

**PATTERNS OF CLASSROOM PRACTICE AND THE HISTORY
CURRICULUM REFORMS IN ZIMBABWEAN SECONDARY SCHOOLS**

By:

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M.Ed. Curriculum Studies (UZ); B.Ed. History (UZ); Cert. in Ed. (UZ)

**Thesis submitted in fulfillment of the requirements in respect of the Doctoral
degree qualification Philosophiae Doctor in Education (PhD Education)**

In the

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION STUDIES, FACULTY OF EDUCATION

At the

UNIVERSITY OF THE FREE STATE

BLOEMFONTEIN

DEC 2018

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DECLARATION

I, Godsend Tawanda Chimbi, declare that the Doctoral Degree research thesis that I hereby submit for the Doctoral qualification PhD in Education degree at the University of the Free State is my independent work, and that I have not previously submitted it for a qualification at another institution of higher education.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my loving father Albert Sibabi Chimbi who taught me the values of honesty and hard work and whose favourite sayings were: “Still waters run deep” and “Empty vessels make the loudest noise.”

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My profound gratitude goes to the Dean of the Faculty of Education and SANRAL Chair School of Mathematics, Natural Sciences and Technology Education, Professor L.C. Jita whose provision of a bursary, invaluable intellectual insights and professional guidance as my promoter, supervisor and mentor made it possible for me to pursue the dream of my life: reading for a PhD degree. His incisive perception, informed guidance and honest opinion opened a new treasure trove of intellectual wisdom for me. I was like a kid in a well-stocked toy shop! My world view will never be the same again.

Dr. K. Mapetere, my co-supervisor, opened new horizons in my intellectual discourse. I cannot leave out other SANRAL members of staff who provided academic, material and moral support in various capacities, in particular Dr. T. Jita, the patient shepherd of the flock. Dr. M. Tsakeni's insights enriched the focus and analysis in my thesis. Ms. Irene Molete-Mohapi, Secretary to the SANRAL Chair, was always there as the foot soldier to sort out all the logistical and administrative challenges. I thank all the other members of staff at UFS who made it possible for me to carry out this study.

Recognition is also due to Dr. Tanaka Chidora, the language editor of my thesis, for his meticulous attention to semantics and the storied narrative. I cannot leave out the Principal of Seke Teachers College Mr. E.N. Mutubuki and the Vice-Principal Mrs. A.S. Duve, and all the other members of staff who contributed in various capacities to make this study possible.

I also thank my wife Joyce Chimbi and the children Tinotenda, Albert and Yeukai (in chronological order). Their emotional, spiritual and intellectual support made it possible for me to concentrate on this thesis. Yeukai (as a secondary school boarding student) always shared with me her unfavourable (and at times exciting) experiences with the new curriculum during her school vacations. The elder sister and brother always said they were 'lucky' to have 'escaped' the new curriculum when they wrote their "O" Level examinations years back! Joyce's classroom experience, spanning over twenty years, as a secondary school commercial subjects teacher was eye-opening during informal discussions on how secondary school teachers were making sense of reform policy as they implemented the new curriculum in 2017-18.

SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

Research on implementation has shown that curriculum reform is a complex and controversial process, littered with unfulfilled policy pronouncements and unfinished business (Cohen, 1990; Cuban, 1993; Fullan, 2000(a); Spillane, 2002; Sahlberg, 2006; Zindi, 2018). Rarely are policies implemented as written or as intended by their initiators (Ganon-Shilon & Schechter, 2017:4); but this has not deterred policy makers from rolling out new reform projects in an attempt to correct the shortcomings of previous reform initiatives. The present study examines teachers' interpretations of new curriculum policy and how their sense making of reform signals influences their classroom practices as they implement a new curriculum in Zimbabwean secondary schools. Using a multiple case study of four history teachers, who had started implementing the new history curriculum with Form 3 classes in January 2017, I explored how the teachers' interpretations and understanding of reform policy influenced their choice of teaching methods. An analysis of various curriculum reform policy documents, semi-structured interviews with the teachers and extensive non-participatory lesson observations enabled me to gain in-depth insights and explanations into how teachers' understanding of new reform policy influenced their patterns of classroom practice. The intention is to ascertain congruence, or dissonance, between the teaching methods the policy documents recommend and the classroom practices teachers actually engaged in.

The key findings of this study suggest that teachers lacked knowledge on the new history curriculum reforms they were implementing. It appears that the new curriculum was hurriedly introduced without adequate teacher consultation, reform dialogue and preparations for the anticipated changes. One fundamental change in the new curriculum that the teachers seemed to lack knowledge on was the practical execution of the research based continuous assessment tasks which required students to collect data outside the school yard. Although all the four teachers appeared to know that the new curriculum required them to use learner-centred pedagogy, only one teacher in the present study had completely transformed her classroom practice to meet this policy requirement. The other three teachers' patterns of practice tended to vacillate between tradition and change with very little observable progress towards learner-centred classroom practices, as demanded by policy prescriptions.

The findings of the present study also challenge the commonly held myth that large classes influence teachers to use rote pedagogy and, conversely, small class sizes encourage teachers to use learner-centred pedagogy (Geoff, 2014:133). The most progressive teacher in this study (Emmy) used progressive learner-centred pedagogy in a class with 49 students and totally avoided rote pedagogy. David, with a class of only 20 students, still believed that the teacher must play his role as the master of the subject and so teacher exposition, dictation and note giving are inevitable in history instruction. It was also unexpected that Emmy's classroom practices were ahead of official reform policy. This was rather unusual as teachers are "historical beings" and schools are "conservative institutions" that cannot easily shed their old habits in pursuit of new practices (Cohen, 1990; Fullan and Miles, 1992). But Emmy had totally discarded the old teaching methods in favour of progressive practices. Another unusual finding from my study was that a teacher's positive attitude towards reform does not necessarily make their classroom practice learner-centred. One teacher in the present study accepted the new history curriculum from the beginning but, for a variety of reasons, she still depended on lecturing and dictation in her classroom practice.

This study recommends collective consultation and reform dialogue between policy makers and teachers as a way of reducing the gap between reform policy and what teachers actually do in the classroom. It is necessary to empower teachers with knowledge of the change process, by putting in place comprehensive change strategies and practical implementation mechanisms, so that they understand why it is necessary to change the curriculum and how they can implement the required changes. When decisions are made to reform curriculum policy in Zimbabwe, teacher interests must be represented at national level so that the teachers own the changes. Due to lack of collective consultation (NCRS Report, 2017:15) the unpopular research-based Continuous Assessment Tasks were officially withdrawn from the schools in March 2018, until a time when better a research based model is developed. I took up this challenge and developed a Research Task Model (RTM) which can be conducted by history

students, without going outside the school yard to search for data, so that research-based learning becomes a reality in Zimbabwean secondary schools.

Key words: classroom practice, curriculum reform implementation, sense-making, history, history curriculum, history pedagogy, and learner-centred pedagogy.

ACRONYMS

“A” Level - Advanced Level

“O” Level - Ordinary Level

B.A. (Hons) - Bachelor of Arts (Honours) Degree

B.A.Ed. - Bachelor of Arts with Education Degree

B.Ed. - Bachelor of Education Degree

C2005 - Curriculum 2005

CAPS - Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement

CDTS – Curriculum Development and Technical Services

CDU - Curriculum Development Unit

Dip.Ed. - Diploma in Education

DSI - District Schools Inspector

HOD - Head of Department

ICT - Information Communication Technologies

LEESP - Lesotho Environmental Education Support Project

M.Ed. - Master of Education Degree

MoET - Ministry of Education and Training

MOPSE - Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education

OBE - Outcomes Based Education

PDF - Protected Document Format

PED - Provincial Education Director

PGDE - Post-Graduate Diploma in Education

RIMS - Rims Information Management Systems

RNPE - Revised National Policy on Education

RTM - Research Task Model

SANRAL – South African National Roads Agency Limited

UK - United Kingdom

ZANU (PF) - Zimbabwe African National Union (Patriotic Front)

ZIMSEC - Zimbabwe Schools Examinations Council

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CHAPTER 1: BACKGROUND AND ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Policy makers and planners in education have always found joy in the promise of curriculum reform, even as the implementation of the envisaged changes and innovations at classroom level has often eluded the best of planners. Cuban (1993:182) shows that curriculum transformation has always been a tempting invitation in the past, even though it has a “pitiful history” of unfulfilled policy pronouncements. Reforming classroom practice has never been an easy process. Spillane (2000:146-7) also points out that policy implementation is a complex process and “the local implementation of standards-based reforms that press for tremendous changes in classroom instruction is difficult.” Cohen and Ball (2006:2) liken policy implementation to “love affairs” that are full of ideas, hopes and dreams that may never be realised. Implementation research demonstrates that reform policies are rarely implemented as written or as intended by their initiators (Ganon-Shilon & Schechter, 2017:4). Consequently, a wide gap often exists between what curriculum reform policy expects and what teachers actually do in the classroom.

Despite a history of failure at the implementation level, policy makers still find it necessary to reform the curriculum from time to time. Sahlberg (2007:1) argues that, “Nations, states, local communities and schools renew their curricula because their existing ones are not what they should be, or simply because there is a belief that changing the curriculum will also bring expected improvements into classrooms.” Policy makers introduce reforms as a response to existing educational problems or failure of earlier reforms to solve identified challenges. Researchers have been puzzled by the fact that reforms often fail to bring about intended outcomes. For that reason, they have explored how these reforms affect, and are affected by, human and material resource availability, leadership styles, bureaucracies and examinations. However, “how teachers have actually taught has largely remained a mystery,” observes Cuban (2006:793). In Zimbabwe, research on policy implementation and classroom practice is still in its infancy. My study sought to examine how history teachers make sense of the New Curriculum Framework 2015-2022 and how their understanding of the policy shapes (or fails to shape) their classroom practice. The intention is to establish if there is congruence (or

dissonance) between policy and practice at the early implementation stage of the new history curriculum reform in Zimbabwean secondary schools.

1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE PROBLEM

Changing classroom practice is one area of curriculum reform which has proved to be the most resistant (Cuban, 1990:3; Desimone, 2002:434). Existing literature indicates that history teachers, in particular, have traditionally been known for their boring and unimaginative classroom practices. For instance, Warren (2007:249-250) observes that, “The literature is full of a myriad of complaints about the traditionally poor pedagogy of secondary school history teachers...” Schul (2015:24) also points out that, “History, as a school subject, is often associated with memorisation of names and dates and a boring, listless lecture by the teacher about things that have little relevancy to the students’ lives. In other words, there is a problem with the teaching of history.” Although Warren and Schul were writing on the American situation, the situation is no different in many other countries, including Zimbabwe.

Extant literature on Zimbabwe shows that teachers have hardly changed the way they teach despite numerous curriculum reform initiatives aimed at changing their teaching practices. The history curriculum reforms of 1990 and 2002 in Zimbabwe encouraged the use of learner-centred approaches in history instruction (Ministry of Education and Culture 1990; ZIMSEC, 2002). However, Mapetere’s (2013:136) study shows that, “The power of the narrative seems to be gripping the teaching of history in Zimbabwe.” In the same vein, Moyo (2014:16) established that history pedagogy in Zimbabwe is characterised by “rote learning and memorization of facts, and uncritical reading of text by teachers and students.” It is against this background of the failure of earlier reforms to change teachers’ classroom practices that the government of Zimbabwe sought to reform classroom practice (among other aspects) under the New Curriculum Framework 2015-2022 which was rolled out into schools in January 2017.

The shift from a colonial to a post-colonial history curriculum in Zimbabwe was a controversial process which Chitate (2005:14) has described as “highly political and parochial” because it favoured the government of the day. After six years of protracted discussions, the History Subject Panel produced Syllabus 2166 in 1990. The syllabus had strong Marxist and

nationalist inclinations – the ideologies of the government of the day. Barnes (2007:639) observes that Syllabus 2166 was “in many ways an enormous change in terms of methodology and content” from Syllabuses 2160 and 2158 that it replaced. Distinct pedagogical innovations in History Syllabus 2166 were the advocacy for learner-centred pedagogy, the development of learners’ historical skills and the study of primary and secondary sources of evidence. Syllabus 2166 boldly declared that, “The involvement of the learner should be regarded as central in approaches to learning. Teaching for this syllabus should involve problem-posing, problem-solving, role play, structured written exercises and discussion.” (Ministry of Education and Culture, 1990: 5).

Without much consultation the Ministry of Education, replaced History Syllabus 2166 with Syllabus 2167 in 2002. Syllabus 2167 was the direct opposite of Syllabus 2166 in terms of teaching methods and assessment procedures. Barnes (2007:649) points out that “one might well claim that Syllabus 2167 amounted to a return to the no-debate, rote learning and ruling-class-glorification styles of the Rhodesian-era textbooks of the 1970s.” Moyo (2014:17) makes similar observations: “Syllabus 2167 is to a large extent a reincarnation of rote learning practices that were encouraged by the colonial regime.” The removal of source based questions and their replacement with simple recall and descriptive questions in Syllabus 2167 made teachers (in practice) revert back to orthodox methods of teaching history – providing ‘facts’, dates, names and events which students memorised for reproduction in examinations. But Syllabus 2167 stated that: “Teaching for this syllabus should involve problem-posing, problem-solving, role playing, discussion...” (ZIMSEC, 2002: 4). This created contradictions between what the syllabus document was saying (policy) and what the examinations (practice) demanded. The syllabus recommended learner-centred pedagogy and the examinations (for the same syllabus) tested for rote memorisation of facts – making teachers resort to rote pedagogy in their classroom practice.

The phasing out of History Syllabus 2167 and the coming in of History Syllabus 4044 in January 2017, as part of the nationwide New Curriculum Framework (2015-2022), brought with it a myriad of implementation challenges and paradoxes. Like Syllabuses 2166 and 2167 before it, the new history Syllabus 4044 recommends teachers to use “learner-centred and multi-sensory approaches” (Curriculum Development and Technical Services [CDTS],

2015:2). It is against this background of failed earlier attempts to reform classroom practice that the present study explores how Form 3 history teachers were making sense of the 2017 curriculum reform policy guidelines and transforming their classroom practices (if at all they were) towards learner-centred pedagogy as required by the New Curriculum Framework 2015-2022.

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

There appears to be a wide gap between what curriculum reform policy says and what history teachers do (in Zimbabwean secondary schools). Prendergast and Treacy (2017:1) point out that, “in most schools there is the common mismatch between the intended curriculum prescribed by policy-makers and the implemented curriculum that is actually carried out by teachers in their classrooms.” The 1990 pioneering reforms in the Zimbabwe secondary school history curriculum stated that, “The involvement of the learner should be regarded as central in approaches to learning” (Ministry of Education and Culture, 1990:5). But Moyo and Moyo (2011:307) found that in most secondary schools in Harare, history lessons were characterised by “lists of dates and strings of names”. Mapetere (2013:136) also established that, “The power of the narrative seems to be gripping the teaching of history again in Zimbabwe.”

Available literature seems to indicate that history teachers, especially in Zimbabwe, have not changed their classroom practices much over the years despite the 1990 history curriculum reforms which discouraged traditional rote pedagogy and encouraged the use of progressive learner-centred approaches. Failure to transform teachers’ classroom practices led to the Zimbabwe government initiating another cycle of reforms – the New Curriculum Framework 2015-2022 – rolled out to schools in January 2017. The new History Syllabus 4044, like Syllabuses 2166 and 2167 before it, advises history teachers to use “learner-centered and multi-sensory approaches” (CDTS 2015:2). Zimbabwe appears to be caught in the endless dilemma observed by Cuban (1990:3), of “reforming again, again and again,” without any significant changes to teachers’ classroom practices. My study sought to explore how history teachers interpreted the 2017 reform policy signals as outlined in Syllabus 4044, and how their understanding of policy influenced and shaped their teaching practices in the first year of implementing the new curriculum in Zimbabwean secondary schools.

Teachers' failure to implement curriculum reforms as expected by official policy is not an educational challenge in Zimbabwe only. Even developed countries continue to face reform implementation challenges. Writing on American and English education, Reese (2013:322) observes that, "progressive ideas are easier to proclaim than act upon." Commenting on the state of history instruction in Canada, the Netherlands, Germany, UK and Australia, Stoel, van Drie and van Boxtel (2015:50) remark that, "much classroom practice is out of sync with the policy goal of teaching historical reasoning. In many classrooms, the focus is mainly on teaching and examining declarative first order knowledge." These recent studies seem to suggest that teachers in the developed world, like those in many developing countries, have struggled to reform their teaching practice as envisaged by the reform policies. Two popular myths are that: schools are conservative institutions and teachers are naturally resistant to change (Fullan & Miles, 1992:745). These are often given as the reasons to explain why most reform initiatives fail to become institutionalised and eventually fade away.

Cohen's (1990:323) case study of Mrs. Oublier in California established that it is rather naïve for policy makers and researchers to expect teachers to abandon old teaching methods and adopt new ones overnight, in part because teachers are "historical beings" with inherited habits and practices. Cohen (1990:323) argues that, "they cannot simply shed their old ideas and practices like a shabby coat, and slip on something new ... as they reach out to embrace or invent a new instruction; they reach with their old professional selves, including all the ideas and practices comprised therein." Teachers understand and try out new teaching methods within the context of their old practices and experiences which makes them appear resistant to change, even when they are making efforts to reform teaching practice.

A similar situation exists in the developing countries. For instance, Tabulawa (2009:101) found that in Botswana, teachers were reluctant to reform their classroom practice in line with official curriculum policy which encouraged learner-centred instruction, and continued to "dispense pre-packaged chunks of knowledge". In Malawi, Chirwa and Naidoo (2014:343) found that despite the Outcomes Based Curriculum (OBC) reforms of 2007 and the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) of 2009, teachers have continued "to impart knowledge using mainly teacher-centred methodology". A study carried out by Hendricks et al. (2016:266) in South African schools established, for instance, that "the terms *learner-centred* and *activity-*

based were not well understood by the teachers.” In Zimbabwe Moyo (2014:16) also concluded that “rote learning, memorisation of facts and uncritical reading of text” are common teaching practices. Indicators from existing literature are that, in both the developed and developing countries, history pedagogy remains teacher-dominated despite various policy initiatives to reform teaching practice. Zimbabwe’s Curriculum Framework for Primary and Secondary Education 2015-2022 (2015:41) “stresses learner-centred approaches ... The focus is on knowledge generation and not just information delivery and treating learners as empty vessels ready to be filled with information.”

My study explores history teachers’ understanding of the new curriculum reform framework and how their sense-making of policy has shaped their classroom practice. It seeks to add new knowledge to the reform implementation debate by studying how history teachers were interpreting the 2017 history curriculum reforms and how their understanding of reform policy shaped (or failed to shape) their classroom practices. By studying what actually happens in the classroom over a prolonged period, patterns of practice can be deciphered, traced and analysed in the light of history reform policy prescriptions. Practice-based research that explores teachers’ cognition of reform policy and the early implementation of policy is still in its infancy in Zimbabwe. The present study partly grapples with McLaughlin’s (1998:70) overarching question on reform: “Why are classroom practices so hard to change?” It contributes to the rather thin and sketchy knowledge base on teachers’ sense-making of reform policy and early reform implementation (in Zimbabwe), and how secondary school history teachers are changing (or failing to change) their classroom practices to meet the requirements of the new history curriculum.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The main research question which guides this study is: How do history curriculum reform policy guidelines in Zimbabwe shape and help to explain the secondary teachers’ patterns of classroom practices? As such, the following sub-questions help in unpacking the main research question:

1. How do history teachers make sense of the curriculum reform policies that guide their teaching practice in Zimbabwean secondary schools?

2. What are the characteristics and patterns of history teaching in some of Zimbabwe's secondary schools?
3. What are the relations between curriculum reform policy and history classroom pedagogy, if at all such relations exist?
4. How can the patterns of practice that characterise history classroom pedagogy be understood and explained?

1.5 AIM OF THE STUDY

The aim of this study is to explore how history curriculum reform policy guidelines in Zimbabwe shape and help to explain the secondary teachers' patterns of classroom practices.

1.6 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of this study are to:

1. Examine how history teachers make sense of the curriculum reform policies that guide their teaching practice in Zimbabwean secondary schools.
2. Explore and establish the characteristics and patterns of history teaching in some of Zimbabwe's secondary schools.
3. Analyse the relations between curriculum reform policy and history classroom pedagogy, if at all such relations exist.
4. Account for the patterns of practice that characterise history classroom pedagogy in Zimbabwe's secondary schools.

1.7 JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY

Failure to implement policy has often been explained in terms of shortage of resources, failure by principals to supervise teachers and teachers' natural resistance to change. Tabulawa (1998:251) explains that the technician-rationality theory assumes that once resources (tools, labour and time) are allocated to a reform, teachers should implement the changes because there is no sensible (rational) reason for them not to do so. To explain reasons for failure to

implement reforms, researchers have often looked at the technical factors which are 'external' to the teacher without investigating what goes on in the teacher's mind after receiving reform signals and during implementation.

In a qualitative and retrospective study on the 1990 history curriculum reforms in Zimbabwe's secondary schools, Chitate (2005:11) observed "the stubborn persistence of traditional methods that went against the grain of the new "O" level history syllabus (2166)." Chitate thought that teachers were being "stubborn" and resistant to change in their continued use of chalk-and-talk methods. The study concluded that the 1990 history curriculum reforms ushered in "a crisis of expectations" as the intended pedagogical changes went largely unimplemented mainly because teachers were resistant to change as they did not have the primary and secondary sources to implement the new curriculum. Mapetere (2013:136) also found that "some [history teachers] are preaching the back to basics concept where the teacher should reclaim the central position" because the history examinations focused on lower order recall skills.

But even where resources are available, as is the case in the developed world, meaningful reform has failed to take place in teachers' teaching practices (Burley, 2012:54; Schul, 2015:24). Mattson (2008:99) found that, "history education at the K-12 levels [in the USA] is seriously in crisis ... it only infrequently teaches the critical analytical skills that most historians would agree are among the central, driving features of historical study." Writing on the Australian experience with curriculum reform, Burley (2012:54) also observes that the traditional approach to history instruction has dominated history pedagogy for centuries and continues to do so despite all the vocal criticisms against it. From the literature available, most instructional reform initiatives in both the developed and developing countries have failed to achieve the expected outcomes and teachers have often been blamed for failure to bring about meaningful change in the classroom.

Extant research has tended to focus on the resource shortage argument and teachers' 'natural' resistance to change as explanations for failure to implement reforms in the past. The teacher's complex thinking processes involving abstract ideas (cognition and sense-making) which make it possible to conceptualise and implement reform have often been ignored or grossly underestimated. Using the sense-making framework as espoused by Spillane et al.

(2002); Coburn (2006); Drake (2006); Marz et al. (2013) and Ganon-Shilon and Schechter (2017), my study takes the research implementation debate further by going beyond the technicist-rationalist reasons for failure to implement reform. My study sought to add new knowledge to the reform implementation debate in Zimbabwe by studying how history teachers understood the 2017 curriculum reforms and how their cognition of these changes shaped (or failed to shape) their classroom practices.

My research is important in that it is an early implementation research which explores history teachers' sense-making of the 2017 history curriculum reforms. This is a pioneering research on history teachers' policy cognition and how their understanding of reform policy has influenced their teaching methods during their implementation of the new history curriculum in secondary schools in Zitown. To the best of my knowledge, no practice-based research has been carried out in Zimbabwe using the sense-making theoretical lens and the multiple case study approach to specifically explore how some history teachers have been implementing the new history curriculum in its first year in the schools. By studying practice (what actually is happening in the classroom) over prolonged periods, patterns of practice can be traced and analysed in the light of curriculum reform policy prescriptions. Policy-makers, curriculum reformers, teacher educators and history teachers stand to benefit from my study as it provides some insights and explanations on why classroom practice appears to be so difficult to change in the first years of implementing reform policy. The study also makes recommendations on how teaching methods can be transformed towards learner-centred practices for the ultimate benefit of the learners in the majority of history classrooms.

1.8 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PROBLEM

The puzzle of teachers' response to reform policy has been looked at differently by different scholars. Reese (2013:324), for instance, stresses that reforms in the classroom have generally been very slow because "teachers to a greater or less degree, teach as they themselves were taught, and spend much of the school day standing in front of a class, with a textbook in hand..." Teaching methods are seen as rooted in the past as teachers teach the way they were taught without much initiative or reconstruction of ideas of their own. However, Cohen (1990:323) argues that it is rather unwise and unrealistic to expect teachers to change their teaching practices completely when they implement reforms because teachers receive

changes within the framework of their existing practices. “Still, all revolutions preserve large elements of the old order as they invent new ones,” advises Cohen (1990:324). So when teachers continue using traditional methods as they implement new reforms it is not because they may be resisting change, but that they cannot easily shed off their past practices for the past makes them who they are. “The past is their way to the future,” insists Cohen (1990:324). In the same vein, Tabulawa (1998:252) also adds that, “Teachers bring to the classroom their existing knowledge and prior experiences and these interact with their current observations and interpretations to give shape to their classroom practices.” Thus, expecting teachers to change their classroom practices overnight just because a new reform has been introduced is not only too ambitious but may also be unrealistic because existing knowledge, experiences and practices influence and shape teachers’ classroom practice.

This study is significant in that it is the first multiple case study in Zimbabwe to analyse history teachers’ cognition of curriculum reform policy and examine how teachers’ understanding of policy influences classroom practice. In Zimbabwe, the learner-centred approach was only adopted as the official instructional policy in history in 1990. Prior to that, history teaching was content-centred and teacher-dominated (Moyo and Moyo, 2011:306; Mapetere, 2013:134). From the literature reviewed, it looks like the teaching of history in Zimbabwe has not changed significantly since the days of colonial education. My study gets “inside teachers’ heads” (Feimani-Nemser & Floden, 1986:506, quoted in Tabulawa, 1998:252) to obtain insights into how history teachers construct meaning of curriculum reform policy and how they have transformed their patterns of teaching in response to these reform guidelines, if at all. The research seeks to make both theoretical and practical contributions to the work of curriculum policy planners, reformers, curriculum supervisory authorities, teacher educators and teachers who are involved in policy planning and reform implementation at various levels of the education system. Reform planners and curriculum supervisors will benefit from the insights generated in this study on how they can involve teachers and teacher educators in reform planning well before the implementation process. By getting involved in reform discourse and curriculum planning, teacher educators and teachers will have a sense of ownership of the envisaged changes and knowledge on the change initiative. Knowledge and ownership of the change process by the implementers is likely to reduce the gap between policy makers and implementers’ understanding of reform policy.

1.9 DELIMITATIONS

History teachers in the 13 well-established secondary schools in Zitown were the target population for my study. The total number of history teachers in these schools was 52, but it was not my intention to study all of them. My study focused on history teachers who were pioneering the implementation of the new history Syllabus 4044 at Form 3 level in 2017. Four high schools were purposively sampled out of the 13 targeted secondary schools to represent government, mission and trust-run secondary schools. One teacher was purposively sampled as a case study at each of the four schools giving a total sample size of four teachers in this multiple case study.

The qualitative multiple case approach provided opportunities for an in-depth analysis of the teachers' and students' behaviours in their natural setting – the classroom. Case studying each teacher as an individual allowed me to unearth the superficial and underlying factors (Yin, 2014:16) that contributed to each teacher's sense-making of the reforms. Using multiple cases, I explored and explained, and then compared and contrasted the meanings history teachers attached to reform policy and how these meanings influenced and shaped their classroom practices. The document analyses, in-depth interviews and observations provided the evidence that helped me explain how history teachers were making sense of reform policy and constructing their classroom practices to meet policy requirements.

In-depth interviews were held with the history teachers so that they could explain in their own words their understanding of the reform policy guidelines and how these shaped and influenced their classroom practice. Multiple lesson observations were the primary data collection instrument in this study as they allowed me to see, interpret, analyse, and assess how history teachers made sense of policy and implemented (or failed to implement) instructional policy as outlined in the policy documents. The findings of my study provide some useful insights into what happens in some history classes in Zitown, a high density residential town 35 kilometres south-west of Harare, which can be transferable to similar urban high density settings and contexts in Zimbabwe and elsewhere.

1.10 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

A number of limitations militate against the generalisability of the findings of this multiple case study to similar contexts. The case study design has often been criticised for its limited generalisability to the study population because “when only a single case is involved, we cannot be sure that the findings are generalizable to other situations” (Leedy and Ormrod 2013:141). I overcame this inherent weakness of a single case study by using multiple cases thereby increasing the sample size for my research to four cases. A larger sample increased the chances of the findings of my study being applicable and transferable to a number of similar settings and contexts.

The issue of sample size has always been a controversial one in qualitative research, but the consensus appears to be that sample sizes are generally small in qualitative studies (Patton 2002:244; Shizha 2007:310). Actually, Kumar (2005:165) argues that the issue of sample size has little significance in qualitative studies, mainly because qualitative research aims at exploring and explaining (in great detail) the diversity and multiple realities in a phenomenon, rather than the number of participants involved in the study. Creswell (2013:189) advises that the common sample size in case studies consists of four to five cases. Four history teachers from four secondary schools were purposively selected and studied as multiple cases in my study which made the sample size fit neatly into Creswell’s framework. I used the multiple case design and purposively sampled “information rich cases” (Patton, 2002:230) which yielded as much data as a larger sample.

My function as the primary data collection instrument meant that my inherent biases and subjectivities might influence the credibility and trustworthiness of the evidence gathered and findings generated. Creswell (2013:186) cautions that the researcher’s personal history, race, gender, culture, social class and level of training all have a strong bearing on how problems are identified, investigated, analysed, and interpreted; making qualitative research inherently subjective. I used five strategies to reduce my personal bias, and ensure the credibility of the instruments used and dependability of the findings. These strategies are: prolonged engagement with teachers in the classroom, thick and rich descriptions, data triangulation, member checking and pilot studying.

1.11 OVERVIEW OF THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Researchers have used a number of theoretical frameworks to study reform implementation challenges and opportunities in both the developed and developing countries. The traditional framework often used to explore policy implementation has been the technicist-rationalist theory which has its roots in scientific positivism. It assumes that teaching is a value free activity which simply needs resources if reforms are to be implemented. Tabulawa (1998:252) criticises the technicist-rationalist theory for failing to bring about any significant changes in classroom practice in Botswana for more than three decades despite the pouring in of financial and material resources. He, therefore, proposes the “classroom ecology” theory which is closely related to the constructivist perspective. The classroom ecology theory perceives teachers as purposeful sense-makers who constantly construct ideas in order to understand situations and events.

Constructivism has also been a very popular theoretical framework with policy implementation researchers because it accepts “the complexity of ideas rather than narrowing meanings to a few categories” (Creswell, 2013:8). I seriously considered adopting constructivism as the theoretical lens for my study, until I delved deeply into the sense-making theory (Garfinkel, 1967; Weick, 1995; Spillane, 2002; Coburn, 2006; Drake, 2006; Marz et al., 2013; Maitlis and Christianson, 2014; Wheat et al., 2016; Ganon-Shilon and Schechter, 2017). Constructivism and sense-making share a lot in common; in particular the view that knowledge and reality are multifaceted social constructs that are not permanent but are subject to reinterpretation, redefinition and reconstruction. However, sense-making goes further than constructivism to emphasise the influence of past experiences on teachers’ interpretation and implementation of reform. It also explores the tripartite relationship between the teacher’s cognitive structures, policy signals and the context the teacher operates in (Spillane et al., 2002:388). By studying these three dimensions as they interacted, I got more realistic and convincing stories on how teachers construct meaning of reforms and how these constructions shape their practices as they implement policy.

The sense-making theory rejects the portrayal of teachers as “resisters and saboteurs working to circumvent policy proposals that do not advance their self-interest” (Spillane et al.,

2002:391). The theory sees teachers as active implementing agents who first process reform policy signals in their cognitive structures, construct meaning of the reforms and then implement, or fail to implement them. Drake (2006:580) sees sense making as “a process incorporating noticing, interpreting and implementing” educational reforms. Weick (1995:61) views sense-making as “fundamentally a process of telling a good story ...these stories then frame and guide the ways in which individuals understand and act on new information.” Thus, I used the sense-making theory to observe what teachers did in their lessons, analysed what they said about themselves and their practice in the interviews, and scrutinised the official documents that guided their classroom practice. Sense making offered me ideas and concepts which I used to tease out teachers’ understanding of policy and their constructions of the 2017 reforms as they implemented them. A detailed discussion of the theoretical framework is presented in Chapter Two of this thesis.

1.12 AN OVERVIEW OF RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study is a qualitative multiple case study of four teachers who were purposively sampled from four secondary schools out of the 13 targeted secondary schools in Zitown. These teachers were studied in their natural settings – the school and the classroom – because “qualitative researchers observe people in their natural setting so that they can learn from them about what they are thinking, and more importantly, why they think and act the way they do” (Minichello and Kottler, 2010:12). The research design selected for this thesis is the multiple case study because of its focus on participants as separate individuals, rather than groups (Creswell, 2013:14). The multiple case design was found to be appropriate for exploring teachers’ sense-making of reform policy and how their understanding of policy shapes their patterns of practice in the classroom.

Purposive sampling techniques were used to select the four secondary schools and the four history teachers who participated in this research. Patton (2002:230) observes that the logic and strength of purposive sampling is in its selection of “information rich cases” for in-depth study. Teachers in the present study were selected because they were teaching the new history curriculum, had more than five years classroom experience, and a degree in history content and pedagogy which enabled them to try out different instructional strategies and

reflect honestly on their classroom practices and experiences. My role, as the researcher in this multiple case study, was not only central but multi-faceted. I analysed the policy documents that guide the history curriculum reforms, engaged each teacher in three in-depth interviews (of about an hour long each) and made a total of 47 lesson observations over the eight week fieldwork period.

1.13 CLARIFICATION OF KEY CONCEPTS

In this study the key terms are: classroom practice, curriculum reform implementation, sense-making, history, history pedagogy, history curriculum and learner-centred pedagogy.

1.13.1 Classroom practice: Teaching is a complex, multi-dimensional and fast-paced activity which makes it difficult to give a clear-cut definition of what classroom practice is. Available literature shows that classroom practice is what teachers and learners do as they interact in the teaching-learning process; and that in most countries, classroom practice remains teacher-dominated as students are passive recipients of processed knowledge (Tijani, 2006:79; Burley, 2012:54; Johansen, 2014:245). McLaughlin (1998:70) stresses that changing classroom practices is not an easy process. In Botswana, for instance, Tabulawa (2009:98) observes that classroom practice “is generally simple, involves fewer instructional tools, and is teacher-centred.” In the developed world, despite major strides made towards progressive classroom practice, Schwerdt and Wuppermann (2011:63) found out that the teacher remains “the sage on the stage”. In my study, classroom practice is used to mean the actions, behaviours and activities teachers engaged themselves and students in, in an effort to implement the 2017 history curriculum.

1.13.2 Curriculum reform implementation: In their seminal work on reform implementation studies, Fullan and Pomfret (1977:336) explain that, “Implementation refers to the actual use of an innovation or what an innovation consists of in practice.” The traditional opinion has been to see teachers as natural resisters and saboteurs of reform implementation mainly because, as Reese (2013:324) claims, “teachers want to teach the way they themselves were taught.” Some of the commonly held myths about curriculum reform implementation are that; “Resistance is inevitable”; “schools are essentially conservative institutions, harder to change

than other organisations”; and teachers are naturally resistant to change (Fullan and Miles, 1992:745). However, the cognitive sense-making theory totally rejects the view that teachers are “resisters and saboteurs working to circumvent policy proposals” (Spillane et al., 2002:391). Instead, the theory argues that teachers embrace change with their old experiences and historical selves (Cohen, 1990:312). Teachers tend to embrace and interpret changes within the context of their existing mindset, and their past experiences shape the way they understand the changes they are expected to implement. It is this sense-making in the teachers’ minds that may account for the discrepancies between policy intentions and classroom practices, rather than the teachers’ assumed natural resistance to change. In my study, curriculum reform implementation is used to mean the sense history teachers created out of the reform policy documents and the changes, innovations and improvements they made in their teaching strategies to meet the instructional requirements of the new history curriculum they started implementing in 2017.

1.13.3 Sense-making: O’Connor (2015:34) cautions that “sense-making is a diverse, fragmented and contested field, where there is no unifying definition.” Despite variations in definitions, sense-making refers to the interpretations and meanings teachers give to phenomena that surround them in the school and classroom contexts. Cohen (1990), Spillane et al. (2002), Coburn (2006) and Wheat et al. (2016) emphasise the importance of past experiences in teachers’ sense-making processes. Teachers’ previous experiences and existing knowledge are very important in making teachers interpret the meaning of reform policy signals because teachers are “historical beings” who “cannot simply shed their old ideas and practice like a shabby coat and slip on something new” (Cohen, 1990:323). Teachers always make sense of reforms within the context of what they already know and have experienced because they cannot automatically abandon their existing practices to accommodate new policy reforms.

Coburn (2006), like Cohen (1990) and Spillane et al. (2002), emphasises the importance of past experiences in teachers’ sense-making processes. Coburn (2006:344) observes that “local actors [teachers] in schools actively construct their understanding of policies by interpreting them through the lens of their preexisting beliefs and practices. How they construct such understandings shapes their decisions and actions as they enact policy in their

schools and classrooms.” In the current study, sense-making is used to mean history teachers’ interpretations and understanding of the reform policy they were implementing in 2017.

1.13.4 History: is one of the oldest subjects in the school curriculum which has survived the test of time since carving its niche on the school timetable in ancient Greece in the 5th Century B.C. We owe the term history to the Greeks who called it “historia”, meaning “a story woven after carrying out an investigation”, or “an inquiry designed to elicit the truth” (Kochhar, 2005:1). One important principle in the study of history is the search for the truth. The National Curriculum Board of Australia (NCB) (2009:14) gives a very short, but incisive definition: “History is a story, told by many storytellers, that links the past to the present.” An outstanding feature of this definition is that history is a tale told by many ‘storytellers’ meaning that there can be as many sides to one story as there are people to tell it. The great French revolutionary, Napoleon Bonaparte, was skeptical about history as impartial collective memory which made him conclude that, “History is a lie agreed upon” (Kochhar, 2005:2). Napoleon meant that there are no universal truths in history; ‘truth’ is what the rulers of the time decide it to be. In the present research, history is used to mean an academic subject taught in secondary schools with the aim of giving learners an accurate, but divergent and at times conflicting, record of past events.

1.13.5 History pedagogy: The Greeks used the word ‘paidagogos’ to refer to the function or work of a teacher (Reeve, 2003:7). Pedagogy is often seen in a unidirectional linear model in which the teacher imparts knowledge to the less knowledgeable, docile and gullible students. However, this perspective is not only seen by modern scholars as outdated, but intellectually retrogressive (Westhoff, 2012b:1115 and Schul, 2015:25). The progressive way of exploring pedagogy, advises Smith (2016:1), is to see it as “the process of accompanying learners; caring about them and bringing learning into life”. Teacher and students must travel side by side rather than having the teacher march ahead. In my study history pedagogy is used to mean the teaching methods and activities teachers engaged learners in while implementing the 2017 history curriculum reforms in secondary schools.

1.13.6 History curriculum: Traditionally, the curriculum was seen as “prescribed instructional content” (Kelly, 1989:12) – the transmission of knowledge from the ‘all-knowing’ teacher to

the 'ignorant' student. The modern perspective views the curriculum as a collective product of the planners', teachers' and students' efforts. Hoadley and Jansen (2009: 28-29) give a holistic definition: "Curriculum must be the official plan and what you as the teacher actually do in the classroom ... curriculum is what we teach and curriculum is what is learnt." This definition sees curriculum as both a process and product of teaching and learning. Sahlberg (2007:5) sees curriculum as "a set of documents for implementation" made up of a body of content-knowledge, subjects syllabi and any other guidelines. In my thesis, I use the term 'history curriculum' to refer to all the policy documents that guide history instruction, teaching methods and learning activities that take place in the history classroom. These documents include the current History Syllabus 4044, previous History Syllabuses 2167 and 2166, Continuous Assessment Policy, Continuous Assessment Task 1 and the schemes of work the history teachers were using to implement the new history curriculum during the Third Term of 2017.

1.13.7 Learner-centred pedagogy: is a direct reaction against teacher-dominated classroom practices. Concepts used interchangeably with learner-centred curriculum are: progressive education, discovery learning, learner-centred education, problem-solving, skills-based and inquiry-based learning (Stoel et al., 2015:49-50). The philosophy of learner-centred pedagogy places the students at the centre of the teaching-learning process so that the learners can use their past experiences to discover new knowledge on their own or with the assistance of the teacher. In a learner-centred classroom, the teacher is not the fountain of knowledge but only acts as a guide and facilitator so that students can find and create new knowledge on their own (Shedd, 2010:450). In my study, learner-centred pedagogy is used to mean the progressive teaching methods teachers use so that learners become active participants in the search and dissemination of new knowledge.

1.14 ORGANISATION OF THE THESIS

This thesis is organised into six chapters.

Chapter 1: Background and Orientation to the study

This chapter outlines the background to the problem of reform policy implementation and changing secondary school teachers' classroom practices in Zimbabwean secondary schools.

Also articulated in this chapter are the problem statement, research questions, objectives, justification, significance, delimitations and limitations of the study. Overviews of the theoretical framework and research methodology are given and the key terms clarified.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This chapter gives an in-depth review of existing literature on the complexity of the policy-practice dilemma in both the developed and developing countries. The sense-making framework that illuminates this study is also discussed and justified in detail. The literature review takes the funnel approach as international literature is reviewed first, narrowing down to curriculum reforms in five Southern African countries, and then to the history curriculum reform debacle in Zimbabwe.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

The research approach to this study, the research design, the selected sites and target population are discussed in this chapter. The chapter also examines the study population, sampling procedures, the researcher's role, data collection instruments and the data analysis methods that were used in this study.

Chapter 4: Data Presentation and Interpretation

Data collected from each case study in the four secondary schools is interpreted and chronicled in the form of a narrative for each teacher. Studying each teacher as a case enabled me to explore the teacher's sense-making of reform policy guidelines and how each teacher's interpretation and understanding of policy influenced and shaped classroom practice. The research questions that anchor this study are partly answered in this chapter.

Chapter 5: Cross-Case Analysis, Major Findings and Discussion

This chapter makes cross-case comparisons in search for commonalities and peculiarities in the way the four teachers made sense of reform policy signals and implemented the prescribed changes in their classrooms. Qualitative content and interpretive analyses were used to come up with patterns and themes on how the history teachers understood and implemented the official reforms in their classes. The outcome of the cross-case analysis determined the findings of this qualitative multiple case study.

Chapter 6: Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

A summary of the major findings of this study and the conclusions that were drawn from them are examined in this chapter. From the conclusions, the implications of the results to the various stakeholders were generated and recommendations made on how reform implementation can be improved at school and classroom levels.

1.15 SUMMARY

The dilemma of reform policy implementation and teacher-dominated pedagogy in the developed and developing world opened this chapter. This was followed by the problem statement on the complexity of policy implementation and how secondary school teachers were making sense of the history curriculum reforms they started implementing in January 2017. The research questions, aims and objectives that anchor and guide this study are articulated in this chapter. The chapter also gave a justification for the study and explained its significance, delimitations and limitations. Overviews of the theoretical framework and research methodology were also outlined. Chapter Two gives a detailed review of existing literature on reform policy implementation in both the developed and developing countries.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This Chapter examines existing literature and research on curriculum reform implementation and how curriculum policy influences classroom practice in the developed and developing worlds. The literature review explores the complexity, difficulty and controversy that surrounds reform policy implementation and debates between conservative right wing intellectuals and progressive left wing scholars concerning 'content' and 'methods' in history teaching. Should history pedagogy focus on the content of the subject or the skills of the historian? This is one major question which this literature review grapples with. The review is divided into seven broad themes which revolve around the research questions raised in Chapter One. The themes are: Theoretical framework; Relationship between policy and practice; Reform implementation in the developed world; Teaching practices in the history classroom; Reform-oriented teaching practices; Reform implementation in Southern Africa and History reforms in Zimbabwean secondary schools.

