focuses on the presentation of data, as well as the analysis and interpretation of the findings of the study.

CHAPTER 4:

DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION

4.0 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to present the research findings, as well as the analysis and interpretation of data that was collected from the field. The purpose of the research was to assess the contribution of PWPs to poverty alleviation in ward 14 of Bikita district in Zimbabwe. Data was collected in Danha, Chidzinga and Nyikanyoro VIDCOs of ward 14 in Bikita district of the Masvingo province of Zimbabwe. The researcher spent two days in each VIDCO. The presentation will follow two routes that is perceptions of beneficiaries of PWPs and those obtained from community leaders such as the DA, local councillor, chief Negovano and the VIDCO chair persons.

4.1 Data Analysis, Presentation and Discussion.

Unstructured interviews were carried out with the District Administrator of Bikita, local chief, ward councillor and the VIDCO chairpersons of Danha, Chidzinga and Nyikanyoro VIDCOs, beneficiaries of PWPs in these areas and finally those excluded from the programmes but are without any means of securing their basic needs. Besides, observations, FDGs and document analysis were also used for collecting data. Document analysis helped the researcher to have the biographical information of beneficiaries of PWPs. The entire information collect during field work is presented and analysed as follows.

4.2 Biographical information of beneficiaries of PWPs.

It is important to note that under the biographical information, the gender, age, position in the household, marital status and the level of education of the beneficiaries of PWPs is presented and analysed. The principal reason for taking note of the age of respondents was to find out what age group is more likely to benefit from PWPs in ward 14 of Bikita district. In addition, the reason for probing the level of education was to investigate the beneficiaries' level of education. This is because according to information which was obtained from the review of related literature, the level of education of most beneficiaries of PWPs is very low and they have no skill what so ever to contribute to the economic growth of the nation. On top of that, the major reason of again probing for the position of the respondents in the household was to determine the actual number of breadwinners or household heads were likely to benefit from public works projects in ward 14 of Bikita district. Moreover the position of respondents in the household would help to determine what impact PWPs would have on the improvement of livelihood of their families.

4.2.1 Gender

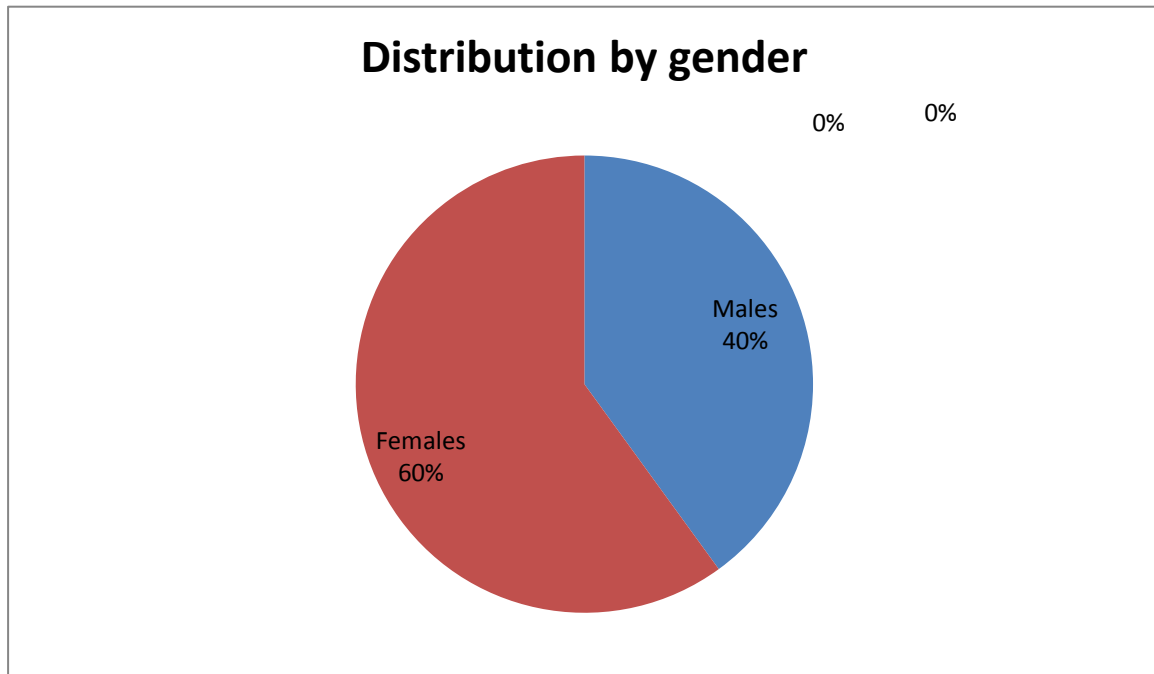
“One of the current issues concerning poverty alleviation is the extent to which these are able to reach and benefit women. Owing to the structure of gender relations in our communities and the social as well as cultural and economic challenges confronting women

and/or the existing biases (favouring men) in most of the programmes of development,
Dejardin (1996:4).

Information gathered during the field visits actually point out that the reverse is equally true. In terms of gender, out of the 25 respondents interviewed, 40% (10) are males whilst 60% (15) are females. Thus the majority of female respondents in the research gave an impression to the investigator that the majority of beneficiaries in PWPs in ward 14 of Bikita district are women. It is important to note that the findings indicate that the highest percentage of beneficiaries of PWPs were essentially single parents and females. This therefore gives an impression that the majority of men are or might not be at all involved in poverty alleviation attempts. The study concludes that PWPs in Bikita district emancipated the position of women. Thus the research found that community run projects in ward 14 of Bikita district especially in Danha, Nyikanyoro and Chidzinga VIDCOs gave sufficient priority to women and this helps to break down unfairness. It can be noted that the provision of income earning opportunities to women was believed to provide many benefits to household welfare, over and above the benefits that would be derived from giving women an equal opportunity.