2.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.2.1 Sense-making

My study on history teachers' implementation of the 2017 curriculum reform policy is informed by the sense-making theory. Wheat et al. (2016:1) describe sense-making as "the process of finding meaning and gaining insights from information." Sense-making suggests that the local interpretation of policy by teachers shapes the direction of policy implementation much more than the external inputs like funding, programme support and resource provision. Coburn (2006:344) emphasises that "teachers actively construct their understanding of policies by interpreting them through the lens of their preexisting beliefs and practices. How they construct such understandings shapes their decisions and actions as they enact policy in their schools and classrooms." Using the sense-making theory, teachers are viewed as active implementing agents who first process reform policy signals in their cognition, construct meaning of the reforms, then decide to try them out in the classroom, or not to. Spillane (2000:145) advises that, "Implementation involves interpretation: implementers must figure

out what policy means in order to decide whether and how to ignore, adapt or adopt policymakers' recommendations in their practice.”

2.2.2 Origins of sense-making

The view that cognition and perception help individuals make sense of the world that surrounds them has a relatively short but rich tradition. Charter and Loewenstein (2016:148) point out that at the beginning of the 20th century, cognitive psychologists were concerned with “the acquisition of meaningful perceptions in a chaotic world”. They rejected the conventional stimulus-response behaviourist model and argued that individuals do not simply respond to stimuli (policy signals) as givens (Spillane, 1999:549). Individuals first interpret and make sense of the stimulus before they can respond to it; and even after the response is given, the process of sense-making continues as individuals reflect and evaluate the responses they would have given. Cognitivists argued that the human mind derives pleasure from making sense of the stimulus in the environment, and gets disappointed, frustrated and pained when it fails to construct meaning out of what surrounds it.

Sense-making only emerged as a distinct theory from the broad field of cognitive psychology in the late 1960s when scholars sought to understand how meaning is constructed and transmitted between individuals and social groups. Garfinkel (1967) was the first to use the term “sense-making” in his ethnographic study on how film actors interact, interpret and construct reality in their daily experiences (Maitlis and Christianson, 2014:60). Sense-making was also popularised by Weick (1969) in his book *The Social Psychology of Organising* which looked at how changes in organisations make implementers react cognitively as they seek to construct meaning of the changes on their daily work and how the reforms are likely to affect their self-image and esteem. Other scholars who have used sense-making as a theoretical framework for their researches include Fullan (1977); McLaughlin (1987); Cohen (1990); Spillane (1999); Ericson (2001); Spillane et al. (2002); Burch and Spillane (2003); Kelchtermans (2005); Coburn (2006); Hernes and Maitlis (2010b); Marz (2013); Maitlis and Christianson (2014); Wheat et al. (2016); and Ganon-Shilon and Schechter (2017).

2.2.3 Meaning of sense-making

A capsule definition of sense-making is not only unattainable but also intellectually undesirable. Spillane et al. (2002:391) caution that the meaning of sense-making is “fraught with ambiguity and difficulties”. O’Connor (2015:34) adds that “sense-making is a diverse, fragmented and contested field, where there is no unifying definition.” Different authorities define sense-making differently. Some view it as a cognitive process within the individual which involves numerous thinking processes like comprehension, analysis, extrapolation and prediction. Sense-making is how a person gathers, restructures and reorganises information to help build a plausible understanding about an aspect that is puzzling or troubling (Wheat et al., 2016:1). Sense-making is reflected by one’s ability to transform complex ideas into simpler representations which can be easily understood even by non-specialists in the field. In the same line of thinking, Ericson (2001:118) stresses that; “An individual’s cognitive schemes are constructed from earlier experiences, and through these sense-making processes people develop interpretation reservoirs, unique to each individual.” Thus, sense-making can be viewed as an individual activity which varies from one teacher to the other. So the different meanings teachers attach to the same reform policy and the different practices they construct can be explained in terms of differences in their cognitive schemes.

Ericson (2001:113) emphasises that sense-making is concerned with “understanding how meaning is constructed and destructed ... if we are to understand organizational change, it is also necessary to understand the organisation members’ own subjective meanings as well as the process by which these meanings shift and coincide.” It is not just a simple case of teachers implementing changes because resources are available and the reforms benefit them; or rejecting reforms if the resources are not there or they do not serve their interests (Tabulawa, 1998:252). It is much more than that because teachers are “historical beings” (Cohen, 1990:323) who interpret, understand and implement policy statements within the context of their existing knowledge, past experiences and situations in order to make a decision to try out the reforms in the classroom, or to shelve them.

Other scholars like Maitlis and Christianson (2014:57) view sense-making as a social process involving interaction “between people as meaning is negotiated, contested and mutually co-constructed...sense-making as the discursive processes of constructing and interpreting the

social world". From this perspective, sense-making is a collective process in which members of a group construct shared meanings in order to reach some consensus and common understanding on the meaning and implementation of policy. The social environment is emphasised in the sense-making process as implementers of reforms interpret and negotiate the meanings of reforms as groups before they can reach an agreement and make decisions to implement reforms or not. Thus, sense-making can be seen as an individual and social construct based on individually and mutually constructed interpretations, meanings and definitions.

It is important to recognise that sense-making does not just occur on its own; it has to be triggered by some external stimulus in the form of an unexpected challenge like educational reforms or uncertainty. Maitlis and Christianson (2014:57) explain that, "Sense-making is the process through which people work to understand issues or events that are novel, ambiguous, confusing, or in some other way violate expectations." There should be some stimulus in the environment which is unusual and rare that triggers the drive for one to engage in the sense-making process. However, Chater and Loewenstein (2016:140) suggest that, "sense-making processes may be as automatic as digestion and respiration, but that, analogous to these other drives, in some situations the motivational system is required in order to provide the appropriate materials upon which these processes can operate." Although Chater and Loewenstein (2016) argue that sense-making can be seen as reflex action, they go on to offer an alternative perspective in which it is necessary to provide appropriate stimulus which will motivate the sense-making process to start working. Sense-making, then, is a purposeful mental activity in an individual or a group of individuals which is triggered by some drive to understand why, in the case of my research, reforms are initiated and how they can be implemented.

2.2.4 Why use sense-making?

I found sense-making to be the most appropriate theoretical framework for this multiple case study because this perspective focuses on what happens in the teachers' minds when they

receive reform policy signals in the form of policy documents and reform guidelines. As I immersed myself in the history classrooms over a two-month period, the sense-making perspective offered me ideas and concepts which assisted me in examining each teacher's interpretation, understanding and implementation of the 2017 New Curriculum Framework. My early implementation study is on curriculum issues that are new, ambiguous, confusing, controversial and still unfolding as teachers work in their minds the meaning of the reforms they are implementing. Sense-making is an appropriate theoretical framework for understanding how individual teachers and collectives of teachers create meanings of reforms, implement them and evaluate their own classroom practices.

Principles of sense making

i. Sense-making as an individual process

The meanings history teachers attach to their classroom practices and the reforms they are implementing vary from teacher to teacher, depending on the teacher's background, experience, setting and context within which the teacher is operating. Marz et al. (2013:15) argue that, "based on their experiences in the profession, teachers develop a personal system of knowledge and beliefs that act as a cognitive and affective lens through which they look at their job, give meaning to it and act in it." Sense-making takes into consideration teachers' perceptions, motivation and feelings. Within the teacher's personal interpretive framework, Kelchtermans (2009:260) identifies two main interconnected domains which directly influence teachers' sense-making: professional self-understanding and subjective educational theory. Teachers' professional self-understanding is characterised by five intertwined conceptual components which are: self-image, self-esteem, job motivation, task perception and future perspective. Teachers' subjective educational theory involves teachers' professional knowledge and content mastery as derived from the teachers' pre-service training, in-service training and the beliefs teachers develop as a result of their experiences in the classroom and school system.

Day and Lee (2011:11) argue that secondary school teachers use their subject areas as "filters" through which they plan their work and respond to curriculum reform policy. Consequently, curriculum changes in the subject areas can be seen by teachers as

questioning their professional self-understanding and this partly explains why their reaction to curriculum reform is often emotionally charged (Marz et al., 2013:15). Each teacher's understanding of curriculum reforms is closely linked to the teacher's knowledge of a particular subject, teaching experience, life history and attitude towards change.

For most teachers, teaching is an autonomous practice with very little interference from supervisors and outsiders. Teachers have the freedom to choose the teaching methods they want to use in their lessons as they make sense of the situation that surrounds them. Sheldon (2012:259) observes that in most schools, the classroom and the curriculum remain a "secret garden – a province of teacher autonomy" – because the teacher has the freedom to interpret the curriculum the way one understands it. I studied the history teachers' understanding of the 2017 reform policy and how they were implementing it in their 'secret gardens', the classrooms.

ii. Sense-making as a collective process

Although individual teachers make sense of policy on their own, they are embedded in a socio-cultural context in which their thoughts, feelings and behaviours are influenced by the presence of other people, real or imagined. So teachers working at one school often develop common definitions and meanings, and share perspectives because of their common setting, past experiences and backgrounds. Scholars like Gephart et al. (2010:285) view sense-making as a process through which "people create and maintain an inter-subjective world to produce, negotiate and sustain a shared sense of meaning." Collective sense-making is about sharing meanings and understanding among members of a group in order to reach some consensus and common understanding. Marz et al. (2013:15) view sense-making as characterised by a "more or less explicitly shared set of assumptions, norms, values and cultural artifacts that orient, guide and evaluate teachers' actions."

In secondary schools, collective sense-making is often associated with departments and subject areas to the extent that "fragmented subject departments contribute to a differentiation in more or less distinctive and sometimes even conflicting subcultures within the same school" (Marz et al., 2013:15). The subject departments act as the centres for cohesion among the teachers and they serve as the main frames of reference to their teaching beliefs, knowledge

and instructional practices. Thus, school culture influences and shapes how teachers make sense of reforms and ultimately determines how reforms are received and implemented at each particular school.

iii. Sense-making and multiple realities

As teachers interpret and make sense of policy changes, they create multiple realities of policy intentions which are unique to each individual teacher (Ericson, 2001:118). Consequently, the theory of sense-making does not see meanings, definitions and knowledge as permanent, absolute and universal phenomena, but as subject to renegotiation, reconstruction and deconstruction depending on local factors like school setting, classroom context and teacher background. Hernes and Maitlis (2010b:27) emphasise that, "Sense-making is widely understood as dynamic, concerned with transience rather than constancy, such that meaning is made in an ongoing present in which past experience is projected upon future features." Sense-making involves individual interpretation, beliefs and understanding to the extent that "it might seem that the number of meanings constructed about a particular policy is as limitless as the number of individuals involved in interpreting and implementing the policy" (Drake, 2006:581). Sense-making made it possible for me to explore variations, as well as common trends, in the teachers' interpretations of reform policy and how their understanding of these policy signals influenced their teaching practice.

iv. Sense-making and frustrated expectations

Making sense of what reform policy says can either be a pleasurable or aversive experience, depending on the results the teacher gets from attempts to interpret and create meaning out of the policy signals (Chater and Loewenstein, 2016:140). If the teacher is able to decipher clear meaning from the policy signals, it creates feelings of excitement and pleasure, but if the teacher fails to make sense out of the policy document (maybe because the message is cryptic or contradictory), this experience can be painful and frustrating for the teacher. Chater and Loewenstein (2016:141) advise that, "The feeling that there is sense to be made, but we are unable to make it, can be agonizing and this explains why we find stimuli aversive when they are surprisingly difficult to make sense of." Equally frustrating and painful for teachers can be the experience that one has made sense of policy intentions but only to discover that

the meanings constructed are full of misconceptions, and so the teacher has to work again and try to create new meaning out of the policy signals.

v. Sense-making and the new history curriculum

This 2017 history curriculum encourages history teachers to use “learner-centred and multi-sensory approaches: games and quizzes, simulation, video and film shows, role play ... Learners should go on educational tours at least three times a year” (CDTS 2015:2). What meanings did the teachers attach to these policy reform signals and how did they implement them in the actual classroom? Using the sense-making perspective, my study explores history teachers’ understanding of reform policy and the dilemma of changing classroom practice in secondary schools. The school settings and classroom contexts in which the teachers were operating were also examined to establish how these factors influenced the teachers’ sense-making of reform policy and their efforts to reform classroom practices, or not to.

2.3 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN POLICY AND PRACTICE

The relationship between policy and practice has been a puzzle for scholars of implementation research since the late 1960s. Majone and Wildavsky (1979:103) point out that “policy shapes implementation by defining the arena in which the process takes place, the identity and role of the principal actors, the range of permissible tools for action, and of course by supplying resources.” Policy, thus, leads practice (implementation), at least in theory. Cuban (1998:453) has shown that, at times, classroom realities and other local factors make practice influence policy, “because schools change reforms as much as reforms change schools.” Policy and practice are in consistent interaction, and at times contradiction and conflict, as they influence and shape each other back and forth in an iterative manner. It would be naïve to talk of policy without practice, although I feel that it is possible to have practice without a formally written policy. As far back as 1941, Friedrich (1941:356) had observed that, “Public policy is being formed as it is being executed, and it is likewise being executed as it is being formed”; emphasising a relationship of mutual dependence and continuity between policy and practice.

2.3.1 Three generations of policy implementation research

McLaughlin (2001:171) identifies three generations of implementation researchers in the developed world. The first generation of implementation scholars discovered the problem of

policy implementation and the dissonance between policies and implemented programmes from the late 1960s up to the 1970s. This first generation includes researchers like Garfinkel (1967), Weick (1969), Bernstein (1971), Shipman (1974), Berman (1975) and Fullan (1977). The second generation from the 1980s up to the 1990s analysed the implementation processes by unpacking the complex relationship between policy and practice and stressing the crucial role played by local actors and situations in making reform implementation a success (or failure). Prominent second generation implementation researchers include McLaughlin (1987); Cohen (1990); Fullan (1992); and Spillane (1999).

The third generation of reform implementation scholars include McLaughlin and Miles (2001); Spillane (2002); Burch and Spillane (2003); Kelchtermans (2005); Coburn (2006); Drake (2006); Cohen (2007); Hernes and Maitlis (2010b); Marz (2013); Maitlis and Christianson (2014); O'Connor (2015); Wheat (2016); and Ganon-Shilon and Schechter (2017). These scholars have been working on bridging the gap between policy and practice since the turn of the 21st century with the intention of “integrating the macro world of policymakers with the micro world of individual implementers” (McLaughlin, 2001:171). Such integration would reduce the gap between policy and practice. My study fits into the third generation of reform policy implementation studies as it looks at how history teachers in Zimbabwe made sense of the 2017 curriculum reform policy and how their understanding of policy influenced their classroom practices, or failed to do so.

2.3.2 The paradox of policy and practice

Cohen et al. (2007:518) do not see much compatibility between policy and practice. Rather they see a “dilemma” and observe that “policy and practice are often portrayed in conflict or opposition, as policy makers attempt to secure compliance from implementers who respond by attending to their situations, or evade, or attempt to buffer themselves from policy.” Thus, the teachers who are the targets of change are also expected to be the agents of reform. Ironically, the teachers can also act as barriers to reform which further complicates the reform implementation dilemma. The puzzle is deepened further when one considers that the teachers are also considered part of the causes of policy reform because of their poor teaching methods which necessitate policy changes. Cohen and Ball (1990:238) summarise the

complexity of the teacher's contradictory roles in reform implementation: "Teachers are seen as the root cause of the problem [of policy reform]: their instruction is mechanical, often boring, and superficial... Teachers are in one sense the problem that policy seeks to correct. On the other hand, teachers are the most important agents for improving things..." The causer of the crisis is also expected to be its redeemer – this is part of the paradox and contradiction of reform policy implementation which I explore in this thesis.

2.3.3 The need for policy guidelines

The conventional view has been that policy acts as a guide to practice, and teachers are expected to implement the reforms they receive from a central authority in a top-down linear approach. But McLaughlin and Mitra (2007:304) established that policy has only affected practice weakly and inconsistently. Teachers have not changed their classroom practices much in response to reform policy signals. This is the reason why "some analysts view policy as an imposition on those who do the real work" (Cohen et al., 2007:519). Those who reform policy are not the implementers, resulting in a policy and practice dilemma which creates friction and conflict between policy makers and implementers (teachers).

Reese (2013:322) argues that, due to a multiplicity of inter-woven factors, "progressive ideas are easier to proclaim than act upon." This is partly because passing reform policy is much simpler than reforming actual classroom practice. "Rather, reform manifests over time as collective commitment and purposive action advance planned change from its initiation to its institutionalization," explain Adams and Jean-Marie (2011:355). Thus, for many decades, reform implementation scholars have sought to account for the disparity between what policy says and what teachers practice.

The traditional approach to the implementation debate has been to explain the disagreement between policy and practice in terms of resource allocation and the equalisation of educational opportunity. The assumption was that "more money would buy more educational resources, which would create better education, which would enable more learning" (Cohen et al., 2007:515). However, research in schools revealed that there was a weak and inconsistent relationship between resource provision and improved student performance in schools making researchers conclude that resource availability does not guarantee reform

implementation (Sahlberg, 2006:24). Resources to support a reform policy can be made available but teachers may not change their classroom practice, which makes the relationship between policy and its implementation a complex and tricky puzzle worth exploring at greater depth because “different schools and teachers did different things with the same resources, with different effects on learning” (Cohen et al., 2007:517).

2.4 REFORM IMPLEMENTATION IN THE DEVELOPED WORLD

From the 1970s up to the beginning of the 21st century, reform implementation studies in the developed world have been dominated by debates on why there is often a wide gap between policy and practice. One may be persuaded to see policy and practice as enemies because “policy and practice are often portrayed in conflict or opposition, as policy makers attempt to secure compliance from implementers who often ignore, evade, or attempt to buffer themselves from policy” (Cohen et al., 2007:518). It appears there is a cat and mouse relationship between policy makers and policy implementers (teachers), which only serves to widen the gap between policy and practice. A review of the policy implementation studies in the developed world which follows in the next section provided me with theory and ideas on the complexity of the reform implementation problem. These ideas provided the theoretical and conceptual foundation for exploring and unpacking the reform implementation dilemma in the developing world and in Zimbabwe.

2.4.1 Policy implementation studies in the USA

i. A bumper harvest of research

Cohen and Ball (1990:233) point out that in the USA, the last decades of the 20th century witnessed “a bumper crop of state policies aimed at instructional improvement”, which in turn resulted in a “bumper harvest” of research in an effort to assess the congruence (or lack of it) between policy statements and classroom practice (Fullan, 1977, 2000; McLaughlin, 1987, 1990; Cohen, 1990; Cohen and Ball, 1990; Spillane, 1999, 2000, 2002; McLaughlin and Mitra, 2001; Coburn, 2006). The behaviourist approach has been used to account for the policy-practice dilemma from a stimulus-response point of view which assumes that, “by manipulating the stimuli, or input of the learning process, we are able to control the response, or output of the learning process” (Sahlberg, 2007:1). The thinking was that, by making

resources available teachers would implement reform policy, as a response to the stimuli provided. But this positivist scientific thinking was found to be inadequate because even where massive resources were made available, educational policy did not bring about the expected changes in classroom practices and student performance.

ii. The teacher as the local implementer

With the positivist behaviourist perspective discredited as a model for reform implementation, research on policy and practice shifted its attention to the teacher as the local implementing agent. Berman and McLaughlin (1979:21) emphasised the centrality of teacher motivation and understanding of policy to the successful implementation of reforms. They stressed that, “Projects begun with broad-based support were not only more likely to have been implemented in a mutually adaptive way, but they also stood a better chance of attaining a stable continuation.” Policy appeared not to have much effect on practice, argued Berman and McLaughlin (1979:21); rather it was practice which seemed to have more influence on how policy was implemented.

Using five case studies, Cohen and Ball (1990:233) explored how elementary mathematics teachers interpreted and responded to California State policy designed to radically change mathematics teaching and learning. The study was carried out after realising that “mathematics teaching in most classrooms emphasizes rules, procedures, memorization, and right answers ... Students are rarely expected to reason about mathematical ideas.” Thus, one prominent objective in the *Mathematics Curriculum Framework for California Public Schools (1985)* was the development of students’ mathematical reasoning. Besides analysing the reform policy documents, Cohen and Ball also used interviews and lesson observations to collect data for their study in the first two years of implementing the reform policy which made their study an early implementation report.

Cohen and Ball (1990) study came up with a number of findings. The five teachers responded to the policy in varied ways. Some made major changes to their practice, while others changed very little or not at all. One novel finding was that all the four teachers had a lot to learn – and also unlearn – if the development of mathematical reasoning was to be realised in the classroom. The new instructional policy required teachers to acquire new knowledge on

mathematics teaching and change their beliefs about mathematics and how students learn the subject. In the end, Cohen and Ball (1990:238) concluded that it is difficult for teachers to “teach mathematics that they never learned, in ways that they never experienced.” Sometimes teachers fail to implement reforms as expected because they lack knowledge and skills on the new concepts and this is often misconstrued as resistance to change.

Spillane et al. (2002:387) argue that the myth that teachers are resistant to change must be explored and analysed in terms of how teachers, who are the implementing agents, make sense of the reform initiatives they are expected to implement. They argue that, “What a policy means for implementing agents is constituted in the interaction of their existing cognitive structures (including knowledge, beliefs and attitudes), their situation and the policy signals.” Interaction between the teacher’s cognition, reform policy guidelines and the school/classroom context combine to create the meaning of the reforms to the teacher. It is not a simple linear sequence in which reform policy is presented to teachers and they abandon their existing practices, and adopt the new approaches on a clean mental slate, or resist the changes. It is too simplistic to assume that reform policy implementation is a straight forward case of just accepting or rejecting changes. Teachers process and make sense of the reforms before they implement them, or fail to.

iii. Teacher response to reform implementation

In studies carried out in North America classrooms, McLaughlin (1987:173) found that when teachers receive reform policy which requires implementation in the classroom they first interpret and give meaning to the policy (sense-making) before they respond. They assess whether the changes are beneficial to them (and students) and worth trying out in the classroom, or not. McLaughlin (1987:173) concluded that motivation and the will to implement policy depend entirely on the teacher, and this will is influenced by factors largely beyond the reach of policy. The teachers’ past experiences, existing knowledge, reward and remuneration system, working conditions and a host of other micro-level factors all influence, positively or negatively, the teachers’ will to implement reform, or not to. Teachers have more influence on what happens to policy than policy can influence their actions. McLaughlin (1987:173) concludes that, “In short, policy at best can enable outcomes, but in the final analysis it cannot

mandate what matters.” It is the teacher who decides ‘what matters’ to implement, or not to, and how.

Only after the teachers have made sense of the meaning of reform policy can they respond in any of the three ways: non-compliance, co-optation (symbolic response) or mutual adaptation. McLaughlin (1987:173) sees non-compliance to reform policy by teachers occurring at two levels. In the worst cases, teachers do not use any new terms/concepts associated with the changes and simply ignore the reform policy. Instead, they criticise the new curriculum and agitate for its non-implementation. In the best scenario, teachers try to implement the new changes without any success because they lack support and resources to implement the changes. Some contexts within which the teachers operate make it difficult for them to start implementing reforms, making them appear as if they are resisting change.

Co-optation or symbolic response means that teachers and students implement changes on the surface and in a superficial manner without understanding the substance of the reforms. Reflecting on the South African experience with reform implementation in the post-apartheid era, Hoadley and Jansen (2009:224) explain that, “Here the new curriculum is implemented, but with no real changes in the teachers and the learners ...These teachers simply interpret the new curriculum through the only lens they have, their old understandings of teaching and learning.” When teachers give symbolic responses to reform, they continue to teach the way they are used to with no real changes in the teachers’ and learners’ classroom experiences. Co-optation of reforms is mainly caused by the teachers’ previous experience, poor sense-making of reform policy, or lack of knowledge and skills on the new curriculum.

Mutual adaptation involves teachers embracing reform policy and then modifying it to suit their classroom situation taking into cognizance resources available and learner attributes. “Curriculum policy and the teacher’s practice are changed when the two (policy and practice) encounter each other in the classroom,” advise Hoadley and Jansen (2009:226). The teacher makes efforts to transform classroom practice so that it accommodates the reform policy signals as well as transform policy to suit the realities on the ground.

iv. Why reform policy implementation fails

Research by Fullan and Miles (1992:744-8) came up with seven reasons why most reforms fail to work at school level despite the generous allocation of monetary, material and human resources to change classroom practice. Failure by teachers to understand the change process has often led to failure to implement changes and make them a permanent feature of the curriculum. Schools with less successful reforms were those with teachers who were unaware of the meaning of reform policy and the extent of change required to initiate, nurture and foster new ideas so that they become institutionalised (Desimone, 2002:444). If teachers are not knowledgeable about the reforms they are expected to implement, no changes can take place in their practice because teachers cannot use new methods which they do not know and new skills which they do not possess.

The availability of new technology does not guarantee its use by teachers in reforming classroom practices (Cuban, 2003:2; Hennessy & Wamakote, 2010:42). Most policy makers, corporate executives, school administrators and parents assumed that wiring schools to the internet and buying computer hardware and software would lead to teachers' increased use of this technology in their lessons. But studies in early childhood, high school and university classrooms in the technology hub of Silicon Valley in the USA (Cuban et al., 2001:816) found that teachers and students use the new technologies "far less in the classroom than they do at home and that teachers who use computers for instruction do so infrequently and unimaginatively." They found an apparent paradox in most classrooms: computers are available yet teachers and students rarely use them for teaching and learning purposes. The use (and non-use) of new technology is influenced by historical and personal factors like teacher knowledge and attitude towards the new technology. Teachers can only use computers when they have the knowledge and skills to use this technology, believe that computers can improve learning and have the will power to transform their teaching practice.

Adams and Jean-Marie (2011:355) found that "the narrow conceptualization of school reform is a reason why many improvement efforts, even well designed initiatives, wither before practices change and performance improves." For instance, if policy makers and school

principals believe that the success of reform implementation depends on resource and material availability while ignoring or underestimating the local social conditions that influence performance, it may be difficult for change to take root in the classroom, even if resource books and learning media are availed to the teachers.

McLaughlin (1990:12) confirmed the findings of the Rand-sponsored study (1973-1978) that local factors (in contrast to policy inputs) have been severely underestimated in explaining why reform implementation fails. Local factors and choices by teachers on whether to put policy into practice (or not to), and how, have been found to have a more significant impact on policy outcomes than external inputs like programme design, provision of technology, funding levels and supervisory requirements (McLaughlin and Mitra, 2001:301). Consequently, most reforms have failed because policy makers have concentrated on providing the external inputs without mobilising and motivating the local factors and actors who include parents, teachers and students, all with their different aptitudes and attitudes.

A superficial approach to change is another reason why large-scale reform initiatives often fail. Reforms may be implemented for some time and then fade from practice slowly, but surely. Fullan and Miles (1992:737) call the gradual withdrawal of reform from practice “faddism” because the reforms are conspicuous in the early days of diffusion and then they disappear from the enacted curriculum with the movement of time. Faddism usually affects reforms which are initiated for political symbolism. Reform is big business, politically and economically (Cuban, 2006). Politicians and policy makers sometimes make curriculum reforms for their political mileage and monetary benefit rather than the pedagogical benefits of the learners.

Some myths about curriculum reform implementation are that resistance is inevitable and teachers naturally resist change (Cohen, 1990; Fullan, 1992; Cuban, 2003). Any slow reaction to change by teachers is perceived as natural resistance to reform. Policy makers expect teachers to embrace change as soon as they receive the policy signals without considering that teachers need time to make sense of the changes and try them out before full-scale implementation. Fullan and Miles (1992:745) caution that labeling teachers as resistant to

change may divert attention from the real problems of implementation like skills, resource shortage and teachers' sense-making of policy.

Policy makers are not the implementers, and sometimes policy is crafted without the consultation and contribution of the local implementing agents – the teachers. Cuban (2003:4) argues that teachers have become “the soldiers of reform. Yet no teacher’s thumbprint or signature can be seen on state and federal policies of the past quarter-century. Consequently, these policies confront teachers with very practical dilemmas.” Teachers are expected to implement changes they never formulated, like foot soldiers that fight a war they never initiated. In the same line of thinking, McLaughlin and Mitra (2002:302) observe that, “Reformers often are external not only to the school, but to the system, and so may have little direct knowledge of the classrooms into which their theories may enter.” This creates an implementation problem as reformers may fail to understand classroom problems in the same perspective as the teachers. Likewise, teachers may fail to interpret and understand policy in the same manner as the planners who crafted it, and this creates a gap between policy and practice.

Fullan (2000(a):1) points out that, “The main enemies of large-scale reform are overload and extreme fragmentation.” Reformers often make too many changes and want them implemented at the same time which results in overloading the timetable, the teacher and the whole school system. “The presence of too many reforms, which take teachers in different directions, can also be a problem,” warns Desimone (2002:444). When teachers are overwhelmed with too many new things to do they may end up doing nothing new, but stick to their old practices.

v. How to make reform implementation work

Implementation research scholars have come up with a number of propositions on how the gap between reform policy and practice can be reduced and changes be institutionalised in the curriculum. Fullan (2000b:2) suggests that if policy implementation is to be successful teachers must be made aware of why a new curriculum is necessary. But the presence of the knowledge of change alone is not enough for the successful implementation of policy, until

the teacher uses the knowledge. “The presence of change knowledge does not guarantee implementation, but its absence ensures failure,” advises Sahlberg (2007:6). Teachers should be able to make sense of why it is essential to adopt new practices (and shed old ones) if they are to implement changes; otherwise they simply ignore the changes which they cannot conceptualise and make sense of. Teachers’ sense-making of reform policy signals, therefore, is a pre-condition for reform implementation because teachers cannot try out new ideas which they do not understand.

McLaughlin and Mitra (2001:305) identify five variables which are critical for sustaining a reform so that it is institutionalised in the school system. Sufficient resources are identified among the five factors that include teachers’ knowledge on the change process, supportive community of practice (Professional Learning Communities), supportive school leadership and teacher involvement in policy planning. Resource availability and capacity building go hand in glove as these two factors make it possible for teachers to implement reforms after making sense of what reform policy requires them to do and how they will use the resources. Sahlberg (2007:6) advises that, “Capacity-building involves policies, strategies, resources and other actions that are aiming at increasing the collective power of implementers.” Without building the teachers’ capacity to implement reforms, resource availability cannot guarantee sustainable changes.

The issue of a supportive learning community, manifest in the creation of Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), kept coming up in literature as one of the conditions that make sustainable reform implementation possible (Fullan, 2000a:2; Cohen, 2006:15). PLCs can be developed at school, cluster and district levels so that teachers at one school can learn from each other, and also from the other teachers in the other schools. Drake (2006:601) advises that one powerful factor of change is learning from one’s peers, especially those who are ahead in implementing a new curriculum. Learning from what other teachers have already done in terms of implementing curriculum changes makes teachers realise that, with will power, determination and hard work, reforming classroom practice is possible and rewarding.

A proactive school leadership makes implementation of reform policy possible by not only providing material and financial resources, but also mobilising and motivating teachers to make sense of reform and initiate implementation at classroom level. Successful school leadership is not only about one's own success, but helping others to be successful (Adams and Jean-Marie, 2011:362). If leaders like school principals do not understand the need for change and cannot make sense of the reform policy signals as contained in the curriculum reform documents, it becomes difficult for the leaders to convince and influence teachers to reform their teaching practices.

2.4.2 History reform implementation in Britain

The debate on the National Curriculum in Britain concerning the nature and purpose of history instruction in secondary schools in the late 1980s was greatly influenced by the history wars between the conservative right wing (in favour of content) and the progressive left wing reformers (in favour of methods). In 1988, Hazel Hertzberg (quoted in Seixas, 1999:317), asked a question which has not been adequately answered up to the present day: "Are content and methods enemies?" Although the logical answer to this question would be that method and content are not enemies because the two complement each other, the contemporary politics of the history curriculum in Britain show that the two concepts are fighting for the hegemonic control of the history curriculum. Cain and Chapman (2014:112) call this struggle "the bipolar dichotomy between traditionalists and progressives" which openly manifests in the protracted conflict between 'subject-centred' and 'skills-centred' instruction.

i. Tug-of-war in British history curriculum

The progressive curriculum reform movement in Britain (from the 1960s to the 1980s) prioritised the development of generic and subject-specific skills, while trivialising factual narratives that presented historical knowledge as a body of fixed and everlasting truths. Clare (1995:6) observes that "20th century historical scholarship put more emphasis on methodology at the expense of content." This unipolar shift towards methods and skills, at the expense of content, made conservative right-wing scholars lament the loss of a national narrative in history textbooks and lessons. They complained that school history was shallow on content

as it emphasised skills of analysis, criticism and skepticism making the history curriculum produce learners who are “methodologically skilled but historically illiterate” (Cain and Chapman, 2014:117).

Sheldon (2014:256) observes that the conservatives only noticed the loss of the national narrative in school history at the end of the 1980s and they quickly went into action. They challenged the progressive left-wing domination of history pedagogy in British schools. The conservatives wanted history pedagogy to change from source-based inquiry learning and revert back to traditional content-centred history instruction with a national story on the British Empire. From the late 1980s, conservatives in Britain launched a serious offensive against left-wing hegemony on history instruction resulting in what has come to be known in curriculum reform studies as the “history wars” (Burley, 2012:53). The right-wing attack on learner-centred instruction and most of what progressivism stands for, culminated in the state-controlled National Curriculum Reform (1989-1994) initiative. Among its objectives was the creation of a history school curriculum which would foster nationalism and national identity, and restore the national story (<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/national> curriculum)

ii. The First National History Curriculum (1991)

The creation of the first national history curriculum in England was not any easy and smooth development. Sheldon (2012:268) symbolically observes that, “The process of producing the history national curriculum was something like a troubled birth – prolonged and painful...” History was the most fiercely debated subject in the national curriculum for England and Wales (Evans, 2013:41). There was a lot of mud-slinging between the conservative right wing advocating for a regression back to history as a factual narrative story, while the progressive left wing defended source-based learning and its focus on the development of historical skills. In 1989, the History Working Group was set up by the Department for Education to produce the first national history curriculum for England, and this task was completed in March 1991.

The first national history curriculum for England produced in 1991 failed to please both progressive left wing and conservative right wing scholars. Progressives criticised it for being too inward looking as 50% of the content focused on the four isles of Wales, Ireland, Scotland and England; with the latter taking the lion’s share of the content coverage (Cain & Chapman

2014:113-114). European and world history were side-lined and only studied in as far as they inter-related with Britain, rather than as independent political themes. The conservatives complained that history content and chronological narrative were not given the prominence they deserved, because the assessment scheme remained skills-based as students were still required to interpret and weigh evidence, empathise, analyse and reflect on the sources given. But when all is put together, the national history curriculum of 1991 was a victory for the left-wing progressives in the history wars as 'skills' won over 'content' and 'factual narrative'. One member of the History Working Group which produced the 1991 curriculum claimed that the only national characteristic they were trying to promote is "skepticism" – the power to question and doubt evidence – and not patriotism and national pride as demanded by the conservatives (Sheldon, 2012:267).

iii. The 'great betrayal'

Conservatives felt that the loss of a national narrative had led to the 'betrayal' of British history because even 'facts' were treated with a lot of skepticism; for instance, David Livingstone's heroism was being questioned. Writing in *The Weekly Telegraph* (Issue No.219 October, 1995:6) Clare observed that: "Traditionally, textbooks used to be in no doubt that King Alfred was great ... Livingstone was the greatest name in African exploration, Queen Victoria and Florence Nightingale were people who had made an important contribution to a collective endeavor." But recent textbooks of that period focused more on source-based materials, historical interpretation, analysis and skepticism, revealing a disturbing lack of narrative and chronological detail. The British curriculum supervision watchdog, the School Curriculum and Assessment Authority, joined the history wars when its chief executive, Nick Tate, complained that;

Britain's sense of national identity is being undermined by the way history is taught in schools and universities... Factual knowledge is being side-lined, narrative neglected, heroes and heroines debunked and nationalism regarded with distaste... There is simply not enough information in some of these books to enable pupils to understand, in any depth, the periods they were studying. (*The Weekly Telegraph*, Issue No.219 October, 1995:6).

The British Conservatives complained that history instruction and textbooks used in the 1990s lacked content, depth and the national narrative to instill a sense of national pride and identity in learners. They called for a return to traditional history instruction – what Shedd (2010:449) calls “fact-script-personality history” – the teaching of facts, reproduction of predetermined conclusions, and the promotion of patriotism and national pride.

iv. The New Draft National Curriculum for History (February 2013)

In February 2013, Michael Gove, a conservative and then British Minister for Education, announced the new draft National Curriculum for History. It was negatively received by all the people who mattered in history education, from conservative traditionalists to radical left-wing reformers. Professors of history and history education were among the first to voice their disapproval of the new national history curriculum draft of 2013. Evans (2013:41), a Regius Professor of history at the University of Cambridge, was the most scathing in his attack when he labelled the draft document a “pub quiz history curriculum” because of its shallowness in terms of scope and depth in content coverage. Evans (2013:42) lamented that; “This is preparation for Mastermind or pub quiz; it is not education.” The assessment focused too much on factual knowledge and simple recall; European and world history were marginalised and only studied in terms of how they interacted with Britain, limiting the curriculum’s worldview.

Stanley (2013:35), a Professor at Oxford University and a right wing conservative, had no choice but to admit, “I am a big fan of Michael Gove and his campaign to give every child a working narrative of British history, but his proposed curriculum contains a flaw.” Stanley gives more than eight strong criticisms against what he calls the misrepresentation of British history as “a moral fable more akin to theology than history” (Stanley 2013:35). Stanley observes that the problem with narrative history is that “it is rooted in political myth and peppered with inaccuracies.” Some of these myths and inaccuracies include the presentation of British history as a linear story of progress and forward movement – from despotism to parliamentary democracy. They underplay or totally ignore periods of regression, when reverses were made against gains previously accrued.

The Historical Association (2013:4-5) carried out a study involving 545 schools and 500 teachers in England to assess the schools and teachers' reactions to the proposed new national history curriculum of February 2013. The findings were interesting, if not shocking, especially to Michael Gove and his team of advisors. Of the 500 teachers who participated in the study, 87.9% felt that the proposed history national curriculum was not effective in equipping learners with the knowledge they need as British citizens in the 21st century. One teacher who was interviewed in this study summarised the general attitude of history teachers and academia towards the draft curriculum when he said; "If I was going to design a curriculum for history to put pupils off the subject, this would be it ... The impact of this will not only see a drop in enthusiasm but also a loss of interest in a very boring and British-focused history" (The Historical Association, 2013:6).

v. The National History Curriculum for England (September 2013)

Faced with a barrage of criticisms, the Department for Education in England had to revise the history curriculum proposed in February 2013, more in line with the demands of the conservative right than the progressive left wing. The national history curriculum for England was finally produced in September 2013 and all schools under the authority of the Department for Education were to follow this curriculum as a legal obligation. The document states that, "These are statutory programmes of study and attainment ... They are issued by law; you must follow them unless there is a good reason not to. All local-authority-maintained schools should teach them" (Department for Education, 2013:1).

The September 2013 national history curriculum marked a shift from source-based pedagogy and skills-based assessment. It emphasised the national narrative, national identity and national pride; the examination tested factual knowledge more than historical skills. The first aim in the national history curriculum for England states that, "...pupils should *know* and understand the history of these islands as a *coherent, chronological narrative*, from the earliest time to the present day..." (Department of Education, 2013:1). The national history curriculum currently in use in British schools is a triumph for right-wing historians and conservative instructional reformers. It is a blow to left-wing progressives as the focus is more on chronology and narrative than exposure to primary source materials and development of historical skills.

The British experience with history curriculum reform implementation resonates with lessons for curriculum reform planners and researchers in Zimbabwe, including myself. The content-versus-skills debate has also influenced curriculum reform politics in Zimbabwe and the introduction of research based tasks in the New Curriculum Framework for 2017 has raised a lot of controversy in the curriculum reform debate in Zimbabwe. A lot can be learnt from the content-skills debate in Britain and how teachers react to changes disseminated using the top-down approach, as similar experiences and situations can also be observed on the pedagogical landscape of Zimbabwe.

2.4.3 The Australian story: History curriculum as a battlefield

Like in Britain, the history curriculum in Australia has been a battlefield for right-wing conservatives and left-wing progressives since the turn of the 21st century. In a study that traces pedagogical reforms in Australian history classrooms, Burley (2012:53) found that the history wars, evident in the United States, United Kingdom, Canada, Japan, Germany, Spain and Turkey, have not spared Australia. Since 2000, the Australian history curriculum has witnessed a tug-of-war for its control between the conservative right-wing forces and the progressive left-wing reformers, although early skirmishes for the control of the history classroom can be traced back to the 1980s. The conservatives, explains Burley (2012:56), “were suspicious of what they saw as a radicalised teaching profession led by revolutionary officials who were keen to influence an intellectually passive and credulous student population”, while the progressive left wing “saw school history as a way of righting past and present wrongs...”

Progressivists were arguing that history must develop learners’ skills of interpretation, judgement and historical skepticism. They were against rote learning practices and the regurgitation of preconceived conclusions by learners; arguing that learners must construct their own knowledge, make their own judgements and come up with their own conclusions from the evidence available to them (Ditchburn (2015:31). The conservatives, on the other hand, advocated for a national narrative that would glorify Australia as a nation state and emphasise the teaching of history content (not skills) so that learners would not question the historical ‘facts’ they were taught. The history teacher was to be seen as the master of the subject and the custodian of historical knowledge

ii. Root and tree renewal

At the Australian History Summit held in August 2006, John Howard, a conservative and then Prime Minister of Australia, declared that school history was going to have 'a root and tree renewal', meaning that the history curriculum was going to have a complete overhaul (Taylor, 2009:323). The curriculum was going to be reformed so that it would reflect national identity and pride, and restore historical narrative. However, the left wing saw otherwise. They complained that, "Howard's hidden intention was to use the summit as a device for introducing a narrowly traditionalist syllabus that would be personally pleasing to the Prime Minister" and the right wing politicians and scholars he represented (Taylor 2009:317). The left-wing historians, naturally, resisted what they saw as a regressive move back to traditional palace and trumpet history. The harsh debate at the Summit, and the verbal wars that followed it, "indicate how deep the problems of the study and teaching of Australian history have become" (Melleuish 2013:33). As a result, Howard's proposed history curriculum reforms failed to please his right-wing allies, nor his left-wing foes, leading to him and his Conservatives losing both the history wars and the Australian national elections to a Labour government in November 2007.

The new Prime Minister, Gillard, had left-wing inclinations and "supported the exposure of students to different interpretations of our history so that they might learn to reach informed decisions..." (Burley, 2012:57). Gillard's victory was a triumph for left wing historians and reformers and it marked Australia's narrow escape from traditional history and the rote learning of dates, names and endless narratives. But the left-wing victory was short-lived.

iii. Curriculum as a balancing act

The Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) and the National Curriculum Board (NCB) sought to bring an end to the history wars by developing a curriculum which is chronological, sequential, prescribed and emphasising both content and skills in equal measures (NCB 2009:4). Besides taking into consideration right-wing concerns for 'content/narrative' and left-wing obsessions with 'skills/methods', the new Australian national

history curriculum produced in 2010 also recognised latest research and international trends in history pedagogy.

Central to the 2010 Australian national history curriculum reform was the striking of an equilibrium between historical content on the one hand and historical skills on the other. The designers of this curriculum address this concern where they state that, “The content of the national history curriculum will be based on the interrelationship between historical knowledge, understanding and skills” (NCB 2009:4). Consequently, the curriculum produced in 2010 catered for both right-wing and left-wing interests, silencing the history wars in the Australian curriculum, for the time being. However, Ditchburn (2015:31) criticises the 2010 Australian national history curriculum for being too shallow and superficial as it tries to serve both right wing and left wing interests in equal measures and calls it “a thin curriculum”.

Melleuish (2013:34) acknowledges the cooling effects the 2010 national history curriculum had on the glowing ambers of the history wars because of its balancing act. He says, “It would be true to say that the release of the national curriculum did not ignite a new significant round of the History Wars. Given the bare bones of the curriculum document, it was difficult to discern a lot that could be described as outlandishly ideological.” It is interesting, as well as pleasing, from my own point of view, to observe that the Australian history curriculum was designed (after extensive consultations) to please both the right-wing and left-wing intelligentsia, a feat which is rarely achieved in a subject like history. History is “a story told by many storytellers” (NCB, 2009:14); making divergent and conflicting perspectives the norm rather than the exception.

The Australian success story in creating a balanced history curriculum, which places equal importance on both content and skills, has useful lessons for history curriculum reform planners and implementation researchers in Zimbabwe. The side-lining of source-based materials and questions in the current Syllabus 4044 (rolled out to schools in January 2017) is an outstanding shortcoming of the present history curriculum reform policy. Curriculum reform planners in Zimbabwe appear to be failing to create a balancing act in reforming the history curriculum. They seem to be focusing more on the teaching of content/narrative while sidelining the development of the skills/methods of the historian. They can take a leaf from

the Australian success story. In the next section we look at how history has been taught across time and space.

2.5 A HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF HISTORY INSTRUCTION

Wiersma (2008:111) observes that only a few large-scale studies have been carried out on the teaching of history in secondary schools over the past one hundred years. One of these few large-scale studies include one by Cuban (1984) which is a comprehensive research on how teachers have been teaching in American schools over a 90-year period, from 1890 to 1980. In his seminal work titled *How Teachers Taught*, Cuban (1984:15) observes that, “How teachers have actually taught has largely remained a mystery ... it is important to find out what happens in classrooms, rather than depending upon teacher surveys or stories heard from parents and students.” Cuban found that for the greater part of the past 100 years, and for centuries before, the traditional teacher-centred approach dominated the classroom instruction of all subjects, until the early 1980s when teachers began to mix teacher-centred progressivism with learner-centred approaches.

2.5.1 Teacher-dominated pedagogy

Teacher-dominated pedagogy has been the most durable of all the teaching methods. Scholars of classroom pedagogy trace the tradition back to the ancient Greeks, religious schools and monasteries of many centuries back (Cuban, 1990:3). This teacher dominated teaching has been given various names which include “traditional”, “subject-centred”, “teacher-centred”, and “tough-minded” curriculum. In classical western societies, knowledge was seen as a sacred, private and closely guarded commodity in the hands of a few custodians (the rulers, teachers and philosophers). This knowledge was only to be transmitted to the privileged few, mainly children of the ruling class. Students were viewed as “blank slates”, “vessels to be filled”, or “ducks to stuff” (Cuban, 2006:793). In such a classroom, students sat meekly and miserably, in orderly rows, listening to the teacher, and copying notes and diagrams from the chalkboard.

2.5.2 Growth of progressivism

Writing in 392 BC when he opened his school, Socrates criticised the teachers of his time for overlooking the innate (inborn) abilities of their learners and argued that students know something about any new concept being taught (Reeve, 2003:9). Socrates is one of the earliest known critics of teacher-dominated pedagogy and a pioneer of progressive student-centred learning because of his use of the questioning technique, later popularised as the Socratic Method. Progressive education places the learner at the centre of the teaching-learning process and stresses that learners must find their own solutions to solve educational problems.

The modern progressive movement spearheaded by Jean Jacques Rousseau in the 18th century and popularised by John Dewey in the early 20th century, placed the learner at the centre of the teaching-learning process, if not in practice then at least in policy and educational debates. Many reform initiatives were undertaken to change the way teachers taught as a result of the influence of the progressive ideology. Labaree (2005:275) observes that progressivism became the catchword of teacher education in the 20th century as “progressivism became the ideology of the education professor.” However, like any other ideology, progressivism was not without its enemies. Progressivism was blamed for declining educational standards in public schools, and plummeting pass rates. In fact, according to Reese (2013:320-1), progressivists were “accused of undermining everything from academic quality in public schools to national security”. This led to pedagogical wars between the conservative right and progressive left wing.

2.5.3 Competing pedagogical traditions

Cuban (2006:794) sees the last 100 years in American education as characterised by “futile pedagogical wars” between traditionalists and progressives on what and how students must be taught. The pedagogical wars centred on whether teachers should focus on teaching content-knowledge or the skills of reasoning and reflective skepticism. However, Cuban (2006:794) established that “by the early 1980s most elementary and some secondary school teachers had incorporated certain student-centred classroom practices into hybrids of

teacher-centred progressivism.” These findings reflect that, despite the numerous curriculum reform initiatives and huge amounts of money spent on reforming classroom practice, the teacher-centred approach, tinted with some elements of learner-centred practices, appear to be the common classroom practice in the developed world. Teachers seem to have developed some hybrid teaching methods involving traditional teaching methods and some learner-centred approaches which Cuban (2006:794) calls “teacher-centred progressivism”. Labaree (2005:275) argues that in American education there is “a long standing, deeply rooted and widely shared rhetorical commitment to the progressive vision” which does not match practice. My study explores how history teachers in Zimbabwe understood curriculum reform policy and constructed their teaching practices towards learner-centred pedagogy, as recommended by the 2017 New Curriculum Framework. Does practice match policy? The next section examines the reform-oriented practices the progressive teacher can use to implement history curriculum reform policy.

2.6 REFORM ORIENTED TEACHING PRACTICES

Innovative and creative history teachers, mainly in the developed world, have come up with a number of learner-centred teaching methods which history teachers can use as they reform their classroom practice at secondary school level. A review of existing literature on reform oriented teaching methods in history deepened my knowledge on the progressive teaching methods teachers can use as they implement the new history curriculum in Zimbabwe.

2.6.1 The forest and the trees approach

Shedd (2010:450) uses the metaphor of “the forest and the trees” to illustrate how history teachers can move away from traditional rote pedagogy towards inquiry-based learning. He emphasises that history is a complex subject that requires teachers and students to focus on events long gone and create relationships between cause and effect, and continuity and change, a task which is not always easy, even for the teachers. Consequently, historians and history teachers have difficulties with making sense of their subject, a dilemma which history students also face. Shedd (2010:450) advises that history teachers must, therefore, be capable of making “complex moves if they are to teach history in a way that students find

meaningful.” One way of making the “complex move” towards inquiry-based classroom practices is to use “the forest and trees” approach to plan and present history lessons.

When using this approach the history teacher presents a general overview (the forest) on a particular theme to show common trends and developments, and then assists students in exploring specific case studies, regions, countries and personalities. This approach resonates with the thematic approach, except that the forest and trees approach goes beyond the themes by searching for common trends and patterns between the different cases – the relationships between the different trees in the forest. In traditional history teaching, teachers tend to focus more on the individual trees without making much effort to create connections between them.

2.6.2 Bird-walking technique

As part of inquiry-based learning, students can be afforded the opportunity to interact and interrogate the primary and secondary sources of history so that they can develop their own independent and critical thinking skills. Shedd (2010:452) talks of the “bird-walking” technique as a pedagogical strategy that allows students to ‘wander’ among the different primary and secondary sources so that they select the evidence they want, leaving out what they find irrelevant and trivial. Shedd (2010:452) summarises the pedagogical benefits (and challenges) of bird-walking thus:

This teaching technique encourages classes to follow a line of thought tangential to the topic at hand so that the teacher and the students can see how the issue under discussion applies to other areas. This is doubtless a good thing, except that the bird sometimes walks too far from the topic ... It is crucial, therefore, that the bird either walk or fly back to its starting place in order to drive home the connection between the topic as first undertaken and the class’s subsequent findings.

Despite the obvious drawback of wasting time, bird-walking is one of the most modern and constructivist learning approaches recommended for use by any progressive history teacher. From my own assessment, it looks like the bird-walking technique cannot be a common classroom practice for the ‘ordinary’ history teacher (at an ‘average’ school) as it requires a

lot of preparation, time, multiple primary and secondary sources for use in one lesson, reflective thinking and commitment on the part of the teacher.

2.6.3 Thinking like a Historian Model (TLH)

In an effort to ensure that skills of inquiry and historical knowledge are taught at the same time, Franco (2010:536) came up with a conceptual model called Thinking Like a Historian (TLH). In his own words, “Thinking Like a Historian is a tool for framing the past to teach students the elements of historical thinking, while at the same time, grounding students’ knowledge of the past through inquiry and evidentiary support.” The TLH framework makes history students ‘do history’ by making them learn both the skills of the historian and the content of the subject at the same time, and in equal proportions.

One TLH strategy Franco (2010:536) used with his K-12 class in the USA is what he calls the “Graffiti Wall”, which “allows students the opportunity to operate in a collective group setting and engage in a discourse based on content specific questions that are crafted after each element of historical thinking.” To use this method, the history teacher must ensure that students have enough content exposure and background knowledge on the questions they will discuss. The questions require them to use both the content they have acquired and the skills of historical analysis they have developed. After discussing the tasks, each group draws and writes graffiti using markers on the ‘butcher paper’ (flip charts) given to them. The writing and drawings on the graffiti wall represent the co-operative group’s understanding of the content and the development of their historical skills of analysis, interpretation and judgement. The responses on the flip charts are then displayed in the class to create a graffiti wall. The teacher allows a gallery walk and then facilitates class discussion from the graffiti. Closely related to the Thinking Like a Historian model is the Project-Based Learning (PBL) approach.

2.6.4 Project-Based Learning (PBL)

The Project-Based Learning (PBL) approach has gained popularity in the past 40 or so years since its inaugural use in the health sciences curricular at McMaster University in Canada in the 1980s (Savery, 2006:9-10). Since then, the PBL model has grown in leaps and bounds across many disciplines including education. It has come to be known by various names including Problem-Based Learning, Inquiry-Based learning and research project. The

philosophy behind PBL is to allow students “to learn by doing and applying ideas ...it is based on the constructivist finding that students gain a deeper understanding of material when they actively construct their understanding by working with and using ideas” (Krajcik and Blumenfeld, 2010:317-318). In PBL, students identify real life problems they are interested in investigating and finding some empirical solutions for. Central to PBL is students’ free choice to identify problems they want to research on. Bell (2010:39) emphasises that, “Project-Based Learning (PBL) is a student-driven, teacher-facilitated approach to learning.” These problems must capture student interest and be within their cognitive and material resource capacity to investigate, with the teacher acting as a facilitator and consultant only. PBL is a completely new concept in the teaching and learning of history in Zimbabwean secondary schools. It is one conspicuous change in Zimbabwe’s comprehensive New Curriculum Framework for Primary and Secondary Education 2015-2022. The research project tasks are known as Continuous Assessment Tasks (ZIMSEC, 2017:2). The present thesis explores in some depth (Chapters 4 and 5) how history teachers in Zitown made sense of Continuous Assessment Task 1 and implemented this novel reform in their classrooms during the Third Term of 2017.

2.6.5 Film pedagogy

The use of film and video in the history classroom has come under severe criticism in the USA over the past years mainly because of the racial stereotypes of black and white which they portray. The other criticisms against the use of film in history classes raised by Stoddard and Marcus (2010:84) are that films can be used as “babysitters” as students lack critical viewing skills because “without explicit instructions in critical analysis from the teacher, students do not naturally critique what they are seeing.” Students tend to believe what they see in films as true and real and this has often led to acts of violence and other anti-social behaviours leading to parents making racially-charged accusations against the use of this learning media.

Despite the criticisms that have been levelled against the use of film and video, Schul (2014:15) argues that, “The emergence of digital technology provides new opportunities for teaching and learning in the history classroom.” The use of film pedagogy and development of documentary making skills for history teachers and students provide some of these opportunities. The pedagogical benefits of using film in the history classroom far outweigh the demerits. Stoddard and Marcus (2010:84) point out that the use of film “engages students in

thoughtful exploration of past and contemporary social or political problems.” It also enables students to recreate a mental picture of the past, its people, their dress culture, habits and behaviour, which makes the past come alive to learners. Because of the affordability of technology in homes, most people no longer read history books. This has made film and video popular media for learning about the past. My study also explored the use of film and video by Zimbabwean history teachers as this is one of the recommended instructional approaches in the new history curriculum which was rolled out to secondary schools in January 2017 (CDTS, 2015:2).

2.6.6 Field trips and museum visits

The use of field trips to places of historical interests like ancient settlements, monuments and museums has always been a refreshing initiative for both history teachers and students because this does not happen often due to financial and logistical constraints, especially in the developing world. In the developed world, visits to museums and historical sites are a common practice, although the frequency of using such practice appears to depend mainly on the initiative of the individual teacher (Marcus and Levine, 2011:104). The greatest strength of learning history in the museum or on a historical site is that history comes alive to students and teachers. Marcus and Levine (2011:104) contemplate: “How wonderful would it be if we could accompany students to museums and literally bring history to life?”

Participating in field trips to museums and historical sites helps develop learners’ ability to analyse, interpret and evaluate primary and secondary sources, as well as empathise with the past. Field trips combine learning historical knowledge with the development of historical thinking skills making the approach very progressive and learner-centred, but only where teachers prepare questions and tasks for students to work on during and after the trip. The new history Syllabus 4044 in Zimbabwe advises that; “learners should go on educational tours at least three times a year” (CDTS, 2015:2). My study assessed history teachers’ compliance with this policy requirement by examining if each of the four history teachers took his/her students on historical tours in 2017, where to and how many times.

2.6.7 Role playing and drama

The issue of role playing and drama provokes anxiety among historians who fear that this approach to history instruction may “reduce serious intellectual inquiry to mere amusement” (Kornblith and Lasser, 2006:4). Critical historical issues are trivialised in a theatrical manner that brings laughter and creates lighter moments on events of grave concern. As a result, some historians do not believe that this method is of much benefit to serious historical inquiry and history pedagogy. However, research by Mattson (2008:101) on K-12 history education in the United States has shown that role playing and dramatisation have a lot of pedagogical benefits for learners at secondary school level. She found that “drama deepens students’ ability to critically read the world around them, to think historically, and to imagine and participate in a more just future.”

Dramatising past historical events also pushes students to carry out research on critical past events, episodes and relationships making them discover new ideas on what they intend to dramatise. Besides making the past come alive in class, role playing enables students to have “control over their own learning by inviting learners to adopt a succession of roles and to engage in debate and exploration within the context of their roles” (Manley and O’Neill, 1997:xiv, quoted in Mattson, 2008:102). Thus, role playing allows students to get physically involved in the lesson, co-operate with other learners and engage in abstract thinking in ways that flex their skills of imagination, interpretation, communication and argument. My study explored the extent to which history teachers were using role playing in their lessons as this is one of the recommended learner-centred teaching methods in the new history curriculum (Syllabus 4044) which they started implementing in January 2017.

2.6.8 A flipped classroom

A flipped classroom is the opposite of the conventional traditional classroom in which the teacher takes the centre stage and learners play a peripheral role as passive listeners and note takers (Fitzpatrick, 2016:90). To ‘flip’ is to turn over or to reverse something so that you can start on a clean page, or do things in a different way as compared to how they were done in the past. In flipped classrooms, students engage in passive learning on their own or at home and lesson time is utilised for collaborative work between the teacher and the students

so that they interrogate more deeply the concepts students studied on their own. This is how Fitzpatrick (2016:91-92) describes a flipped classroom:

In a flipped classroom, students are expected to complete readings and recommended tasks before coming to the classroom. Class time is for engaging in activities such as experiments or debates that allow students to use course concepts. In contrast to traditional lecturing, these activities require more student involvement and less instructor control. Instructors play a facilitative role to help students glean insights from activities.

The emphasis in a flipped classroom is on active learning by students while the teacher plays the role of the facilitator and consultant. The new history curriculum disseminated into schools in January 2017 encourages “learner-centred and multi-sensory approaches” (CDTS, 2015:2) with teachers playing facilitative and consultative roles. This is a direct call to teachers to ‘flip over’ their traditional teaching methods and reform their classroom practices towards learner-centred pedagogy. The present study explores how history teachers were making sense of the new history curriculum and how they were reforming their classroom practices in response to policy prescriptions, if at all.

2.7 REFORM IMPLEMENTATION IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

2.7.1 Learner-centred pedagogy as policy

The adoption of a learner-centred curriculum in post-colonial Southern Africa, besides being beneficial to learners’ intellectual development, was (and still is) seen as a means of promoting democracy in the post-colonial states. Raselimo and Mahao (2015:8) point out that, “The ideal of learner-centred pedagogy was seen as a catalyst to expediting the process of democratization in most African countries.” By giving learners the opportunity to participate in decision-making and knowledge creation in the classroom, teachers would be preparing students to function as critical thinkers and vocal citizens in emerging democracies. For instance, the introduction of a learner-centred curriculum in Namibia after 1990 “was regarded as a means of consolidating democratic ideals” (O’Sullivan, 2004:585). Raselimo and Mahao, (2015:8) observe that the Outcomes Based Education (OBE), as articulated in Curriculum 2005 in post-apartheid South Africa, signaled “a departure from apartheid education to a

democratic dispensation”. These are the policy intentions of the politicians and curriculum planners in Southern Africa. But what is the situation like at school and classroom levels concerning the implementation of these noble curriculum reform policies? A review of existing literature on the complexity of curriculum reform implementation in Southern African countries deepened my understanding of the ‘reform implementation problem’ and prepared the intellectual ground for me to explore the implementation of the 2017 history curriculum reforms in Zimbabwe.

A bird’s eye view of classroom practices in various Southern African countries like Botswana, Zambia, Malawi, South Africa and Lesotho shows that despite the many official curriculum reforms initiated by central governments, teachers seem not to have changed their classroom practices much in the past 20 or so years (Tabulawa, 2009:101; Chirwa and Naidoo, 2014:343; Hendricks, Botha and Adu, 2016:266). Only in Lesotho were secondary school geography teachers found to be using the learner-centred approach and to be very supportive of pedagogical reforms in the classroom although teachers of other subjects continued to use rote pedagogy in preparing students for school leaving public examinations (Raselimo & Wilmot, 2013:9). A country by country review of curriculum reform in postcolonial Southern Africa states is given in the next section, before cascading to Zimbabwe.

2.7.2 The case of Botswana

After the attainment of independence in 1966, curriculum reform in Botswana sought to transform teachers’ classroom practices from the traditional bureaucratic missionary education inherited as part of the colonial legacy. Tabulawa (1997:193) observes that colonial education was teacher-dominated, “inculcating into pupils strict discipline, subordination to their betters, and Christian humility.” Mosothwane (2014:39) remarks that up to the 1970s most teachers in Botswana “were not familiar with problem solving skills. Both students and teachers had to memorize certain steps to arrive at the correct answer.” Government-initiated curriculum reforms in Botswana, like the 1977 Education for Kagisano (Social Harmony) and the Revised National Policy on Education (RNPE) of 1994, called for “a change in the student-

teacher relationship and urged teachers to relate to pupils as people, not just as receptacles for cognitive material” (Tabulawa, 1997:189).

It is disturbing to observe that nothing much has changed since the missionary days in the way teachers conduct their lessons, despite the numerous curriculum reform policies rolled out since independence. “The teacher’s role is reduced to that of a technician who dispenses pre-packaged chunks of knowledge ...Teachers ‘spoon-feed’ students with the information they need to pass examinations,” observes Tabulawa (2009:100-101). In the same vein, Nkosana (2013:69) points out that, “As studies in Botswana classrooms have indicated, the prevailing pedagogical style, a teacher-centred style, can work against reform, especially if the proposed reforms are incongruent with the dominant approach.” Thus, in Botswana, teachers are reluctant to reform their classroom practice in line with official curriculum policy which encourages learner-centred instruction.

A variety of reasons have been advanced to explain why teachers in Botswana are not so eager to embrace learner-centred methods. These include traditional and contemporary Tswana values that entrench authoritarianism and excessive respect for authority, and the missionary legacy of a teacher-dominated pedagogy (Tabulawa,1997:193). The other reasons that militate against reforming classroom practices at classroom level in Botswana are: abnormal class sizes, high workloads, broad syllabi, examination-oriented teaching and inadequate financial and human resources (Rudhumbu et al., 2016:19).

2.7.3 Curriculum reform in Zambia

Although a number of curriculum reform initiatives have taken place in Zambia since independence in 1963, most of the reforms have never been fully implemented mainly because of limited financial support from the government. Mkandawire (2010:1-2) points out that, “It is very difficult to implement a curriculum successfully if the education system has limited funding capacities ...The fact that the education system is under-funded by the government means that the availability and quality of facilities in learning institutions is negatively affected.” Given the limited financial resources available to most schools in Zambia, abnormal class sizes, shortages of textbooks, and poorly trained teachers, most teachers in

Zambia appear to have limited options in terms of methodologies but to use rote learning and chalk-and-talk. It is against this background of a teacher-centred and examination-oriented curriculum that The Zambia Education Curriculum Framework 2013 sought to reform existing classroom practices by taking into consideration global trends in classroom pedagogy.

The Zambia Education Curriculum Framework of 2013 outlined that, “Teachers and teacher educators should use methods that encourage learners to reflect, think and do rather than reproduce from rote learning. In this regard, teachers and teacher educators are strongly advised to use the Learner-Centred Approach in the teaching and learning process” (Ministry of Education Zambia, 2013:56). This is what the official curriculum policy says, but what is the situation like in the Zambian classroom? As is often the case, curriculum policy is at variance with actual classroom practice.

In a scathing attack on the Zambian curriculum reforms of 2013, Phiri (2015:1) charges that, “The new curriculum was hastily implemented by people who seemed to be pursuing something or were being pursued by something ... The new education curriculum is actually a mess.” He argues that teachers were not adequately consulted and in-serviced in preparation for the reforms to the extent that most of them are not aware of the reforms they were expected to implement and did not possess the required skills. For instance, Phiri (2015:1) remarks that, “Computer Studies is now a compulsory subject at junior secondary. This is despite the ministry knowing that the majority of its teachers are computer illiterates. Up to this day [March 3, 2015], the computer illiterate teachers haven’t been given textbooks to share their ICT hallucinations with the children.” Some schools do not have electricity but curriculum policy demands that computers be compulsory to all junior secondary school students. Textbooks and other learning resources are also in short supply militating against learner-centred reforms in teachers’ classroom practices.

Mkandawire (2010:2) and Phiri (2015:1) appear to agree that the challenges facing curriculum reform implementation in Zambia are far from over and teacher-centred pedagogy remains the commonest instructional practice in most schools. Interestingly, depending on one’s position on the ladder of the politics of the curriculum, there are some, in Phiri’s (2015:1) rather

uncharitable words, “useless Judas Iscariots called Teacher Unions that are singing praises about the new curriculum.” Regardless of what its achievements look like on the ground, existing literature shows that the Zambia Education Curriculum Framework 2013 has not yet succeeded in changing classroom practices from teacher-dominated pedagogy to learner-centred instruction as envisaged by the curriculum reform initiative, showing that reforming classroom practice is a difficult and complex process which is easier to talk about than implement.

2.7.4 Reform in Malawi

Chirwa and Naidoo (2014:343) established that despite numerous curriculum reform initiatives in Malawi, teachers have continued “to impart knowledge using mainly teacher-centred methodology.” Curriculum change and development in Malawi in the post-2000 period has been influenced and shaped by internal political, social and economic influences, as well as external factors like globalisation and the influence of South Africa’s post-apartheid curriculum. Chirwa and Naidoo (2014:344) observe that, “In its bid to pursue the global agenda, Malawi borrowed the ideas of Outcomes-Based Education (OBE) and integrated learning areas from South Africa’s first major post-apartheid curriculum, Curriculum 2005.” The curriculum planners in Malawi modified OBE and the integrated learning areas to suit Malawi’s socio-political-economic context resulting in the production of the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) of 2009.

But critics of CAPS, like Chirwa and Naidoo (2014:337), argue that Malawi suffers from “the danger of unproblematic borrowing which could be hazardous as curricula get implemented in contexts different from where it was conceived.” They feel that CAPS was not adequately modified to suit conditions in Malawi and this could make it difficult for the reform to be accepted at school and classroom levels. Mwakapenda (2002:251) points out that although curriculum reform in Malawi aims at improving classroom practice towards a more learner-centred curriculum, this has largely been hampered by two main obstacles: lack of collective consultation and limited conceptualisation of what curriculum change involves by both policy planners and teachers. The reform processes involved only a few individuals and neglected teachers and students and so teachers lacked ownership of the reforms they were expected

to implement. They also lacked the knowledge and skills to implement them. Consequently, classroom practice in Malawi remains bogged in traditional instructional practices.

2.7.5 Reform in South Africa

Curriculum reform in post-apartheid South Africa, like in all post-colonial states, has had its own share of controversy. Jansen and Taylor (2003:38) view South Africa's first post-apartheid Curriculum 2005 as "a strongly progressivist curriculum, based on constructivist epistemology." But Khumalo (2014:1) observes that, "Curriculum 2005 was implemented in 1998 amidst fundamental differences on the outcomes based education principle and reports of its flawed implementation flooded curriculum literature." Teachers were inadequately trained for the transition from teacher- and content-centred curriculum to learner-centred pedagogies. The cascade training model adopted by the Department of Education to in-service all practising teachers on the curriculum reforms was inadequate.

Carl (2005:223) complains that, like in many other countries, the teachers' voices are not heard in curriculum reform in South Africa; they are like "voices crying in the wilderness." This is because reform policy is developed outside the school system and teachers are only regarded as mere recipients of a curriculum developed by specialists elsewhere. As a result, teachers lack knowledge and ownership of the curriculum changes and therefore ignore the reforms or fail to implement them as expected by the policy makers. Jansen (2002:199) advances the theory of "political symbolism" to explain why most post-apartheid curricular reforms in South Africa have failed to bring the anticipated changes. Political symbolism explains that educational reforms are initiated by politicians (who are the policy makers) as political lip-service to gain popular support and silence dissenting voices without any real commitment to implementation at school and classroom levels.

Hendricks et al.'s (2016:266) quantitative non-experimental survey in South African schools established that most teachers' classroom practices were at variance with reform policy. Teachers did not use learner-centred and activity-based approaches as required by official reform policy. Hendricks et al. concluded that, "It is assumed that the terms *learner-centred* and *activity-based* were understood by teachers, which was not the case." This was mainly

because the teachers did not fully understand and appreciate the practice of learner-centred instruction in the first place. Research by Khumalo (2014:2-3) on the school as a curriculum reform management site established that most schools in South Africa do not have systems in place “to develop, sustain, and monitor teaching and learning effectively to ensure implementation of curriculum policy changes.” As a result, most teachers in South Africa continue to teach using traditional teacher-centred practices, although reform policy prescribes learner centred pedagogy.

2.7.6 The exceptional case: Lesotho

It is critical to observe that curriculum reform in Lesotho, like in many other developing countries, has not been a smooth process. The end of British colonial rule in Lesotho in 1966 provided the country with an opportunity to reform its curriculum to meet the needs of the Basotho nation. “Since then, a number of curriculum and assessment reforms have been attempted, albeit with a little success,” observe Raselimo and Mahao (2015:1). The Curriculum and Assessment Policy of 2009 in Lesotho aimed at transforming the traditional subject and examination-oriented curriculum towards a learner-centred and skills-based integrated curriculum. The 2009 policy stated that: “The focus on pedagogy has therefore shifted more to the teaching and learning methods that can further develop creativity, independence, and survival skills of learners” (MoET, 2009:22). This new curriculum reform policy, according to Raselimo and Mahao (2015:7), “challenges the existing dominant teacher-centred methods, which are a typical feature of classroom teaching and learning processes in Lesotho.” Thus, to a large extent, most teachers in Lesotho, like their counterparts in both the developed and the developing worlds, continue to use teacher-centred pedagogy, with perhaps, the exception of geography teachers.

Secondary school geography teachers in Lesotho have made significant strides in accepting and implementing learner-centred reforms in their classrooms. In a study by Raselimo and Wilmot (2013:10), the geography teachers recognised the benefits of learner-centred pedagogy and used this approach in their practice, mainly because of the knowledge and pedagogical skills they had gained from the Danish donor-funded Lesotho Environmental Education Support Project (LEESP). One of the teachers in this study summarised his new

role thus: “My role is to facilitate teaching. I facilitate in the sense that I don’t always give learners information. I am expecting them to contribute, say what they know or even work together to find information.” Another teacher said, “In actual fact, in geography for students to do well they should participate, manipulate things...” (Raselimo & Wilmot, 2013:10). However, the study acknowledges that an expansive syllabus, examination-oriented teaching and learners’ poor command of the English language are some of the factors that militate against learner-centred practices in Lesotho, making some teachers use traditional rote learning methods. Thus, except for geography teachers in Lesotho, most teachers in Southern Africa appear not to have changed their teaching practices much in response to official curriculum reform policy.

2.8 HISTORY REFORMS IN ZIMBABWEAN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

When one looks at the nature and extent of curriculum changes in post-colonial Zimbabwe, the observation that “the sponsoring and adoption of large-scale programs of reform are to large extent political acts” (Fullan & Pomfret, 1977:386) sounds particularly true.

2.8.1 Policy reform in Zimbabwe

Evidence available shows that there were no deliberately planned curriculum reforms in Zimbabwe in the first ten years, or so, after independence, although the government “adopted a broadly defined socialist policy for the reconstruction of the inherited colonial education system” (Jansen, 1991:77). Zvobgo (1999:115) explains that, “The political mood in the early days of independence did not give policy formulators and implementers much room to rationally examine and debate the policies of the ruling party that were imposed on national government.” Against this background of political excitement and expediency, curriculum changes and innovations were announced to please the masses without consulting most of the stakeholders. There was no time for planned change as “the government was in a hurry to reform the colonial curriculum, leaving very little room for planning”, adds Mavhunga (2014:20). Curriculum reform was initiated by government and planned by the Curriculum Development Unit (CDU) – a government department. In Zimbabwe reforms were (and still are) disseminated using the top-down approach. They start from the ruling party, down to central government, the CDU, until they reach the teachers who are expected to implement

the changes as a matter of policy. But the history curriculum reforms which were implemented ten years after independence (in 1990) involved some limited consultations with different interest groups and prolonged debate on what was to be taught in history and how.

2.8.2 Setting the controversy in motion: the first wave of history reforms

Reforming the history curriculum in post-colonial Zimbabwe was a political, controversial and heavily contested process which took over six years to complete (Chitate, 2005:14). Moyana (1984:1) points out that;

The ideological implications of curriculum change, in any society undergoing transformation, are always felt more dramatically in the study of History than in many other subjects. For History, like Political Science and Social Studies, can be much more easily used for conscientising or domesticating a people than most other traditional disciplines.

The drafting of the new history syllabus for an independent Zimbabwe was heavily influenced by the government's declared ideology of scientific socialism. The Zimbabwean government sought to use (or is it abuse?) the secondary school history curriculum to transmit socialist and nationalist ethos to learners. At the consultative meetings organised by the government-sponsored National History Subject Panel there were heated debates over which history was to be taught in independent Zimbabwe and how. The conflict of interest was mainly between "a small group of motivated, progressive individuals and a large majority of very conservative lecturers and administrators" (Proctor, 1990:78). But in the end, the "small group of progressives", with the overt support of the National History Subject Panel and the government, won the battle for the reform of the history curriculum. Consequently, History Syllabus 2166 produced in 1990 had strong Marxist and nationalist inclinations, reflecting the ideology of scientific socialism which the government believed in (then) and the agenda of a single unified nation-state it sought to create. History Syllabus 2166 was rolled out in schools in January 1990.

In terms of teaching methods, Syllabus 2166 reflected a major shift from the rote learning of the colonial era (Moyo and Moyo, 2011:306). Inquiry-based learning was the main teaching strategy recommended by this syllabus as students were exposed to multiple primary and

secondary sources of evidence which they interpreted, analysed and evaluated. History Syllabus 2166 stated that; “The involvement of the learner should be regarded as central in approaches to learning. To this end, teaching for this syllabus should involve problem-posing, problem-solving, role play, structured written exercises, and discussion” (Ministry of Education and Culture, 1990:5).

However, the progressive learner-centred methods recommended in Syllabus 2166 were only tried by a few history teachers as most of them continued to chalk-and-talk. Taruvinga (1997:36) explains why the 1990 history curriculum reforms were unsuccessful: “Teachers were not familiar with the ideological and pedagogical orientation demanded by the new history syllabus. The new syllabus had the effect of deskilling the teachers. Teachers felt threatened and uncomfortable and this led to some resistance.” Taruvinga’s analysis reflects themes that keep recurring in literature on reform implementation in both the developed and developing countries: teachers cannot reform their teaching practices when they cannot make sense of the change process and lack content-knowledge and skills on the new ideas (Fullan 2000b; McLaughlin, 2001; Ganon-Shilon & Schechter, 2017). In 2002, without any consultation or deliberations, Syllabus 2166 was hastily removed from the curriculum and replaced by Syllabus 2167. The reason why the government made this abrupt (and retrogressive) change has remained a bone of contention among curriculum reform scholars in Zimbabwe.

2.8.3 Complicating the reform implementation debate: the second wave of reform

Government intentions in removing Syllabus 2166, which encouraged critical thinking, and replacing it with a factual narrative history curriculum (Syllabus 2167) in 2003 have been questioned by both progressive and conservative historians. These motives can only be understood against the backdrop of a declining economy, political violence and social unrest triggered by the farm invasions of the post-1999 period and the fast-track land reforms. Cornered by growing opposition and a declining economy, the ZANU (PF) government sought to use secondary school history to drum up political support. Syllabus 2167 sought to glorify and romanticise Zimbabwe’s liberation struggle and the quest for economic emancipation while demonising whites and the western capitalist countries. One history teacher interviewed by Barnes (2007:635) remarked that, “People have to be forced to be proud about the role

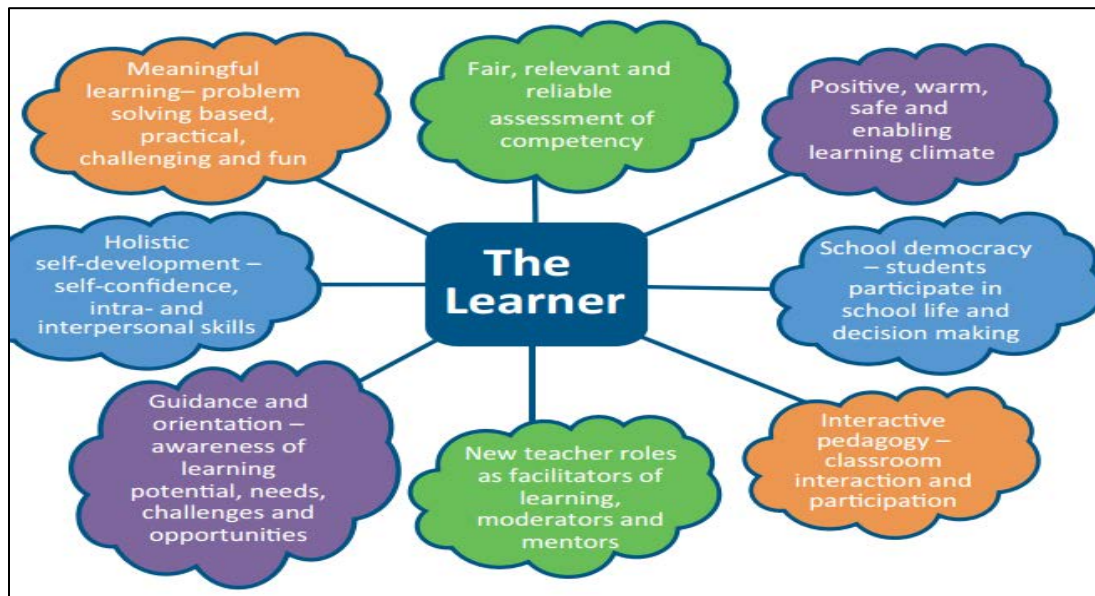
played by the ruling party. They have to be made to be grateful and history has to play its role.” Ranger (2004:215) calls the 2002 history curriculum “patriotic history” because it ostensibly championed the African cause for economic liberation as a logical step in the nationalist struggle for total emancipation. But some teachers in Harare saw Syllabus 2167 as “boring national propaganda” and “a cheap propaganda tool” (Barnes, 2007:645).

The introduction of Syllabus 2167 made the few teachers who had started reforming their teaching practice towards learner-centred pedagogy revert back to the rote practices of dictating and/or writing notes on the chalkboard. Students could now pass the history examinations by simply reproducing the teachers’ notes – something they could not do with Syllabus 2166. Barnes (2007:649) accurately observes that, “A critic might well claim that syllabus 2167 amounted to a return to the no-debate, rote learning and ruling-class-glorification styles of the Rhodesian-era textbooks of the 1970s.” It is difficult to disagree with Barnes because the introduction of Syllabus 2167 (and the removal of Syllabus 2166) reversed the progressive gains that had been made towards inquiry-based learning in Zimbabwe, in an effort to reduce criticism and garner support for the declining Mugabe regime.

2.8.4 The reform implementation dilemma continues: the third wave of reform

The new History Syllabus 4044 was introduced in January 2017 at Form 3 level as part of the nationwide comprehensive reform of the secondary school curriculum in Zimbabwe. The Curriculum Framework for Primary and Secondary Education 2015-2022 (2015:41) places the learner at the centre of the teaching-learning process as illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 1: The learner at the centre of learning and teaching



Source: MOPSE (2015:41) Curriculum Framework for Primary and Secondary Education 2015-2022

The new History Syllabus 4044 also states that: “The teaching of History will be accomplished through the use of the following learner-centred and multi-sensory approaches: games and quizzes, simulation, video and film shows, educational tours, case study, group discussion, discovery, research, debate, role play, projects, folklore and e-learning” (CDTS, 2015:2). Thus, the new history curriculum reform policy encourages teachers to use multi-sensory learner-centred approaches, just like the two previous history syllabuses 2166 and 2167 which had also encouraged progressive inquiry-based learning. And this is where the history curriculum reform problem in Zimbabwe is anchored: why keep on reforming curriculum policy “again, again and again?” to borrow Cuban’s (1990:3) thesis. Reforming policy several times is an indicator that earlier attempts to change classroom practice were unsuccessful. Cuban (1990:5) advises that, “The return of school reforms suggests that the reforms have failed to remove the problems they were intended to solve.” My study sought to find out how history teachers made sense of the 2017 curriculum reforms and how they were constructing (and deconstructing) their classroom practice towards learner-centered pedagogy as demanded by reform policy.

2.8.5 Methodological and knowledge gaps

In reviewing implementation research carried out in Zimbabwe, I identified some gaps in the research methodologies the researchers used to gather their data. Moyo (2014:1) used “content analysis” of published research to examine the ways in which History Syllabi 2166 and 2167 were used for nation-state building. A study by Mapetere (2013:134) “employed the literature review methodology to examine the concept ‘New History’ and its significance to classroom practice.” Like Moyo, Mapetere did not go into the classroom to find out how history teachers were reforming their practices to suit the demands of the ‘new history’ concept. Moyo and Modiba (2013:3-4) used content analysis as the main strategy to examine the reform policy documents for History Syllabus 2166 and 2167. Matereke (2011:1) reviewed existing literature on history curriculum reforms in Zimbabwe but did not conduct any fieldwork. Chitate (2005:1) used “qualitative retrospective analysis”, a sophisticated term meaning collecting data from published documents, to examine the implementation problems associated with Syllabus 2166. Earlier on, Taruvinga (1997:35) had used library based research to explore “the crisis of “O” Level History in Zimbabwe”. All these studies found out that the traditional teacher-centred approaches still dominate history teaching in Zimbabwean secondary schools. None of these studies employed the case study design and non-participatory observation techniques which required prolonged engagement with teachers and students in the classroom.

There were also gaps in the knowledge generated in previous studies. To the best of my knowledge, no case study or multiple case studies have been carried out in Zimbabwe to study how history teachers interpret and understand reform policy, and construct their teaching practices to meet policy requirements. My study sought to fill the knowledge and methodological gaps in existing research by using the multiple case study design. The multiple case design afforded me the opportunity for prolonged face-to-face interaction with the teacher and his/her class. This enabled me to gain in-depth insights into how the teachers understood reform policy and were reforming classroom practice, or failing to do so, in the process of implementing the new history curriculum. Practice based research on curriculum reform implementation is still in its infancy in Zimbabwe. Thus, my study contributes to the growing body of knowledge in this emerging area of study.

2.9 SUMMARY

Research by various scholars (Fullan, 1977, 1992, 2000; Cuban, 1984, 1990, 2006; McLaughlin, 1987, 1990, 1998, 2001; Cohen, 1990, 2000, 2007; Spillane, 1999, 2000, 2002; Coburn, 2006, Drake, 2006; Westhoff, 2012; Burley, 2012; Reese, 2013; Schul 2015) has shown that despite all the reforms advocating for learner-centred pedagogy in the western world, most teachers have continued to use traditional teacher-centred practices. This shows that curriculum reform implementation is a complex, controversial, difficult and frustrating process which makes it difficult to close the gap between what reformers want to see happening in classrooms (policy) and what actually happens (practice). Failure to implement reform policy means that the problems the reform was supposed to solve remain unresolved, making it necessary to initiate another set of reforms (which may also miss the target); triggering off an endless cycle of reforms.

I used the theoretical framework of sense-making as the lens for exploring how history teachers interpreted and understood the 2017 curriculum reform policy, and how their understanding of policy influenced (or failed to influence) their teaching practices. The repeated interactions between the teacher and the reform policy documents, the teacher's interpretation of reform policy and selection of teaching methods, made sense-making a useful theoretical lens for exploring why reform implementation remains difficult and differs from school to school, and from one teacher to the other.

Curriculum reformers in post-colonial Botswana, Zambia, Malawi, South Africa, Lesotho and Zimbabwe adopted learner-centred curricula, not only for the cognitive benefit of the learners, but also for the democratisation of decision-making in the classroom and wider society (Jansen, 2002, Jansen & Taylor, 2003; Mkandawire, 2010; Mosothwane, 2014; Chirwa & Naidoo, 2014; Raselimo & Mahao, 2015). Despite the official adoption of learner-centred curriculum as official instructional policy, available literature shows that classroom practice in these countries has largely remained teacher-centred, except for geography teaching in Lesotho (Raselimo & Wilmot, 2013:10).

Literature on the history curriculum reforms in Zimbabwe (Taruvunga, 1997; Chitate, 2005; Moyo & Moyo, 2011; Matereke, 2011; Mapetere, 2013; Moyo, 2014) focused on the motives,

challenges and controversies of changing from a colonial to a post-colonial historiography which resulted in the rolling out of Syllabuses 2166 and 2167 in 1990 and 2003, respectively. Most of these studies were based on library research which did not involve fieldwork in the classroom. Reform implementation studies involving classroom based research, and how teachers understand reform policy and construct their teaching methods during periods of comprehensive curriculum reform are still in their formative stages in Zimbabwe. My study contributes to the rather shallow body of knowledge on the reform implementation problem in Zimbabwe and how teachers' understanding of reform policy influences and shapes their patterns of classroom practice.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes the methodology I adopted to gather evidence that addresses the main research and sub-questions on how history curriculum reform policy guidelines shape and help to explain the history teachers' patterns of classroom practice in Zimbabwean secondary schools. The research paradigm, research design, study population, sampling procedures and data collection instruments that provide the evidentiary base for this study are discussed. A justification for their selection is given in relation to the aims and objectives of this study. Issues of credibility and dependability, data analysis and interpretation, as well as ethical considerations are also examined.