Fig 4 (a) below is a pie chart to show the distribution of this by gender.

Fig 4.2.2

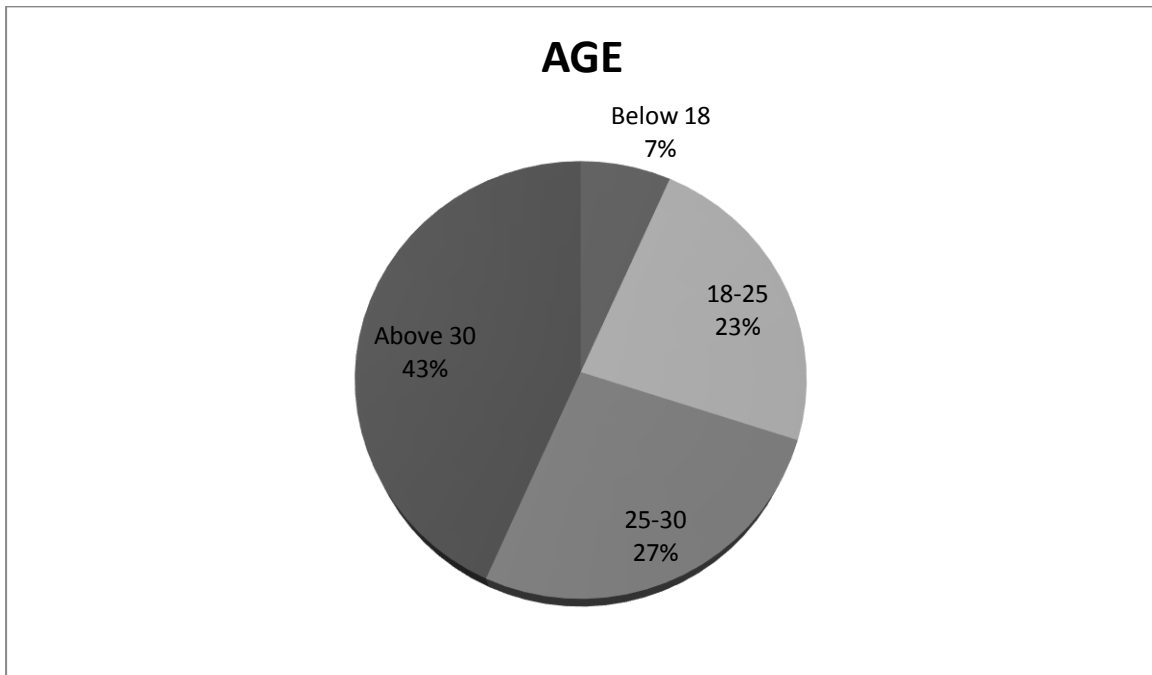


Source: Field research, April 2015

4.2.3 Age

In terms of the age of respondents, out of the 25 interviewed beneficiaries of PWPs in ward 14 of Bikita district, 8% (2) of the respondents are below the 18 years old. Besides, 28% (7) are between 18-25 years old. It can again be noted that 32% (8) are between 25-30 years and 52% (13) are above 30 years. Therefore, the pie chart below shows the distribution of PWPs respondents by age.

Fig 4.2.4



Source: Field research, April 2015

According to the study, it can be concluded that those who are below 30 years benefit most from the PWPs in ward 14 of Bikita district. They are followed by those between the age of 25 – 30 and those between 18 – 25 and lastly those below 18, who constitute below 7%.

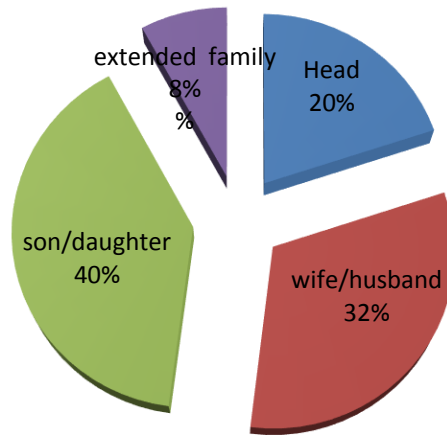
4.2.5 Position in the household.

It can be noted that, below is a household variable result shown in table 1 and depicted in table 4.2.6

Table 4.2.6

	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage</u>	<u>Valid percentage</u>
Head	5	20%	20
Wife/husband	8	32%	32
Son/daughter	10	40%	40
Extended family	2	8%	8%
Total	25	100	100

Position in household



Source: *Field research April 2015*

From the diagram above, it can be noted that of the 25 households sampled in the study, 20% (5) represent the heads of the households who are participating in the public works programmes operational in the ward. Besides, 40% (10) represent the son and daughter. It can again be deduced that 32% (8) has been taken to represent the wife or the husband. Lastly, only 8% (2) come from the extended family.

4.2.6 Marital of the respondents

In terms of the marital status of the 25 respondents, 32% (8) were married, 40% (10) were single, 12% (3) were divorced and 16% (4) were widowed. Table 4.2.6.1 below illustrate the distribution.