3.2 RESEARCH PARADIGM

This study on classroom practice and reform policy implementation is conceived within the constructivist research paradigm. Constructivism was selected as the philosophical perspective (as opposed to a theoretical framework) for viewing classroom practice because it accepts “the complexity of ideas rather than narrowing meanings to a few categories of ideas” (Creswell, 2013:8). Karl Mannheim (1893-1947), a pioneer of constructivist thinking, argued that all ideas are products of their time and all our knowledge of the world involves constructs we create as we interact with the environment and other people (Flick, 2014:76). Constructivists argue that there is no objective knowledge, truth and reality which can stand independent of the creators, contexts and situations in which they are created.

It is a pedagogical truism that no school, class or teacher is identical to another; and so classroom practice and response to reform are likely to vary from one teacher to another, from class to class and from school to school. The setting and context of the research (where, when, how, with who and why) are very important for constructivists because they believe that truth and reality are not universal but are situational and contextual (Gall, Gall & Borg, 2007:456-7). Classroom practice and curriculum reform, therefore, are multi-dimensional and multi-layered concepts. This makes constructivist assumptions that reality is multiple and knowledge is divergent, fluid and dynamic appropriate lens for exploring teaching practice and reform policy implementation. In this study, there was no manipulation or interference with the

classroom setting, teachers, students and lesson delivery. I observed history teachers conducting lessons in the classroom following their normal timetable without interfering with their daily practices. I did not start my multiple case research with any theory or hypotheses which I needed to prove true or false because constructivists do not start by proposing a theory which the study will approve or disapprove (Chisaka, 2013:10). Rather, I started my study by asking a major research question: How do history curriculum reform policy guidelines in Zimbabwe shape and help to explain the secondary teachers' patterns of classroom practices?

Ponelis (2015:537) advises that in constructivist research, theories must emerge from the 'ground', that is, from what the researcher observes and experiences in the classroom and not some pre-conceived hypothesis. In answering the major and sub- research questions, I looked out for themes and patterns on how teachers were constructing meaning of reform policy and conducting their lessons in response to curriculum reform policy. It is from these themes and patterns that I drew conclusions on history teachers' sense-making of reform policy and the methods they were using during the early phase of implementing the new history curriculum. From these conclusions, I generated some 'theory' on how secondary school history teachers were constructing their classroom practices in response to the curriculum reforms they started implementing in January 2017.

3.3 RESEARCH APPROACH

This study followed the qualitative research approach. Qualitative research focuses on contexts without seeking objective and universal explanations on why, in the case of my research, teachers engage in certain behaviours and classroom practices, or not. Anderson (2010:1) advises that; "Qualitative research involves the collection, analysis, and interpretation of data that are not easily reduced to numbers. These data relate to the social world and the concepts and behaviours of people within it." The qualitative approach was appropriate for exploring how individual teachers were making sense of reform policy and transforming their practices in response to the policy directives they started implementing in January 2017. This study relies heavily on narrative accounts, thick descriptions and interpretation to make sense of the teachers' behaviours and responses from the interviews, lesson observations and teaching documents. Qualitative research seeks "to grasp the

meaning that events, situations, experiences and actions have for participants in the study, which is part of the reality that researchers want to understand” (Gall et al., 2007:456).

The qualitative research approach enabled me to study history teachers in their “natural settings” – the school and the classroom. I immersed myself in the history classroom and examined the school and classroom contexts within which each teacher was operating, and how these contexts influenced the teacher’s choice of teaching methods. Ponelis (2015:541) advises that, “the qualitative researcher attempts to make sense and interpret the phenomena in terms of the meaning the participants place on them. Qualitative research often relies on total immersion in a setting.” Teachers’ instructional practices are better understood when studied in the classroom while the teachers are conducting their lessons and interacting with learners. “Complex educational situations demand complex understanding; thus, the scope of educational research can be extended by the use of qualitative methods,” argues Anderson (2010:2).

I spent eight weeks in the schools and classrooms interacting with the teachers, observing their lessons and interviewing them on the curriculum reforms they started implementing in January 2017. Minichello and Kottler (2010:12) stress that “...qualitative researchers observe people in their natural setting so that they can learn from them about what they are thinking, and more importantly, why they think and act the way they do.” I used naturalistic inquiry to study teachers in the classroom so that credible and transferrable data could be gathered on how teachers understood reform policy and were implementing it.

The qualitative approach does not claim to provide simple and complete answers to complex educational phenomena like classroom practice and curriculum reform. Rather, it recognises the complexity and multi-dimensional nature of educational reform. Leedy and Ormrod (2013:139) point out that; “Qualitative researchers rarely try to simplify what they observe. Instead, they recognise that the issue they are studying has many dimensions and layers, and they try to portray it in its multifaceted form.” My qualitative study appreciates that there are no easy explanations as to why history teachers may find it difficult to reform their classroom practices once they have developed particular instructional cultures. The use of in-depth

interviews, lesson observations and document analysis enabled me to study classroom practice from a variety of perspectives and triangulate the data obtained. Triangulation increased the trustworthiness and transferability of the findings and conclusions drawn from this qualitative study.

3.4 RESEARCH DESIGN

The qualitative research design selected for this thesis is the multiple case study which focuses on participants as separate individuals rather than as groups. Creswell (2013:14) observes that, "Case studies are a design of inquiry ... in which the researcher develops an in-depth analysis of a case, often a program, event, activity, process, or one or more individuals." In this multiple case study, I studied four history teachers, each as a separate entity, and made an intra-case analysis. After the case- by-case analysis, I cross-examined the four cases in search of commonalities and differences in how the teachers made sense of reform policy and its implementation at classroom level. Arguing in favour of the multiple case design, Campbell (1975) (quoted in Cohen et al., 2011:291) suggests that, "having two cases, for comparative purposes, is more than worth having double the amount of data on a single case study!" Using the multiple case design, I observed common and divergent practices on teachers' patterns of classroom practice. I got a deeper, richer and more realistic explanation from the teachers on how they understood reform policy and why they were finding it difficult, or not so difficult, to change their teaching practices towards learner-centred pedagogy as required by policy.

Four history teachers were studied as cases, one teacher from each of the four selected secondary schools. The number of cases required in a multiple case study is determined by the complexity of the problem being investigated. Yin (2014:292) advises that, "the more subtle the issue under investigation, the more cases might be required." Creswell (2013:189) also suggests that the common sample size for case studies are four to five cases. I selected four cases for in-depth exploration so that I could develop insights into each teacher's sense-making of policy and how interpretation of policy shapes reform implementation and classroom practice. Cohen et al. (2011:289) explain that, "contexts are unique and dynamic; hence case studies investigate and report the real life, complex, dynamic and unfolding

interactions of events, human relationships and other factors in a unique instance.” I experienced the different school environments and classroom contexts the four teachers were operating in and examined how these could have influenced their practice. I sought to understand, from the teacher’s point of view, the meaning of curriculum reform policy guidelines and how their understanding of reform policy influenced and shaped their teaching practice.

This multiple case study explored and analysed the ‘meanings’ different history teachers attach to curriculum reform policy and the learner-centred methods it advocated for. Observing and interviewing each teacher as a case study, several times over a prolonged period, afforded me the opportunity to experience different classroom contexts and dialogue with the history teachers on the meaning and challenges of implementing policy at classroom level. This multiple case study involved “watching people in their own territory and interacting with them in their own language, on their own terms” (Gall, Gall & Borg, 2007:449). I did not seek to manipulate the teachers or the students, but interacted with them with minimum interference with how they did their work.

In undertaking fieldwork for this multiple case study, I became an essential component of the data collection instruments and procedures. My personal involvement in the data collection process made it possible for me to see, hear and feel for myself how history teachers were interpreting and responding to curriculum reform policy and changing (or failing to change) their classroom practices. In this multiple case study, I studied each of the four teachers over an eight week period. My prolonged stay in each teacher’s classroom was intended to wear off participant reactivity to the researcher’s presence (Cohen et al., (2011: 292) so that the teacher conducts lessons in a ‘natural’ manner, as if I was not there, yielding credible and trustworthy findings which can be transferable to similar contexts.

The major criticism that has been raised against the case study design is its limited generalisability (Leedy &Ormrod, 2013:141). This shortcoming was addressed when this study adopted the multiple case design. By studying four teachers, each as an individual case, I greatly increased the sample size thereby increasing the trustworthiness of the data gathered

and transferability of the findings to similar contexts. The other criticisms raised against the case study are researcher bias and subjectivity because the researcher is the primary data collection instrument (Ponelis, 2015:544). I minimised personal bias and subjectivity in this multiple case study by immersing myself in the research site (the school and classroom setting) for an eight week period so that I could experience the way the teachers taught, reduce researcher reactivity to the setting and wear off the observer effect on participants. Audio recordings of interviews, thick descriptions of numerous lesson observations, rich reflective field notes, data triangulation and pilot studying were also employed to reduce personal bias and subjectivity in the present study.

I found the multiple case study the most appropriate research design mainly because my research was exploratory as it investigated a curriculum reform initiative which is currently underway. My study explored how different history teachers made sense of reform policy and implemented (or did not implement) the teaching methods recommended by the new history curriculum. The phenomenon of curriculum reform implementation, which formed the basic unit of analysis in my study, is still unfolding and was in its first year of implementation when field work for this study was conducted in the Third Term of 2017. The case study made it possible for me to trace how each teacher was creating meaning of policy and how policy was shaping (or failing to shape) classroom practice in the first year of reform.

3.5 RESEARCH SITES

This research was conducted in four secondary schools located in Zitown (pseudonym), a high-density dormitory town located south-east of Harare. The few formally employed residents of this sprawling residential town tend to work in Harare. The majority is unemployed and mostly ekes out a living from informal (and at times illegal) means. As a result, poverty, crime, violence, drugs, prostitution, alcoholism, homelessness and a host of other social vices associated with economic deprivation are part of life in this densely populated residential town. The last official census in 2012 placed the population at 356 840, but unofficial estimates place it at well over one million. In terms of population size, Zitown is one of the largest urban settlements in Zimbabwe.

Two government day secondary schools, one mission day secondary school and one trust-run boarding school were purposively sampled for this study from a population of about 13 secondary schools. The four schools were purposively selected on the grounds that they have well established history departments, qualified history teachers, fairly adequate instructional resources and are offering the new History Syllabus 4044 at Form 3 level. These better-resourced schools were selected for this multiple case study because such schools are likely to be more proactive and responsive to curriculum reform initiatives from central government, as compared to their counterparts with fewer resources. I also wanted to concentrate on how teachers interpret and understand reform policy as they implement it, rather than focus on resource shortage as an explanation for teachers' failure to implement reform. Schools that met these selection criteria are regarded as the best secondary schools in Zitown by the residents and the educational authorities in terms of the opportunities to learn they afford learners and their comparatively high pass rates in "O" Level examinations. To ensure anonymity and protect the identity of the schools that participated in this study, the two government day secondary schools were given pseudonyms: Arise and Bridge High Schools; the latter being older and larger than the former. The pseudonym for the mission day school is Delta High and that for the boarding school is Exit High School.

Arise High School is one of the oldest government day secondary schools in Zitown. It was opened in the late 1970s. The school had a high student population of 2 224 and a total of 48 classes from Form 1 to Form 6 in September 2017. The total staff compliment stood at 89 teachers – 56 females and 32 males; there was one vacant post at the time of the study. There were 7 teachers in the history department, six females and one male. All the eight Form 3 classes taking history at Arise High School were being taught by two female teachers when this study was carried out in the Third Term of 2017. Like all the other government schools in this town, Arise High practices 'hot seating' or 'double sessions'. This means that half of the student population (1 112) attends lessons in the morning (from 7am to 12pm) and the other half comes in the afternoon (from 12pm to 5pm). Despite the high enrollment, Arise High is one of the best resourced government high schools in Zitown in terms of qualified staff, textbooks, computers and teaching-learning media.

Bridge High School was established by government in the early 1980s in response to the mass demand for secondary education in post-colonial Zimbabwe. The school also practices hot seating and has a total enrolment of 1 788 students from Form 1 to 6, consisting of 908 girls and 880 boys. The school has a total staff enrolment of 60 teachers comprising 34 females and 26 males. Four ladies and two gentlemen made up the history department. All the eight Form 3 history classes at Bridge High school were being taught by two lady teachers at the time of the study. Instructional resources are fairly adequate as two students share one textbook. Most of the students at this school come from Oldbricks Township, the oldest urban settlement in Zitown, which is densely-populated and poverty-stricken with ultra-high unemployment and crime levels.

Delta High School was founded as a mission station by missionaries in the early part of the 20th century. The school follows the official curriculum from the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education and is supervised by the government curriculum regulatory authorities, although it remains under the authority of the church. Delta High School does not have hot-sitting (so students have more learning hours at school), class sizes are smaller and the school has more teaching-learning resources, compared to the government schools. Delta High had a total enrolment of 1 320 students from Form 1 to Form 6 at the time of the study. It had a total staff compliment of 52, comprising 30 female and 22 male teachers. The history department had four teachers, three males and one female. Delta High is the only school (in my sample of four high schools) which has more male teachers than females in the history department. It was at Delta High School that I was able to purposively sample a male history teacher as a case study for my research because the two Form 3 classes taking history at this school were being taught by the male teacher. The other three cases in my study were female teachers because there were no male teachers taking Form 3 classes at these schools.

Exit High School is different from the other three schools in this study because it is the only boarding school in my sample. The trust-run private boarding school was established after the 1950s and does not admit any day scholars. School authorities are afraid that they may bring in undesirable values and substances like alcohol, cigarettes and drugs into the school.

Student enrolment at Exit High School is very low, as compared to the other secondary schools in Zitown. There were 757 students from Form 1 to 6 when I carried out the study in the Third Term of 2017. Hot sitting has never existed at Exit High School. Instead, because it is a boarding school, many hours are set aside for supervised study. Teaching staff complement stood at 29 teachers – 16 females and 13 males. There were three teachers in the history department, two females and one male. Only one Form 3 class was taking the new History Syllabus 4044 at Exit High School, and this class was taught by a lady teacher. Each student had a history textbook issued by the school and some had supplementary copies bought by their parents. The library is more than adequately resourced with recent publications and internet facilities.

3.6 TARGET POPULATION

History teachers in the secondary schools in Zitown were the target population for this study. Flick (2014:167) views a target population as a group of interest to the researcher “which might be too big to be studied completely”, but to which the results of a study can be generalised. The total target population in the 13 secondary schools in this study was 65 history teachers. It was from this target population that I purposively sampled four history teachers from four different schools for in-depth study as multiple case studies.

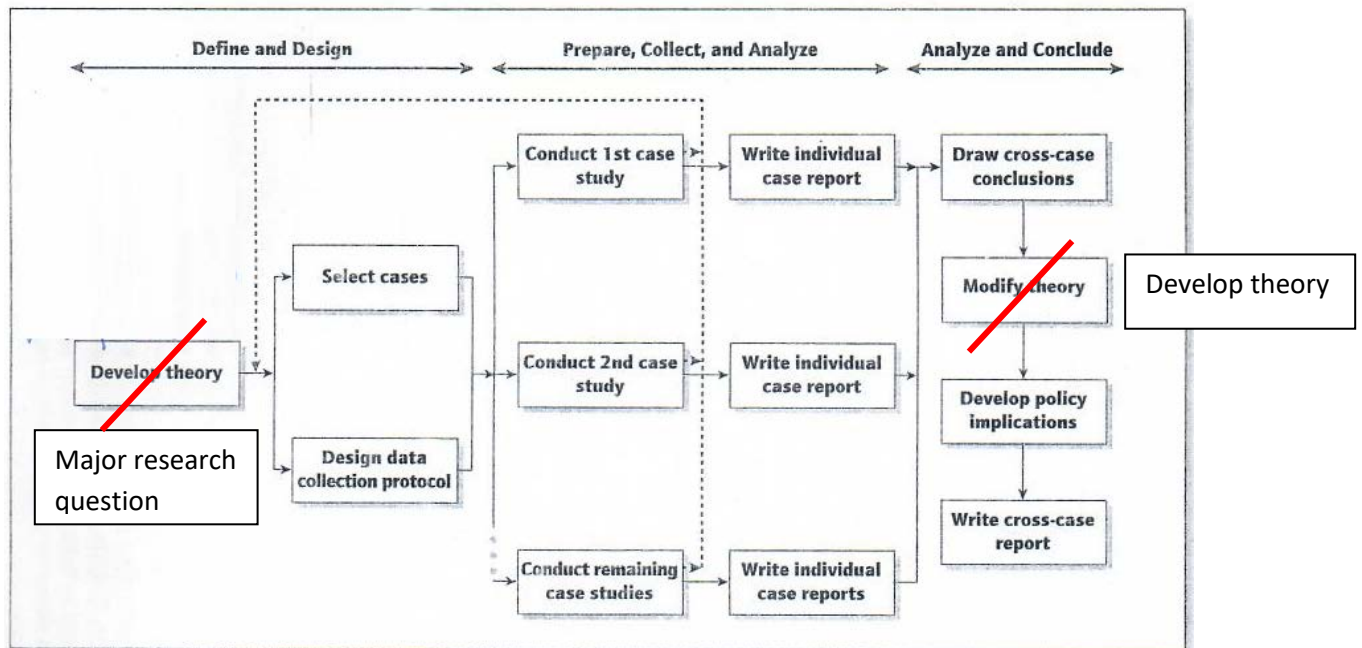
3.7 SAMPLING PROCEDURES

Although a number of sampling techniques are available to researchers, of particular interest to qualitative researchers is purposive sampling. Purposive sampling was used to select the schools and the history teachers who were to participate directly in my research. Out of a total of 13 targeted secondary schools, four were sampled on the grounds that they had well established history departments, qualified and experienced history teachers, adequate instructional resources and were offering the new History Syllabus 4044 at Form 3 level.

Four history teachers were sampled, one from each of the selected schools. The intention was to select teachers with high content knowledge in history, history pedagogy, and experience in teaching secondary school history. The logic and strength of purposive

sampling is to select “information rich cases” for in-depth study (Patton, 2002:230). I therefore purposively sampled history teachers with a minimum qualification of either a Bachelor of Education Degree in History, or a Bachelor of Arts Degree in History and a Post-Graduate Diploma in Education. The other considerations were that: these teachers had more than five years’ experience in the history classroom; were teaching the new History Syllabus 4044 at Form 3 level; and were willing to participate voluntarily in this study over an eight-week period. By virtue of their professional qualifications and experience, I expected these teachers to have adequate pedagogical content knowledge to try out different learner-centered strategies as recommended by the new history curriculum. Carl (2005:224) observes that experienced teachers are “capable of giving an informed opinion” on curriculum change and teaching practice by virtue of what they have done and seen in the classroom, compared with their inexperienced counterparts. The four history teachers were studied using the multiple case study procedure as suggested by Yin (2014: 60) in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Multiple-case study procedure



Source: Yin (2014:60) Modified by researcher

My study followed Yin’s (2014:60) multiple case study procedure, with minor modifications, as illustrated in Figure 2. The minor deviation from Yin’s model is that my multiple case study did not start by developing a theory; instead it started by asking a major research question:

How do history curriculum reform policy guidelines in Zimbabwe shape and help to explain the secondary teachers' patterns of classroom practices? To answer this major research question, four case studies were selected, instruments developed, data collected, coded and analysed using the case by case narrative and (later) cross-case analysis. The findings were then enfolded with existing literature so that conclusions could be drawn and theory developed from the cross-case conclusions.

3.8 RESEARCHER'S ROLE

In this multiple case study, my role as the researcher was not only central, but multi-faceted. I personally collected data for this study by interviewing the history teachers several times, observing their lessons, examining curriculum policy documents and compiling reflective memos during fieldwork.

I held pre-observation interviews with each of the four teachers who were my case studies. The purpose of the pre-observation interview (**Appendix A**) was to find out how each teacher interpreted and understood the reform policy signals and how these policy directives were influencing their teaching methods. What meaning did the teachers attach to the teaching methods recommended in the new history curriculum? Intermittent interviews (**Appendix B**) were held with each teacher after four weeks of lesson observations. Exit interviews (**Appendix C**) took place at the end of the eight week fieldwork period to dialogue on how teachers were interpreting and implementing policy, and closing (or opening) the gap between policy and classroom practice.

The non-participant observer technique was adopted in this study. I observed the four history teachers as they taught, without participating in the lessons. I noted down my observations on the lesson observation grid (**Appendix E**) as the lesson unfolded. My knowledge and experience as a history teacher and lecturer prepared me for the complexity and fluidity of lesson observations in secondary school history classrooms. I had 10 years' experience as a secondary school history teacher before joining teacher education in 2000. As a history and curriculum studies lecturer in teacher preparation colleges for the past 18 years, I have carried out numerous lesson observations in varied classroom settings, gaining valuable experience

which I used in doing fieldwork for this study. I intended to observe 16 history lessons from each of the four case studies over an eight week period.

I also analysed official documents using the document analysis protocol (**Appendix D**) which I developed for the purposes of this study. Six key types of documents were analysed, which are: New Curriculum Framework for Primary and Secondary Education 2015-2022; History Syllabuses 2166, 2167 and 4044; Continuous Assessment Implementation Guidelines for Schools; Continuous Assessment Task 1; New Curriculum Review Symposium (NCRS) Report and teachers' schemes of work. The intention was to obtain official information on the new history curriculum and how its initiators expected it to be implemented at school and classroom levels.

Critics of qualitative research see the researcher's direct involvement in the data collection process as undue influence on participants which may compromise the trustworthiness of the data gathered. Creswell (2013:186) points out that the researcher's background influences the direction of most qualitative studies bringing in problems of bias and subjectivity. To reduce this personal bias and subjectivity, I piloted tested my data collection instruments for dependability and spent eight weeks observing the teachers in the classrooms. I also held three in-depths interviews with each teacher and used data triangulation to get credible and transferable data on how teachers were making sense of reform policy and responding to curriculum reform guidelines.

3.9 DATA COLLECTION STRATEGIES

Four main strategies were used to gather data in this multiple case study. These are policy/document analysis, in-depth interviews, lesson observations and fieldwork memos. A summary of the data collection process for this study is given in Table 1.

Table 1: Data collection process in this study

SUB-RESEARCH QUESTION	DATA COLLECTION STRATEGIES	DATA SOURCE	ANALYSIS PROCEDURE
1. How do history teachers make sense of the curriculum reform policies that guide their teaching practice in Zimbabwean secondary schools?	-Policy analysis -In-depth interviews -Document analysis -Fieldwork memos -Lesson observations	-National syllabus -Assessment task projects -Schemes of work -History teachers	-Content analysis -Interpretive analysis
2. What are the characteristics and patterns of history teaching in some of Zimbabwe's secondary schools?	-Lesson observations -Document analysis -In-depth interviews -Fieldwork memos	-History lessons -Schemes of work -History teachers	-Interpretation -Thematic aggregation -Data coding -Content analysis -Interpretive analysis -Data triangulation
3. What are the relations between curriculum reform policy and history classroom pedagogy, if at all?	-Policy analysis -Document analysis -Lesson observations -In-depth interviews -Fieldwork memos	-National syllabus -Schemes of work -History lessons -History teachers	-Interpretation -Thematic aggregation -Data coding -Content analysis -Interpretive analysis -Data triangulation

3.9.1 Document analysis

I started the process of analysing policy documents long before the formal data collection procedures commenced in the schools and the classrooms. I started curriculum policy analysis at the inception of this study as I struggled to formulate the problem statement and prepare the research proposal. Since then I have examined a variety of documents in an iterative manner at the various stages of this research. Wolff (2004:284) defines documents as “*standardized artifacts*, in so far as they typically occur in particular *formats*: as notes, case reports, contracts, drafts, death certificates, remarks, diaries, statistics, annual reports, certificates, judgements, letters or expert opinions.” If there is no standardised format (an agreed and accepted way of writing) in the written artifact, the artifact may not be considered an authentic document and, therefore, may not be used for academic purposes. In my study, the standardised documents that I analysed were: (i) Curriculum Framework for Primary and Secondary Education 2015-2022; (ii) History Syllabuses 2166, 2167 and 4044; (iii) Schemes of work; (iv) Continuous Assessment Implementation Guidelines for Schools; (v) Continuous Assessment Task 1; and (vi) New Curriculum Review Symposium Report.

Document analysis had three main intentions. Firstly, to examine the assumptions and teaching methodologies recommended for use by the official curriculum reform policy. Secondly, to identify the teaching methods the history teachers planned to use in their lessons (as reflected in their schemes of work) and assess whether these were compliant with the official curriculum reform policy. Thirdly, to observe whether the methods the history teachers selected in their schemes of work were the ones they actually used in their lessons. Yin (2014:106) points out that one advantage of using document analysis is that it is an “unobtrusive source of data” whose accuracy and reliability can be counted on because the documents were not produced at the researcher’s initiative, and so they are likely to contain authentic data. Creswell (2013:192) also observes that documents are a “stable” source of data as they are “time convenient to the researcher” because they are physically available. This means that I can revisit and re-analyse the documents to clarify any grey areas, or gain further insights whenever necessary.

The initial document analysis stage involved a study of History Syllabuses 2166, 2167 and the new History Syllabus 4044, and related official curriculum reform paraphernalia, using a document analysis protocol (**Appendix D**) which I developed for the purposes of this research. A critical appraisal of the syllabuses was made in an effort to understand the aims and objectives of each syllabus, the recommended teaching methods and assessment procedures the teachers were/are expected to use in their lessons. These syllabuses (and related documents) were produced by the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education and its arms – the Curriculum Development and Technical Services unit (formerly the CDU); and the Zimbabwe Schools Examinations Council (ZIMSEC).

The second document analysis phase took place at the beginning of fieldwork in the schools in September 2017. I kindly asked for the teachers’ schemes of work. In Zimbabwe the scheme of work is a document teachers produce as they interpret the national syllabus and break it down into weekly lesson units. The scheme of work is one official document in which the teachers try to make sense of policy requirements as they interpret what the syllabus means (to them) and breakdown the content into teachable units. An analysis of the schemes of work showed me the objectives teachers set for each week’s lessons and the teaching methods the teachers planned to use in the various lessons. This document analysis made

it possible for me to assess whether the teachers were adopting the objectives and teaching methods recommended in the new History Syllabus 4044 in particular, and the New Curriculum Framework in general.

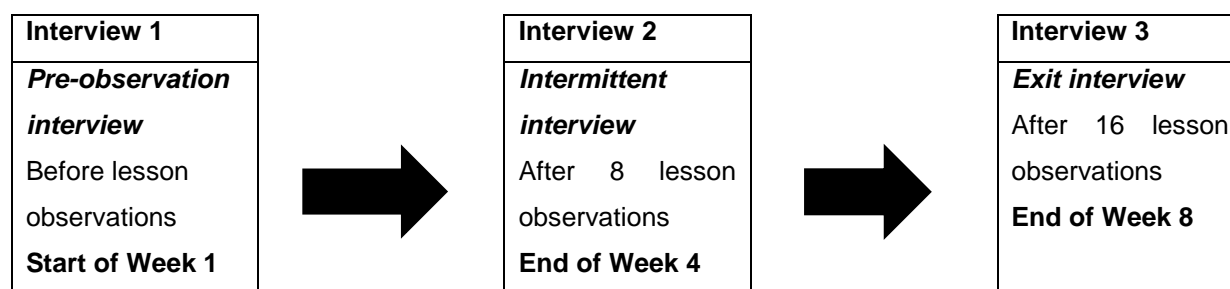
3.9.2 Semi-structured interviews

Three semi-structured interviews were held and audio-recorded with each of the four secondary school history teachers studied as a case in this multiple case study. A pre-observation interview (**Appendix A**) was held with each teacher before the beginning of lesson observations. This was followed by an intermittent interview (**Appendix B**) which I held after four weeks of observations. The third and last interview was the exit interview (**Appendix C**) which was held at the end of the 8 week fieldwork period. These interviews were conducted between mid-September and mid-November 2017. Cohen et al. (2011:411) emphasise that, “By providing access to what is inside a person’s head, an interview makes it possible to measure what a person knows (knowledge or information), and what a person likes or dislikes (values and preferences), and what a person thinks (attitudes and beliefs).” Interviews were used so that the teachers could explain their understanding of curriculum reform and explain how policy shaped (or failed to shape) the teaching methods they used in their lessons.

Through interviews I was able to share ideas with history teachers and gain insights into their knowledge on syllabus interpretation, teaching strategies and their feelings and attitudes towards reform in history pedagogy. Cohen et al. (2011:409) view an interview as “an *inter-view*, an interchange of views between two or more people on a topic of mutual interest.” The interviews allowed me to explore the teachers’ views on curriculum reform, their understanding of learner-centred pedagogy, and their justification for the teaching methods they used in their lessons. The purpose of holding the pre-observation interview was to examine the relationship between what reform policy says and what the teachers understood the policy to mean. Existing literature has shown that very often, there is a disjuncture between what policy says and what teachers interpret it to mean (Stoffels, 2004:17). The intermittent interviews interrogated how teachers conducted their lessons over a four week period and how policy signals influenced their choice of teaching methods. The exit interviews were held at the end of the eight week fieldwork period. The third interview explored how each teacher

understood and justified their practice in the first year of reform implementation. Each interview lasted approximately an hour and a total of 15 interviews were held during the eight week fieldwork period. The interview roadmap over the eight week is illustrated in Figure 3.

Figure 3: Interview Roadmap for each history teacher over 8 weeks



Three interviews with each teacher at critical moments during the two month fieldwork period (at the beginning, the middle and the end) afforded me the opportunity to gather comparable (as well as unique) evidence on how history teachers’ instructional practices are shaped by curriculum reform policy, personal background, and the school and classroom contexts. Using a series of three closely sequenced, semi-structured, in-depth interviews with each of the four history teachers, I was able to explore and trace classroom practices beyond the surface/artificial level. During the interview, I closely observed each teacher’s gestures and audio-recorded what the teacher said concerning history curriculum reform policy and its implementation. Using these serialised in-depth interviews, I was able to explore how history teachers were making sense of reform policy in the first year of implementing a new curriculum.

To ensure that the interviews remained focused and thought provoking, I prepared interview protocols (**Appendixes A, B & C**) to guide the three interviews held with each teacher. Leedy and Ormrod (2013:154) advise that, “Novice researchers often have greater success when they prepare a few questions in advance and make sure that all of the questions are addressed at some point during the interview.” Following this advice, three types of interview questions were used. These are the main, follow-up and probing questions (Rubin & Rubin, 2012:116-119). Main questions were higher order questions that required the teachers to reflect on their classroom experiences and express their views and opinions concerning

curriculum reform policy and classroom practice. After the teacher had responded to the main question, I made use of follow-up questions and probes to elicit more detail, depth, examples and clarifications on the issues under discussion. Some of the follow-up and probing questions which I deemed critical were written in small print under the main question so that I could easily refer to them when the need arose.

3.9.3 Interviews and ethics

Participation by the four teachers in this study was purely voluntary. I did not use any form of duress, psychological or otherwise, to make the history teachers participate. It was based on free will and free choice and those who agreed to participate were given consent forms which they signed (**Appendix I**). The teacher's signature on this form is the evidence of informed consent and voluntary participation. Leedy and Ormrod (2013:105) stress that, "...when people are specifically recruited for participation in a study, they should be told the nature of the study to be conducted and given the choice of either participating or not participating. Any participation in a study should be strictly voluntary." I informed each history teacher that they were free to withdraw from the study at any time, with or without giving reasons. The approximately one hour long interviews (**Appendixes A, B & C**) were held with each teacher at his/her school when the teacher was not teaching, but during working hours. Depending on the infrastructure at each school, the interviews were conducted in the history "base room" (storeroom-cum-office), H.O.D's office, an unoccupied classroom, or the school reading garden.

3.9.4 Anonymity and confidentiality

To ensure the anonymity of the sampled schools and the history teachers who were studied as cases, pseudonyms were used to protect their actual identities. All participants in a research involving human beings have the right to privacy and to have their identities protected. The history teachers' identities were protected so that the data gathered in this study does not embarrass or expose them to their supervisory authorities in any way. Leedy and Ormrod (2013:107) caution that the researcher must not share the findings from observations, documents or interviews with the other teachers or administrators at the site as this information may be used against the participant(s). I ensured confidentiality and

anonymity by not sharing my findings with the other teachers at the sites where I carried fieldwork, except the participants.

3.9.5 Lesson observations

Lesson observation is the third strategy that I employed to gather evidence on the methods teachers used in their lessons. In-class non-participatory lesson observation was used to obtain new insights and evidence on how history teachers were conducting their lessons. Magwa and Magwa (2015:83) view observation as “observing behaviour and interactions as they occur but seen through the eyes of the researcher. It is the systematic description of events, behaviours, artefacts in the social setting chosen for the study”. In this multiple case study, the observation technique was “methodologically systematized” (Flick, 2014:308) through the use of a pre-formatted observation grid (**Appendix E**) to yield data which could be categorised into themes to answer the research questions raised in this study.

I developed and pilot tested a structured lesson observation protocol (**Appendix E**) that helped focus and guide my classroom observations. During the pilot study, I used the observation grid to describe the traditional, progressive and reform-oriented strategies each teacher used in each lesson. The history curriculum reform policy, as enunciated in History Syllabus 4044 (CDTS, 2015:2), recommends the use of progressive learner-centred methodologies.

Each teacher was observed twice a week over an eight week period, starting in mid-September and ending in mid-November 2017, giving an expected total of 16 lesson observations per teacher. However, during the actual fieldwork period, the actual number of lessons observed varied from one teacher to another depending on the school context and learners’ attitudes towards school work. I observed a grand total of 47 lessons in this multiple case study, instead of the expected 64 observations, due to unforeseen circumstances in the schools that prevented the lessons from being held. However, the 47 observations enabled me to trace the teachers’ sense-making of reform policy, their patterns of classroom practice and how policy was influencing (or failing to influence) their teaching practices.

I adopted the non-participant observation or complete observer approach. The non-participatory observation technique afforded me the opportunity to concentrate on observing

how teachers were teaching without interfering with the actual teaching-learning process (McMillan and Schumacher, 2010:350). This allowed teachers and students to interact as they normally do in all the other lessons. I concentrated on observing how the lesson unfolded while noting down the key activities the teacher and students engaged in on the observation protocol. “Practically all the senses – seeing, hearing, feeling and smelling – are integrated into observations”, observes Flick (2014:308). Detailed descriptions of the methods and activities used in the lessons were entered on the observation grid with particular attention on how teachers made sense of reform policy, and whether they used traditional rote pedagogy or progressive and reform-oriented practices. I transcribed, organised and word processed my observations on the pre-formatted observation protocol as soon as the lesson was over so as to capture all the minute details while my memory was still fresh. The typed observation protocol was electronically filed and later printed so that it could be coded manually into themes, sub-themes and categories in preparation for later analysis and interpretation.

Except at Exit High School, history lessons at the other three schools were held in the afternoon (between 12:10 and 5:30pm). At the two government schools (Arise & Bridge) all Form 3 classes attended lessons in the afternoon session. At Delta High School there is no hot-seating, but the history teacher deliberately time-tabled his lessons as double periods (35 minutes x 2) in the afternoon starting from 3:10 pm – 4:20 pm on Monday and Tuesday. David, the teacher, explained that he did this so that he could use activity centred methodologies like group work and discussions as he felt that a single 35 minute lesson was not enough for such learning activities. At Exit High (a boarding school) history lessons for Form 3E were held in the morning between 7:30 and 10:00 am. I observed each teacher according to the class timetable. I was able to fit into each teacher’s timetable because I was on leave for the two months I was collecting data (mid-September to mid-November 2017), so I dedicated all my time to this critical activity.

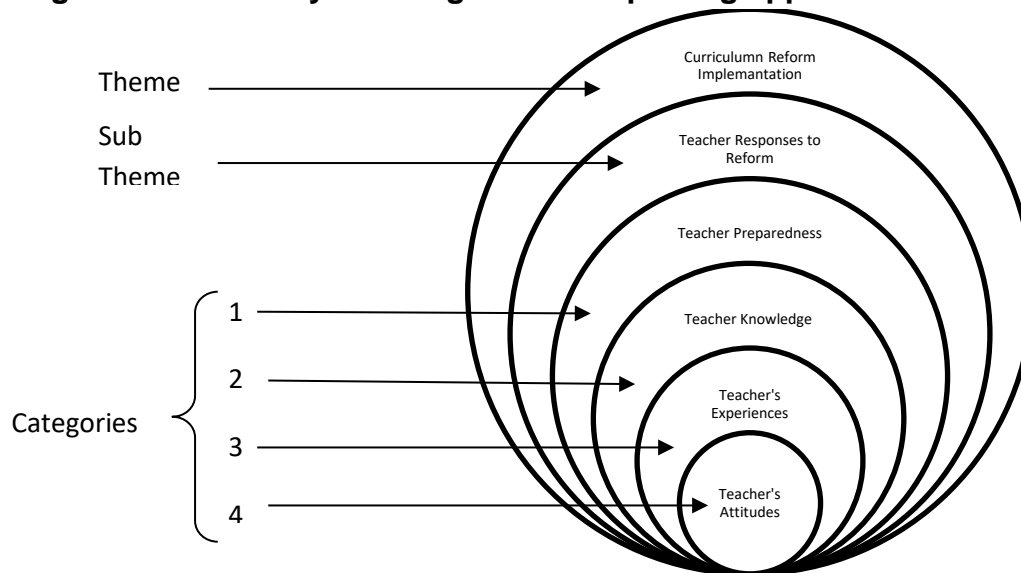
3.10 DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

In this qualitative multiple case study, data analysis was not a terminal or summative process that took place at the end of the data collection process. Once document analysis, interviews and lesson observations started, I began initial data interpretation and analysis by searching

for patterns of practice and emerging themes so that data could be classified into meaningful categories that could be coded. Henning (2004:127) advises that in qualitative studies, data analysis is an evolving process which begins with the data collection phase, continues throughout the fieldwork period, into the post-fieldwork phase until the final research report is produced. The data analysis techniques used in this study include content analysis, interpretive analysis, thematic aggregation, data coding, data triangulation, within-case analysis and cross-case examination.

Data analysis involved interpreting, organising, arranging and making sense of the huge volumes of data collected from the observations, in-depth interviews, document analysis and fieldwork memos. Bogdan and Biklen (1992:153) conceptualise data analysis as “working with data, organizing them, breaking them into manageable units, synthesizing them, searching for patterns, discovering what is important and what is to be learned, and deciding what you will tell others.” Data analyses enabled me to identify and trace patterns of classroom practice and pick out emerging themes on reform policy implementation. Creswell (2013:195) uses the analogy of an onion to illustrate how data analysis takes place: “It involves segmenting and taking apart the data (like peeling back the layers of an onion) as well as putting it back together.” For instance, in my study, Theme 3: ‘Curriculum Reform Implementation’, was segmented into three sub-themes: Teachers’ response to reform; Surface dimensions of practice; and Reform-oriented practices. Using Creswell’s analogy of the onion, I peeled the sub-theme ‘Teachers’ response to reform’ into the following rings (categories): Teacher preparedness; Teachers’ reactions; Teachers’ experiences, and Teacher attitudes. This is illustrated using the structure of an onion in Figure 4.

Figure 4: Data analysis using the onion peeling approach



Source: Idea is from Creswell (2013:195). Illustration created by the researcher.

The processes of data collection and analysis were cyclical and iterative in my study. They involved forward and backward movements between collecting and analysing the evidence. Once the pre-observation interview was held, it was immediately transcribed, printed out and manually filed in preparation for coding and further analysis. I would then go into the classroom to observe lessons and bring back more data which I transcribed and made some initial analysis on before electronic filing. Intermittent interviews were held after four weeks of lesson observations and more lessons were observed after this 'half-way' interview. The processes of observing lessons, transcribing, analysing and filing the observations were repeated back and forth until each of the four teachers was observed not less than 9 times and interviewed three times over the eight week fieldwork period. In my multiple case study, data collection, analysis and interpretation went on at the same time, but the last two processes continued well after the data collection period. From the data collected a narrative for each of the four teachers is woven and an intra-case analysis of the teaching methods each teacher used is made before moving on to the cross-case analysis.

3.10.1 Emerging themes

I collected large volumes of qualitative data from the lesson observations, interviews, document analysis and field notes which I coded according to the themes emerging from my

study. Patton (2002:432) cautions that one of the greatest challenges in qualitative data analysis is making sense of the large amounts of data collected. To create meaning out of the copious data, I had to compact the evidence into themes, sub-themes and categories so that similar data had similar tags. Creswell (2013:195) observes that the purpose of compacting and categorising data “is to aggregate data into a small number of themes, something like four to seven themes,” so that findings can be meaningfully analysed. Data collected in this study was categorised into four emerging themes: making sense of policy guidelines, characteristics and patterns of classroom practice, curriculum reform implementation, and explaining and understanding practice. Sub-themes were generated from the themes and data was scrutinised for underlying trends, patterns and cause-effect relationships. The thematic aggregation of data into sub-themes made it possible for me to code data into meaningful and manageable categories making data analysis systematic.

3.10.2 Data coding

The main themes used for data coding in this study were derived from the research questions and these were decided a priori (before any data was collected). These major themes were also informed by the literature I reviewed. But the sub-themes, categories and codes for my data were decided after the pilot study. The pilot study gave me ‘dummy’ findings which I used to identify sub-themes and smaller categories into which data could be classified and coded for purposes of further analysis. I attached labels (codes) to the data in the policy documents, interview transcripts, lesson observation protocols and fieldwork memos. Newby (2010:467) refers to coding as ‘tagging’ which is attaching a distinct mark to a piece of data so that it can be easily recognised. Cohen et al. (2011:559) define coding as “the ascription of a category label to a piece of data, that is either decided in advance or in response to the data that have been collected.” Similar data had common codes attached to it in line with the themes, sub-themes and categories as dictated by the research questions. Table 2 shows the data codes.

Table 2: Data codes for this study

THEME	SUB-THEME	CATEGORY	CODE
1.Policy Guidelines How do history teachers make sense of the curriculum reform policies that guide their teaching practice in Zimbabwean secondary schools?	Sub-theme 1.1 History National Syllabus 2167	Category 1: Aims & Objectives	POLICY1.1/1
		Category 2: Teaching methods	POLICY 1.1/2
		Category 3: Use of media & ICTs	POLICY 1.1/3
		Category 4: Source materials	POLICY1.1/4
		Category 5: Assessment	POLICY1.1/5
	Sub-theme 1.2 History National Syllabus 4044	Category 1: Aims & Objectives	POLICY1.2/1
		Category 2: Teaching methods	POLICY 1.2/2
		Category 3: Use of media& ICTs	POLICY1.2/3
		Category 4: Source materials	POLICY1.2/4
		Category 5: Assessment	POLICY1.1/5
	Sub-theme1.3 Schemes of work	Category 1: Aims & Objectives	POLICY1.3/1
		Category 2: Teaching methods	POLICY 1.3/2
		Category 3: Use of media& ICTs	POLICY1.3/3
		Category 4: Source based materials	POLICY1.3/4
		Category 5: Assessment	POLICY1.3/5
2.Characteristics and Patterns of Practice What are the characteristics and patterns of history	Sub-theme 2.1 Conventional teaching methods	Category 1: Teacher talk, lower order questions, dictation	METHOD 2.1/1
		Category 2: Note giving, intensive chalkboard use, content centered learning	METHOD 2.1/2

teaching in some of Zimbabwe's secondary schools?	Sub-theme 2.2 Progressive teaching methods	Category 1: Higher order questions, pair work, group work, textbook study, map study, picture study, cartoon study	METHOD 2.2/1	
		Category 2: Presentations, discussion, research based learning	METHOD 2.2/2	
		Category 3: Computer aided learning, film, video, museum trips, local history, projects	METHOD 2.2/3	
	Sub-theme 2.3 Patterns of practice	Category 1: Traditional teaching approach	PATTERN 2.3/1	
		Category 2: Mixed/hybrid methods	PATTERN 2.3/3	
		Category 3: Reform oriented practice	PATTERN 2.3/3	
3. Curriculum Reform Implementation What are the relations between curriculum reform policy and history classroom pedagogy, if at all?	Sub-theme 3.1 Teacher responses to reforms	Category 1: Teacher preparedness	REFORM 3.1/1	
		Category 2: Teachers' reactions	REFORM 3.1/2	
		Category 3: Teacher experiences	REFORM 3.1/3	
		Category 4: Teacher attitudes	REFORM 3.1/4	
	Sub-theme 3.2 Surface dimensions of practice	Category 1: Planned curriculum	REFORM 3.2/1	
		Category 2: Actual curriculum	REFORM 3.2/2	
		Category 3: Obstacles to implementation reform	REFORM 3.2/3	
	Sub-theme 3.3 Reform oriented practices	Category 1: Teacher-student interactions & discourse	REFORM 3.3/1	
		Category 2: Student -student interaction & discourse	REFORM 3.3/2	
		Category 3: Teaching history for understanding	REFORM 3.3/3	
		Category 4: Research projects & continuous assessment tasks	REFORM 3.3/4	
		Category 5: Use of primary & secondary sources of evidence/ source based materials	REFORM 3.3/5	
		Category 6: Teacher opinion on source materials	REFORM 3.3/6	
	4. Understanding and explaining		Category 1: Class size	EXPLAIN 4.1/1

dimensions of practice How can the patterns of practice that characterise history classroom pedagogy be understood and explained?	Sub-theme4.1 Classroom context	Category2: Nature of learners	EXPLAIN 4.1/2
	Sub-theme4.2 Teacher background	Category1: Teacher conceptualisation of reform	EXPLAIN 4.2/1
		Category2: Teacher background	EXPLAIN 4.2/2
	Sub-theme4.3 School based factors	Category1: School setting and size	EXPLAIN4.3/1
		Category2: School administration	EXPLAIN 4.3/2
		Category3: Resource availability	EXPLAIN 4.3/3
	Sub-theme4.4 External pressure	Cateegory1: Exam oriented teaching	EXPLAIN 4.4/1
		Category2: Syllabus coverage	EXPLAIN 4.4/2
	Sub-theme4.5 Teacher self-perception	Category 1: Conservative & traditional	EXPLAIN 4.5/1
		Category 2: Progressive & reformist	EXPLAIN 4.5/2
		Category3: Hybrid: a mixture of conservatism & reformism	EXPLAIN 4.5/3

3.9.3 Data synthesis

Once the data from each case study was coded into the different categories, it was analysed, compared, contrasted and then synthesised, so that patterns of classroom practice could be deciphered, and an exploration made on how these practices are influenced by history curriculum reform policy. “Synthesis is the process of building up separate elements, especially ideas into a connected whole”, advises Schulze (1999) (quoted in Shumba & Zireva, 2013:22). Comparative data analysis and synthesis were carried out to trace commonalities, as well as unique practices, in the way the four history teachers understood reform policy and conducted their lessons. Cross-case synthesis was used to draw conclusions on history teachers’ sense-making of reform policy and how policy was influencing their practice, or failing to do so. The conclusions coming from the cross case synthesis enabled me to support or contradict existing literature on the complexity and

difficulty of reform policy implementation and transformation of traditional teaching practices to learner-centred pedagogy.

3.11 TRUSTWORTHINESS OF THE STUDY

Issues of validity, reliability and generalisability remain controversial in qualitative research. This is mainly because events, processes and activities involving human interactions cannot be repeated in the same manner and with the same results (when the need for verification arises) like in the Natural and Physical Sciences. Ponelis (2015:538) points out that the criteria used to evaluate findings generated from qualitative research differ significantly from those used in quantitative positivist research to the extent that some qualitative researchers are not comfortable with using the terms validity, reliability and generalisability. In this study, I prefer to use the concepts credibility, dependability and transferability to establish the trustworthiness of the findings from my qualitative multiple case study. Credibility refers to how the researcher's portrayal of participants, their views, opinions, feelings, attitudes and practices are in agreement with the participants' perceptions (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2008:23).

Stoffels (2004:67) cautions that qualitative research has a very strong human element and so bias and participant reactivity are real and strong threats to the credibility of these studies. He identifies two main threats which affect all qualitative studies. These are "observer bias" – the influence of the researcher's background on his/her perception of reality; and "observer effect" – the distortion of evidence due to teachers' and pupils' change of behaviour because of the researcher's presence. To minimise bias and subjectivity during data collection and analysis, I employed the following strategies: recognition of my personal biases, prolonged engagement at research sites, use of thick descriptions, member checking, data triangulation and pilot studying.

3.11.1 Researcher's personal biases

I had to reflect on my own personal prejudices, which could openly or saliently permeate my data collection and analysis procedures. "It is important to keep in mind that findings are considered dependable if, among others, the researcher's subjective role is outlined," advises Ponelis (2015:544). Bias and prejudice are subtle, even to those who hold them, and it might be difficult for me to be aware of my own personal biases and subjectivities, but my favourable

disposition towards progressive learner-centred pedagogy is one I am aware of. My professional training as a history teacher, and interest in and preference for progressive learner-centred pedagogy had some subtle influence in the way I perceived and interpreted teachers' actions, behaviours and opinions during in-depth interviews and lesson observations. Although I tried to guard against my personal preference for progressive learner-centred practice as much as possible, it cannot be ruled out that when teachers used learner- and activity-centred approaches I could have judged them more favourably (because I prefer these methods) than when the same teachers used traditional teacher-dominated approaches, which I consider to be less beneficial to learners. It is also possible that I might have (unconsciously) judged harshly the classroom practices of teachers who preferred traditional approaches to history instruction because I consider such methods not only to be inferior to learner-centred practices, but also to be outdated.

3.11.2 Prolonged engagement

Fieldwork for this study was conducted over a two month period starting from mid-September to mid-November 2017. I spent eight consecutive weeks in the schools, observing each of the four teachers conducting lessons twice a week – giving a potential total of 16 lesson observations per teacher. Flick (2014:295) points out that very often researchers spend minimum time possible with the participants at the research site. They are quick to leave once they feel that they have obtained the data they were looking for. This often compromises the credibility and transferability of their findings. I sought to avoid this pitfall by spending eight weeks in the schools and the classrooms observing for myself how history teachers conducted their lessons, interacted with students and implemented curriculum reform policy. First-hand evidence were obtained through interviews, observations and informal discussions, which I used to build an eye-witness account on each case. I interviewed each teacher three times and observed each one of them not less than 9 times. I engaged in many casual conversations with each teacher so that I could get the teacher's sense-making of reform policy and its implementation in the classroom.

Prolonged engagement with the history teachers enabled me to build rapport with them so that they could open up and give their honest opinions on history curriculum reform policy and its implementation. "Trust is important to promote truthful sharing," advises Ponelis

(2015:545). Rapport with the teachers created trust and confidence which provided an opportunity for me to explore classroom practice beyond surface level, and unravel the underlying factors that influence and shape classroom practice in the early stages of reform implementation.

My eight week stay in the schools and classrooms also reduced the 'observer effect' on the teachers and students' behaviours. The observer effect theory suggests that participants in a study are likely to change their behaviours once they realise that they are being observed or interviewed by a 'stranger' (Best & Kahn, 2006:166). The teachers and students were more likely to work and act in a natural manner after becoming familiar with my presence than when they were seeing me in a once-off session. The eight week period I spent with the teachers in the classroom increased the trustworthiness and dependability of the data I gathered.

The observer effect is very similar to the Hawthorne Effect (Best & Kahn, 2006:166). The Hawthorne Effect explains that when participants are aware that they are being studied, they are motivated to perform to the best of their abilities. This means that what the researcher observes in early interactions may not be authentic and genuine everyday practice. But once teachers get used to seeing the researcher in their school and classroom settings they are likely to do their duties in a natural manner, giving the researcher authentic data which can be depended on. I assume that the two months I spent in the schools and classrooms reduced to minimum levels the influences of the observer and the Hawthorne effects on teachers' and students' behaviours and actions, making this study yield credible and dependable findings.

3.11.3 Rich and thick descriptions

Interview transcriptions, completed observation protocols, document analysis summaries and fieldwork memos form the base of the primary evidence that was used to create a detailed account of each case. The teacher's actual words from the in-depth interviews, observation protocols, fieldwork memos and policy analysis helped in constructing thick and rich descriptions on each history teacher's sense-making of policy and experience with curriculum reform implementation in each unique school and classroom setting. "When qualitative researchers provide detailed descriptions of the setting, or offer many perspectives about a theme, the results become more realistic and richer", observes Creswell (2013:202). Audio-

recorded interviews reduced my personal bias and subjectivity in the transcription and interpretation of interview data as I was able to quote the teachers' words verbatim from the taped interviews. I compiled and transcribed reflective memories (as fieldwork memos) at the end of each day which helped in building detailed and rich descriptions of each of the four teachers.

3.11.4 Member checking

To ensure that the data collected was authentic and reliable, I periodically went back to the four teachers to verify with them if the data interpretation and analysis accurately captured their views. Creswell (2013:201) cautions that member checking "does not mean taking back the raw transcripts to check for accuracy." Only at strategic intervals during the data collection and analysis processes would I go back to the history teachers for purposes of member checking. I showed the history teachers their personal profiles, the portrayals of their schools and the major findings of the study so that they could raise queries and objections where necessary. Any misinterpretations or misrepresentations I had made were clarified with the teachers and immediately rectified so that the teachers' classroom practices and interpretations of reform policy were recorded as accurately as possible. The rigorous collection and analysis of data using organised and explained procedures increased the transferability of the findings of this multiple case study to similar situations.

3.11.5 Data triangulation

The use of document analysis, interviews and lesson observations to collect data for this study allowed me to look at classroom practice from different angles and explain why teachers implement reforms the way they do. Ozturk (2012:297) explains that, "Triangulation refers to the application and combination of several research methodologies in the study of the same phenomenon." Data triangulation made it possible for me to capture the different factors that converge to influence and shape classroom practice. These variables include curriculum reform policy, school and classroom based-factors, and teacher background.

Using different instruments to gather evidence on the same issue enabled me to check for authenticity and accuracy on the information collected. Observations, for example, were used to cross-check the credibility of data collected in the pre-observation interviews; and post-

observation interviews authenticated what was observed in a series of lessons. What was observed in the lessons was also compared and contrasted with what was recommended in the policy documents like the syllabuses and the schemes of work. Data collected using one method was subjected to cross examination by evidence from the other methods. This reduced bias and subjectivity and, conversely, increased the dependability of the findings of this multiple case study.

Data triangulation enabled me to seek for data convergence and divergence. Leedy and Ormrod (2013:142) view data convergence as a situation in which separate pieces of information coming from different sources (observations, interviews and documents) all point in the same direction and to the same conclusion. When data converge, it can be assumed that the data gathered and the methods used to collect it were trustworthy and dependable. Data divergence refers to a situation where different pieces of information from observations, interviews and documents point in different or contradicting directions. Ozturk (2012:297) cautions that data divergence as a result of triangulation is not necessarily an indicator of lack of credibility in the methods used, but can be a reflection of diversity of opinion and multiple perspectives. In my study, triangulation came up with commonalities and diversities in the way history teachers understood and implemented reform policy in their classrooms.

3.11.6 Pilot study

To ensure the validity of the data that was to be collected in the main study, the data collection tools were pilot tested in two government day secondary schools. Two female history teachers, who are not part of the sample in the main study, were selected for the pilot study in the two secondary schools. A pilot study is a small study that is carried out before the major fieldwork can be attempted. Leedy and Ormrod (2013:112) view a pilot study as “a brief exploratory investigation to try out particular procedures, measurement instruments, or methods of analysis. A brief pilot study is an excellent way to determine the feasibility of your study.” The pilot study for this research assessed if the questions in the interview protocol conveyed the intended meaning to the history teachers and sought responses which answered the research questions. The lesson observation protocol was pilot tested to see if it captured the teaching methods teachers used in the process of implementing the new

history curriculum and the nature of the interactions that took place between the teacher and the students.

After being granted permission by the school heads to talk to the history teachers, two female history teachers who met my purposive sampling criteria volunteered to participate. The two teachers were qualified history teachers (with at least a degree and diploma in history and pedagogy), had more than five years' teaching experience and were teaching the new curriculum History 4044 at Form 3 level. The observation protocol was found to be a suitable guide for lesson observations as it captured the critical moments in the lessons. The only shortfall in the observation guide was that some methods which the teachers used in the lessons, like pair work, report backs and group presentations, had not been listed on the observation guide. I later revised the observation protocol to include these unanticipated interactions and teaching strategies that the teachers used in the pilot study.

The interview questions were also pilot tested to see if they conveyed the same message to the researcher and the teachers. Some interview questions were found to overlap as they required the same type of responses from the teachers. For instance, the probe question for sub-question 2.1: "In which situation(s) do you use each of these methods?" was found to be similar to Question 2.2: "Why do you use each of these methods?" Consequently, the probe question was used to replace Question 2.2 after the pilot study. Some interview questions were rephrased so that they could encourage teachers to talk more on how they made sense of reform policy. This made the questions more open-ended and discursive. The interview protocol and the observation guide were amended and improved as a result of the pilot study.

A document analysis protocol was also pilot tested to assess if it was suitable for the content analysis of the history syllabi and the teachers' schemes of work. No changes were made to the document analysis protocol as a result of the pilot study as the guide was found to be appropriate for analysing curriculum reform policy documents. The testing of the data collection instruments was in line with Yin's (2014:96) advice that "A pilot study will help you to refine your data collection plans with respect to both the content of the data and the procedures to be followed." The pilot study afforded me the opportunity to improve the research tools so that the inadequacies observed in the pilot study could be rectified before the main fieldwork commenced. From the pilot findings, I was able to identify emerging themes

and sub-themes on teachers' sense-making of reform policy and how it influenced classroom practices. The pilot study helped me sharpen and focus my data collection tools and procedures in preparation for the major fieldwork which started in mid-September and ended in mid-November 2017.

3.12 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethics can be viewed as the expected standards of behaviour that guide the conduct of a person in a particular profession. In education, ethics are the principles of right and wrong that the researcher must respect and adhere to when carrying out research which involves teachers and students (Neuman, 2014: 469). Some of the ethics I had to adhere to in carrying out this research include: seeking permission to carry the study, informed consent, voluntary participation, anonymity, confidentiality, honesty and truthful reporting. Yin (2014:77-78) advises that it is the researcher's duty to protect participants from physical and psychological discomfort like unusual stress, embarrassment or loss of positive self-esteem during observations, interviews or any other activities the researcher and participants may be involved in during and after the data gathering process.

3.12.1 Permission to carry out research

To carry out fieldwork for this study, permission was first sought from the University of the Free State. As a starting point, I submitted a research proposal to the Committee for Title Registration which granted me permission to go on with this study under the agreed title in March 2017. After submitting the initial drafts for Chapters 1, 2 and 3, I worked on the ethics clearance application for this study. This was submitted on the Research Information Management Systems (RIMS) portal in April 2017. I was granted ethical clearance to carry out fieldwork for this study by the Education Ethics Committee of the UFS on 11 May 2017 under Ethical Clearance No. UFS-HSD2017/0523 (**Appendix F**).

Once written permission to carry out the study was granted by the university, I had to apply for permission to carry out fieldwork in secondary schools in Zimbabwe. Permission to carry out research in the four selected secondary schools in Zitown was granted by the Permanent Secretary to the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (MOPSE) on 9 June 2017

(Appendix G). With the Permanent Secretary's letter of permission in hand, I applied to the Provincial Education Director (PED) for Harare Metropolitan Province who is responsible for schools in Zitown. Once the PED's letter of permission was granted **(Appendix H)**, the next port of call down the hierarchy of education administration was the District Schools Inspector (DSI) for Zitown. The DSI rubber stamped the permission for me to go and negotiate with the School Heads for access to the history teachers and their classrooms.

3.12.2 Informed consent and voluntary participation

The school Heads I approached were very accommodative and helpful though some questioned the length of my stay (eight weeks). They said they were used to researchers who collect data over a day or two and leave the school. When I explained that this was a case study involving prolonged engagement with one teacher, they granted me permission to talk to the History HODs who took me to the teachers who met my sampling criteria. After explaining the scope and purpose of my study to the targeted Form 3 history teachers, I asked for a volunteer to be studied as a case at each of the four schools. Each participant was kindly asked to sign a consent form, and the teacher's signature on this form is taken as the evidence of informed consent and voluntary participation **(Appendix I)**.

3.12.3 Honesty and truthful reporting

Telling the truth is one ethical principle all serious researchers must respect, otherwise it does not make much sense to spend time, resources and energy in carrying out a study whose findings will be falsified. In this study, I reported the fieldwork findings as honestly and truthfully as I could interpret and understand them. Creswell (2013:99) warns that suppressing, falsifying or inventing findings is a fraudulent activity which is not taken lightly by the professional research community as it constitutes scientific and ethical misconduct. It is my hope and belief that this study tells each teacher's story as honestly as possible without any exaggeration or falsification. Bogdan and Biklen (1992:54) stress that, "Fabricating data or distorting data is the ultimate sin of a scientist." It is my sincere hope that I did not to commit this cardinal sin during the fieldwork, analysis and write up stages of this thesis.

3.13 SUMMARY

This study adopted the constructivist research paradigm which assumes that truth, knowledge and reality are situational and socially constructed by teachers and learners. The constructivist nature of this study makes it follow the qualitative approach which explores teachers' sense-making of reform policy and their pedagogical practices using thick descriptions and narratives. The multiple case study afforded me the opportunity to observe each teacher's patterns of classroom practice and interpretation of policy over a prolonged period and then do a cross-case analysis. This chapter also identified the study population and gave justification for the use of purposive sampling techniques in my study. To ensure credibility of findings, I studied the four history teachers over a two months period, used data triangulation, rich descriptions and member checking to reduce my personal bias and subjectivity. Chapter four presents a chronicled narrative of how each teacher constructed meaning of the 2017 history curriculum reform policy and implemented the expected changes, or failed to do so.

CHAPTER 4: DATA PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION

4.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents and interprets primary evidence gathered from four history teachers using document analysis, interviews, lesson observations and reflective fieldwork memos. The evidence seeks to explore how the teachers make sense of the 2017 history curriculum reform policy and how they change (or fail to change) their teaching practice to meet policy requirements. The main research question for the study is: How do history curriculum reform policy guidelines in Zimbabwe shape and help to explain the secondary teachers' patterns of classroom practices? As such, the following sub-questions helped in constructing a narrative for each case study:

1. How do history teachers make sense of the curriculum reform policies that guide their teaching practice in Zimbabwean secondary schools?
2. What are the characteristics and patterns of history teaching in some of Zimbabwe's secondary schools?
3. What are the relations between curriculum reform policy and history classroom pedagogy, if at all?
4. How can the patterns of practice that characterise history classroom pedagogy be understood and explained?

Each case is chronicled on how each teacher interpreted and understood history curriculum reform policy, and constructed his/her classroom practice in the first year of implementing the new history curriculum. To ensure anonymity and protect the schools and participants' identities, all the names used in these narratives (and the whole thesis) are pseudonyms created by the researcher for the purposes of this study only.

4.1 CASE STUDY 1: THE STORY OF ANGELA: The computer savvy soul rebel

“I wanted to be a lawyer, a nurse or police officer. I never thought of teaching.”

“We were never consulted; the curriculum was dictated upon us.”

4.1.1 TEACHER BACKGROUND AND CLASSROOM CONTEXT

Introducing Angela

Angela is a 34 year old history teacher with 10 years' experience of teaching in secondary schools. She holds a Master of Science Degree in Development Studies, which she completed in July 2017, and a Bachelor of Arts with Education (B.A.Ed.) Degree in History and Religious Studies from two local universities. As a secondary and high school student, the vibrant, confident, ambitious and assertive Angela aspired to be a lawyer, a nurse or a police officer. “I wanted to be a lawyer, a nurse or police officer. I never thought of teaching”, she explained to me in the intermittent interview.

But she had an early interest in history as an academic subject. “I started enjoying history when I was in Form 3; it was my favourite subject and I would teach other students history ... I actually started teaching history when I was a student,” she told me. She loved history, not because she wanted to become a history teacher, but because she wanted to be a lawyer. Angela's story of how she missed all her occupational dreams sounds like the work of the hands of destiny. After completing her “A” Levels in 2001, Angela could not secure a place to study law at the University of Zimbabwe, which was her first career choice. She then joined the police force as a recruit, but withdrew after one week of training to pursue a nursing opportunity in the UK. Unfortunately, she lost the chance to go to the UK and she was devastated.

Her father remained her pillar of strength and made efforts to secure her a place at Africa University (in Mutare, Zimbabwe). She enrolled for a four year Bachelor of Arts with Education Degree (B.A.Ed.) in August 2002. Though now late, her father remains her source of inspiration and role model. Hard work, self-improvement, and an ambitious lifestyle are some of the traits she said she traces back to her father. After completing her B.A.Ed. in History and Religious Studies in 2006, Angela began her career as a secondary school history teacher in

January 2007, a job she had never aspired to do when she was a secondary and high school student.

An overview of Form 3A

Form 3A is one of the 48 classes at Arise High School, one of the oldest government day secondary school in Zitown which was opened in the late 1970s. The school had a high student population of 2 224 from Form 1 to Form 6, and 89 teachers when this study was conducted in the Third Term of 2017. Half the school attends lessons in the morning from 7am to 12noon. The other half comes in the afternoon from 12:10pm to 5:30pm. When the high volume electric bell goes off at midday, there is shouting, jostling, fussing, laughing, screaming, and stampeding as the morning session comes to an end. Form 3A, like all the other Form 3 and Form 1 classes, was in the afternoon session for the whole of 2017. Form 2s, 4s, Lower and Upper Six classes came in the morning. Form 3A appeared over-crowded with 49 students (20 boys and 29 girls) against the official teacher-student ratio of 1:35 (MOPSE, 2017:2). The students were almost always present during my observations and they appeared a cheerful lot, eager to participate in history lessons, though at times they were rowdy and noisy. The classes at Arise High School are streamed according to ability and the class I am calling Form 3A in my study was the third class (Form 3³) in a string of ten Form 3 classes. The first two classes (Form 3¹ and Form 3²), which are considered the best in terms of academic ability, are not offered history as they do the Sciences, something which Angela was bitter about. "I think history should also be given to the best classes, and not just leave it to the lower streams, because a student who does history would want to be a lawyer and lawyers and doctors are at par," she argued in the intermittent interview.

4.1.2 CONSTRUCTING MEANING OF REFORM POLICY

In the pre-observation interview, we discussed with Angela what the new history curriculum meant to her. She explained that:

It means confusion because one day you are told this, the next day you are told the other thing. You do this and then you are told it's wrong. Up to today [15 September 2017], for example, the curriculum used to be the new curriculum, now it's the updated

curriculum, it's no longer new. So you find people are playing with words so that we accept it. They think if you say new people will reject it. I think this is so because there were no consultations.

Angela saw the curriculum reforms as characterised by confusion and inconsistency, even in the use of terminology associated with the changes. She pointed out that when the reforms started in January 2017, the policy makers were talking about the 'new curriculum'; but somewhere along the way the same authorities started saying that the reforms being implemented do not signify a new curriculum but an "updated curriculum". This was now causing confusion in Angela's mind as she no longer knew whether the reforms were only a change in semantics (language and terminology) or a change in content and substance. Angela felt that the policy makers wanted to cover up for their shortcoming of not consulting teachers by making the false claim that there was nothing really new in the 'new curriculum', but were simply 'updating' what was already there and what the teachers already knew.

The most important reform document

Angela explained to me that the syllabus was the single most important document that conveys reform policy signals to the history teacher. She narrated how the new curriculum policy was introduced into schools in January 2017, as official policy which every school in Zimbabwe had to follow, but without any support materials except the subject syllabuses. This is how she put it:

The national syllabus is the most important document for me because without it you do not know where you are going as a teacher. You are like a ship without its radar. The new curriculum was introduced in January without any resources – no relevant textbooks, no specimen papers, but only the syllabus. The syllabus offered the content we were expected to cover, but the Form 3 textbooks did not have topics like 'Sources of historical evidence' and the 'Slave trade'.

During the pre-observation interview, Angela stressed that when the new curriculum was introduced at the beginning of the year; teachers were not sure of what to do and had to look

for their own resources to teach the new topics. She complained that: “We were not given enough information, we were no trained. But we had to implement the new curriculum as a matter of policy. We only received one workshop and we thought we were going to have in-service training which was thorough and detailed first, but this never came.” It appears that the changes were introduced without adequate teacher consultation and preparation. It was as if the policy makers saw the syllabus as the only reform policy document necessary to bring about changes in the way teachers teach and students learn. Angela explained that with the new History Syllabus 4044 in hand, they had no reason and justification not to scheme for the new curriculum and not to teach it. This is how she put it:

We were told to accept it whether you like it or not ... In fact we were never consulted but the curriculum was dictated upon us. It was just dictated upon us. The school Head, Deputy Head and HODs also insist that the teachers implement the new curriculum as required by the Ministry using the old resources which are already available.

From this conversation, it was apparent that Angela had no choice but to implement the new curriculum, despite her lack of knowledge on it. Failure to implement meant that she could be charged with misconduct and negligence of duty by the internal and external curriculum supervisory authorities. The Secretary’s Circular No.2 of 2017 (dated 03 January 2017) instructs that: “Internal and external supervision shall be undertaken to ensure effective implementation of the New Curriculum. Heads shall ensure that teachers are supervised in line with Teacher Professional Standards (TPS) at least once every month” (MOPSE, 2017:8). The observation that teachers are forced to implement reform policy by internal and external curriculum supervisory authorities is neither new, nor peculiar to Zimbabwe. Most centralised education systems, especially in the developing world, use the top-down approach to disseminate reforms from the centre into schools, and teachers are obliged to implement reforms as a matter of policy, or risk being charged (Zvobgo, 1999:115; Adams and Jean-Marie; 2011:355; Mavhunga, 2014:20; Ganon-Shilon and Schechter, 2017:4).

Knowledge on reforms

Angela complained that, although she started teaching the new history curriculum to her Form 3 classes in January 2017, she did not have adequate knowledge on the changes she was expected to implement. She explained that:

It was too late when we were informed of the new curriculum (Third Term 2016) and the workshops held were just insufficient. In fact we did not learn anything from the workshop mainly because all departments from different subjects were in the same room, whether history, economics, mathematics ... Each subject should have held its own workshop because departmental requirements differ from subject to subject.

Angela was adamant that she did not learn anything new on the new curriculum at the single awareness workshop she attended at the end of 2016. This means that she did not fully understand what the new curriculum was all about when it was rolled out in schools in January 2017. She also queried the logic of the one-size fits all workshop and the quality of the facilitators at the single curriculum reform awareness workshop she attended. Angela was bitter that:

People training us were our fellow teachers who were handpicked and trained for two days only. They were inadequately trained. They could not answer all our questions. If you asked a question you were told 'we don't know', 'we were only told this'. Our recommendations were not taken up because we made them to our fellow teachers who are powerless to influence policy.

Angela complained that most teachers did not have an input into the new history curriculum: "Last year (2016) we were taught on the new curriculum. We were never consulted but the curriculum was dictated upon us. We were told to accept it whether we like it or not." However, the custodians of reform policy, the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education, claimed that they had made extensive nationwide consultations involving teachers and many other stakeholders. The Curriculum Framework for Primary and Secondary Education 2015-2022 (MOPSE, 2015: ii) purported that "there were widespread consultations in which almost a million people (961 000) participated." But, as already discussed, Angela had only attended

one awareness workshop at the end of 2016 which frustrated her expectations as it was poorly organised and did not answer the questions she had concerning the new curriculum she was expected to implement in January 2017.

Knowledge on teaching methods

Interestingly, Angela appeared knowledgeable about the teaching methods advocated for in the new History Syllabus 4044. She eloquently explained that:

The new syllabus requires us to use the internet, interactive boards, white boards, projectors, but all these things are absent. It also encourages learner-centred activities like group work, pair work, presentations, text study and note writing [by students], the use of the cellphone and the internet.

From the interview, Angela's sense-making of instructional policy was in congruence with the policy signals as she emphasised learner-centred methods. History Syllabus 4044 specifically stated that; "The teaching of history will be accomplished through the use of the following learner-centred and multi-sensory approaches: games and quizzes, imitation or simulation, video and film show, educational tours, drama, song and poetry, case study, group discussions, discovery, research, debate, work-related learning, role play, project, resource person, folklore and e-learning" (CDTS, 2015:2).

Angela's scheme showed that the teaching methods she planned to use were not totally compliant with the pedagogical demands of the new history curriculum.

Figure 5: Teaching methods Angela planned to use in Week 3 of her scheme

WEEK ENDING	TOPIC AND CONTENT	OBJECTIVES	COMPETENCES	TEACHING AND LEARNING ACTIVITIES	RESOURCES, MEDIA, REFERENCES	GENERAL EVALUATION
22/09/17 29/09/17	Activities of the Portuguese in the Mutapa	By the end of the lesson learners should be able to: a) list at least 5 Portuguese activities in the Mutapa State b) describe in about 8-10 lines the activities	Listing Describing	It is assumed that pupils know some economic and political activities of the Portuguese Recap of the previous lesson Text study Class discussion Teacher explanation	National Syllabus 2015-2022 Step ahead Book 3 pp.78-79 History of History Book 3 pp.105-106	
	Effects of the Portuguese activities in the Mutapa	a) list at least 5 effects of the Portuguese activities in the b) describe in about 8-10 lines the effects	Listing Describing	It is assumed that pupils know some economic and political effects of the Portuguese activities Class discussion Teacher explanation	National syllabus 2015-2022 Step Ahead book3 pp78-79 History of History Book 3 pp.106-107	

Figure 5 shows that, besides planning to use teacher explanation, Angela also intended to use text study and class discussion. But the only competencies she intended to develop in learners were listing and describing – skills which are wholly dependent on simple recall and rote pedagogy. This evidence shows that Angela did not intend to use most of the teaching methods recommended in Syllabus 4044 (CDTS, 2015:2) like “games and quizzes, simulation, role play, video and film show, educational tours, drama, song, poetry and research.” The absence of these methods in her scheme of work, besides being an indicator of her non-use of them in her classroom practice, may also be a reflection of her lack of knowledge on these methods. The next section continues with Angela’s story with particular attention to the teaching methods she actually used with Form 3A and her compliance, or lack thereof, with policy prescriptions.

4.1.3 TEACHING HISTORY IN FORM 3A

The 13 lessons I observed Angela teaching, the three interviews I held with her, and an analysis of her scheme of work helped me to explore further the teaching methods she planned to use, and those she actually used, in implementing the new history curriculum during the Third Term of 2017.

The initial observation phase

In the first four weeks of the observations, Angela made deliberate efforts to involve students in her lessons. The learner-centred methods she used in her lessons were group work, text study, group presentation and class discussion.

Text study and teacher directed discussion

Below is a glimpse of the teacher directed class discussion that took place in the lesson on 'Early missionary activities in Zimbabwe 1850-1900.' The lesson was presented on a Wednesday afternoon to Form 3A – a class of 29 girls and 20 boys. This was the 4th lesson in a series of six lessons that focused on the origins and growth of the Ndebele state. After introducing the lesson through a question and answer session, Angela referred students to a passage titled "Relations with whites" in Barnes et al. (2010:53). She wrote three questions on the chalkboard and instructed students to do individual text study for five minutes using the questions as a guide. After the text study (which actually took eight minutes) the following discussion emerged between Angela and the students.

Lesson segment 1

T: Why did Robert Moffat want to be a friend of Mzilikazi?

L₁: To spread Christianity, commerce and civilisation

T: Yes, that is what he said, openly. But you must explain that this was the White man's civilisation. Don't just say civilisation because Africans also had their own civilisation. But what was the hidden agenda?

L₂: To spread British imperialism.

T: Very true, and what did Mzilikazi benefit from the friendship? Remember in politics there is no friendship for nothing – you scratch my back I scratch yours.

L₃: Maybe some guns, because he was always involved in fights with other tribes.

L₄: Yes madam, he wanted guns for protection from the Zulu and the Boers.

The discussion went on with Angela making efforts to help students place missionaries within the wider context of European imperialism – the idea of missionaries as forerunners of imperialism and the flag following the Bible. Discussion is one of the learner-centred methods Angela mentioned in her schemes of work and her use of the approach in her lessons reflected her attempts to change classroom practice and adhere to reform policy.

But an analysis of the discussion in Lesson segment 1 shows that students only gave short phrases while the teacher provided much of the explanations. This reflected elements of teacher domination in Angela's struggle to make her lessons learner-centred; what Cohen (1990:323) calls "conservative progressivism." Although Angela made serious attempts to involve learners in the lessons, she still found it difficult to move away from the traditional practice of teacher dominated discussion described by Cuban (2006:794) as "teacher-centred progressivism." As teachers try to reach out for learner centred practices (as required by policy), they always do so using the teacher-centred methods they are used to, making their classroom practices a mixture of the old and the new.

Group work

In the initial observation phase, I observed four group activities in Form 3A. Group work always unfolded in a linear sequence. It started with Angela giving group work tasks, often in the form of questions, which she wrote on the chalkboard. In one lesson which I observed on a Thursday afternoon, students were referred to a passage titled 'The slave trade' in the textbook by Moyana and Sibanda (2007:27). They were given time to study the passage and answer the questions. Group feedbacks were then made and these were accompanied by teacher directed discussion and note making. Angela added clarifications to what students would have said and students took the points into their notebooks. Below is a segment of the discussion:

Lesson segment 2

T: Why were Africans taken as slaves?

L₁: There were too many Africans and some had to be sold by the kings [Laughter]

L₂: But this passage says this was only a cover up to sell Africans as slaves.

T: Yes this was only a cover up. We call it a justification or a scapegoat in history [writes the new terms on the board]. That reason which you give so that you cover up the truth. What then was the real reason for making Africans slaves?

L₃: Africans were stronger and did not die easily (Another round of laughter)

T: Why were Africans stronger?

L₂: Africans had suffered from small pox and were resistant to many tropical diseases. The local Indians in America were dying in large numbers when made slaves.

Angela made efforts to engage students in meaningful discussion and the students were enthusiastic to participate, but still, the teacher talked more than the students. Angela's classroom practices seemed to corroborate Flanders' law of two-thirds "which operates in almost every classroom" (Inamullah, Nasser ud din and Hussain, 2008:46). The law established that two-thirds of lesson time is spent by the teacher talking, giving instructions, controlling and directing learners. Only one-third of lesson time is spent by learners talking, responding to the teachers' questions and engaging in active learning.

Computer-aided learning

The use of ICTs to search for historical information and to teach history was one novel practice in Angela's lessons. Instead of carrying the traditional notebook (with old yellowing pages) Angela often had her lesson notes on her tablet. This practice did not go down well with the school Head and Deputy when they saw her scrolling her phone during lesson time. The vocal Angela explained to me how her school administrators were acting as impediments to her efforts to implement ICT-based history pedagogy at classroom level, as required by the new curriculum reform policy:

The Headmasters, the superiors do not even understand a teacher when she is on the phone. They think she is on social media, not knowing that a teacher can use his or her phone to give notes. They need to change their mindset when they see the teacher on the phone; they don't understand that I am working on the new curriculum, or the tasks. They just feel that I am flipping through my gallery.

She also lambasted parents who do not want to buy cellphones or laptops for their children who are in secondary school:

Parents are still backward in terms of technological development in our country; they don't understand the importance of cellphones and laptops to Form 3 students. But apart from that, the economy is not stable so parents may not have the money to purchase smartphones for their children. For example, there are only four students with smartphones in Form 3A. Sometimes I would want to give my students notes over the phone and some documents, maybe PDF, that they can use to do their research, but I cannot do that because students have no phones and laptops.

The use of computer based instruction is one of the novel teaching methods in Syllabus 4044 which was not recommended in Syllabuses 2167 and 2166, mainly because when the earlier reforms were made the use of computers in the schools was not as widespread in Zimbabwe. Angela showed so much passion for the use of computers for instructional purposes, although she lamented the lack of resources and lambasted administrators and parents for not appreciating the value of computer-aided instruction. Hennessy and Wamakote (2010:41) established that negative attitudes among school leaders towards computers and the internet are major impediments to the use of ICTs in classrooms in Sub-Saharan Africa. A similar situation seemed to obtain at Arise High.

The final phase of observation

Dictation of notes

In the last four weeks of the observation, Angela tended to reduce student activity and discussion as she resorted more and more to the dictation of notes and lecturing. She dictated notes to students on 'Sources of historical evidence' and justified the action saying that, "Students need this knowledge to do the research tasks. We used to teach this topic to the Form 2s. Now in the new syllabus we must teach it to the Form 3s, again." Dictating notes from her tablet, Angela hurriedly covered written records, archaeology and oral traditions in 35 minutes. This is how she explained her selection of teaching methods:

Sometimes I use the lecture method; sometimes I dictate notes, which is not acceptable in this new curriculum. But this is because I want to cover for time lost invigilating ZIMSEC examinations and students attending the SASAF and DASAF cultural festivals brought by the new curriculum. They are compulsory. Then I have to prepare my students to write end of year examinations.

Earlier I had probed Angela to find out if her teaching methods had changed in response to the demands of Syllabus 4044. She had remarked that:

Methods have not really changed because of inadequate materials. The new syllabus requires us to use the internet, interactive boards, white boards, projectors, computers, but all these things are absent. So we are still resorting to our traditional teaching methods – lecturing and dictation.

In the intermittent interview, held four weeks after the initial pre-observation interview, Angela seemed to contradict herself. I inquired if the new history curriculum had changed her teaching patterns. She replied that:

Yes, they have changed a lot. We used to teach using the lecture method, but with the new curriculum there is need to do practical research. There is also need for students to write notes for themselves, because they cannot make it in the new curriculum if you continuously give them notes. They need to write the tasks on their own.

Data from the pre-observation and intermittent interviews on whether Angela had reformed her teaching practice or not seem to contradict. In the pre-observation interview Angela said, “Methods have not really changed because of inadequate materials”; but in the intermittent interview she said: “Yes, they have changed a lot.” This could be an indicator that Angela was unsure of whether her classroom practice had changed or not. But such confusion may not be very surprising in the early stages of implementing reform policy. Ganon-Shilon and Schechter (2017:2) use the metaphor of “steering through the fog” to describe the confusion and uncertainty that characterise the thinking of most teachers in the early implementation stages of most curriculum reforms. Angela also seemed to be moving through the fog in terms of her understanding of the teaching methods she was using in implementing the new history

curriculum. This may partly explain why (in the pre-observation interview) she had said that classroom practice had not changed, then some four weeks later (in the intermittent interview) she said that teaching practice had changed a lot.

Hybrid patterns of practice

It was difficult to categorise Angela's patterns of classroom practice into either traditional or progressive practice. She tended to mix the two. At the beginning of the observation period, she used a lot of activity-centred approaches, but then regressed back to orthodox teaching in the last four weeks as she made efforts to cover up for lost teaching time. In the exit interview, I gave her the opportunity to judge her own teaching methods over the two months I had observed her. "It's a mixture of progressive and traditional methods," she said. I further inquired: But towards which side are you more inclined? "It's balanced," she insisted.

The hybrid nature of Angela's practice was also reflected in her approach to the issue of notes. I sought her opinion on whether history teachers should give notes or students should write their own notes. She replied, with a smile:

They should do both, giving notes and helping students write their own notes. At times pupils cannot deduce facts for themselves. They can write notes which are not relevant. The greatest problem is irrelevance when they write notes on their own. I would prefer guided notes; I give them some sub-headings to follow. I have to guide and show them how they can write meaningful notes on their own.

Evidence gathered from the lesson observations, interviews and document analysis also appeared to support Angela's view that her patterns of classroom practice were a mixture of teacher-dominated and learner-centred practices, some form of "conservative progressivism" (Cohen, 1990). She did not have total faith in learner-centred pedagogy which involved students writing their own notes. She dictated notes even after engaging students in group work and class discussion; giving her patterns of classroom practice a hybrid nature reflecting both tradition and change.

4.1.4 CHANGES IN ANGELA'S CLASSROOM PRACTICE

Continuous Assessment Task 1

The introduction of research-based tasks which contribute 30% to the student's final mark in "O" Level history was a novel change in the history curriculum reforms. Task 1 for Term 3 2017 was: "Carry out an investigation on the appointment of local leadership showing challenges in their appointment and offer solutions to the challenges" (ZIMSEC, 2017:3). I inquired about Angela's attitude towards Continuous Assessment Task 1. She replied in her combative, but honest, voice; "It has never been positive. Yes we are implementing because that is what we are instructed to do. The implementation is actually dictated upon teachers. It's forced upon teachers. And the tasks are a total failure. I think they are a total failure." I wanted to know why she thought the tasks were a failure. She explained that, "Most of these students reside in one area and so they interviewed the same councilor at the same time who gave them the same information. I think some students just copied from others." Angela was also bitter that:

Asking pupils to interview these politicians – this field is male-dominated. If you look at the councilor, the MP and the mayor they are all men. The girl child will end up looking down on herself – that they cannot achieve anything. The headman, the chief, they are all males. They are sending wrong messages to the girl child that they cannot venture into male territory.

The rights of the girl-child were another recurring theme (after that of the use of ICTs) in the interviews I held with Angela. This gender sensitivity was probably a result of the nature of her studies as she holds a Master of Science degree in Development Studies from the Women's University in Africa (which is in Harare). Her initial career aspirations to be a lawyer, a police officer or a nurse may also have a bearing on her sense of social justice and gender equality.

Angela also complained that the continuous assessment task also greatly affected her content coverage for Term 3 2017. "I failed to look at the Scramble and Partition of Southern Africa; I did not finish the colonisation of Zimbabwe, lone the First Chimurenga," she lamented. I actually observed Angela taking away time from her planned lessons to do the tasks with the

students. After receiving the task on her phone from the school administration on the 11th of October 2017, she wrote the task and the key guidelines on the chalkboard for the students to copy. Initially Angela did not want to assist students much arguing that, “The rules and regulations of the tasks are that the teacher should desist from teaching the learners the task,” until it was a bit too late!

Realising that students had not done much on the data analysis and time was running out, Angela allocated two lessons to the tasks. On the 1st and 6th of November 2017, she used individualised instruction as she moved around the class checking on progress and making recommendations on how students could complete the tasks. Each student was assisted according to need, which was a very progressive approach, although I feel that this assistance could have come earlier. When I held the exit interview with Angela on Tuesday 14 November 2017, I wanted to know how far her students had gone with the tasks. She pointed to a large heap of flat files in the storeroom-cum-office and said, “As you can see, these are the files and most of the students have handed in. I think only five or six are outstanding, out of 49, but they promised to bring them tomorrow.”

Reforming teaching practice

One method which Angela used in her lessons to ensure student participation and an exchange of ideas between her and learners was class discussion. Text study, pair work or group activity usually preceded the discussion. In these discussions, Angela made efforts to help students gain a deeper understanding of the concepts being explored rather than simply memorising basic factual knowledge. In a lesson on ‘The origins of the slave trade’ (**Lesson segment 2**) one student asked if Africans were the only slaves in the world. Angela took a historical perspective and explained that;

Most ancient societies had slaves and practised slavery. The Jews were slaves in Egypt and the pyramids were built by slave labour, and so was Great Zimbabwe. Greeks and Romans also enslaved their kith and kin. What made the Atlantic slave trade unique is the movement of millions of Africans to the Americas and Europe over centuries. The Portuguese took their first cargo of African slaves to Brazil in mid-15th century (1444).

Most of the teachers I have observed teaching this topic did not take this wider and intellectually enriching perspective on slavery and the slave trade. What is even more exciting is that Angela had downloaded her notes on the slave trade from the internet (most Form 3 textbooks did not have the topic) and was using her tablet in place of the note book. Angela's multi-perspective approach to historical analysis and use of ICT-based technologies reflect some of the progressive and reform-oriented practices in her classroom, as recommended by the new history curriculum, although she also used traditional practices like lecturing and dictation.