Table 4.2.6.1

	Frequency	Percentages
Single	10	40
Married	8	32
Divorced	3	12
Widowed	4	16

Source: Field research, April 2015

4.2.7 Educational qualifications of the interviewees.

Table 4.2.7.1

Educational qualifications	Frequency	Percentage
Never went to school	3	12
Primary	7	28
Secondary	10	40
Other	5	20

Source: Field research, April 2015

The above table shows that 12% (3) never went to school, 28% (7) had attained primary education, 40% (10) had gone through the secondary education and 20% (5) had gone above secondary education. Secondary level graduates had the highest number of responses indicative of their desire to take part in PWPs in ward 14 of Bikita district.

4.2.9 Employment status of the respondents.

During the FGDs, the respondents cited the issue of unemployment as the major reason behind their participating in PWPs. The research again established that those who regarded themselves as self-employed were involved in agriculture related work, for example, processing cooking oil as well peanut butter and growing vegetables. Others were involved in piggery as well as keeping broilers. Table 4.2.9.1 below shows the employment status of the interviewees.

Table 4.2.9.1

Employment status of respondents

	Frequency	Percentage
In school	0	0
Unemployed	15	60
Employed temporarily	4	16
Self employed	6	24
Permanently employed	0	0

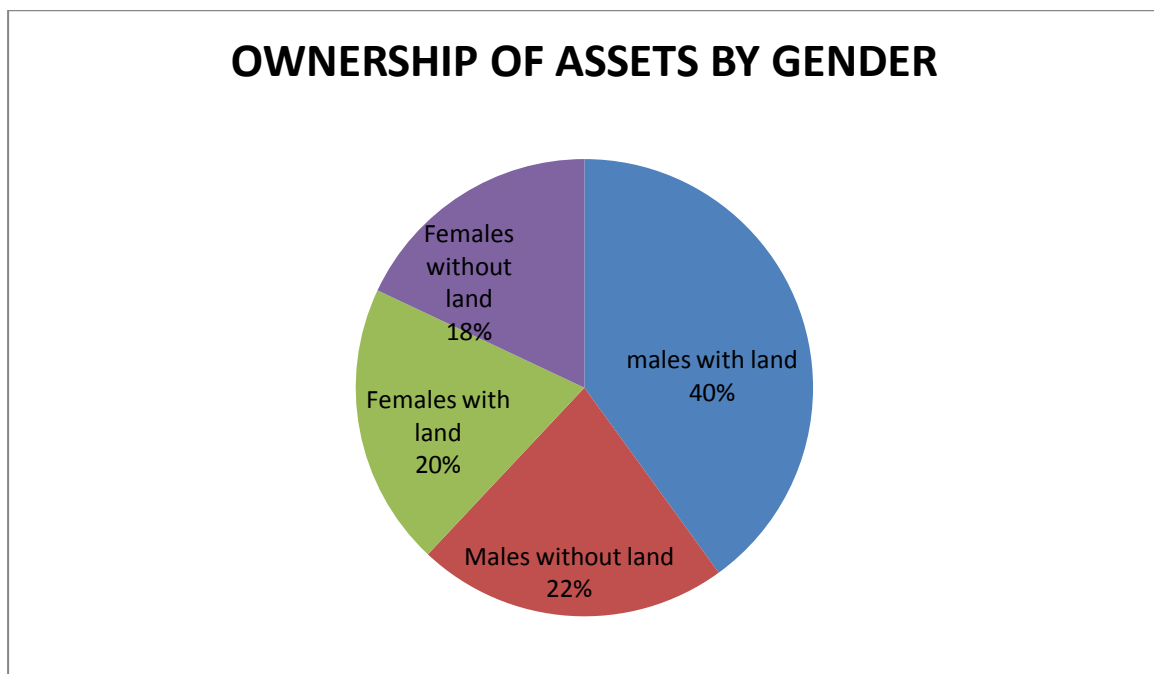
Source: *Field research April 2015*

The 25 respondents sampled in this research were asked to reveal their employment status. 60% (15) were unemployed, 16% (4) were employed temporarily, and 24% (6) were self employed. It can be concluded that that the unemployed seemed to have more time at their disposal to participate in community programmes such as PWPs.

4.2.9.2 Ownership of Assets.

Of the 25 respondents sampled in this research, it can be noted that, 60% (15) stated that they have pieces of land. Of these, 40% are males and 20% are females. Despite being culturally and economically marginalized when it comes to having land, one can note that women in ward 14 of Bikita district are finding their way to property rights. Besides, it was found that 40% of the respondents did not have pieces of land, where 18% were females and 22% were males. Non –land owners were mainly rural dwellers staying with parents and relatives. According to Jaynet and others (2001:65), Land is a very important form of social capital owing to the fact that it can sustain income growth. In addition to that, it can also aid in poverty alleviation. Fig 4.2.9.3 below summarises land ownership by gender.