4.1.5 IN THE CLASSROOM BY DESTINY THAN CHOICE

Teacher attitude towards reform

I wanted to know how Angela viewed the history curriculum reform implementation process. She replied, in a dejected voice, "Rather confusing, not specific, though we are implementing it. We are implementing in confusion. We do corrections every day ... We have adopted it, but in the dark." Angela's attitude towards curriculum reform implementation goes beyond the state of confusion and blind adoption she talked of here. I inquired about her attitude towards the new curriculum when it was introduced in January 2017. She replied: "It was negative. I never thought it was going to be a success." I probed her to explain what led to her eventual change of attitude towards the new curriculum. She shook her head: "It has never become positive." This meant that Angela was implementing curriculum reforms whose existence she had never accepted. This negative attitude could have direct effects on how she understood the reforms and implemented them in her lessons.

Teacher aspirations

How Angela found herself in the history classroom was more by default and destiny than by free will and design. Although history was her favourite subject, she never wanted to be a history teacher. "I never thought of teaching. I really wanted to be a lawyer, or a nurse, or a police officer," she opened up during the interview. After failing to realise her occupational dreams, Angela went to Africa University (at her father's initiative) to study for a B A. Ed. in History and Religious Studies. After ten years in the classroom, Angela still had not accepted history teaching as her final occupational destination and was largely dissatisfied with the way her school administration was responding to the implementation of the new curriculum.

School administration

The support Angela received from the school administration in implementing the new history curriculum was a cause for concern for her. She was adamant that:

As of now, the school admin is not supportive, because it indicated that school coffers are empty. This is the reason why they posted the tasks on social media and asked us to download for ourselves. Pupils were supposed to receive the tasks already photocopied but they did not receive anything. Rather we dictated the tasks to pupils and then after dictating we asked the pupils to bring their own monies for photocopying.

Lack of support from the school administration delayed Form 3A students from starting work on the tasks earlier. I witnessed Angela wasting valuable learning time pleading with the students to pay 10 cents each to the class monitor so that she could photocopy the 10 page task document for all the 49 students in the class.

Nature of learners

Angela complained vehemently against Arise High School policy which offers sciences, literature and geography to the two best classes: 3¹ and 3². History is only offered to 3³ up to 3¹⁰. The class I am calling Form 3A in this study is actually the third class (Form 3³) at Arise

High. This is how Angela explained the relationship between the nature of learners, ability streaming and her selection of teaching methods:

Streaming does affect my methods a lot. I think history should also be given to the best classes, and not just leave it to the lower streams, because a student who does history would want to be a lawyer and lawyers and doctors are at par. If I want to dictate notes I cannot dictate notes to 3¹⁰ because they can't write the notes. I have to write the notes on the chalkboard. But I can dictate notes to 3³ because they have the comprehension skills to write what I say.

From her explanation, Angela continued to dictate and sometimes write notes on the chalkboard because, in her opinion, some of her students lacked the ability to write notes on their own or comprehend what she dictated.

Class size

According to the new curriculum framework, the official teacher-pupil ratio in Zimbabwean secondary schools is supposed to be 1:35 (MOPSE, 2017:2), but Form 3A had 49 students. Angela explained how the abnormal class size militated against the implementation of the new history curriculum:

Our classes are too big, too many pupils ranging from 46 to 50 something. Marking is not thorough; you can't give comments in every book, and you cannot correct every book. The groups may be too many for me to monitor making me shun group work, fearing that the groups may make noise and pupils may get out of control.

She explained that abnormal class sizes were not appropriate for the implementation of the new history curriculum because she could not supervise student activities effectively. This made her desist from group work and resort to dictation of notes.

School size

Role playing, simulation and dramatisation are some of the methods Angela did not use over the eight weeks I observed her teach Form 3A. She explained why:

We operate under a hot-seating set up and some of the methods like role playing need time. Because if you are to dramatise you may find that the 35 minute lesson is not enough, the organisation of the role play also takes time. We have only four periods per week and we cannot talk of the four periods as there are many other activities in the school which may disrupt the four periods. Take for example ZIMSEC exams and school arts festivals and unplanned meetings. So basically I can actually say that per term we can remove two weeks in which students will be doing activities which have nothing to do with learning.

From Angela's explanation, double sessions, school cultural festivals brought by the new curriculum, and a host of other unforeseen disruptions made it difficult for her to adopt learner-centred and reform-oriented teaching practices like role playing and dramatization because she would want to cover for lost time through dictation of notes.

Resource availability

In all the 13 lessons I observed, Angela did not make use of any films, videos or computers as recommended by the new History Syllabus 4044. She explained why: "The school is incapacitated to engage in such methods. There are no films and videos. We have one projector for the whole school and one computer lab and this is not enough." What about the three educational tours per year recommended by the new history curriculum? I probed. "We have done nothing so far because of the financial constraints facing the parents and the school itself. The school is broke, parents are broke as well", she lamented. Limited financial resources forced Angela to stick to chalk-and-talk methods which do not require much material and financial resources.

Angela and the future

In the exit interview I wanted to know about Angela's occupational satisfaction as a history teacher. This is how the ambitious Angela felt about her current occupation:

To be honest, teaching is no longer in me. Yes, I have adjusted to being a history teacher but I still have ambitions. I am thinking of lecturing. I want to leave the classroom, at least being a lecturer is better than being a secondary school teacher. As a lecturer at least you deal with adults, unlike these Form Ones. If I had my choice I would just want to be an "A" Level history teacher only.

From this conversation, it was clear that Angela was no longer enjoying teaching, although she said she had adjusted to it. Her unfavourable attitude to teaching as a profession may partly explain why, at times, she resorted to dictating notes from her tablet rather than organise activity-based learning which requires more time to prepare.

4.2 CASE STUDY 2: THE STORY OF BESSIE: The cool embracer

"I used to hate the subject history. I was not born a teacher."

"I accepted the new curriculum from the beginning."

4.2.1 TEACHER BACKGROUND AND CLASSROOM PROFILE

Teacher Profile

The Deputy Head of Bridge High School introduced me to Bessie in August 2017. She did not hesitate to voluntarily participate as a case study. Bessie is soft-spoken, but confident, and had ten years' experience as a history teacher at the time of my research. In January 2017, she returned from a two-year study leave during which she successfully pursued a full-time Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) degree in History at the University of Zimbabwe. Her return coincided with the rolling out of the new history curriculum at Form 3 level under the New Curriculum Framework 2015-2022.

How Bessie became a history teacher sounds more like a fairy tale. “You know what Mr. Chimbi, when I was doing “O” Level I used to hate the subject history,” she opened up in the intermittent interview. “When I was growing up I was very quiet. I just felt lazy to speak. I was not born a teacher,” she explained to me. How then did she become a teacher? Bessie explained how she got attracted to teaching.

I wanted to be a teacher because of the rural areas I grew up in. What you only saw was the teacher. So at the end of the month you saw them wearing new clothes, every time you went into the staffroom you saw them eating good food, delicious food. I remember at one point at my school they used to have what they called ‘beef committee’ – teachers organised and bought cattle for slaughter and dried the meat – every month. To me it was something else. They ended up being my role models because of the limited exposure I had.

Even her close relatives used to worry about how she would cope as a teacher given her cool and introverted personality. “My relatives used to wonder: you have decided to be a teacher, how are you going to teach these pupils? You are so quiet and soft. And I said: God will help me,” she softly narrated her odious journey into a profession she had only admired because of the material benefits the rural teachers seemed to enjoy.

A profile of Form 3B

Form 3B is one of the 44 classes at Bridge High School. Twenty-two classes come in the morning and the other 22 in the afternoon. The school had a total student population of 1 788 from Form 1 to Form 6, and 60 teachers in the Third Term of 2017. There were ten Form 3 classes, but history is not offered to the first two classes that take the sciences. Bridge High School practices ability streaming and the class I am calling Form 3B in this study is actually the eighth class (3⁸) out of the ten Form 3 classes. Form 3¹ is considered the most academically gifted and Form 3¹⁰ the least talented. During the eight week fieldwork period, I observed rampant absenteeism and bunking of lessons in Form 3B. The class had a total enrollment of 45 students – 22 girls and 23 boys. In all the 10 lessons I observed over that period, I never saw this class as a full-house. On one particular Monday, only 30 students

were present. Of the 15 absentees only two were girls. I asked one girl why this was the case and she replied, “Maybe they have gone back home after assembly with those who have completed the morning session.” “Because the boys don’t like school,” added another girl with a chuckle. Cutting classes appeared to be a common habit in Form 3B. Bessie appeared unworried and never inquired about those who were absent. After the lesson I asked Bessie why some students do not come to class. She replied; “Bunking lessons is a common practice in Form 3B and all the lower ability classes at this school, especially among the boys. They call it ‘the disappearing act’ in their language.”

4.2.2 FROM UNIVERSITY TO A NEW HISTORY CURRICULUM

Bessie’s return to the classroom in January 2017, after a two-year study leave at the University of Zimbabwe, coincided with the rolling out of the New Curriculum Framework 2015-2022 in Zimbabwean secondary schools. In three in-depth interviews with Bessie and a comparative analysis of her scheme of work and policy documents, I gained insights into how she was making sense of the 2017 curriculum reforms.

Meaning of policy guidelines

I wanted to find out what the new curriculum meant to Bessie. She explained that; “For me the changes are quite good because if you look at the teaching methods they are advocating for progressive teaching methods where teaching must be pupil or learner-centred. Teachers must be facilitators. The changes are quiet exciting.” Bessie understood the changes to mean a transformation of teaching methods from teacher-centred practices to inquiry-based pedagogy in which learners search for solutions to problems and teachers only make the learning process possible through facilitation. But how did she initially receive the policy guidelines when she first heard about them? Her response was interesting, if not unusual:

I did not have any problem with the new curriculum. I accepted it from the beginning. I was not resistant; I was not against it because I did not have that fear of the unknown. I just said to myself even if it’s something new I have to grab it and go by it. Some people at this station were able to go for training workshops on the new curriculum but myself I did not have that exposure because I was at University. But those who went

for the training they say a lot of negative things about the new curriculum. But I never went for it but have a positive attitude.

Bessie accepted the new curriculum from the onset although she had not attended any awareness workshops in 2016 as she was studying full-time for her B. Ed. Degree in History. She was puzzled why those who had attended workshop(s) on the new curriculum spoke so much against it. I was equally amazed and asked her why she was such an early adopter of the new curriculum, although she had not attended any workshop on it. This is how she tried to account for her early positive sense-making of the new curriculum:

Maybe this is because of the B.Ed.; some of the skills that I gained in the degree programme put me above some other teachers. The new methods in the new curriculum were familiar to me as I had covered them at university in the pedagogics course. The use of computers; I did a course on that. So to me I did not have a challenge with the new curriculum. So the B.Ed. training was very useful for me to understand the purpose of the new curriculum and the skills it required.

Bessie's understanding of the new history curriculum and her early acceptance of the reforms were made possible by her B.Ed. training which seemed to have offered her knowledge and expertise on progressive teaching methods and the use of computers as a tool for facilitating teaching and learning in the classroom. The skills and knowledge Bessie gained at university matched the knowledge and skills which were required in the new curriculum. This made Bessie interpret the changes as familiar and useful as they were in line with what she had learnt at university.

The syllabus as key to reform

In the pre-observation interview Bessie identified the main document that conveys the policy reform signals to the teachers. She explained that:

The syllabus is the most important document for us as teachers when the curriculum is being changed. The syllabus provides the new content which you are expected to teach, the methods to use and the assessment procedures. It guides the school

syllabus and the scheme of work. We are supposed to be doing Continuous Assessment Tasks right now because it is a requirement of the new History Syllabus 4044.

It appears like there is an over-emphasis on the importance of the syllabus document in reforming curriculum policy in Zimbabwe. This could be because this is the document that reaches the teacher with the message of curriculum reform, more than the workshops and awareness campaigns. Bessie explained that when the new history curriculum was rolled out to the Form 1 and 3 classes in January 2017, they were only given the syllabus and told to implement the new curriculum. Any other supporting documents for the new curriculum like the Continuous Assessment Policy and Continuous Assessment Task 1 only arrived in the schools in the Third Term of 2017, more than nine months after the rolling out of the new curriculum.

A document analysis of Bessie's scheme of work (**Figure 6**) showed that her objectives were derived from the new syllabus, although most of them were lower order.

Figure 6: Bessie's scheme for Week 2 showing her choice of objectives and teaching methods.

WEEK ENDING	TOPIC	OBJECTIVES	COMPETENCIES	SOM\ MEDIA	METHODS AND ACTIVITIES	EVALUATION
22-09-17	Slave trade in Africa	By the end of the lesson pupils should be able to; -Define slavery and slave trade -Explain the causes of slave trade in Africa	-Defining -Explaining	-Resource file -Pictures	-Teaches exposition of the topic -in pairs pupils define slavery and slave trade -feedback from pupils -teacher explanation -note writing	
	Slave trade in Africa	-identify methods used to obtain slaves -explain the methods used to obtain slaves	-identify -explain	-Resource file	- teacher recaps the previous lesson -class discussion on methods used to obtain slaves -Feedback - Teacher explanation	
	Impact of slave trade	-outline the positive effects of slave trade -describe the negative effects of slave trade	-outlining -describing	-Resource file	-in pairs , pupils discuss the impact of slave trade in Africa -feedback from pupils -teacher explanation	
	Revision test		-answering	Teacher's file	-Individual written exercise on the given exercise guided by the teacher	

The objectives in Figure 6 required students to: define, identify, outline and describe, showing Bessie's preference for lower order cognitive objectives. The only higher order objective in Bessie's scheme for Week 2 was 'explain.' A comparative analysis of Bessie's scheme objectives and those in the new history curriculum may be useful in exploring Bessie's sense making of reform policy.

The objectives of the new history curriculum as given in Syllabus 4044 (CDTS 2015:2) are reproduced below.

By the end of Form 4 learners should be able to:

- *define the term history*
- *describe historical events in their context*
- *analyse historical evidence, points of view and make value judgements*

- *assess the significance and relevance of historical information and draw reasoned conclusions*
- *empathise with the past*
- *explain concepts and issues that relate to history, population, gender, democracy and human rights in a relevant and coherent manner*
- *use ICT in the study of history*
- *relate the concept of Unhu/Ubuntu/Vumunhu to the historical activities in Zimbabwe*

History Syllabus 4044 has only two lower order objectives – define and describe. The other six objectives are higher order learning outcomes as shown by the verbs: explain, analyse, assess, draw conclusions, empathise, use and relate. Thus, Bessie’s selection of lower order objectives, as shown in her scheme for Week 2 (**Figure 6**), is not compliant with the syllabus prescriptions; and reflects Bessie’s dependency on teacher exposition, teacher explanation and teacher recap as her main teaching methods; although she also mentions pair work and discussion.

Knowledge on teaching methods

I compared and contrasted the teaching methods in Bessie’s schemes of work with those recommended in the new history curriculum. History Syllabus 4044 clearly states that, “The teaching of history will be accomplished through the use of learner-centred and multi-sensory approaches” (CDTS 2015:2). Most of the teaching methods recommended in this syllabus like simulation, role playing, video, film, educational tours and e-learning did not appear in Bessie’s schemes of work. A sample of Bessie’s scheme of work in Figure 7 concretises this observation.

Figure 7: Bessie's scheme for Week 6 showing her choice of teaching methods

WEEK ENDING	TOPIC	OBJECTIVES	COMPETENCIES	SOM/ MEDIA	METHODS AND ACTIVITIES	EVALUATION
3-10-17	Portuguese Activity in the Zambezi Valley	By the end of the lesson pupils should be able to; -discuss Portuguese activities in the Zambezi Valley -Analysing the nature of interactions between the Portuguese and Africans	-Discussing -Analysing	-Resource file	-Teacher recaps the previous lesson -Questions and answer session - Teacher explanation - Note writing	
	Early Missionary Activities	-identify early missionary groups and their areas of operations -describe early missionary activities	-Identifying -Describing	-Resource file	- teacher exposition of the topic - Questions and answer session -In pairs pupils describe early missionary activities - Note writing	
	Early Missionary Activities	-explain challenges faced by missionaries -analyse the impact of missionary activities	-explaining -analysing	-Resource file	-Teacher recaps the previous lesson -Questions and answer session - Teacher explanation - Note writing	
	Revision test	-Answer all questions asked by the teacher	-answering	Teacher's file	-Individual written exercise on the given exercise guided by the teacher	

Figure 7 shows Bessie's dependency on traditional teaching practices like teacher recap, question and answer, teacher explanation and note writing. The only learner-centred method in her scheme for Week 6 is pair work; showing that Bessie did not plan to use much learner-centred practice in her lessons. Bessie's scheme of work reflects dissonance between planned teaching methods and the multi-sensory learner-centred approaches recommended in the new history curriculum.

To further verify Bessie's knowledge on the teaching methods recommended in the new history curriculum, I held an intermittent interview with her. This is how she explained her sense-making of the teaching methods recommended in Syllabus 4044:

The recent curriculum reforms advocate for progressive teaching methods where teaching must be learner-centred. Teachers must be facilitators. The new teaching

approach is downloading of notes from the internet, the use of computers, giving pupils some work so that they carry out research on their own using the internet.

From this interview, Bessie appeared to be partially knowledgeable of the progressive teaching methods recommended in the new curriculum, especially the new role of the teacher as the facilitator and the use of ICTs as teaching-learning tools. But she left out other progressive teaching methods like games and quizzes, role playing, video, film and educational tours that are recommended in the new history syllabus. This could be an indicator of her non-use of these progressive methods in her classroom practice. The next section looks at a sample of lessons Bessie actually taught to Form 3B and the instructional methods she used.

4.2.5 TEACHING FORM 3B: THE CLASS WHICH WAS NEVER FULL

Data on how Bessie actually taught the new history curriculum over the eight week fieldwork period was obtained from the 10 lessons I observed her teaching, the three interviews I held with her and a document analysis of her schemes of work and policy related paraphernalia. The students in Form 3B appeared a bit shy and withdrawn especially when the teacher asked for feedback on the work she would have given them. But I observed that the students engaged in a lot of noise making during study periods and when they were waiting for the lesson to start. Bunking history lessons was also a common practice. In my fieldwork memos, I recorded that in all the 10 lessons I observed over the eight week period, Form 3B was never a full class. The lowest attendance was 12 students in a class of 45 and the highest was 40. Bessie seemed unworried about the rampant absenteeism in Form 3B as she casually explained to me that, ““Bunking lessons is a common practice in Form 3B and all the lower ability classes at this school ... and the administration is aware of the problem.”

The initial observation phase

Before observing her lessons, I held a pre-observation interview with Bessie so that I could have a picture of how she viewed her own teaching methods and made sense of the reforms she was implementing. This is how she explained her pedagogical practices:

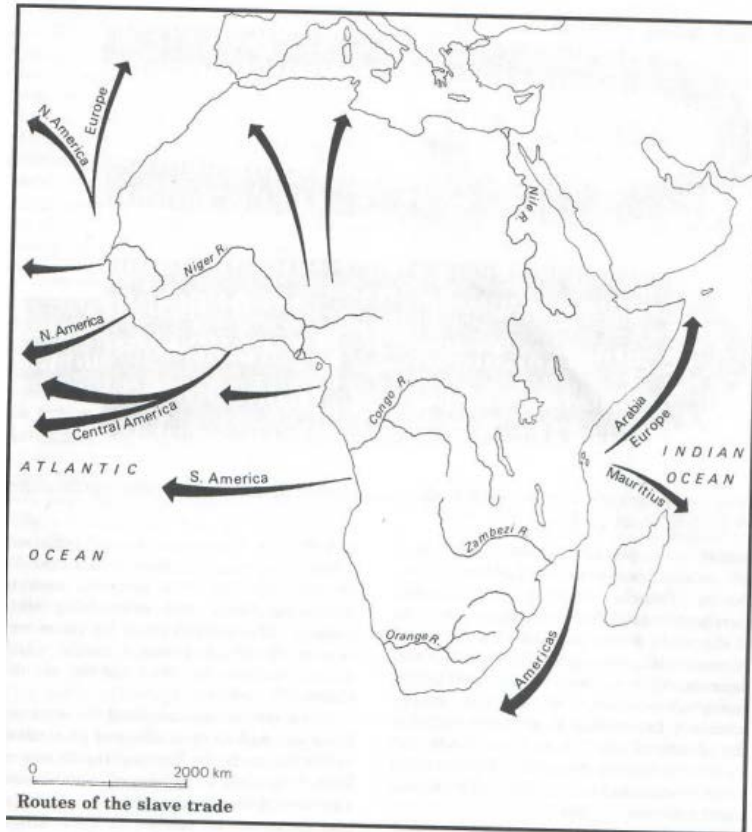
I try to use a number of methods but the main one which I use, because of the large numbers of our pupils, is pair work. Pair work is the main one because if you put them into larger groups they give problems of class management and can make noise. And besides the pair work I also use class discussions. They are very beneficial to the students, because you give the pupils work, thereafter they discuss the work in pairs and then you get feedback from them. From that feedback you will be in a position to note where they are going wrong. You then explain and clarify issues.

Pair work was central to Bessie's teaching methods. She avoided using large groups as she was afraid this could cause disciplinary problems in Form 3B. In this pre-observation discussion, Bessie did not mention the traditional teaching methods, like lecturing and dictation, which I later observed her using in many lessons. Maybe she wanted to give me the impression that she is very progressive in her classroom practice, or perhaps she intended her classroom practice to be as such but could not in reality.

Map study and class discussion

The first lesson I observed Bessie teaching was on the Origins of the Slave Trade. The lesson was conducted on a hot Friday afternoon in the second week of Third Term 2017. It was her sixth lesson with Form 3B since schools had opened for the new term. Only 31 students (20 girls and 11 boys) were present for the lesson in a class of 45 (22 girls and 23 boys). Bessie did not inquire (from those present) why the other 14 students were absent. She appeared oblivious of their absence and introduced the new topic using teacher exposition. After the teacher-centred introduction each pair of students was given a one page handout with a map of the Routes of the Slave Trade (photocopied from Sibanda, Moyana and Gumbo, 2005:119). She instructed them to study the map which is reproduced in Figure 8.

Figure 8: Routes of the Slave Trade in Sibanda, Moyana and Gumbo (2005:119)



The pairs were given five minutes to study the map. After that Bessie initiated a teacher-directed discussion. Below is a segment of the discussion.

Lesson segment 3

T: Let us look at that map. Where were the slaves taken from?

L1: Africa.

T: To which continents were they taken?

L2: Europe and America

T: Yes. Some were taken to North America, Central and South America. Others were taken to European countries like Portugal, Britain and France. Now can you identify the places from which the slaves were taken from?

L₃: Near the Congo River.

T: Yes they were actually taken from the Congo Kingdom. This Kingdom lost many people to the slave trade. Any other place from where the slaves were obtained?

There was no response from the class and Bessie went on to give notes to the students. She wrote the notes on the slave trade on the board in her small hand writing (see her schemes in **Figure 6 and 7**). The lesson which had started with learner-centred activity ended with note giving by the teacher, and many such lessons were to follow.

Pair work and class discussion

The 4th lesson I observed Bessie teaching in Form 3B was on 'Ndebele political organization.' In a class of 45 students, only 32 were present in this lesson. There were 22 girls, meaning that all the girls were present, and 13 boys were absent. The lesson was held on a Wednesday afternoon and Bessie combined pair work, text study and class discussion in the lesson. She instructed students to study the passage titled 'Political organisation' in the textbook by Mpfu et al. (2009:66). As the pairs' reported back, Bessie initiated class discussion. The following is an excerpt from the lesson on Ndebele political organisation:

Lesson segment 4

T: From what you have read, let us look at the King's role in detail. What were his duties?

L₁: He was the head of government, the commander of the army and religious leader.

T: Very good. But what do we mean when we say he was commander and religious leader?

L₂: He could tell the army to attack or not to and religious ceremonies were held by him.

T: Yes. What about head of government?

No response came. She repeated the question, still no answer. In hidden frustration, Bessie told the students in her usual soft voice: "If you do not want to talk then let us take down the following notes." She started dictating notes on the role of the king as head of government and how he directly appointed indunas. In the intermittent interview Bessie had hinted that students in Form 3B were perceived as of average and below average ability because this

class is actually the eighth class in a string of ten Form 3 classes streamed according to ability. I observed that Form 3B had problems communicating in English and had a restricted language code which appeared to limit their participation in class discussions, making Bessie resort to rote pedagogy.

Final observation phase

Despite Bessie's early adoption of the 2017 reforms and her positive attitude towards the new curriculum, she made increased use of teacher dominated methodologies in her actual classroom practice in the last four weeks of the fieldwork period.

The struggle to reform

In one lesson, Bessie asked for a volunteer to go and research on oral traditions. The following day the student gave a well-researched presentation on oral evidence, its meaning, advantages and disadvantages. But no discussion emerged during or after the presentation. Instead, Bessie went on to dictate notes to students. Most of the points dictated by the teacher had been raised by the student during the presentation. Bessie could perhaps have assisted students build their own notes while the presentation was going on instead of waiting for the presenter to finish and then start dictating notes on the same issues raised by the presenter. This gave the impression that points raised by students were not worth taking into notebooks making lessons teacher-centred, which goes against the spirit of the new curriculum framework.

Lecturing and dictation

In two lessons on the social and economic organisation of the Ndebele state, Bessie used dictation and note writing as the only teaching methods. In the exit interview I wanted to know why Bessie was using traditional teaching methods in implementing the new history curriculum which advocates for learner-centred approaches. Her response was straightforward:

I used dictation and lecturing because we cannot do without them. Even if you use these learner-centred methods – pupils can do presentations, class discussions – but as the teacher you have to get in and give more than what students can find on their own. The other reason again is the issue of time. Like when the Form 4s and 6s started writing their ZIMSEC examinations, I could foresee that the Form 3s will not have their lessons the normal way because all classrooms are used for these examinations. So I had to use the lecture method to cover a lot of ground and make up for lost time.

Bessie's mindset, school and classroom contexts made her resort to rote pedagogy, although she was aware that this was against official reform policy. Bessie still believed that the teacher must play her traditional role as the more knowledgeable expert who knows more than the students and so must give notes. She also justified her continued use of traditional teaching approaches on time constraints, external examinations, learner ability and abnormal class sizes at Bridge High School. Bessie's classroom practices bear testimony to her personal philosophy as a history teacher: "Dictation and lecturing, we cannot do without them."

Traditional patterns of practice

Bessie talked eloquently about learner-centred progressivism, maybe because she had completed her B.Ed. degree in history in December 2016. But she still held many traditional views and beliefs on history teaching. In the pre-observation interview, I wanted Bessie's opinion on whether history teachers should teach history content or historical skills. Her position was clear:

It's the content which is more important because that is what they will use in the examinations. In the end it is passing examinations which matters and shows that the teacher has done good work. It's the results that matter not the methodology. You cannot call on pupils to explain the progressive teaching methods you used after they have failed.

From these conversations and lesson observations, it became clear that history content was more important to Bessie than developing historical skills in learners. In the exit interview, she declared that: "Yes, I cannot do without dictation and lecturing." This strengthened my

perception of her as more of the orthodox history teacher than the progressive reformer she imagined herself to be. I asked Bessie to judge her own methodology over the two months observation period. She confidently declared; “90% progressive and 10% orthodox.” But from what I observed in Form 3B, the opposite appears to be true: 10% progressive and 90% orthodox. Maybe it is true that for the most part, teachers cannot accurately and honestly judge their own abilities, performances and shortcomings.

4.2.4 POLICY ACCEPTANCE BUT IMPLEMENTATION DILEMMA

Continuous Assessment Task 1

How did Bessie receive the continuous assessment policy which is one major change in the new history curriculum? She replied that:

I have embraced it because it has got its own advantages. Pupils can do their own researches and you as the teacher you try to evaluate what they have discovered. And then at the end of the day you will be able to conclude that pupils have gained communication skills, analysis skills and writing skills. So I think there is something new coming up.

Unlike most teachers in the four schools in my study, Bessie was not critical of the continuous assessment task, although she only received the task on the 4th of October 2017, three weeks after schools had opened. She explained that her favourable attitude towards the new history curriculum and the continuous assessment task was a result of the new knowledge, research, computer and pedagogical skills she gained during her B.Ed. degree programme which she completed in December 2016.

But the implementation of the continuous assessment task, which she had not planned for, had an impact on Bessie’s content coverage for the term. I observed Bessie taking away lesson time from planned learning activities to assist learners interpret the research task, prepare the interview guides, analyse the findings and do the write ups. After receiving the task, Bessie summarised key points from the 10 page task document on the chalkboard for

students to copy because the school could not afford the cost of photocopying the document for all the Form 3 history students in the eight classes. In all the lessons I observed after she had received the task, Bessie set aside five to ten minutes towards the end of the lesson to assist students work on the task. Realising that her students were lagging behind in completing the tasks, Bessie allocated a whole 35 minutes lesson to supervising and assisting students work on the task on Monday the 6th of November 2017.

Because of the lesson time taken to cover the tasks, Bessie failed to teach the Colonisation of Zimbabwe and the First Chimurenga as she had planned in her Third Term schemes of work. As per her expectation, Form 3B students failed to complete the task on time too. This is how Bessie explained her dilemma in the exit interview on the 13th of November 2017:

I can foresee that some pupils will not be able to clear the task before the end of year examinations start on Friday 17 November 2017. I can see by the way they are responding. I have received only four files in a class of over 45 students. And today is Monday and we are talking of examinations this Friday; even if I use the iron rod to push them it won't work.

What could have been the reason for students' lack of progress in doing the task when Bessie had given them a lot of support and encouragement? She tried to account for her students' lack of progress thus:

It might be that pupils have developed resentment, they ask: what are all these tasks for? It's across all learning areas. It's a burden to them. If they are doing eight subjects, they have eight tasks; if they are doing ten they have ten tasks. So students are not happy because the work is overwhelming. And next year (2018) they are expected to do more tasks in every subject, again.

Besides being overwhelmed, most of the students in Form 3B were perceived as of average and below average ability, and as such they faced serious language problems in doing the research. This may partly explain why Form 3B students had a negative disposition towards the continuous assessment task in history.

Difficulties in reforming teaching practice

The way Bessie interacted with learners and discussed historical issues with them appeared perfunctory and artificial without deeper and broader analysis of issues. Most topics were only covered at surface level and students gained factual historical knowledge, most of which was not interrogated and debated much. Bessie insisted so much on basic historical facts because three-quarters of the marks in the examination questions test lower order recall and descriptive skills. She stressed that; “Examinations influence my methods 100%. As a teacher you must know what the examiners require and after that you can now go to the pupils.” In most of Bessie’s lessons, discussion was abandoned mid-way. Once students failed to respond to her question, instead of rephrasing it or unpacking the question, Bessie would simply abandon the discussion and give students notes because, according to her own judgement and past experience, “These students are below average performers with limited communication abilities.”

There was very limited teaching for historical understanding in most of Bessie’s lessons, although at times she made use of learner-centred methods. The class tests she gave to Form 3B did not have the (c) question which requires analysis and judgement. As I sought for an explanation she pointed out that:

The best classes are given the sciences, in line with the government’s STEM policy, and the low ability classes are given history. So the classes we are now teaching history in the New Curriculum Framework have less gifted children who find history difficult because of its abstract nature, and cannot answer the interpretation and analysis question. That is why I leave it out because even if I write it, no one can answer it in Form 3B.

Bessie also explained that she no longer gave homework to Form 3B because most of the students do not bother to do the work. This is how she explained the subtle effects of streaming on her classroom practices:

These lower streams are a great challenge. If you give them homework, out of maybe 45 pupils, only four will bring their books, the rest will not. So at the end of the day I have now sidelined the issue of giving homework and I make sure I give exercises during lesson time. No more homework because when you want to record the work only four pupils will have brought the books and the rest haven't. Then you have problems with gaps in the progress record book.

Without any homework to do outside learning hours, students in Form 3B could not carry out any historical research on their own, at home and after school, further limiting their opportunities to develop historical skills and understanding.

4.2.5 BESSIE AS A LATE CONVERT TO HISTORY

Teacher aspirations and upbringing

The most outstanding observation on Bessie's career as a history teacher is that she never aspired to be a history teacher. "I used to hate the subject history," she explained to me in the intermittent interview. She went on to account for her hatred:

The way our teacher used to teach this subject history was boring, it was monotonous; it was not interesting. He would give us voluminous notes and was not even concerned with writing the day's date ... He would assign someone who was eloquent enough to dictate the notes to us. So we would just write notes and notes. I remember when we were doing World War One we were given a timeline of the events leading to the outbreak of World War One, a list of dates and events we had to memorise.

Despite her hatred for the subject, the history teacher kept on encouraging her until she passed the subject at "O" Level. She paid homage to the history teacher, whose name she could no longer remember, for making her pass history at "O" Level, and making it possible for her to become the history teacher she is today:

So surely I did not like history, but one thing I liked was my teacher who used to teach history. He knew that when he went to 4A there were certain individuals A, B, C who

needed encouragement and, if he kept on encouraging them, one day they would make it and credit would come to his side. So I just want to give credit to my teacher because if he was someone else I wouldn't have passed history at "O" level.

Thus Bessie became a history teacher more by default than by design. She acknowledged that she was not born a teacher because, "when I was growing up I was very quiet. I just felt lazy to speak." But as a primary and secondary school student, she aspired to be a teacher "because in the rural areas, what you only see is the teacher. At the end of the month you see them wearing new clothes; every time you go in the staffroom you see them eating good food, delicious food."

The turning point in Bessie's attitude towards history occurred after she had completed her "A" levels and taught for one year as an untrained teacher in two high schools in Harare. This is how she explained her late conversion to history:

In fact the period when I decided to become a history teacher was in 2004. That is when I started to do temporary teaching and at the schools where I was deployed I taught history. At Harare High I was teaching history and then from there, after the termination of my contract, I went to Mbare High. At Mbare High I was also teaching history. And when I was teaching that is when I realised that history was an interesting subject and I could become a history teacher. I then decided to apply for a place to train as a history teacher. Fortunate enough, I was offered a place for a two year programme (because I had "A" levels) to train as a history and geography teacher at Hillside Teachers College in 2005.

It was because of her experience as an untrained history teacher that Bessie realised that she could become a history teacher. She suddenly realised that history is an interesting subject after she had taught it. An interesting change took place in Bessie's sense-making of history as an academic subject after she had taught the subject she used to hate when she was a secondary school student. Only after teaching history at secondary school as an untrained teacher (albeit using rote pedagogy) did Bessie realise that she had the potential to teach the

subject she hated so much when she was a student at secondary school. Bessie's late conversion to history was reflected in her superficial approach to the subject and her lack of patience, persistence and depth in her explanations to students. In most of her lessons, class discussion was abandoned mid-way. Once students failed to respond to her question, instead of rephrasing it or unpacking the question to assist learners, Bessie would simply abandon the discussion and give students notes; arguing that students in Form 3B are of low academic ability as they are the eighth class out of the 10 ability streamed Form 3 classes at Bridge High School.

Teacher attitude towards reform

When I asked Bessie about her views towards the new curriculum, she replied: "I accepted it from the beginning." I questioned why she had such a favourable attitude towards the new history curriculum. This is how she responded:

Let me put it this way. My attitude was changed by going to the university [to do B.Ed. in history]. Prior to that I gave pupils notes and sometimes never cared to explain them. But when I came back beginning this year 2017, I started to see the teaching of history with another eye, with another view. I was so stimulated, so motivated by the new curriculum because while at university we were equipped with various approaches that are learner-centred like research, seminars and presentations. That helped me a lot. My B.Ed. training helped me accept the new curriculum.

Did she have adequate knowledge on the reforms she was implementing with Form 3B? Bessie replied confidently, "Yes, I do have adequate knowledge. The new methods in the new curriculum are familiar to me as I had covered them at university – the use of computers; I did a course on that. Research, I did another course on that. So to me I did not have a challenge with the new curriculum." The B.Ed. degree gave Bessie knowledge on learner-centred practices and, in some ways, prepared her for the implementation of the new history curriculum.

Class size

In the interviews and informal discussions I had with Bessie, she always complained about the abnormal class sizes at Bridge High School. Form 3B had 45 students when official teacher–student ratio at secondary school is supposed to be 1:35 (MOPSE, 2017:2). Bessie explained the relationship between class size, resource availability and teaching methods in the exit interview:

The school has tried to source some resources for the new curriculum, but considering the numbers we have – classes of 40 to 50 students each – these textbooks are inadequate. I tried to photocopy some material for the new history curriculum, but they [school administration] said they did not have stationery. This becomes a challenge. As a teacher I have to find a way out, and then you find me dictating the notes, giving the notes to the pupils, instead of them going out to find the information themselves.

Large classes stretched resources to the limit and impacted negatively on student discipline, making Bessie resort to dictation. Bessie did not make use of role playing and dramatisation in Form 3B. Why was this so? She explained in her usual soft voice:

To be honest with you, I haven't used these methods because of the issue of discipline on the part of the students. For example, if you assign pupils to role play religious leaders of the first Chimurenga and you say, 'you are Mbuya Nehanda or Sekuru Kaguvi', they become overwhelmed and get out of hand. Instead of focusing on the real issues they will start calling each other names. And even after the lesson, instead of calling those pupils with their original names they will call them 'Nehanda' or 'Kaguvi'. There is the problem of discipline among these pupils, and after the role play de-rolling is a problem.

Nature of learners

Besides being ill-disciplined and considered as below average performers, students in Form 3B absconded a lot from class, especially the boys. I never observed the class as a full house because of rampant absenteeism. The largest number of students present was 40 out of the expected 45 students during one lesson. The class was at its smallest when there were only 12 students present out of 45. This absenteeism had direct effects on the methods Bessie used to teach the class. “There is no need to explain and discuss the points raised in the notes

when most of the students are not present”, remarked Bessie as she started dictating notes to the 12 students present on that day. When I later asked her why some pupils bunk history lessons, she said that this is a common practice in all the lower ability classes at Bridge High School. She complained that the best classes are given the sciences, in line with the government’s STEM policy, and the low ability classes are given history. So the classes they are now teaching history in the new curriculum framework have less gifted learners who find history difficult because of its abstract nature. For example, the class I am calling Form 3B in this study was the eighth class out of 10 form three classes that were streamed according to ability. As a result, most of the students in Form 3B were of below average ability making them dislike history due to its abstract nature

School location and size

Bessie blamed the ghetto neighbourhood of Oldbricks Township, which is Bridge High School’s main catchment area, for the social ills that distract students’ attention from school work. The high student population of 1 788, coupled with a shortage of classrooms, makes it necessary for the school to have double sessions. Double sessions make it easy for the unruly students to cut classes and spend the whole day loitering around the school yard pretending to be “off session”. Bessie explained that, “Absenteeism is common in Form 3B, and all the other lower stream classes. Administration is aware of the problem, but they cannot do much about it as it is part of the school culture.”

School administration and resource availability

Bessie and her class did not go for an educational tour in 2017. But the new history curriculum recommends that students go for educational tours at least three times a year. I inquired why and she replied: “The challenge is our school administration. It says before you go to such areas as far as Great Zimbabwe, as far as Chinhoyi Caves and Matopos, why can’t you go

within the vicinity? But in our locality we do not have these places of historical significance. And it is also about the costs involved.” She also added that:

These trips have got some procedures, and the procedures are so tiresome and so engaging, in the end you give up. Clearance from Ministry, consent from parents and you also need money from parents to finance the trip ... And our syllabus is also very long; you have to make sure that every second is utilised. And so trips may be seen as a waste of time and resources.”

Although Bessie and Form 3B class were eager to embrace ICTs in the learning of history, there was only one computer laboratory at Bridge High School; and it was almost always occupied by students studying computers as an examinable subject at “O” and “A” Levels. The majority of students in Form 3B cannot afford smart phones and laptops because most come from low income families. Only 9 out of 45 students in Form 3B had smart phones. In the exit interview, Bessie complained that she could not use film and video as recommended in the new Syllabus 4044 because, “The video player we have in the staffroom for teachers is not working. So we cannot talk of video for pupils when the one for teachers is not even working.”

Bessie and the future in the classroom

At the end of the eight week observation period I inquired about Bessie’s career aspirations and occupational satisfaction. She responded:

My dreams were fulfilled. But I remember at one point, when I was growing up I was very quiet, my relatives used to wonder: ‘You have decided to be a teacher how are you going to teach these pupils. You are so quiet and soft.’ And I said, ‘God will help me.’ Now I am enjoying it [teaching]. Even classroom management, I can manage the pupils. I think teachers can be trained, like me. I really was trained to become one.

She attributed her change of attitude to the training she got at diploma and degree levels. “Now I cannot think of any other job besides teaching history,” she added. Bessie appeared

satisfied with her career choice as a teacher and was thinking of no other job except teaching history, a subject she used to hate when she was a secondary school student.

4.3 CASE STUDY 3: DAVID: A traveller at the crossroads

“My father always said, ‘I think this one is going to be a teacher, like me.’”

“I did not welcome this new curriculum. But you cannot escape being progressive.”

4.3.1 TEACHER BACKGROUND AND CLASSROOM CONTEXT

Introducing David

I was introduced to David by the History HOD at Delta High School in August 2017 as I was purposively scouting for teachers willing to participate in my study. After outlining the intentions of my study to him, David voluntarily agreed to be case studied while implementing the new history curriculum with Form 3D over an eight week period, beginning mid-September to mid-November 2017.

David is soft-spoken, calm and collected. He holds a Diploma in Education, a Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) degree in History and a Master of Education (M.Ed.) degree in Educational Management. He had 25 years’ experience as a history teacher when I conducted this study in the Third Term of 2017. He speaks with caution and looks like any other mature secondary school teacher, until you hear about his “entrepreneurial ventures” from his workmates. He rarely talks about them himself. Although he teaches full time at the mission school (where I conducted the study), David and his wife own a private school with Form1 to 6 and a total enrolment of around 500 students in one of the high density suburbs in Zitown.

David explained that owning the private school is not an accident but the fulfillment of a long held dream. As a small boy, his father always said, “This one is going to be a teacher, like me.” David explained that his family background and secondary education were instrumental in his career choice. He traced his attraction to history thus:

It was in 1987. I liked the way Mr. Moyo was teaching us. I thought one day I would like to be a history teacher, like him. I was in Form 3. Mr. Moyo had a lot of impact on me.

I liked to be a teacher one day because in rural areas teachers were highly respected. My father also wanted me to be a teacher as well.

Thus, David found himself in front of the history classroom partly because of his family background, his father wanted him to be a teacher, and also because of his secondary school history teacher who made him aspire to be a history teacher. In teaching history and running a private school, David sees himself as fulfilling his father's as well as his personal dream to become a teacher and school Head.

Form 3D at a glance

Form 3D is one of the 30 classes at Delta High School which had a total enrolment of 1 320 students from Form 1 to Form 6. The total staff compliment in the Third Term of 2017 was 52 teachers (30 females and 22 males). The mission school differs considerably from the two government day secondary schools in this study. Delta High does not have hot-sitting. Students spend more hours at school as lessons start at 7:30am and end at 4:30pm. Form 3D had some outstanding features: the class had only 20 history students; 14 girls and only 6 boys; and the lessons were double periods (35 minutes x 2), making each lesson one hour ten minutes long. The four history lessons per week were double periods starting from 3:10pm to 4:20pm on Monday and Tuesday. The twenty students taking history in Form 3D had made their own free choice to take the subject (instead of Biology) because the two subjects were optional in this class. The fact that students had made their own decision to take history had an important bearing on the students' attitude and commitment to the subject. Of the four classes in this study, only Form 3D had double history lessons. David justified the double periods on the grounds that they gave him enough time to use learner-centred methods like text study, group presentations and discussions. A single 35 minutes lesson would not give him adequate time to use learner-centred pedagogy, he claimed.