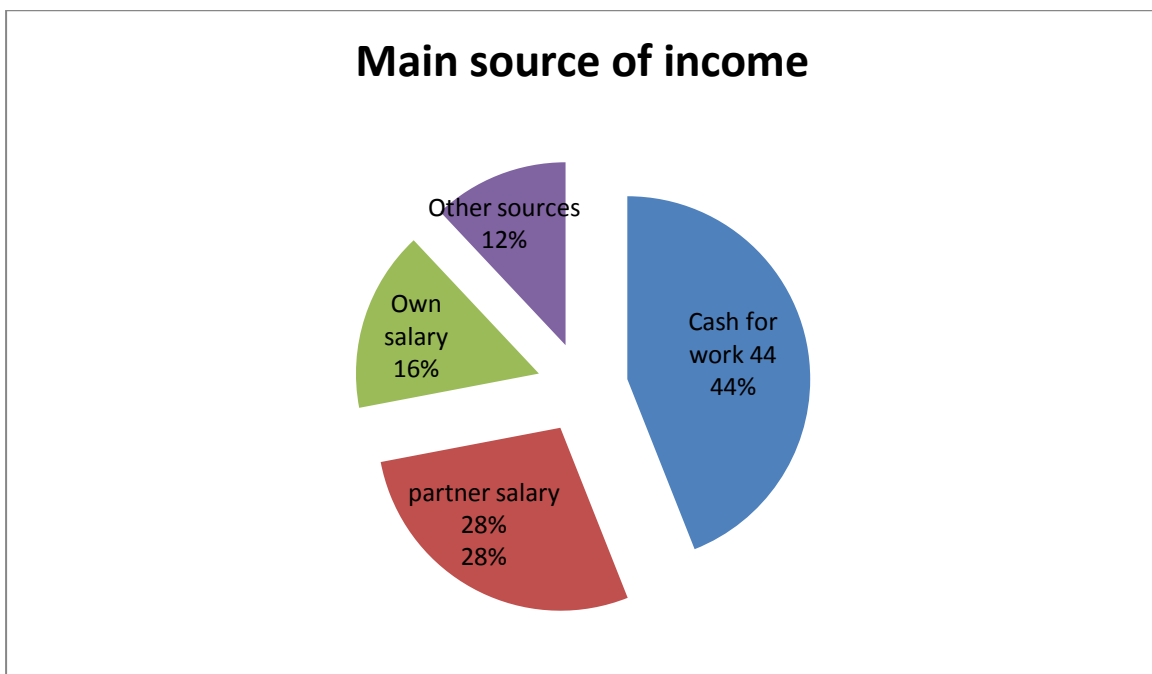
Fig 4.2.9.3



Source: *Field Research April 2015*

4.2.9.4 Main sources of income

It is important to note that multiple sources of income do exist in ward 14 of Bikita district. It was found that out of the 25 house hold sampled in this research ,44% (11) relied on cash for work, 28% (7) relied on income from their partners. It is also important to note that 16% (4) used their own salary. In addition to that, 12% (3) responded that they used other sources. It was observed those who said they used their own salary sell fruits, mushroom, agricultural products and some insects they call *harurwa* at their nearest market which is at Nyika growth point. It is interesting to note that the majority of the respondents rely on PWP as their source of income; hence PWP contribute significantly to poverty alleviation in the ward. Fig 4.2.9.5 below shows the respondents’ source of income.



Source: *Field research April 2015*

4.2.9.5 Source of food

It was found from the research that people in ward 14 have numerous sources of food .Of the 25 sampled households, 44% (11) rely on food for work that is food hand outs from public works programmes. They rely on both food and cash from PWPs to secure their food daily needs. Be that as it may, 24% (6) rely on income transfers from partner’s salary, 20% (5) use salaries from temporary employment and 12% (3) said they use other sources. With this distribution, it can be safely concluded that PWPs play a major role in poverty alleviation in Bikita district. Table 4.2.9.6 below shows the main sources of food for the respondents in ward 14 of Bikita district.

Table 4.2.9.6

	Frequency	Percentage
Food for work	11	44
Cash from spouses	6	24
Salaries from temporary employment	5	20
Other sources	3	12

Source: *Field research April 2015*

4.2.9.7The perception of poverty by the beneficiaries

The definitions of poverty which were given by respondents in ward 14 of Bikita district vary from one respondent to the other, showing that poverty is a multifaceted phenomenon. It was a finding of this study that most of definitions given by the respondents were comparing

income and available resources in relation to their ability to meet their basic needs as well as to sustain them. The majority of the people in the ward emphasised lack of potential to meet basic necessities. These include requirements such as food as well as shelter, clothes and educational facilities. The following definitions were given:

- *Poverty can be defined as lack of food, clothing, shelter and health and exploitation by the elite.*
- *Poverty refers to a state of failing to get basic needs such as food, clothes as well as health security.*
- *Poverty can be defined as a pathetic state when households can no longer afford basic daily meal and when children are supposed to be in school and they are not in school owing to failure to afford paying their school fees.*
- *Poverty is a situation where by an individual cannot afford to meet the basic needs of life such as food, clothes and shelter after getting paid.*
- *Poverty can be regarded as a situation where one is in a position of failing to support him /her, even when they have the potential to do so but owing to circumstances beyond their control, they cannot.*
- *Poverty as you know refers to hunger and starvation, whereby an individual does not have anything to cover the body.*
- *Poverty can best be defined as a situation whereby one cannot afford to live an average life owing to lack of resources to cater for his family.*
- *Poverty can be regarded as a state of hunger and of being financially overstretched.*

All the above explanations and definitions of poverty point to the multifaceted nature of poverty. One can easily conclude that, poverty is best understood from people's experiences and one cannot give a one size fit all definition.

4.2.9.8 Inclusion and Exclusion.

According to Moyo and others (2014:1746), social exclusion can be defined as the inability of people to take part fully in any social, political and economic functioning of the society. With this, it is very important for people to have a chance to participate fully in the life of their locality if they are to flourish and realise their potential. It was a finding of this study that the effects of inclusion and exclusion in targeted PWPs vary depending on the implementation of the programme. In ward 14 of Bikita district, the people use the system of rotation rather than targeting. The rotation system is where different homesteads benefit from participation in public works projects each month with the objective of reaching as many households as possible with income transfer. With this, it can be noted that, the rotation system works against targeting the transfers to households with needy and providing them with a significant number of transfers so as to attain a substantive seasonal impact on their situations.