4.3.2 REFORM POLICY AS COSMETIC CHANGE

Making sense of reform

In the pre-observation interview David explained his understanding of the 2017 curriculum reform in history. This is what he said:

This idea of curriculum reform I cannot say we have reformed our curriculum in history because there is nothing which has completely changed. It's just a term we are using but there is nothing which has changed. It's the same John we are today calling Thomas because we don't have new topics. The topics we were studying in the previous syllabus [2167] are the same topics we are studying in the new syllabus [4044].

David sees the concept of 'the new curriculum' as a myth, more of the old wine in new bottles, without any real change in content and substance. He argued that they were still teaching the old topics they used to teach in the old Syllabus 2167. I probed David further to explore his sense making of the new curriculum, its intentions and requirements. His response revealed that his understanding of reform policy was still incomplete:

This new curriculum thing is a new baby; we are not very clear right from the top to the bottom. We are still learning. But in a nutshell, the new curriculum has two new aspects. It has this idea of coursework and projects which we call continuous assessment and the old one of summative evaluation or final exam they write at the end of the course. It also includes new subjects like Heritage Studies, Physical Education, Mass Displays, to just mention a few. And Agriculture is now compulsory for every student.

David admitted that he had not completely understood the new curriculum policy, although he was already implementing it. But he did not see the lack of clarity about the new curriculum as a problem unique to him; it was a problem for everyone – right from the policy makers at the top, down to the teacher at the bottom. That is why he said: "We are not very clear right from the top to the bottom." He saw confusion in the whole hierarchy from the policy makers who developed the new curriculum down to the implementers at classroom level. For David, continuous assessment through research tasks and the introduction of new subjects were the two major changes in the new history curriculum. He did not mention anything about changing teaching methods towards learner-centred approaches as one of the requirements of the new curriculum. While this could have been an oversight on his part, it may also be an indicator

that he did not prioritise the transformation of teaching methods as a key element of the 2017 curriculum reform initiative.

Understanding teaching methods

As our discussion unfolded during the interview, it took us to the issue of the teaching methods the new curriculum recommended. Did David see any changes in the teaching methods the new history curriculum recommended teachers to use? He explained: “They haven’t changed very much. Only the inclusion of ICT is one major change, maybe we also have the idea of projects, but we haven’t changed teaching methods yet.” David did not see any major changes in the teaching methods recommended in History Syllabus 4044, as compared to those stipulated in Syllabus 2167, except the inclusion of ICT and research based projects. When I probed his understanding of the teaching methods in Syllabuses 2167 and 4044, David clarified that, “Not much has changed in those teaching methods, both syllabuses encourage teachers to use progressive teaching methods.” David’s sense-making of the teaching methods in the two syllabuses was very accurate because both state that teachers must use learner-centred approaches. Syllabus 2167 states that; “The involvement of the learners should be regarded as central in approaches to learning” (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2002:5) while Syllabus 4044 recommends the use of “learner centred and multi-sensory approaches” (ZIMSEC,2015:2).

But which teaching methods did David often use in his lessons? His response was elaborate:

The methods we use when teaching history are different from mathematics. We have key methods like text study; usually we work from the known going to the unknown and we don't expect our students to be prophets, they must read. And so text study is one of the key methods we use in history because of the nature of historical knowledge. We also have the teacher exposition; the teacher must be very knowledgeable; before attacking the topic the teacher must explain to students what he or she expects to cover and the depth of coverage. And so teacher exposition is very important.

David’s response showed both elements of adherence and non-adherence to reform policy prescriptions. He stressed the centrality of text study by students as one way of reducing

teacher talk and dominance in the history lesson – which is in compliance with the new curriculum policy. But he also emphasised his use and dependence on teacher exposition – an approach which is discouraged in Syllabuses 2167 and 4044. David's sense-making of reform policy on teaching methods was not in total congruence with the visions and expectations of the policy makers because he still believed that some traditional teaching methods, like teacher exposition, are still critical in history instruction, a view which obviously is not shared by those who developed the new history curriculum and expect teachers to use learner-centred approaches only.

I analysed David's scheme of work to identify the teaching methods he planned to use in his lessons viz-a-viz the learner-centred and multi-sensory methods recommended in Syllabus 4044.

Figure 9: A sample of the methods David intended to use in Week 7 and 8

Week ending	Work planned	Objectives	Source	Methodology and competencies	Evaluation
27-10-17	Treaties signed between Lobengula and Whites -Examples of the agreements - The Tuli Concessions Grobler Treaty - The Moffat Treaty (1887)	-By the end of the week pupils should be able to ; name at least four agreements signed between Lobengula and the Whites - State at least 3 terms of the -Tuli Concession -Grobler Treaty - Outline at least 4 terms of the Moffat Treaty	-Step Ahead Book 3 -African Heritage Book 3 -'O' Level History of Southern Africa - From Iron Age to Independence	- teacher exposition - Question and answer -text and study - Class and group discussions - simulations - Picture study - Map studying - Note taking - Note making	
03-11-17	Era of Treaties - The Rudd Concession (1888) - The Lippert Concession - Revision test	- Name at least six people present at the signing of the Rudd concession -state at least six written terms of the Rudd Concession -State at least six non-written (verbal) terms of the Concession -state at least six terms of the Lippert Concession	-Step Ahead Book 3 -African Heritage Book 3 -'O' Level History of Southern Africa - From Iron Age to Independence -Dynamics of History book 3	- teacher exposition - Question and answer - text and study - Picture study - Class and group discussions - Note taking - Note making	

The teaching methods in David's schemes of work were: teacher exposition, question and answer, text study, map study, picture study, group discussion, class discussion, note making, note taking and role playing. Figure 9 shows that David planned to use both teacher-centred and learner-centred approaches, but his methods were skewed more towards progressive teaching methods than the traditional ones. Thus, the teaching methods in David's schemes of work were not wholly congruent with the requirements of the new history curriculum as they also included teacher exposition, dictation and note taking. Having observed the contradictions between David's schemes of work and reform guidelines, I immersed myself in David's classroom for an eight week period. The intention was to observe how he was teaching the new curriculum in the light of what he said in the interviews, planned in the schemes of work and what the history curriculum reform policy says.

4.3.3 FORM 3D: TEACHING A CLASS OF 20 COMMITTED ‘CADRES’

The twenty students taking history in Form 3D had made their own decision and free choice to take history (instead of biology) because the subject was optional in their class. This had implications on their attitudes towards the subject and their commitment to it. Form 3D’s four history lessons per week were double periods starting from 3:10 to 4:20pm on Monday and Tuesday. David explained that he preferred the one hour ten minutes lessons because they gave him enough time to use learner-centred methods like text study, map study, picture study, discussions, group presentations and role playing. David was the only teacher, among the four teachers in this multiple case study, who had double lessons for history. The other three teachers taught four single history lessons per week per class.

Attempts to reform

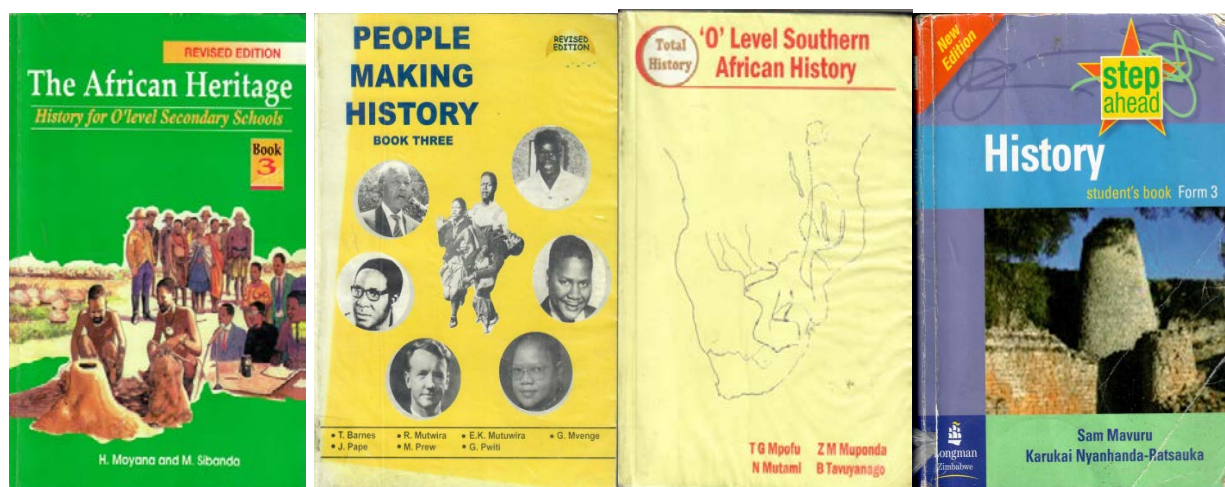
Had David changed his teaching methods in response to the demands of Syllabus 4044 which he was implementing? His response reflected the complexity and difficulty of curriculum reform: “The methods haven’t changed very much. Only the inclusion of ICT is one major change, and we also have the idea of continuous assessment tasks.” David saw stagnation and change at the same time in the new curriculum. That was why he said there was not much change and then went on to talk of “major changes” in the use of computers and introduction of continuous assessment tasks. I wanted to know the teaching methods David used in his lessons. His response was elaborate:

The methods we use when teaching history are different from mathematics. We have key methods like text study – we don’t expect our students to be prophets, they must read. And so text study accompanied by class discussion is one of the key methods we use in history. We also have teacher exposition; the teacher must be very knowledgeable; before attacking the topic, the teacher must explain to students what he or she expects to cover. And so teacher exposition is very important.

Text study followed by class discussion was one key method David used extensively in most of the 9 double lessons I observed. Each of the nine lessons I observed was one hour ten minutes long. David would use two or three textbooks in one lesson to enable students to see

different perspectives or versions of the same historical incident or topic. The textbooks commonly used in Form 3D were: *The African Heritage Book 3: History for “O” Level Secondary School* by Moyana and Sibanda (2007); *People Making History Book 3* by Barnes et al. (2010); *Total History: “O” Level Southern African History* by Mpfu et al. (2009) and *Step Ahead: “O” Level History Student Book 3* by Mavuru and Nyanhanda-Ratsauka(2008). Figure 10 shows the four textbooks.

Figure 10: The four textbooks David and Form 3D used



In the lesson on ‘The origins of the Ndebele State’, David asked students to read two passages from Mpfu et al. (2009:61) and Barnes et al. (2010:49-51). David provided learners with the opportunity to experience multiple representations of a single historical event by different authors. In these lessons, David and his students went beyond the surface level as they explored historical issues on a deeper level.

David also used three different textbooks in the lesson on ‘Why the Ndebele settled in Zimbabwe’ to illustrate how different historians often see the same issue in different perspectives. The textbooks used in this lesson were: Moyana and Sibanda (2007:18); Mpfu et al. (2009:63-64) and Mavuru and Nyanhanda-Ratsauka (2008:64). Excerpts from the lesson:

Lesson segment 5

T: Why did Mzilikazi and his people decide to settle in Zimbabwe?

L1: There were good pastures for cattle which were important for the Ndebele.

L2: For security reasons – it was far away from the Zulus and the Boers.

T: Very true. The Ndebele had rebelled against Tshaka and the Zulus still wanted to punish them for this. Remember the Zulus and the Boers attacked them several times forcing them to move further north. Any other reasons?

L3: The area also had a lot of ivory which was important for external trade

T: Yes, but elaborate on that point.

L3: In Matabeleland, Mzilikazi could trade with Portuguese in the East, and the Boers and the British from the South.

T: Very good. So we say that Matabeleland land was strategically located.

Students took down notes as the discussion unfolded and David encouraged them to do so. Most of them were eager to participate in the class discussion as they could articulate and justify their ideas reflecting their assumed above average cognitive abilities. After the discussion, David went on to dictate notes to students for them to reinforce what had emerged from the class discussion. In the pre-observation interview, David indicated that, “Forcing or making students write their own notes is like leaving your students in the wilderness. You must guide them. Even if students are to write their own notes, at times the teacher must give notes to students because it’s not everything which is found in the school textbook.”

Group presentations and discussion

Group presentations and class discussions were popular with David. His class of 20 students had four permanent groups of five students each. Each student had two history textbooks (Mpofu et al., 2009 & Mavuru and Nyanhanda-Ratsauka, 2008) allocated by the teacher. The group work unfolded in a linear sequence which started with the teacher writing the tasks on the chalkboard and referring students to the relevant passages in the texts. Students were then given time to work on the tasks and give feedback, which was followed by teacher

directed class discussion. I observed a lesson on 'Mzilikazi's leadership qualities' which had group presentations as the main teaching strategy. The following discussion emerged from the presentations.

Lesson segment 6

T: So what made Mzilikazi survive that long as the leader of the Ndebele – from his breakaway from Tshaka in 1822 till his death in 1868?

L1: Mzilikazi had superior military tactics like the short stabbing spear, the long shields and cow horn formation that he had learnt from Tshaka.

T: Yes. Any other reasons?

L2: Mzilikazi was a brave warrior and strategist who won many battles.

T: Very true. Let us focus more on him as a warrior and politician.

L3: He was ambitious to have his own kingdom and that is why he rebelled from Tshaka.

T: Yes. But remember that Mzilikazi also used diplomacy. How?

L4: He would marry from the people he conquered and signed a friendship treaty with Robert Moffat a missionary because he wanted guns.

T: Very good. Now let us rank the reasons for Mzilikazi's survival in order of importance and make judgement (there was some hushed discussion among students before they raised up their hands).

L5: I think it's his character which made him survive that long – he was a strategist and a brave fighter.

T: Yes. Mzilikazi's personality as a leader was very important for his survival – he was an ambitious and brave military leader, a shrewd strategist and diplomat where necessary.

In this lesson, students first discussed the various factors that made Mzilikazi hold on to power for that long. David facilitated and moderated the discussion and sense-making process. He also assisted students in the search for a common understanding and did not impose his opinion on the students. Rather, David encouraged an exchange of ideas between him and the students as they explored new concepts, negotiated their meanings and constructed new knowledge.

Educational tours

Educational tours are one of the recommended teaching methods in the new history curriculum. I checked if David had gone for educational tours with his Form 3s in 2017. He narrated that:

We visited the National Archives and the Heroes Acre here in Harare in July 2017. We were shown how important documents and newspapers are stored and accessed when needed for research purposes. Students also learnt a lot about the war of liberation at the Heroes Acre. These tours were very enlightening and they enjoyed a lot. We have not done any excursions outside Harare in 2017 mainly because of financial constraints.

The educational tour was conducted during the Second Term of 2018, so I did not have the opportunity to witness it. But during casual conversations with Form 3D students, I was able to confirm that the trip indeed took place. In the pre-observation interview, David had pointed out that, "This idea of trips has brought a lot of interest in my kids because working indoors becomes monotonous and boring. So history outdoor has aspects of excitement and adventure." Going for the educational tour was one sign of David's compliance with the requirements of the new history curriculum in its early implementation stages.

Failure to reform

Exposition and dictation of notes

In the pre-observation interview, David acknowledged that he also uses teacher exposition, lecturing and dictation. "Usually teacher-centred methods are used where we find textbooks lacking. Some of the textbooks which are used by the students lack facts and that is where the knowledge of the teacher becomes very important," he explained to me. He emphasised the teacher's central role in the teaching-learning process when I asked him whether teachers should give notes or students should write their own notes. This is how he made sense of the notes-giving/notes-making debate:

This one is a tricky question, in my view I think its 50-50. Even if students are to write their own notes at times the teacher must give the students notes because it's not everything which is found in the textbook which is relevant to the exam. The teacher must play a critical role especially in subjects like history where we have limited text recovery. It's different from science and mathematics where you can prove a theory again and again. So in history the teacher remains the master of the subject and so must give notes.

True to his word, David dictated and gave notes to pupils in all the lessons even when he used learner-centred approaches like text study, presentations and discussions.

Theory not practice

There are some teaching methods which David talked about in the interview and selected in his schemes of work but which I never saw him use in the classroom like role playing, map study, picture study and computers. In the interview he had said:

At times the students empathise, so role playing is a very important method. We also have methods like map study, picture study; we have a variety of them. It's not the old history class. We also use ICT to do research. We have facilities here, the internet, and the computers. We are a modern school different from a school in the rural areas.

David talked of these progressive learner-centred methods (which I never saw him use in practice) either to flatter me so that I see him as a very reform oriented teacher, or simply because he had knowledge of these methods from his diploma and degree training as a history teacher, but never tried them in actual classroom practice. In the lessons I observed, David seemed to over-depend on text study, group work and class discussion as the only progressive teaching methods without trying out some of the unique learner-centred practices he mentioned in the interview.

Resource availability and use

In all the nine double lessons I observed in Form 3D, David did not make use of film and video shows. He justified his actions this way: “The themes that I was covering did not demand the use of video and films. But we do have the resources.” David was honest enough to accept that at Delta High School the film and video resources are there, but was not honest when he claimed that the topics he covered in Term 3 2017 did not demand the use of these technologies. A lot of films and videos have been produced on Ndebele migrations, early contacts with Robert and John Moffat, Cecil John Rhodes and the colonial occupation of Zimbabwe. With foresight and preparation, David could have used the audio-visual technology available in his lessons. There was an apparent paradox in David’s practice in that film and video resources were available but David was not using them, preferring to use traditional teaching methods and some learner-centred activities which did not depend on the use of any modern electronic gadgets.

Hybrid patterns of practice

In the intermittent interview, I wanted David’s opinion on his own patterns of classroom practice. This was his self-evaluation:

It’s progressive because the way I was operating yesterday is different from the way I am operating today. The students I taught yesteryear are different from the students of today. Usually in history, we believe that teachers who do not change face extinction, like the dinosaurs. You cannot escape being progressive.

But what David said in this interview was not necessarily congruent with what I observed in his lessons. Although he made use of progressive learner-centred methods like text study, group presentations and class discussion, David also made use of traditional practices like teacher exposition and dictation of notes in the same lessons. In fact, he believed that, “The history teacher remains the master of the subject. Here and there the teacher must give students notes because it’s not everything which is found in the school textbook.” Such statements revealed David’s traditional leanings and beliefs on the role of the history teacher in the classroom, perhaps making him not as progressive as he thought he was.

In the exit interview, I gave David the opportunity to judge his own patterns of teaching practice over the eight week period I had observed him teach. His response was realistic: “My teaching methods this term were more of progressive and traditional methods would only come here and there.” Even in lessons where notes were generated from text study and class discussions, David always used some dictation and exposition, making his practice a mixture of progressive and traditional teaching practices. David appeared to be at the crossroads of pedagogical reform as traditional practices were always finding their way into the lessons in which he would have started by using learner-centred methods.

4.3.4 TRYING TO MAKE REFORM POLICY AND TRADITION COMPATIBLE

Continuous Assessment Task 1

Like all the Form 3 teachers in this study, David received Continuous Assessment Task 1 some three weeks after schools had opened for Third Term in 2017. He described his experiences with the implementation of 2017 reform policy as not so rosy:

I did not want to use this term, but let me use it; the introduction of the reforms has been chaotic. The inclusion of the tasks and projects was not done properly. In fact, the introduction was haphazard. There was no uniformity. Different schools received the continuous assessment tasks at different times. That's why I say the implementation was chaotic.

He went on to explain that he only received the task on the 4th of October, some three weeks after schools had opened for the Third Term of 2017. As a result, he had not planned for the task in the term's schemes of work. He had to find time, outside the school timetable, to assist learners in constructing the interview guide, collect the data, analyse it and write the research report.

How did the introduction of the continuous assessment task affect his actual teaching, looking at the fact that he had not planned for this activity? He explained that, “I had to take some five or more minutes from each lesson to talk about the research tasks because the tasks came mid-way through the term.” He went on to say that he had to teach the task outside normal

teaching hours to give the students the support they needed to carry out meaningful research. David complained:

No time was allocated on the timetable to assist learners work on the tasks. Students must know why they conduct research, define a research project and outline the steps and structure of a project. You cannot simply send students to go into the community and collect data without discussing methods or strategies we use to collect data, such as interviews, developing questionnaires and how to analyse the data. This can only be done after some lessons.

To give his Form 3D students enough theoretical grounding on why and how to carry out research, David had to meet his students outside the official timetable. Luckily, there is no hot-seating at Delta High School and so classrooms are always available for use by teachers and students during working hours. The other advantages which David had in executing the research based task with Form 3D, compared with his counterparts in the day secondary schools, was that Form 3D was a small class of 20 students who volunteered to take history at “O” level (while their peers took biology) and so they were highly motivated to work on the task. David confidently assured me that, “The 20 who chose to do history are of above average intelligence and the number is an appropriate class size for the new curriculum. So I expect a 100% pass rate.” In the exit interview on 14th November 2017, David informed me of student progress on Continuous Assessment Task 1, with a smile of satisfaction; “All of them have handed in the work and I am marking. I am almost through with the marking.”

Reforming teaching practices

Teacher-student discourses

Discussion between David and his students was characterised by a deep exploration of historical issues that went beyond surface level. For instance, in one lesson David and his

class of 20 debated the question: To what extent was Cecil John Rhodes a cruel leader? David facilitated the debate by picking on respondents and acting as a moderator on whether Rhodes was a hero, a villain, or a combination of both. Students gave the negative side of Rhodes (like taking away African land, taxation, the wars he caused etc.). But they also commended him for ending Ndebele raids on the Shona, introducing new agricultural skills, education and modern medicine. During the discussion David advised his students that: “You need to draw a balance sheet on Rhodes’ contribution to Zimbabwean history. Your answer must look at both sides of the story rather than a one sided response full of praises or condemnation only. Look at the positive and negative side of his contribution to history.”

Teaching for historical understanding

David made efforts to ensure that students understood concepts rather than regurgitate what the teacher would have said (see **Lesson Segments 5 and 6**). He dictated notes to support what would have been discussed in the lesson, and I did not see him using dictation as the main teaching method or at the beginning of the 70 minutes long lessons. Lessons always started with learner-centred activities like text study, group work, presentations, debate and writing notes generated during class discussions. Only after discussing issues and developing learners’ understanding would David dictate notes to reinforce what the students would have said. Giving students additional notes was important for David because “it shows that the teacher is the master of the subject whose knowledge goes beyond the textbook,” he said. Despite the use of dictation in the later stages of the lessons, David made efforts to teach for historical understanding in the early stages.

4.3.5 STRUGGLING AT THE CROSSROADS

Teacher aspirations

That David became a history teacher was not an accident, but the fulfillment of a long-held dream which was directly influenced by his father and secondary school history teacher. Besides the influence of his teacher Mr. Moyo, David also explained how his father influenced his career: “My father also wanted me to be a teacher as well. He was always saying, “I think this one is going to be a teacher like me. I would really like to carry on this legacy.”

Attitude towards reform

In one of the interviews, David opened up on his attitude towards the implementation new curriculum. This is how he explained it:

I did not welcome this idea of the new curriculum because of the amount of work – tasks, projects. To say the truth, the new curriculum was forced upon us because we were not involved in the formulation of the new syllabus. There was no consultation. I think it's very important to consult the classroom practitioner because I believe there is no substitute to experience. Usually the policies which are formulated by the elite do not succeed at the grassroots because they are far removed from reality.

The amount of work associated with the new curriculum (especially the tasks), lack of consultation and lack of knowledge on the changes he was expected to implement all contributed to David's negative attitude towards the new curriculum when implementation started in January 2017. But what made him accept the new history curriculum in the end? He explained the gradual transformation of his attitude:

Meetings with teachers from other schools, workshops conducted by ZIMSEC, district and provincial offices, and even staff development conducted by the school administration made me change my attitude towards the new curriculum. Gradually, I accepted the change. Usually, in history we believe that teachers who do not change face extinction like the dinosaurs. You cannot escape being progressive.

School administration

This is how David explained the role of the school administration in making curriculum change possible:

The school administration is very supportive of the curriculum changes. We have photocopying facilities, typing, and we also use school computers for research. The school photocopied the continuous assessment tasks for each student. We have even

given our students letters to introduce themselves to the councillors they want to interview.

The number of textbooks issued to each student by the school administration also complemented David's efforts to move towards learner-centred pedagogy. Each Form 3D student had two history textbooks (Mavuru and Nyanhanda-Ratsauka, 2008 & Mpofu et al., 2009) for use throughout the year. David had two other textbooks (Moyana and Sibanda, 2007 & Barnes et al., 2010) which he also used his lessons to enhance his multi-perspective approach (see Figure 10). The administration also supported educational tours, as alluded to by David:

We conduct educational tours often. Every term we have educational tour to places of historical significance. We have visited Great Zimbabwe, National Archives, National Heroes Acre and Domboshava rock paintings which were done by the San. We have also visited the National Museum. We must thank the school administration which shoulders the greater part of the costs, provides the school bus and fuel, and parents who subsidise the costs.

Resource availability

David acknowledged that most resources that can make lessons more learner-centred as recommended by the new curriculum are available at Delta High School. "We have adequate textbooks because without individual textbooks students find it hard to research." Why then did he not use film and video in the eight week observation period? David replied that: "The themes that I was covering did not demand the use of video and films. But we do have the resources." But many films are available on the colonial occupation of Southern Africa and Zimbabwe which are the major topics David covered in Term 3 2017. My own inference was that David was not making use of film and video technology which were readily available at his school because he may not be familiar with this form of media in his lessons although he claimed that he had the knowledge and skills to use these technologies.

Class size

Form 3D which I observed David teaching over an eight week period had only 20 students because history was optional in this class. Students were free to do history or biology. David explained the modalities of the selection:

Usually those good in math/science they go for the sciences and others into the commercials and the arts. We allow them free choice to do the sciences, the commercials or the arts. Like Form 3D you are observing, the students chose to do history, it's an arts class. It's not really streaming in the traditional sense of the word – its channeling according to ability and interest. The aspect of interest is very important because it brings in intrinsic motivation.

In the 9 lessons (70 minutes long each) that I observed in Form 3D, the 20 history students were highly motivated and participated actively in group presentations and class discussions reflecting an intrinsic passion for studying history. David proudly said, “I am teaching students who want to do history, and the class of 20 is an appropriate class size for the new curriculum.” The official teacher-pupil ratio for the new curriculum at secondary school level is actually 1:35 (MOPSE, 2017:2). The small class size was indeed a motivating factor for David who indicated that, “With this manageable class size, you can pay attention to each individual student and mark work more closely giving detailed comments. And I am assured of a 100% pass rate.”

Nature of learners

David's selection of teaching methods was also influenced by the perceived intellectual ability of learners in Form 3D. He explained the relationship between learner ability and methods of instruction:

Most of my students are average to above average. The strategies which I use are influenced by the learners' ability – usually I favour discussion because they are above average and have the language to engage in discussion. I also use a variety of

strategies like text study, map study, simulation, drama and picture study. Each method is used depending on the situation and reaction of learners.

I observed David using class discussion in most of his lessons and the students actively participated because they had an elaborate language code and could explain and argue their ideas clearly. Just like the small class size, the academically gifted learners in Form 3D motivated David to use learner-centred approaches. Although he received the task late (4th October 2017), David's class was able to complete the task by 14th November 2017 because of students' willingness and interest in carrying out the research-based task.

In the exit interview I enquired about David's occupational satisfaction as a history teacher. He was not hesitant in his response: "I am operating in a territory where I can really say I wanted to be. My occupational dreams were fulfilled." It was clear that David was not thinking of any other job except teaching history and running his private college, dreams he had developed as a secondary school student.

4.4 CASE STUDY 4: THE CASE OF EMMY: Pacesetting at the frontline

"I was born a teacher by nature and I enjoy teaching. It's part of me."

"Even before the new curriculum, I had already moved from the teacher dominated approach."

4.4.1 TEACHER BACKGROUND AND CLASS PROFILE

Introducing Emmy

If first contact is an indicator of what is likely to follow, then Emmy lived up to the Nigerian proverb: "You can tell the cock the day the chicks are hatched." On the first day we met, Emmy stood out from the crowd as a history teacher cut from a different block of wood. I was introduced to Emmy by the Deputy Head of Exit High School in early August 2017 just before schools closed to mark the end of the Second Term. She was the only history teacher teaching

the new history curriculum to the only Form 3 class that was taking history at this boarding school.

While explaining to Emmy that my research required prolonged stay in her classroom, two school girls came to her. One of the girls said that they wanted to know the history topics they were to research and write notes on during the school holiday. I wanted to ask if her students write their own notes, but she quickly explained: “These are Form Ones. I have taught all my students to write their own notes. I do not give notes and this explains why I have a 90% pass rate at “O” level.” I really looked forward to observing Emmy’s lessons as she had already indicated some uniqueness in her approach to history pedagogy.

The 36 year old Emmy holds a Bachelor of Arts Honours (B.A. Hon.) Degree in History from the University of Zimbabwe and a Post-Graduate Diploma in Education from the Zimbabwe Open University. She had eleven years’ experience as a secondary school history teacher when I did fieldwork for this study in the Third Term of 2017. For Emmy, teaching history is a dream that came true, as she had always wanted to be a history teacher. She explained her close attachment to the teaching profession: “I am a teacher, born a teacher by nature. And I enjoy teaching – it’s a part of me. I am motivated and I want those results.” She also sees her work as a history teacher as the continuation of a ‘tradition’ started by her elder brother who was also a history teacher. “When I was still at secondary school my brother was a history teacher so I used to have all the textbooks I needed ... My brother influenced me to be a history teacher. I cannot rule that out. My brother was, and still is, my model,” she explained during the intermittent interview.

Form 3E: a bird’s eye-view

Form 3E is one of the three Form 3 classes at Exit High School, a trust-run boarding school which had 757 boarders (Form 1 to 6) in September 2017. There are only 12 classes from Form 1 to 4 at Exit. One outstanding feature in Form 3E was that the class had a total of 49 students, going against popular belief and expectations that classes at boarding schools are generally small. Emmy explained that the classes at Exit High School are over-loaded mainly because of parental demand for places for their children at this boarding school. There is high

competition to secure places at this school due to the good results the school produces at “0” and “A” levels. Consequently, Exit High School only takes the cream of the crop when it enrolls students for Form 1 and so most of the students in Form 3E, like in all the other classes at the school, are considered to be of above average ability.

At Exit High School, Form 3 students are not streamed according to ability since most are high flyers or of above average ability. Rather, they are channeled into different classes according to talent and student subject choice. Students make choices, with the teachers’ advice and progress report in hand, to go into the Sciences, Commercials or the Arts class. Form 3E was the Arts class and all the 49 students in this class had made their own free choice to take history. The free will to take history had a strong bearing on student commitment and disposition towards the subject. The concept of ‘hot sitting’ does not exist at Exit High School. Instead, students have many hours of supervised study after school because this is a boarding school.

4.4.2 MAKING SENSE OF POLICY

Emmy’s sense-making of history curriculum reforms

The pre-observation interview opened by asking Emmy to explain her understanding of the history curriculum reforms they were implementing. She elaborately articulated that:

When you look at the syllabus not much has changed; we still have old topics in this new syllabus, but they have just actually divided it into four categories, Sections A, Section B, Section C and Section D. What I have noticed is that they want to bring in the Second Chimurenga and Post-independence developments in this new curriculum. Previously most teachers would teach up to the First Chimurenga and then when it comes to the Second Chimurenga, post-independence developments, ESAP, land reform, our children were blank. Everything that happened after independence we did not touch on because students would get their four questions for the examinations from the pre-colonial and colonial eras. But now the new curriculum has sections and you have to touch on every section, including the Second Chimurenga and post-independence developments.

In Emmy's eyes, the new history curriculum is almost a duplication of Syllabus 2167 which it replaced because the topics have largely remained the same. The only conspicuous change, in her own sense-making, is the division of History Syllabus 4044 (CDTS, 2015:44) into four sections reflecting four historical epochs: Pre-colonial Zimbabwean societies; Colonisation of Zimbabwe, The Armed struggle, and Post-independence developments in Zimbabwe. Each of the four sections of the syllabus is allocated equal weighting (25%) to give a total of 100 marks (CDTS, 2015:44). Candidates are expected to choose one question from each section making it mandatory for history teachers to cover post-independence developments with their lessons in order to prepare students for the examinations.

The intention of the policy makers, from Emmy's interpretation of the 2017 reform policy, is to "force history teachers to teach post-2000 political and economic developments, including the controversial Third Chimurenga and the violent farm invasions that accompanied it." With the singular exception that the new syllabus was indirectly forcing teachers to teach post-independence developments and acknowledge ZANU (PF)'s achievements, for Emmy the new history Syllabus 4044 was the proverbial old wine in new bottles as it was very similar to Syllabus 2167 that it was replacing. But did Emmy have enough knowledge on the new curriculum she was implementing? She replied in a rather worried tone:

This new curriculum has been a major challenge because, initially, we did not have much information on the changes. It was abrupt, it was not given time and we didn't have enough workshops to prepare us. I don't even know where we are going and what is going to happen because we haven't seen anything, even the specimen papers, we haven't seen them. So we are actually teaching from the head.

Emmy complained that the new curriculum was rolled out without adequate teacher preparation for the changes. She only attended one awareness workshop on the new curriculum in 2016 and they were told to implement the new curriculum in January 2017. As a result, Emmy was failing to make sense of the changes she was implementing as reflected by her complaint that, "I don't even know where we are going and what is going to happen." The new history curriculum was creating a lot of uncertainty, anxiety and confusion in Emmy's

mind on what she was supposed to do (and not do) in implementing it. This uncertainty in her mind was mainly caused by the reform authorities' failure to produce essential documents, like specimen papers, that were supposed to guide her and eliminate some of the confusion surrounding the new history curriculum.

Knowledge on teaching methods

Emmy was unsure of where she was going in the implementation of the new curriculum because of lack of information from the reform initiators. I then wanted to know if she had enough knowledge of the teaching methods recommended in the new history curriculum. Emmy responded:

The new curriculum emphasises learner-centred approaches, putting more emphasis on learning activities, so that the teacher is only a facilitator. We just facilitate and students take the leading role, they can co-ordinate themselves with minimum supervision. There is no room for dictation in the new curriculum. Students have to write their own notes. It's the students who have to do the learning themselves which is in line with the new curriculum.

From this pre-observation interview, I could deduce that Emmy appeared to have in-depth knowledge of the teaching methods recommended by the new history curriculum as she correctly emphasized that the dictation of notes is totally discouraged. Her sense making of learner-centred methodology was in agreement with history curriculum reform policy as stipulated in Syllabus 4044 (CDTS, 2015:2) which states that: "The teaching of history will be accomplished through the use of learner-centred and multi-sensory approaches."

After the pre-observation interview I sought to find the teaching methods Emmy planned to use in her lessons and compare them with the methods in the syllabus document.

Figure 11: Emmy's choice of teaching methods in her scheme of work for Week 2

WEEK ENDING	TOPIC	OBJECTIVES; By the end of the week learners should be able to	COMPITENCIES	TEACHER/LEARNER ACTIVITIES	SOURCE	COMMENTS
22-09-18	COLONISATION OF ZIMBABWE REASONS FOR COLONISATION	-identify the reasons for the colonisation of Zimbabwe -explain the reasons for the colonization of Zimbabwe i.e. quest for second Eldorado, presence of good savannah soils and availability of raw materials.	-identifying -explaining	Tr begins by asking learners to identify Rhodes on a picture - question and answer on the background of Rhodes -class discussion on the reasons for colonization -learners take down notes -homework on treaties signed by Rhodes	Zimsec 'O' Level History Syllabus p29 S. Mavuru Step Ahead Bk 3 p115	
	TREATIES SIGNED BY LOBENGULA TATI CONCESSION GROBLER TREATY (1887)	-State the terms of the treaties -analyze the provisions of treaties signed i.e. Tati Concession and the Grobler Treaty.	-stating -analyzing	-Tr begins by showing learners the portrait of Lobengula and asking questions about him -Presentation on the treaties -class discussion on the terms -Tr asks pupils to give summary -learners take down main points	S. Mavuru Step Ahead Bk 3 p 116 -pictures of Lobengula	
	MOFFAT TREATY (11 FEB 1988)	- explain why the treaty was signed. -describe the terms of the treaty - analyze the terms of the treaty.	-explaining -describing -analyzing	- recap of previous lesson. -Presentation on the Moffat Treaty. -Class discussion of the term -Pupils take down main points Homework on the Rudd concession	S. Mavuru Step Ahead Bk 3 p 117	
	REVISION EXERCISE	-recall -describe -evaluate	-recalling -describing -evaluating	Tr writes the question on the white board -learners attempt the questions individually -Tr collects books for marking	S. Mavuru Step Ahead Bk 3 p138	

As shown in Figure 11, the teaching methods documented in Emmy's scheme of work for Week 2 were: picture study, question and answer, class discussion, presentations, teacher recap, and note taking. Emmy also wanted to develop learners' higher order competencies of explaining, analysing and evaluating; besides the lower order abilities of stating, recalling and describing. Most of the methods in Emmy's scheme of work for week 2 were progressive and learner-centred, as recommended in the new syllabus document (CDTS, 2015:2), except for teacher recap. After the document analysis, I immersed myself into Emmy's Form 3E for an eight week period so that I could observe the teaching methods she actually used in her lessons in the light of what she had planned in her schemes of work, said in the interviews and the policy prescriptions of the new history curriculum.

4.4.3 TEACHING FORM 3E: THE STUDENT'S VOICE IS HEARD

Ahead of the reforms

Before the lesson observations in Form 3E, I discussed with Emmy how she understood her own teaching methods. This is how she explained her pedagogy:

Group and individual presentations are my main approaches; students present on questions given. We also have class discussions when they make presentations. I usually interact, I intervene so as to clarify points, emphasise points, or correct misconceptions by the students. We also use role playing. It's important because when they imitate they actually understand better, it's like bringing history closer to them.

Did she use any teacher-centred methods in her practice? She was adamant that she did not use traditional approaches in her lessons. "In my classes I have always used progressive methods. Even before the new curriculum I had already moved from the teacher-dominated approach," she insisted. It is interesting that Emmy believed that she had already reformed her practice before the curriculum reforms of January 2017. In other words, her practice was ahead of the reforms. The lesson observations were to establish whether and how Emmy's sense-making of her own teaching practice could be described in the terms she had provided.

No dictation, no note giving

The issue of notes came up in my pre-observation interview with Emmy: must teachers give students notes, or students should write their own notes? Emmy's response was different from the conventional:

Personally I don't give notes; they have to write their own notes. Because when they write notes they are actually reading, they are actually studying on their own. And so when it comes to the lesson students are ripe, they ask where they did not understand and you are actually emphasising on what they have read.

Emmy stressed that she does not give notes to students at all. In all the 15 lessons I observed Emmy teaching over the eight week fieldwork period, she did not dictate notes to students or write notes on the whiteboard, setting her practice apart from that of the other three teachers in this study. Students in Form 3E took down notes as the class presentations and discussions unfolded, a skill which Emmy had taught them. Emmy had also taught her students to write

notes before the topics were taught, and during the lesson they would add new points and views to reinforce what they had written on their own. Students asked questions and the teacher clarified grey areas. “I have seen it work: that they first interact with the textbook through note making, and then when I come for the lesson I clarify points and we discuss issues,” Emmy explained her practice to me.

In the exit interview, I further inquired if Emmy did not find it necessary, due to time constraints, preparations for the examinations, or any other reasons, to use traditional teaching methods. She was adamant that:

The traditional methods in history are the lecture method and dictation. But I don't use lecturing and note giving. I have desisted from that. They write their own notes so that they will be able to interpret them. If you check they are way ahead in their notes – usually a topic or two ahead. I just give them the layout of what we are going to do and they write their own notes and they are enjoying it. It's exciting, children participate, they understand better, they are motivated, even the results themselves they actually show that when children do it they will understand better and pass.

Emmy's words are supported by the November 2016 “O” Level history examinations results analysis. She achieved a 90% pass rate with 92 of her students getting “A” grades out of the 146 candidates (College Magazine, 2016:5).

Skills development

The discussion on note making took us to the content-skills debate. Should history teachers teach history content or historical skills? I wanted to know her opinion and practice on this controversial issue. She gave another interesting perspective:

I think they should teach skills. It's the skills which are important because the skills will always be there. Once they have got the skills they will understand the content. Rather than when you give them the content if the question comes in a different way, or if they see something that is new, they cannot understand it. With the skills they can apply

them in any context; they can do the thinking on their own, and it promotes independent thinking.

From this conversation, one can deduce that Emmy saw history pedagogy from a progressive point of view, as she regarded historical skills of analysis and judgement as more important than historical content. In the 15 lessons (out of the anticipated 16) that I observed, Emmy was keen on developing the skills of the historian in learners, rather than make them regurgitate historical events, names, dates and preconceived conclusions.

Group presentation and discussion

In the first lesson that I observed Emmy, she used group presentations and discussions as the main teaching methods. This lesson was held on a cool Thursday morning from 8:05 to 8:40am. It is interesting to note that all of Emmy's lessons with Form 3E were in the morning, before break. The other three teachers in the present study had their lessons in the afternoon. After group presentations on 'The effects of the Industrial Revolution', there was a teacher-guided discussion on the non-economic motives for the partition of Africa. Here are the excerpts from the discussion:

Lesson segment 7

T: But reasons for the scramble were not only economic. If they were purely economic why was the Sahara desert also occupied? (Laughter from students).

L1: To show off to other countries that they also have colonies.

T: Very true, but explain that point further?

L2: But the desert had oil, mum!

T: But no oil had been discovered in the 1880s and 1890s when Africa was colonised.

L3: France took large parts of the Sahara Desert to look big because it had lost wars to Germany in Europe.

T: Very good point. France wanted political prestige and to regain lost glory. These are the political reasons for the scramble. Which other European power took colonies for prestige?

As the discussion unfolded, Emmy summarised new ideas on the whiteboard and students wrote their own notes in addition to what they had written before the lesson. The political causes for the scramble were explored at great depth as Emmy made efforts to teach for historical understanding rather than the simple reproduction of dates and events. There was no dictation of notes. In most of the lessons that I observed Emmy teaching, class discussion was used as the teacher made efforts to interact with learners beyond the surface level. Class discussion was used in conjunction with other learner-centred approaches like text study, picture study, map study and role playing.

Picture study and discussion

Emmy used picture study as the initial stimulus for learners in the lesson on 'Rhodes and the colonisation of Zimbabwe'. Rhodes' picture in the textbook by Mavuru and Nyanhanda-Ratsauka (2008:115) generated a lot of interest from the learners when Emmy started asking questions based on it.

Figure 12: Cecil John Rhodes in Mavuru and Nyanhanda-Ratsauka (2008:115)



Lesson segment 8

T: What can you say about Rhodes' personality and character from this picture?

L₁: He looks a serious man and his hair-cut reflects a touch of class.

L₂: He looks ambitious and determined to achieve his goals.

L₃: He looks wealthy from his suit; his ring is made of diamonds and gold, and the chair he is seating on is expensive leather.

T: Very interesting. So why do you think Rhodes was interested in Zimbabwe?

L₃: He wanted gold and diamonds, as shown by his expensive ring. He wanted to find a "Second Rand"

The picture was used to initiate discussion on why Rhodes wanted to colonise Zimbabwe. Emmy summarised the reasons for the colonisation of Zimbabwe on the whiteboard. All the 49 students in Form 3E had already written notes on this topic and what they were doing during the class discussion was to add new points and explanations as these were being discussed in class. Emmy's practice was in congruence with what she had said in the intermittent interview: "There is no room for dictation in the new curriculum."

Role playing

I observed three lessons in Form 3E in which role playing was used to recreate historical events, and develop empathy, communication and judgement skills in learners. The lessons were: The signing of the Rudd Concession (1888), The Shangani and Mbembesi Battles (1893) and the Matopos Indaba (1896).