4.3 Qualitative results of the study

4.3.1 Awareness of PWPs

It can be noted that in terms of publicity and awareness of the existence of PWPs, most respondents/beneficiaries admit to have known the PWPs through the ward councillor and the people in other wards who were already benefiting. Community leaders such as the VIDCO chairpersons stressed that they hold meetings in the communities that were considered strategic for information dissemination to make people aware of the availability of PWPs.

4.3.2 Duration of employment in PWPs.

In terms of the duration of employment, the majority of the interviewed people pointed out that they spent close 10 months in the project. Most of the projects are short medium term projects. It is logical to opine that, some beneficiaries were afraid of being retrenched and falling into poverty once again after the project closure.

4.4 Contribution of PWPs in poverty alleviation in ward 14 of Bikita District.

First and foremost, in terms of the contribution of PWPs in alleviating poverty, many respondents cited that these projects were such a relief necessary given the poverty situation in Bikita district in general and ward 14 in particular. Besides, the respondents also emphatically mentioned that their situation was temporarily reversed by earning a wage for the period stipulated.

In addition, the research discovered although there are some demerits inherent in PWPs, they are also of great significance to rural dwellers. It is important to note that many people in rural Zimbabwe rely on PWPs for both household income and household food security.

Besides, the unstructured interviews with the beneficiaries discovered that PWPs are useful as a poverty alleviation strategy, as they increase household food security and cash flow as well. Cash flow would allow the beneficiaries to spend their incomes on buying food and other basic needs. Besides, cash-for-work would allow young men and women who reside in the rural areas to be gainfully employed.

Nevertheless, the study also found out that although PWPs acted as a bridge to unemployment, it is quite genuine to say the scale was too low as compared to the levels of unemployment in Bikita district. In addition to that, PWPs left a lot of poor people who were

without the means of securing their basic needs owing to the fact that the number of people needed for the work was limited. Besides, although rotating participants covered this up, it only worked to a limited extent in assisting the poor.

Many respondents in ward 14 of Bikita district stressed that PWPs of seasonal and temporary employment hence rural dwellers will return to poverty during the periods when PWPs are not operational. Thus PWPs fail to produce permanent employment. It was also learnt from this research that, some people in the ward were against the idea that the normal food payments are packets of maize meal, beans and at times cooking oil. It is quite authentic to say these people are left with no other income generating projects to get essentials like sugar, salt and so on. Against this background, it is logical to conclude that food payments has been criticised for a lack of diversity in food stuffs.

Some beneficiaries also complained that where food is used as stipend, it takes a very long time to be given to them; hence people suffer from acute food shortages. In addition, it was also learnt from this research that, another disadvantage of public works schemes which the respondents cited was the inability of projects to continue after the end of major programmes. Insufficient monitoring and evaluation also jeopardise the sustainability of projects.

4.5 Beneficiary perception and attitudes on public works projects and their impact.

A significant number of respondents consulted in ward 14 of Bikita district viewed activities taking place as a result of PWPs as a means to an end. Not only that, they again viewed public works schemes as a life saver owing to the fact that those who worked on them were able to get a form of income and invaluable skills and information throughout the life span of

projects which would be useful elsewhere. Nevertheless, the ward councillor and VIDCO chairpersons felt that perceptions differ with individuals and from place to place.

For example, in cases where PWP's were implemented procedurally, beneficiaries were satisfied and were now able to do things they could not previously do. Thus beneficiaries at grassroots were able to attest to the real benefits of products delivered to them through the PWP's. However, where the policy governing the implementation of PWP's was violated or not implemented wisely, it precipitated scenarios where beneficiaries were having some negative attitudes and perceptions towards PWP's.

These respondents felt that they were just being exploited owing to the fact that sometimes cash/grain was often not available to pay them at the end of the month upon labour provision, a development that has occurred frequently in recent years. Owing to this, it can be argued that taking part in the PWP's has decreased owing to lack of interest, poor remuneration and the selection of beneficiaries by local authorities. Moreover, young people are not inclined to join the state led PWP's as they have larger ambitions. It was also a finding of this study that problems often occur at ward level where the councillor belonged to the ruling ZANU PF and beneficiaries were selected on partisan basis.

According to Karenga (2009:17), placing the responsibility of beneficiary selection with the local government through its councillors, ward coordinators and VIDCO chairpersons has politicised targeting and led to the exclusion of individuals or households outside of close socio-political networks. It was again a finding of this study that women, older persons and the disabled either as individuals or their representative groups have not been involved during the planning or decision making stages. Consultation according to a number of scholars is a critical part of social assistance.

4.6 The social and economic benefits of PWPs to beneficiaries.

First and foremost, the beneficiaries indicated that owing to the introduction of PWPs, it is now relatively easier for them to participate actively in the local economy. The respondents cited that they were now able to secure their basic needs like food, shelter, clothes etc. All the respondents (25) which represent 100% strongly agreed to the fact public works projects have improved their social and economic status of the rural poor people in ward 14 of Bikita district. In addition, all respondents pointed out their social and economic status has improved due to employment generated as a result of PWPs. Beneficiaries claimed that their social capital among themselves in the form of solidarity as poor people has increased at the time of the research. It can also be noted that public works programmes have helped the poor people in ward 14 of Bikita district to acquire new skills and ideas with regard to economic opportunities for instance how to improve selling of their agricultural products and access to markets for their products. Of great importance is the fact that beneficiaries are receiving a stipend which enables them to join community investment clubs to help one another pay for funeral expenses in the event of death of a relative under social capital.

4.7 Effectiveness of PWPs in developing skills of the beneficiaries

The in ward 14 of Bikita district claim that that PWPs have proven to be the most ideal strategy in developing skills for instance with regard to carrying out the mandate of job creation and correctly reporting jobs through a validation process that is being practiced. On

top of that, the beneficiaries are given the opportunity of training at the full expense of the programme for example building, tree planting, and carpentry. PWPs have are also helping future leaders to compete in an open business environment and render them skills of business acumen. PWPs have also fostered the readiness of participants to face life after the life span of PWPs has elapsed. It can also be noted that as the projects end, they will be able to use the skills they could have gained from PWPs elsewhere.

4.8 Conclusion.

It was a finding of this study that there is a positive impact of PWPs on poverty alleviation in ward 14 of Bikita district. Although poverty is still dominant in the ward, it has to some extent reduced since the introduction of PWPs. It is important to note that poor people such as youth and women have benefitted from the projects through employment creation as well as monthly income. The study again revealed that women benefitted more in public works projects; this has been hailed owing to the fact that it promotes a culture of gender sensitivity.

It is quite genuine to make a standing fact that PWPs have succeeded in uniting rural dwellers in ward 14 in working together as a group (participatory approach), sharing thoughts, earning income and being able to secure their basic needs such as food, shelter, clothes and so on. Besides, the development of infrastructure such as road networks as well as environmental rehabilitation and construction of water sources have helped in reducing the daily hardships faced by the ward at large. Research findings also indicated that the social and economic conditions and sustainable livelihoods of the poor within ward 14 have improved significantly.

Nevertheless, it can also be noted that year round projects have created problems in as much as it clashed with normal activities of the community for instance the summer agricultural season. Thus tension is created between jobs offered under public works and the need for labour for regular farming activities. Beneficiaries of PWPs in ward 14 of Bikita district recommended that the potential conflict between PWPs and normal economic activity should be addressed preferably by adjusting the wage rate according to seasons. In addition, despite the improved standard of living and poverty alleviation at the local level, there are still challenges as many young people are still without jobs.

From the researcher's observations, PWPs have not sufficiently reduced poverty in the ward as the beneficiaries spend much of their valuable time on poorly paying jobs that consumes time. It was also a finding of this study that no long term employment has been generated and no effort towards this has been exerted. Thus PWPs have short-lived the expectations of the beneficiaries owing to their short duration. It is logical to conclude people of Bikita district remain poor owing to the fact that they are technically handicapped and PWPs do little to emancipate them. Poverty continues to haunt people in the ward owing to the fact that PWPs aims at curing symptoms of poverty and there are no solid measures to ensure the sustainability of assets created by PWPs.

4.8 Chapter summary.

In this chapter, an analysis of the main research findings was done and all the data collected during field visits was interpreted. It is quite authentic to say, data was collected from twenty five beneficiaries of public works programmes in the ward, the DA, local councillor, the local

chief as well as the VIDCO chairpersons of Danha, Chidzinga and Nyikanyoro. The aim of the chapter was to assess the contribution of PWPs in poverty alleviation in ward 14 of Bikita district of Masvingo province. The next chapter draws conclusions based on research findings and literature review on the contribution of PWPs in poverty alleviation in rural Zimbabwe.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENTATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapter presented, discussed and interpreted some research findings on the contribution of PWPs to poverty alleviation in ward 14 of Bikita district in the Masvingo province of Zimbabwe. It is also vital to note that, this chapter is a summary of the whole study which again endeavours to highlight the contribution of PWPs to poverty alleviation. Its main objective is to indicate and align the most crucial findings with the research questions. It can again be noted that its main thrust is to assess whether the findings are addressed or have measured the variables under study. It is quite authentic to say the major findings are mainly from the experiences of the respondents as to how they view poverty and how PWPs have managed to alleviate poverty in their locality. General conclusions shall be drawn and recommendations shall again be suggested.

5.2 Conclusions drawn from the research.

In light of the analysis given in this study, it is logical to conclude that the Zimbabwean government adopted PWPs as early as 1984 in an attempt to reduce the adverse effects of poverty in both rural and urban areas. The strategy became a prominent initiative to poverty alleviation and employment creation through labour absorption. Besides, PWPs are often used as social protection instrument to address the needs of the working age poor. In fact PWPs are expected to reduce reliance on social protection and also contribute towards economic growth. It is important to note that PWPs lead to job creation for social protection

providing a “win-win” combination of welfare transfers and the generation of useful assets. This is what makes it an attractive policy option for most governments in Africa and abroad.

The whole frame work governing public works is formulated by the central government and delegated to local authorities to implement. The local authorities are expected to develop infrastructure in their areas of jurisdiction. Therefore, in the process, the projects are able to cushion people from the adverse effects of poverty.

It was a finding of this study that PWPs are very crucial as a poverty alleviation strategy owing to the fact that they increase household food security and cash inflow. Thus they have been regarded as a life saver by the people of ward 14 in Bikita district. The respondents also stressed that the programmes have proven to be best in developing skills since beneficiaries are sometimes given an opportunity of training at the full expense of the programme. After the life span of the project they will be able to use the same skills to get employment elsewhere.

Nevertheless, whilst the PWPs were applauded for their merits, it appears there are some demerits that are inherent in them. A significant number of beneficiaries have criticised them for micro focusing in the sense that few people end up benefiting from the programme which pay little dividends. Thus participating in PWPs has declined as a consequence of lack of interest, poor remuneration and the selection of beneficiaries by the local authorities. Problems are occurring at ward level where a councillor belongs to the ruling ZANU PF and beneficiaries are selected on partisan basis. Beneficiaries claimed that placing the responsibility of beneficiary identification and selection to the local government through its councillors has politicised targeting and led to a complete exclusion of individuals or households outside close social and political networks.

5.3 Recommendations.

It is important to note that the recommendations in this research are based on the findings of this study, personal experience and a body of literature reviewed and analysed in chapter 2. These recommendations are made to the government of Zimbabwe in particular the Ministry of local government and public works which is responsible for the execution of PWP, to ensure the relevant contributions of managing public works are necessitated. Thus in light of the conclusions given, it is therefore recommended that:

- It was noted that at the delivery or grassroots level, the institutional arrangement of the programme is very weak and non-existent in most cases leading to poor governance. Against this background it is therefore recommended that during the design stage, institutional arrangements and mechanisms should be improved through the involvement of potential beneficiaries of the public works projects to enhance service delivery.
- Besides, it is also recommended that there is need to improve the capacity and political will to follow all the guidelines, to ensure transparency and accountability and take firm action on non-compliance. In the planning stage of public works projects, there is need to allocate administrative budget to facilitate monitoring and evaluation. It is of paramount important for monitoring and evaluation to be done on a more regular basis. Above all, the beneficiaries of public works projects should form part of the monitoring and evaluation of the programme to solicit comments and input from the poor beneficiaries.
- It is again important for poverty summits to be organised on yearly basis to enhance programme and project planning process. Besides, the programme implementation

process should involve all the stake holders and be consultative with the grassroots people to seek benefit from it.

- It is again recommended that gender mainstreaming must form part of the project management and programme design. This therefore means vulnerable groups of people such as women and orphans are accorded special status in the programme. Thus PWPs should encourage women participation and this can also be done by consulting participants in the local area.
- The government is recommended to move away from the local government led functional units to the broad stakeholder committees informed by localised safety net planning. It was deduced that politics has polarised communities and perpetuate social exclusion across programmes.
- In addition, putting in place representative groups at grass root level can help with inclusion strategies across programmes.
- It is of great importance to build trust and understanding on PWs through concerted communication efforts. Thus programming of PWPs at national level needs a sound communication, information and education plan and support, transparency and accountability through common implementation standards and expectations.
- Be that as it may, PWPs should be synchronised to the timing of agricultural slack seasons especially in the rural Zimbabwe. With this, it is important to conclude that the key challenge to this has been administrative in nature in nature with funds arriving late.
- The design of public works programme itself should address the basic needs of the people. In this context, there is need to ask communities what they want. It is quite authentic to say developing programmes with the beneficiaries ensures a regulatory structures, trust, transparency and accountability. With this, it can therefore be argued

that this reinforces the need for community based planning approaches where appropriate.

- The authorities are also recommended to ensure guidance on targeting and inclusion. There is need to document and share the best practices on how communities can help each other. It was deduced that on the ground there are contradictory views on what public works are and how targeting in PWs can be best implemented. Therefore, this means that, information will enable the rural villages to decide wisely on particular situations about public works.
- In as far as targeting of beneficiaries is concerned, it should start with the vulnerability assessment and there is need for a marked level of serious cooperation between actors than during the needs assessment and the beneficiary selection.
- There are numerous non - governmental organisations (NGOs) and donor agencies in Zimbabwe that can do a splendid job with the help of the government. It can be argued that if all efforts on PWP are well planned and coordinated at national level, PWPs can be very effective and indeed act as a panacea to poverty alleviation.
- There government of Zimbabwe is recommended to engage all players in the central forum to commence the coordination process. It is important to note that the prevailing uncertainty in the operational environment requires a flexible and multifaceted approach if PWPs are to realised the desired objectives.
- Furthermore, there is need for the GOZ to improve guidelines on the goals, ensure transparency and accountability as well as monitoring and evaluation of PWs activities either as a standalone programme, an integrated relief programme or a development tool.
- It is of great significance to link guidelines to district and ward level plans. The GOZ is therefore a requirement to agree and set objectives with associated indicators and

outcomes, provision of reporting standards that include progress against indicators and a monitoring plan.

- Above all, there is also need to state in very clear terms the roles and responsibilities of different actors at each level that is central, provincial, and ministerial, district, ward and VIDCO, state and non-state as well as the harmonisation of procedures for both urban and rural programmes.
- Subbaro (2003:16) opines that in the designing of public works policy in general as well as implementation of programmes, there are six considerations that need careful and regular review which he summarises as follows:
 - *That public works programmes provide income in the form of cash to those households in need of this type of assistance.*
 - *PWPs should also enable households to meet any consumption/shortfalls they may encounter during slack agricultural periods depending on the timing.*
 - *That well designed PWPs should construct much –needed infrastructure and endeavour to minimise the trade off between public spending on income transfers versus public spending on developmental projects.*
 - *That fixed assets that PWPs generate have the ability to create second round employment benefits as the much needed infrastructure is developed.*
 - *That public works programmes can easily be targeted to specific geographical areas that are experiencing high unemployment and poverty rates.*
 - *That public works programmes have helped many small private contractors to emerge and as well grow.*

5.4 Future research

Although this study on the contribution of public works programmes on poverty alleviation in ward 14 of Bikita district in the Masvingo province of Zimbabwe was successfully carried out there are pockets of intellectual gaps that need to be filled such as:

- ❖ Those that relate to the gender dimension in public works programmes.
- ❖ Youth development through public works initiatives in Zimbabwe.
- ❖ Youth development in rural areas.
- ❖ Assessment of public works programmes as an employment creation strategy in Zimbabwe.

These areas have not been fully researched in this study.

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APPENDICIES

APPENDIX A

Private Bag 9055
Gweru
Zimbabwe,
Telephone: 26354260432 ext 319

Fax: 263-054-60442



MIDLANDS STATE UNIVERSITY
Chairperson of the Department of Development Studies

13 April 2015

To Whom It May Concern

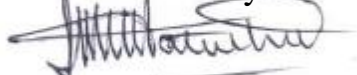
Dear Sir/Madam

CONFIRMATION: COSTAIN TANDI

This is to confirm that Costain is reading for a Master of Arts degree in Development Studies (MADS) at the Midlands State University. The student is Carrying out a research in partial fulfilment of the said degree programme. Kindly allow the student to collect data for the said study.

The student is familiar with research ethics. For further information about the Student and/ or any of our degree programmes, feel free to contact the undersigned.

Yours faithfully



Jephias Matunhu (PhD)
matunhuj@msu.ac.zw 0733809555

APPENDIX B



Apostolic Faith Mission In Zimbabwe RUFARO HIGH SCHOOL

Box 92, Chatsworth, Masvingo.
Tel: 0308-577 Fax: 0308 -577 Cell: 0772 785 050 /0773 549 618
E-mail-afmrufarohigh@gmail.com

01 April 2015

The District Administrator

Bikita District

Dear Sir/Madam

RE: Request for permission to carry out an academic research in Bikita district ward 14

The above matter refers. I am doing a Masters degree in Development Studies at Midlands State University (MSU). I am researching on the Contribution of Public Works Programmes to Poverty Alleviation in ward 14. In this ward, i will select Danha, Chidzinga and Nyikanyoro ViDCOS. I will select 25 respondents. The research is for academic purposes only. No tokens will be given to participants.

If possible, I am waiting for your favourable reply.

Yours faithfully

COSTAIN TANDI



Appendix B

Rufaro high school

P O Box 92

Chatsworth

01 April 2015

The District Administrator

P O Box.....

Nyika

Dear Sir/Madam

RE: Request for permission to carry out a research in Bikita district, ward 14

The above matter refers. I am doing a Masters degree in Development Studies at Midlands State University. I am researching on the contribution of public works in poverty alleviation in ward 14 of Bikita district. In this ward i will select Danha, Chidzinga and Nyikanyoro VIDCOs and i will select 25 respondents. The research is for academic purposes only and no tokens will be given to participants.

If possible, i am waiting for your favourable reply

Yours faithfully

COSTAIN TANDI (R14672Z).

DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR
MIN. OF LOCAL GOVT. PUBLIC
WORKS & NATIONAL HOUSING
28 APR 2015
P. BAG. No. 100001

96

*permission granted within the
ambit of the stated
conditions
Mafunguwa
DA BIKITA*

Appendix C

CONSENT FORM.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF THE STUDY

- 1. The right to privacy and non-participation – participants have the right to refuse to participate in my study.**
- 2. The right to remain anonymous – participants have the right that their individual identities are not highlighted in the study.**
- 3. The right to confidentiality – participants have the right that their answers be confidential.**
- 4. The right to prove that the researcher is responsible – participants have the right to know the intentions to know the intentions of the researcher in conducting the research. They will be assured that their dignity is respected and that their information is purely for academic purposes.**
- 5. Above all there are no financial gains to be gained for participating in this study.**

I..... have read and understood the terms and conditions governing the study. I therefore participate freely in the study.

Signature.....

Date.....

APPENDIX D

THE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR THE DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR

- 1. Tell me about the poverty situation in Bikita district?**
- 2. What are the livelihood strategies of the people of Bikita district?**
- 3. How are public works programmes implemented in Bikita district?**
- 4. What are your perceptions on public works programmes as a poverty alleviation measure in Bikita district?**
- 5. What measures do you put in place to ensure the sustainability of assets created by public works programmes?**
- 6. Is there any form of community involvement in the selection of projects?**

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR THE LOCAL COUNCILLOR

- 1. Tell me about the poverty situation in ward 14?**
- 2. How do you conceptualise public works programmes as a poverty alleviation strategy in your ward?**

- 3. What criteria do you use to the select the beneficiaries of public works programmes?**
- 4. How effective are public works programmes in developing skills of the people in your ward?**
- 5. What are the perceptions and attitudes of people in your ward on public works programmes as a poverty alleviation measure?**
- 6. Do public works programmes have any impact on other economic activities in your ward?**

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR THE LOCAL CHIEF

- 1. Tell me about the poverty situation in your area?**
- 2. What public works projects have been done so far in your area?**
- 3. How do you ensure that the poor people in your area have equally benefited from public works programmes?**
- 4. How effective are public works programmes as a policy option for the government to alleviate poverty in your area?**

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR THE BENEFICIARIES OF PUBLIC WORKS SCHEMES IN WARD 14.

- 1. Can you tell me your age and educational qualifications?**
- 2. What assets do you own at your home?**
- 3. What are your sources of income?**
- 4. What are your sources of food?**
- 5. What is your position in the household and employment status?**
- 6. Are you happy with the way public works programmes are implement in your area?**
- 7. Are you involved in the selection of public works projects?**
- 8. What are the socio-economic benefits of public works to you?**
- 9. How effective are these public works programmes in alleviating poverty and skills development?**
- 10. Have public works reduced poverty to you over the years?**

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR THOSE EXCLUDED IN PUBLIC WORKS PROGRAMMES BUT ARE WITHOUT MEANS OF SECURING THEIR BASIC NEEDS

- 1. What criterion was used to select beneficiaries of public works programmes?**
- 2. For how long have you been excluded in the programmes?**
- 3. Why were you excluded in the public works programmes yet you also do not have any means of securing the basic needs?**