Lesson segment 9

It was an early Wednesday morning and the history lesson was the first period of the day (7:30 - 8:05am) for Form 3E. As I entered the classroom behind Emmy, I observed that some chairs and desks were already organised in front of the class. Following the ritual morning greetings, one of the students (the narrator) explained that we were to witness the negotiations and signing of the Rudd Concession. Chairs and tables were already arranged to show the different interest groups involved in the negotiations. The different characters took their positions. Lobengula and his indunas were on the right side sitting on chairs; the interpreter (Thompson) and missionary (Moffat) were in the middle sitting down, to show their respect for the King and their role as intermediaries. The lawyer (Maguire), Rudd, and a few other whites were on the opposite side sitting on chairs. Excerpts from the role play:

Moffat: If you sign this paper you will become a great friend of the White Queen my King.

Lobengula: I said I am not interested in putting my hand on the white men's piece of paper. I don't want to see these whites on my land; and the land of the Mashona is my land too.

Moffat: But Nkosi remember you are a friend of the Great white Queen and she will protect you when you are attacked.

Lobengula: Attacked by who? Remember we the Matebele fear no man.

Lotshe & Sikombo: (clapping) Nkosi yamakhosi! The great bull elephant! These whites are our good friends. They have promised us a lot of guns to use against the Boers and the Zulus, our great enemies. If you sign this paper we will be stronger than the Zulus and the Boers.

Moffat: And my Lord, only 10 white men will come to dig only one hole on your land. They will surrender all their guns to you. In fact they will be your servants.

Students acted out (convincingly) the role of persuasion and trickery in the verbal agreement, which deviated significantly from the written concession. Learners laughed heartily when Lobengula (with a shaking hand), assisted by the missionary John Smith Moffat, finally put an X on the agreement. I could also not help but laugh softly, and so did Emmy. The role play was an interesting comic relief and a lively depiction of one of the most critical episodes in Zimbabwean history. The written Rudd Concession gave Cecil Rhodes “complete and exclusive charge over all metals and minerals situated and contained in my kingdoms, principalities and domains [Lobengula’s], together with full power to do all things they may deem necessary to win and procure the same...” (Mavuru & Nyanhanda-Ratsauka, 2008:118). In effect, this meant Lobengula had given his land to the British. Rhodes used the Concession to obtain a Royal Charter from the British Queen. With the Charter in hand, Rhodes occupied Mashonaland in 1890.

Progressive patterns of practice

All the 15 lessons I observed in Emmy’s Form 3E were progressive, learner-centred and activity-based, corroborating what she had said in the pre-observation interview: “Even before the new curriculum, I had already moved from the teacher-dominated approach.” In the intermittent interview, she proudly declared:

I have been using these learner-centred methods; they are not new. To me the new methods are old. I have been using them before the new curriculum, so it’s just a continuation. To me the coming in of the new curriculum doesn’t change anything, because I have been doing it all along.

The interviews, the lesson observations and document analysis all convinced me that Emmy was indeed a progressive history teacher pacing at the frontline of curriculum reform in history pedagogy.

4.4.4 REFORM AS AN EXCITING AND REWARDING EXPERIENCE

Continuous Assessment Task 1

Continuous Assessment Task 1 is one of the major changes in the new history curriculum which courted the greatest controversy among history teachers. Emmy expressed her sentiments towards this particular reform:

The introduction of the tasks, I did not like it per se but we were forced to like it. We don't have any choice; especially that now everyone has to do the new curriculum. We don't have a choice, so we have received the assessment continuous policy and we are in the process of working on the tasks that have been given. But I think they have to revise the tasks – they cannot be done in all the subjects.

From Emmy's point of view, the research tasks were imposed on the teachers and they had no choice but to accept and implement it as it was now policy. Although she felt that the tasks were imposed on her, she was still willing to learn new practices:

We have little knowledge on the continuous assessment aspect but will continue to find guidance from others. Even the construction of the interview guides, we will ask other teachers who are knowledgeable so that we work together. We work as a team with other teachers. We have to learn new things; it's a continuous learning process because we have not been doing it before. We cannot escape learning new things as teachers.

Although, initially, Emmy disliked the tasks, once she had received Continuous Assessment Task 1 for the Third Term of 2017 on the 3rd of October, I observed her and Form 3E working frantically and enthusiastically on the tasks. She gave each of the 49 students the task document which she had photocopied with the support of the school administration. It became a habit for Emmy to take five or more minutes from her planned lessons to talk, guide and assist students on the tasks; especially during the construction of the interview guide for the local Member of Parliament, data analysis and final research report write up. With the support

of the school, she made logistical arrangements to bring a Member of Parliament to Exit High School so that Form 3E students could interview him. This meant that all the 49 students collected data at the same time and by the last week of October, they had started working on the final report write ups.

I observed that most of the students in Form 3E were able to carry out the research task and they enjoyed preparing the interview guide for the local MP. Emmy's pedagogical stance to discuss and debate historical issues, and make learners write their own notes seemed to be paying dividends as learners in Form 3E appeared to be succeeding in carrying out the research task with minimum assistance and supervision from the teacher. But the implementation of Continuous Assessment Task 1, which Emmy had not planned for in her schemes of work for the Third Term of 2017, affected her classroom practice and lesson delivery in Form 3E. She reported that:

The tasks came mid-way through the term when the schemes of work were already done, so the tasks were not planned for. They took some of our lesson time. We were unable to complete work on the Second Chimurenga as some of the time was now dedicated to Continuous Assessment Task 1 which is now due. We wanted to finish the tasks before the end of year examinations because they are contributing 30% to the candidate's final examination mark at "O" level.

In implementing Continuous Assessment Task 1, Emmy proved that 'those first in the field, are also first in yields.' She was the first teacher to work on the research tasks when most teachers were still in the rejection/denial stages of this curriculum reform. Not surprisingly, all the 49 students in Form 3E had completed the task and handed in their files to Emmy for marking by Friday 3 November, 2017. When I held the exit interview with her on the 9th of November, Emmy proudly explained that, "My students are well ahead because the history task is done. I am almost through with the marking."

Teacher-student discourse

Emmy's discussions with students were characterised by in-depth explorations of historical issues beyond the surface level. Her approach was that students write notes on their own before the topic is taught, and then they add more notes during class discussions. Emmy's main purpose in the lessons was to clarify issues, give more examples (than the sources studied) and respond to students' questions during the presentations and teacher-guided discussions. Emmy explained why she preferred activity-based teaching methods in her lessons:

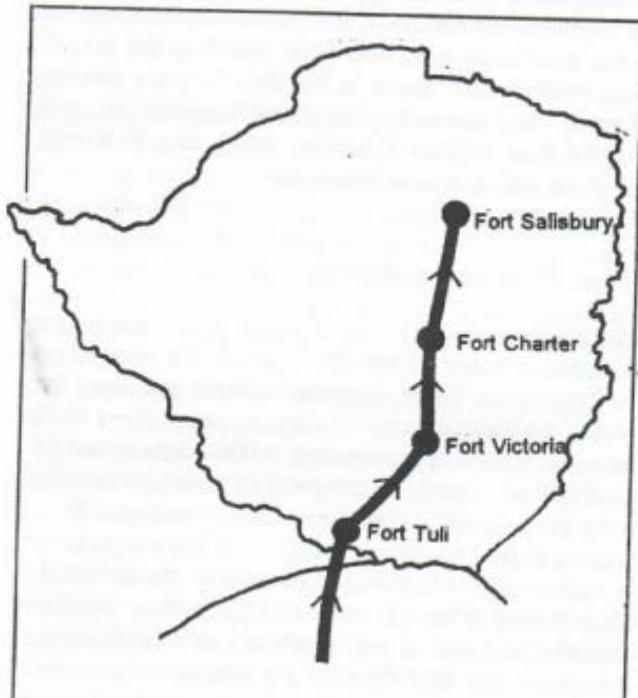
When I teach history I make the students active and I become a facilitator. It's very interesting because students want to learn new things; they want to try out new things themselves. They can also suggest the methods, for example, this role play you saw today; they came to me and suggested that they want to role play the Mbembesi River Battle. It was their own initiative because role playing is interesting and makes the past easier to remember. I gave them the room to organise themselves, do the research and rehearse the drama before the lesson.

The use of role playing enabled learners to recreate past events and make the past come alive. Students were able to acquire historical knowledge in a relaxed and fun-filled learning classroom environment, making Emmy stand out as a relatively progressive reform-oriented teacher.

Teaching for historical understanding

The lesson on the 'The occupation of Mashonaland in 1890' took place on a Tuesday morning (8:05 – 8:40am). As usual, all the 49 students were present in the lesson. The learners looked smart, alert and eager to learn as they already had their history notebooks and textbooks (Moyana and Sibanda, 2007) open on the desks and were busy reading and writing. Emmy used map study as the initial stimulus to generate class discussion and develop learners' historical reasoning. She referred students to the map in Moyana and Sibanda, (2007:46) title 'Route followed by the Pioneer Column in 1890.'

Figure 13: Route of the Pioneer Column (1890) in Moyana and Sibanda, (2007:46)



After giving students four minutes to study the map Emmy initiated a class discussion. Excerpts from the discussion:

Lesson segment 10

T: Any observations you can make from this map?

L1: The Pioneer Column started from South Africa, moved on to Fort Tuli, Fort Victoria, Fort Charter and then Fort Salisbury.

L2: The Pioneers avoided passing through Matabeleland because of Lobengula.

T: Yes. What about Lobengula?

L3: Lobengula would attack them if they passed through Matabeleland.

T: Yes, but why would he attack them?

L4: Lobengula was angry because of the Rudd Concession. What was said to him was different from what was written in it.

L5: Only 10 white men were to come, but now they were over 500 whites coming.

T: Very true. With armed policemen and many African soldiers given to them by Chief Khama of the Ngwato. Why were Khama and Lobengula great enemies?

L₆: The Ndebele used to raid Khama's people for cattle, women and grain, like they did the Shona. So Khama wanted to revenge by supporting the whites against Lobengula.

Emmy tried to make learners understand and explain the reasons why the Pioneer Column moved into Mashonaland and why some African groups took sides with the whites against other Africans. She appeared to be teaching for historical understanding and not the simple regurgitation of facts.

4.4.5 FULFILLING AN OCCUPATIONAL DREAM

Teacher aspirations

Emmy became a history teacher mainly because of her family background and her early interaction with history at secondary school. She explained that:

My brother was a secondary school history teacher and so when I had assignments he would help me. So I was a star in history. He was, and still is, actually the family's breadwinner. It's only now that teaching is no longer paying but during that time (1990s) he did much for the family. He actually paid my fees, looked after the family and so I just dreamt that 'one day I want to be a teacher, like him'. So I developed a keen interest in history at secondary school, then I pursued it at university. My brother influenced me to be a history teacher.

Emmy's brother was her role model who made her develop a keen interest in history while still at secondary school. She excelled in the subject up to university level where she obtained an honours degree in history and has been teaching the subject for the past eleven years. Emmy has an emotional attachment to her job as a history teacher and does not think of changing her career as she is happy with the results she is producing in history at "O" and "A" levels. In the intermittent interview, she pointed out: "I don't intend to leave teaching. I am a teacher. Born a teacher by nature and I enjoy teaching. I like teaching, it's part of me. I am motivated and I want these results; and the students are proud to be associated with me as I give them confidence that they are going to make it." Emmy's personal commitment to the

teaching of history, and the development of learners' thinking skills, had a strong bearing on how she taught history during the implementation of the new history curriculum.

Teacher attitudes towards reform

It is puzzling, if not paradoxical, that when the 2017 reforms were introduced in schools Emmy did not welcome them, although she was already using some of the teaching methods recommended in the new curriculum. She explained her initial response to the history reforms:

We received it with resistance. We did not like the new curriculum, because already we have our 'museums of knowledge', we have our literature; we have our notes and past exam papers. And now a new curriculum comes, we have to start afresh, look for new information, new approaches – like the continuous assessment tasks. So we didn't like it. I personally did not like it.

So Emmy's initial reaction to curriculum reform implementation was one of distaste because the reforms threatened her existing knowledge base, would make her research for new knowledge and introduced a completely new concept in secondary school history instruction: the continuous assessment tasks. But she eventually accepted the curriculum changes because:

One, its policy so there is no choice but to accept it. Two, I think when you get information on what is happening from others, you get to accept the new curriculum. Some resistance is caused by ignorance and lack of knowledge. We did not have enough seminars, enough workshops on the new curriculum. It was hurried, so that is why we were a bit reluctant to introduce the new curriculum in the classroom.

Emmy explained that her initial resistance against the new curriculum was a result of lack of information on what the new framework involved and lack of knowledge on the new skills the teachers needed. It was only after interacting with the other teachers at two seminars that were held during the first term of 2017 that Emmy's attitude towards the new curriculum

changed for the positive. She articulated her changed position towards reform implementation in Third Term 2017:

But now we are in full swing and the new curriculum is not as bad as we initially thought. After some seminars that were conducted we now understand that it is also emphasising on developing learners' historical skills, skills for survival, skills that are long lasting, that's the emphasis. At least now the attitude has changed and we have moved on.

After some seminars Emmy realised that the new curriculum was not the monster she had perceived it to be at the beginning, and that its focus was on the development and nurturing of life-long skills of critical and independent thinking in students. The new focus was more on learning skills that are transferable to different situations than content which can be redundant in new contexts.

Class size

I observed Emmy teaching Form 3E which had 49 students over an eight week period. The official teacher-pupil ratio in Zimbabwean secondary schools is one teacher to 35 students. I wanted to know if class size affected Emmy's teaching methods. Her reply was unexpected and reflected her unique approach to history pedagogy:

This class I am teaching has 49 students. But this does not affect my teaching methods at all. In my classes, I have always used progressive methods. Even before the new curriculum, I had already moved from that teacher dominated approach. Yes, the classes are big and that's one major challenge which makes it difficult to understand each and every child. But activity based learning is exciting, children participate, they understand better, they are motivated, even the results actually show that when children do it they will understand better and pass.

The rather large class size of Form 3E did not deter Emmy from using learner-centred approaches. She used text, picture and map study; group and individual presentations; class

discussions and role playing although she had a class of 49 students. She did not face any observable disciplinary problems as all her students appeared co-operative and eager to participate in the varied learning activities she engaged them.

Nature of learners

From the students' active participation and language proficiency in the 15 lessons that I observed, most learners in Form 3D appeared to be functioning at the perceived above average cognitive level. Emmy explained that:

The learners are not bad, as most of them are of above average ability. They are quite eager to learn and they are innovative, they actually motivate the teacher. They give you motivation and they are disciplined, as you have seen. They will be waiting eagerly for the lesson. They like history and that's why they are writing notes on their own and even way ahead of the teacher. We hope they are going to be lawyers.

I observed that Form 3E students were very enthusiastic to research and prepare for class presentations and role plays. Emmy pointed out that this was mainly because the students in this class were motivated to do history. "We asked them to choose commercials or the arts and those in 3E chose to do the arts which include history and literature", she explained. So Emmy was teaching students who were motivated to do history as the choice to do the subject was their own. Besides that, most of the students at Exit High School are of above average ability as parents only send students with very good Grade 7 results to Exit High because of the high competition to secure places at the boarding school.

School type

Exit High School is a private trust run boarding school where students stay at the school during the course of the term. Students have supervised study hours after school which gives them more time to concentrate on their studies than their peers in day secondary schools. Emmy explained that:

When time is not enough you have to stretch the day. That's the advantage of a boarding school, students can work overnight so that they do their homework and meet the deadlines. The boarding environment is very suitable for group activities, preparing presentations and role plays after school hours. The students can always meet when they want to and they can assist one another at almost any time.

At Exit High there is no issue of students losing learning time by going back home to collect fees because students whose fees are not paid up are not allowed into the school gate on opening day in line with the school policy: "No fees no school."

School administration

The school administration at Exit High School appeared to be very supportive of the implementation of the new curriculum. Emmy was happy that:

Our administration is very supportive; we are getting everything that we need to support our teaching and the new curriculum. They are making efforts to buy new books and stationery. We can photocopy, we can go for seminars, and they support that. We go for workshops they support that. And so I think they actually help us as teachers to implement the new curriculum.

The school administration's support of the new curriculum was also reflected in their photocopying of the continuous assessment tasks for all the Form 3 students in all the subjects. The administration also motivated teachers with monetary rewards so that they produce quality results at "O" and "A" levels. This is how Emmy put it to me:

The school administration also motivates the teachers. For example, there are results-based individual rewards for teachers who produce outstanding results. This has actually helped to improve, not just the quantity, but the quality of the results because you get US\$5 for each A grade you produce at "O" level. So the more As you produce the more you pocket. You know no one can reject a reward, this is very motivating, but you have to work very hard to get As.

During the School Prize Giving Day held on the 7th of October 2017, Emmy pocketed US\$450 cash from the school administration as an incentive for the 90 As she had produced in the November 2016 “O” level history examinations. No wonder she was emphasising the benefits of learner-centred methods if students are to get distinctions at “O” level.

Parental attitudes and resource availability

Mainly because of their middle income status, most parents with children at Exit High School paid the US\$650 fees per term on time. They also complemented the school administration’s efforts to make teachers improve their classroom practices. Emmy had praises for the parents:

Our parents are supportive, for example, this incentive I am talking about is coming from the School Development Association (SDA). It’s the parents who suggested to the School Head that they want to motivate the teachers who produce good results (A grades) by giving them monetary rewards during Prize Giving Days. As students get prizes for outstanding achievements, outstanding teachers can also be rewarded.

Besides incentivising the teachers, the parents also bought personal textbooks for their children, as recommended by the history teacher during consultation days. During lesson observations in Form 3E, I realised that each student had two different history textbooks. Emmy explained that one textbook was issued to the student by the school and the other one was bought by the parents. This gave her the latitude to use different learner-centred approaches because students had the different textbooks they could use for reading and researching. Emmy acknowledged that teaching-learning resources for implementing the history curriculum reforms were available and adequate at Exit High School. Resource availability may partly explain why Emmy had already adopted learner-centred practices, long before the comprehensive 2017 reforms.

Stepping ahead of the crew

In terms of implementing the teaching methods recommended by the new history curriculum, Emmy was far ahead of the other three teachers in this multiple case study. “For me teaching history is not about the money, but the interest in the subject,” she explained. Her brother’s influence made her develop a very positive inclination towards history when she was in Form 3. I asked about her career aspirations and current job satisfaction:

I just wanted to be a teacher, I never thought of any other job, mainly because of my brother. I am into history, I love it; and I have my Honours Degree in History. Because of my understanding of the subject, I use methods that interest learners so they end up loving the subject. So my dream to be a history teacher has been fulfilled, and I don’t intend to leave teaching. I am a teacher. Born a teacher by nature and I enjoy teaching.

Emmy’s love for history and her innovative approach to history pedagogy did not go unrecognised by the school and curriculum supervisory authorities. At Exit High School’s Prize Giving Day held on Saturday (7th October 2017), she scooped three top prizes: two District Awards for the Best “O” Level and Best “A” Level History results in Zitown for the November 2016 history examinations; and one award from the school for Overall Best Teacher at “O” level in 2016. She also received US\$450 cash prize from the school for the 90 candidates who scored As in history at “O” level in the November 2016 examinations. I congratulated her for the prizes she earned (and deserved) for her outstanding performance as a history teacher.

4.5 SUMMARY

This chapter presented the stories for each of the four teachers using thick and rich empirical evidence collected through document analysis, in-depth interviews, lesson observations and reflective memos. Data presented and interpreted in this chapter showed that each teacher had a different understanding of the history curriculum reform policy and was implementing the new history curriculum following their own unique sense-making, although there were some commonalities in their practices. Angela was the “the computer savvy soul rebel” who became a teacher by default. She was almost obsessed with the use of computer technology

in history instruction, although she rejected the philosophy and spirit behind the new history curriculum reform policy. Bessie was, in her view, not born a teacher but was trained to become one. She embraced the history curriculum reforms without question. David was the “traveller at the crossroads” who found it difficult to follow the traditional teacher-dominated route or the progressive learner-centred one, making him blend the two in a creative synthesis. Emmy was the “pacesetter at the frontline” as she had already changed her classroom practices towards learner-centred pedagogy before the 2017 reforms. The next chapter (Chapter 5) makes a cross-case analysis of the data generated from each case study and discusses the findings of this study.

CHAPTER 5: CROSS-CASE ANALYSIS, FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter attempts a cross-case analysis of the four cases presented in Chapter 4 and their classroom practices. The analysis and discussion focus on the history teachers' sense-making of reform policy and their patterns of teaching as they implemented the new history curriculum. Four major themes were generated from the data and these themes guide this cross-case analysis and discussion. The themes are: teacher backgrounds, making sense of policy, characteristics and patterns of practice, and curriculum reform implementation. The chapter begins with a biographical contrast of the four history teachers in order to help explain the teachers' understanding of policy, their classroom practices and how they implemented the history curriculum reforms in the curriculum's first year of operation in the schools.

5.2 TEACHER BACKGROUNDS

Table 3: The four history teachers at a glance

SCHOOL	TEACHER	GENDER	AGE	EXPERIENCE	QUALIFICATIONS	CLASS	SIZE
Arise High	Angela	Female	34	10 years	M.Sc. Development Studies B.A.Ed. History and Religious studies	Form 3A	49
Bridge High	Bessie	Female	35	10 years	B.Ed. History Dip. Ed. (Secondary)	Form 3B	45
Delta High	David	Male	49	25 years	M.Ed. Administration B.Ed. History Dip. Ed. (Secondary)	Form 3D	20
Exit High	Emmy	Female	36	11 years	B.A. (Honours) History Grad.D.E.	Form 3E	49

Although I used purposive sampling techniques, the selection of more female teachers than males in my study was random and is perhaps an artifact of the gender composition of teacher population in the high schools in Zitown in general, and the history departments in particular. There were 20 history teachers, 13 females and 7 males, in the four high schools I sampled in this study, a ratio of close to 2:1. In three of the four schools selected in my study, all the

Form 3 classes doing the new history curriculum in 2017 were taught by female teachers, except at Delta High School. As a result I had little choice but to study three female teachers and only one male teacher in this multiple case study as shown in Table 3 above.

5.2.1 How they became history teachers: By chance or choice?

The four teachers' socio-academic backgrounds and career aspirations had some outstanding differences as well as commonalities. Two of the four teachers in my study never thought they would become history teachers, while the other two had dreams of becoming history teachers while at secondary school. The vibrant and energetic Angela explained that she wanted to be a lawyer, a nurse or a police officer. She never thought of teaching because of the perceived low salary associated with it. Angela became a history teacher more by default than by choice and free will. This may have had implications on her job commitment, motivation, selection of teaching methods, attitude to curriculum reform and career satisfaction. Evidently, Angela never accepted teaching as her career path and history teaching as her final career destination. She openly told me that; "To be honest, teaching is no longer in me. Yes, I have adjusted to being a history teacher but I still have ambitions ... I am thinking of lecturing. I want to leave the classroom ..."

Bessie, cool and soft spoken, became a history teacher more by chance and destiny, than through passion or love for the subject. "When I was doing "O" Level I used to hate the subject history. The way our teachers used to teach history was boring, it was monotonous, it was not interesting ... History to them was knowledge from the teacher to students. We were treated as tabula rasa, as completely empty," she complained in the intermittent interview. She went on to explain that she was not a teacher by nature because, "When I was growing up I was very quiet. I just felt lazy to speak, and especially to argue about anything. I was not born a teacher, I really was trained to become one." The way Bessie managed her lessons and the methods she used sometimes reflected Bessie's superficial understanding and approach to history teaching, which may partly be explained by her late attachment to the subject she used to hate.

The unassuming, but entrepreneurial, David had always wanted to be a teacher since childhood because his father always said, 'I think this one is going to be a teacher, like me.'

And so it came to pass and David became a teacher like his father, but with an entrepreneurial feather added to his cap for he owns a thriving private college with an enrolment of over 500 students. When I inquired about his career satisfaction after 25 years of continuous service as a history teacher, David appeared totally satisfied. He pointed out: "I am operating in a territory where I can really say I wanted to be ... [T]his idea of starting a private school was not an accident but the fulfillment of a long held dream."

Emmy, always active and accommodating to student interests, also emphasized: "I am a teacher. Born a teacher by nature and I enjoy teaching. I like teaching. It's part of me." Besides being naturally interested in teaching as a profession, Emmy traces her initial attraction to history back to her brother who was a secondary school history teacher when she was doing her "O" levels in the 1990s. "My brother influenced me to be a history teacher ... whenever I had assignments he would help me, and so I was a star in history," explained Emmy. Her classroom practices could have suggested that Emmy had a long standing attachment to history and a passion to teach for historical understanding. She was many steps ahead of the other three teachers in this study in the implementation of the new history curriculum reforms because she had already abandoned teacher dominated methods in favour of activity centred pedagogy way before the rolling out of the new history curriculum under the umbrella of the New Curriculum Framework in January 2017.

5.3 MAKING SENSE OF POLICY

This theme explores how the four history teachers interpreted and understood the history curriculum reform policy as outlined in the syllabuses and other policy documents. I examine this theme under two sub-themes: Interpretation of policy guidelines and knowledge on teaching methods. These sub-themes collectively answer the first sub-research question in my study: How do history teachers make sense of the curriculum reform policies that guide their teaching practice in Zimbabwean secondary schools?

5.3.1 Interpretation of policy guidelines

The meaning of reform policy to teachers

The four teachers seem to have interpreted and attached different meanings to the various reform policy documents that they used to guide their selection of content, teaching methods and assessment procedures. The first important finding from my study was that the four teachers had different interpretations of the history curriculum reforms they were implementing, depending on the meaning they attached to the different reform policy signals that they received in the syllabuses and other policy documents.

Angela, for instance, saw the curriculum reforms as characterised by confusion and inconsistency, and that is why she complained that “the new curriculum means confusion because one day you are told this, the next day you are told the other thing. You do this and then you are told it’s wrong.” She pointed out that policy makers were changing the goal posts because at one time they were talking of the ‘new curriculum’; but were now saying it is an ‘updated curriculum’ which created confusion in Angela’s mind. There was also a lot of uncertainty (since January 2017) on whether continuous assessment was to be used or not, until the task was received in October 2017. Angela’s frustrations with the interpretation of the new curriculum speaks to observation by Chater and Loewenstein (2016:141) that; “The feeling that there is sense to be made, but we are unable to make it, can be agonizing and this explains why we find stimuli aversive when they are surprisingly difficult to make sense of.” Teachers get frustrated when they fail to make meaning of reform and this experience can be painful. Equally frustrating for Angela was the experience that she had made sense of policy intentions and was implementing the new curriculum, only to be told that it was not a new curriculum but an updated one. She had to recast her sense making and try to create new meaning out of the policy signals.

But for Bessie, the new curriculum meant a refreshing and new experience to history instruction and she greatly welcomed it as it afforded her the opportunity to use the new pedagogical, computer and research skills she recently acquired during her studies for the Bachelor of Education Degree in History. “I did not have any problem with the new curriculum. I accepted it from the beginning,” she explained to me. Thus, Bessie, unlike most teachers in this study, had a favourable attitude towards the new curriculum since its introduction in the

schools mainly because her return from university coincided with the introduction of the new curriculum in January 2017. Spillane (1999:549) observes that the meaning of reform policy will differ from one teacher to the other because “policy signals do not present policy problems and policy solutions as givens: rather, the meaning or message of a policy signal is constructed by local enactors in the interaction of policy signals with their knowledge, experiences and situation.” The four teachers in my study interpreted reform policy according to the knowledge that they had, their teaching experience and the schools and classrooms they operated in.

David saw no difference between the new curriculum (History Syllabus 4044) and the old curriculum (Syllabus 2167) he had been teaching since 2002. To him the changes were cosmetic rather than fundamental. It was simply a matter of changing terminology as it was “the same John we are today calling Thomas because we don’t have new topics,” he remarked. However, David also added that he did not clearly understand the intentions and purposes of the new curriculum policy, although he was already implementing it. But David did not see the lack of clarity about the new curriculum as a problem unique to him; it was a problem for everyone because “This new curriculum thing is a new baby; we are not very clear right from the top to the bottom. We are still learning.” David, like Angela, saw a lot of confusion in the way the new curriculum was being interpreted and implemented mainly because teachers were learning about the new curriculum as they were implementing it. They were not in-serviced to understand what the new curriculum meant and appreciate its benefits to both learners and teachers. However, as Cohen (1990:323) advises, even if the best implementation plan is put in place, “many confusions, and some sorts of mixed practice, seem inevitable” in the early implementation stages of a reform. This was reflected in Angela and David’s practices as described in the previous chapter.

In terms of her teaching methods, Emmy saw herself as well ahead of the 2017 reforms: “I have always used progressive methods. Even before the new curriculum I had already moved from that teacher dominated approach.” In the lessons that I observed, Emmy lived up to her word as she was able to engage learners in a variety of activities and totally avoided the use of rote pedagogy. One surprising finding in this study is that Emmy was already using

progressive teaching methods even before the introduction of Syllabus 4044 in January 2017. In all the three interviews I held with her, Emmy insisted: “I don’t use lecturing and giving notes. I have desisted from that ...To me the new methods are old. To me they are not new.” She attributed her progressive approach to history instruction to her training during the B.A. (Honours) degree programme in history which exposed her to research in history and the PGDE which gave her skills in history pedagogy. Her classroom experience and love for history also taught her that “activity based learning is exciting; children participate, they understand better, they are motivated; even the results themselves actually show that when children do it they will understand better and pass.” In terms of content, Emmy saw the new history Syllabus 4044 as a duplication of Syllabus 2167 which it was replacing because the topics had largely remained the same. Her sense-making of the content in the new curriculum was very similar to that of David’s. “When you look at the syllabus, not much has changed; we still have old topics in this new syllabus,” she observed. For Emmy, the new history Syllabus 4044 was like old wine in new bottles as it was very similar to Syllabus 2167 in terms of its nationalist and patriotic inclinations and support for the government of the day.

David and Emmy saw the 2017 history reforms as similar to what they have been teaching all along. This is hardly surprising as Cohen’s (1990) ground breaking study of Mrs. Oublier’s classroom has shown that when teachers look at a new policy they do so through the lens of their previous experiences and existing knowledge. Teachers view and understand new reform policy within the context of their old practices and experiences. Coburn (2006:344) emphasises that, “teachers actively construct their understanding of policies by interpreting them through the lens of their preexisting beliefs and practices. How they construct such understandings shapes their decisions and actions as they enact policy in their schools and classrooms.” As a result, teachers may see reforms as familiar, without recognising or appreciating the new aspects in them, because they view the changes using the lens of their past experiences and practices which may prevent them from seeing and making sense of the new changes. Cohen (1990:323) had also established that; “their inherited ideas and practices are what teachers and students know, even as they begin to know something else.”

A document analysis of the old and new history curriculum showed me that David and Emmy’s assessment that Syllabus 4044 was a duplication of Syllabus 2167 may be an

oversimplification of the familiar aspects in the two syllabuses. This might not be David and Emmy's problem alone in making sense of reform policy because "all revolutions preserve large elements of the old order as they invent new ones" (Cohen, 1990:324). As I explored the issue further, I noticed that Angela and David recognised that the new curriculum brought in some novel aspects like the use of computers, research by students, continuous assessment and learner-centred pedagogy. 'Sources of historical evidence' and 'The slave trade' were new topics for Form 3 in Syllabus 4044 as these were only taught at Form 1 and 2 levels in the previous syllabus. Though it borrowed many aspects from Syllabus 2167, Syllabus 4044 has its own novel aspects, which confirms the idea that all reforms are bound to bring some form of change; it may only be a question of the sense teachers make of the changes. As a result of their existing cognitive lenses, teachers may sometimes fail to recognize the changes and see them as part of the old familiar phenomenon.

Lack of knowledge on reform

There was agreement among the four teachers that they lacked some knowledge on the reforms they were implementing mainly because they were not adequately prepared by the Curriculum Development and Technical Services on how to implement these changes. One major finding on teachers' sense-making of reform policy was that all the other three teachers in this study, except Bessie, complained that they lacked knowledge on the curriculum reforms they were implementing. Angela complained that; "It was too late when we were informed of the new curriculum and the workshops held were just insufficient ... In fact, we did not learn anything from the workshop ...". Bessie also made similar remarks; "I think this thing was hurriedly done. It was just dictated on teachers and we just have to do it, like it or not, since the learners we are teaching have to sit for the examination." Similar sentiments were shared by David: "I don't think as teachers we were adequately prepared. Before implementation of a new syllabus teachers must have a number of workshops to interpret the new syllabus and to prepare the teaching materials." Emmy also felt the same: "This new curriculum has been a major challenge because, initially, we did not have much information on the changes. It was abrupt, it was not given time and we didn't have workshops to prepare us. I don't even know where we are going." Lack of adequate knowledge on the reforms they were implementing was a common theme among the four teachers.

Discussion

There is a tendency for policy makers in both developed and developing countries to often rush curriculum reforms and roll out changes into schools without taking steps to prepare teachers with knowledge and skills on how to implement the changes at classroom level (Fullan, 2000(b):3, Ganon-Shilon & Schechter, 2017:4). Failure by Angela, David and Emmy to understand the change process meant that the three continued to teach largely in the way they had always taught before the reform. Desimone's (2002:444) research in the USA found that schools with less successful reforms were those with teachers who had difficulties making sense of reform policy and the extent to which change is required to initiate and nurture new ideas so that they become institutionalised. In my study, Emmy complained that; "This new curriculum has been a major challenge because, initially, we did not have much information on the changes. It was abrupt, it was not given time and we didn't have workshops to prepare us. I don't even know where we are going." Angela and David talked of the confusion and chaos that characterised the implementation of the new history curriculum in their schools and classrooms.

The problem of introducing curricular reforms without adequate teacher preparation is not unique to Zimbabwe. This appears to be a common problem in most developing countries where reforms are mostly initiated by central governments which are far removed from the realities on the ground. For instance, Phiri (2015:1) strongly criticised the Zambian government for introducing the 2013 curriculum reforms without preparing the schools and the teachers for the changes:

The new education curriculum is actually a mess ... Computer Studies is now a compulsory subject at junior secondary. This is despite the ministry knowing that the majority of its teachers are computer illiterates. Up to this day, the computer illiterate teachers haven't been given textbooks to share their ICT hallucinations with the children.

Findings from my study seem to lend some support to existing literature which indicates that teachers often lack knowledge on the reforms they are expected to implement mainly because they are inadequately inducted and trained for the changes. Cuban (1993:182) found that curriculum policy makers often found the temptation of curriculum reform irresistible despite its “pitiful history” of failure in the past. Fullan and Miles (1992:747) found that in the USA, “Schools, districts and states are under tremendous pressure to reform. Innovation and reform are big business, politically and economically. The temptation is to go along with the trend ...” Cuban (2003:5) sees reforms in American schools as “essentially a series of political acts.”

Most curriculum reforms the world over have been initiated out of political expediency. Jansen (2002:199) uses the lens of “political symbolism” to explain why reforms in developing countries in general and post-apartheid South Africa in particular, are “replete with narratives of ‘failure’...despite unprecedented investments in policy making and policy production.” Jansen (2002:199) explains that most reform initiatives fail to take root in the classroom simply because the policy makers (who initiate and announce the changes) never mean to have them implemented in the first place. “What if the impressive policies designed to change apartheid education did not have ‘implementation’ as their primary commitment?” he asks. The reforms appear to have been made for political lip-service – to gain popular support, appease and silence dissenting voices demanding changes in schools and what is taught inside them.

Oloruntegbe (2011:444) asserts that; “Most curricula innovations in Africa, and a few other parts of the world, were initiated ‘top-down’ through unilateral administrative decisions and externally imposed in utter negligence of the grassroots.” Zimbabwe seems to be no exception to this generalisation. The history curriculum reform initiatives of 1990, 2002 and 2017, like most other curricular policy changes in post-colonial Zimbabwe, were politically motivated to serve the interests of the new ruling class and the new nation state, without adequately empowering teachers with knowledge and skills to implement the changes (Zvobgo, 1999:115; Matereke, 2011:10; Mavhunga et al., 2012:47; Moyo & Modiba, 2013:2). Chitate (2005:14) describes the 1990 history curriculum reforms as “highly political and parochial” because they promoted socialism, the ideology of the government of the day. Makuvaza (2018:46) celebrates the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (MOPSE) for introducing Unhu/Ubuntu as the guiding philosophy for the new curriculum in Zimbabwe,

reflecting how government sets out policy to be followed in all schools, making curriculum reform “a political act.”

5.3.2 Knowledge on teaching methods

Data from the interviews and informal discussions indicated that all the four teachers were aware that the new history curriculum required them to use learner-centred approaches. What differed were their interpretations of the ‘learner-centred’ methods the new curriculum advocated for. Learner-centred methods meant different things to the four teachers in my study, depending on how the teacher interpreted and understood the concept. The theory of cognitive sense-making informs us that teachers have individual sense-making capabilities. Marz et al. (2013:15) stress that, “based on their experiences in the profession, teachers develop a personal system of knowledge and beliefs that act as a cognitive and affective lens through which they look at their job, give meaning to it and act in it.” Sense-making takes into consideration teachers’ perceptions, motivations and feelings (O’Connor, 2015:34).

For Emmy, learner-centredness meant students taking a leading role in a variety of learning activities with the teacher facilitating the process. “We just facilitate and students take the leading role, they can co-ordinate themselves with minimum supervision. There is no room for dictation in the new curriculum,” Emmy stressed. For David, learner-centred pedagogy meant students carrying out research and going on educational tours. “I really liked the aspect of research because we are training our students to be historians at a very tender age. And this idea of trips has brought a lot of interest in my kids because working indoors becomes monotonous and boring,” David explained the new methods advocated for in the new history curriculum.

For Bessie and Angela, computer aided instruction appeared to be at the core of their conceptualisation of the history curriculum reforms. Bessie explained: “The new teaching approach is downloading of notes from the internet, the use of computers, giving pupils some work so that they carry out research on their own using the internet.” Angela saw learner-centredness from the same angle: “The new syllabus requires us to use the internet, computers, interactive boards, white boards, projectors, but all these things are absent ... It also encourages learner-centred activities like group work, pair work, presentations, text study

and students writing their own notes.” The way the four teachers interpreted and implemented the history curriculum reforms showed that the classroom and the curriculum remain “a secret garden – a province of teacher autonomy” (Sheldon, 2012:259); because each teacher has the freedom to interpret and implement the curriculum the way one understands it.

5.4 CHARACTERISTICS AND PATTERNS OF PRACTICE

In this section, I compare and contrast the teaching methods the four teachers used over the eight week period that I observed them teach the new history curriculum to their Form 3 classes. I seek to provide a response to the second sub-research question which anchors my study: What are the characteristics and patterns of history teaching in some of Zimbabwe’s secondary schools?

5.4.1 Common pedagogies

The common teaching methods that all the four history teachers used in their classes were traditional teacher dominated practices and a then variety of learner-centred approaches. In the first four weeks of the fieldwork period, all the four teachers used some learner-centred methods, with varying degrees of success. But as the observation period progressed into the final phase (last four weeks), I noticed that the teachers resorted more and more to lecturing, dictation and note writing on the chalkboard, except for Emmy. Emmy’s teaching methods stood out as unique in this multiple case study because she did not resort to the traditional rote learning practices in all the 15 lessons I observed her teach.

Text study and class discussion

Text study was the commonest learner-centred approach used by all the four teachers, as they tried to break away from teacher talk and exposition. Text study gave students the opportunity to read a relevant source and discover new historical knowledge on their own or with the facilitation of the teacher. Text study was often used with individual, pair or group work; and teacher guided class discussions often followed. David articulated the centrality of text study to the teaching of history: “We have key methods like text study ... we don’t expect our students to be prophets, they must read.” In the first lesson I observed Angela teaching, she made use of text study and teacher directed discussion in an effort to help students explain how missionaries acted as forerunners of imperialism. Bessie also pointed out that; “I sometimes use text study and class discussion. For example, I issue out handouts on a certain topic, give students time to study the text and then I will ask pupils some questions.” Emmy did not mention the use of text study in the interviews, although she made use of the method several times in the lessons I observed her teach. Rather, Emmy emphasised the importance of class presentations as a way of making lessons more learner-centred.

Class presentations

I observed all the four teachers using variants of class presentations in their lessons ranging from individual, pair and group presentations, with varying degrees of success depending on the ingenuity of the individual teacher. Class presentations took the teacher away from the centre stage of history instruction to become one of the participants in the community of learners. The approach allowed for the sharing of ideas between the teacher and the students. Emmy stressed that; “I prefer individual presentations; they read, they research, they present. I only guide and correct where there are misconceptions, and emphasise where they have done good. It encourages them to keep on doing good work.” Emmy lamented the lack of double periods on her timetable as a limitation to her teaching methods: “Our lessons are 35 minutes and so some of the methods need more time, like group discussions. So I rarely use group work in 3E because of time limitations.”

Bessie also used individual and pair presentations where she gave students work to go and research on as homework and then come and make presentations to the class. Interestingly,

Bessie totally avoided the use of group work as she feared that the method could cause disciplinary problems in her class of 45 students. Angela explained that; “we sometimes use group work, pair work, presentations and discussions to give them some skills of research and a chance to express themselves.” David, on the other hand, explained that he preferred double lessons in all of his history classes because this gives ample time for text study, map study, picture study, group presentations and discussions, unlike the 35-minute lessons. I observed Form 3D students making some interesting group presentations on ‘Why the Ndebele settled in Zimbabwe’ (**Lesson segment 5**); and David followed this up with a vibrant teacher guided class discussion that explored issues beyond the surface level. David was the only teacher among the four teachers in this multiple case study who had double lessons for history and he appears to have used them effectively for group presentations. The other three teachers had four single history lessons per week, which was somewhat of a constraint on their practice.

Discussion

The class discussions that followed pair or group presentations created opportunities for learners to interpret the meanings of the tasks given and negotiate the appropriate answers. Chater and Loewenstein (2016) stress that sense-making is a purposeful mental activity in an individual or a group of individuals which is initiated by some drive to understand why things are what they are or why and how things occurred in the past. What the group or pair wrote and reported back to the whole class as feedback was what the individuals would have first debated and agreed on as collective effort. Learners, therefore, engaged in collective sense-making (Gephart et al., 2010:285) as a group or a pair, before giving their report backs to the whole class. The agreed responses and meanings were then further interrogated and renegotiated with the teacher and the whole class during and after the presentations. When the teacher and the students reached consensus on the meaning of the concepts and content at hand the teacher then summarised the key ideas on the chalkboard. Collective sense-making involved sharing meanings and interpretations among students and the teacher in order to reach some consensus and common understanding. Marz et al. (2013:15) view collective sense-making as characterised by a “more or less explicitly shared set of

assumptions, norms, values and cultural artifacts that orient, guide and evaluate teachers' actions.”

Using the sense-making theory as my lenses, I analysed how history teachers were using class presentations to foster democratic participation by pupils in their lessons, irrespective of the learners' social backgrounds. I observed Emmy and David nurturing students' historical skills of analysis, argument and reflective skepticism through pair and group work, and class discussion. Bessie used class presentations and discussions with very limited success. She always abandoned the presentations (and wrote notes on the chalkboard) once students failed to respond to her questions because of their poor comprehension and language skills. Angela also made some rudimentary attempts to engage students in class discussions, but would often abandon the approach and dictate notes to students from her tablet.

The adoption of a learner-centred curriculum in post-colonial Southern Africa is often justified as a way of promoting democracy in independent post-colonial nation states (Hendricks *et al.*, 2016:266). Student participation in pair work, group work and class discussion prepares them for future debates and action in civic society and political institutions in emerging democracies. Raselimo and Mahao (2015:8) point out that, “The ideal of learner-centred pedagogy was seen as a catalyst to expediting the process of democratization in most African countries.” The introduction of a learner-centred curriculum in Namibia after 1990 “was regarded as a means of consolidating democratic ideals” (O'Sullivan, 2004:5). For instance, Curriculum 2005 in post-apartheid South Africa signaled “a departure from apartheid education to a democratic dispensation” (Raselimo and Mahao, 2015:8). The New Curriculum Framework was rolled out in Zimbabwe in January 2017 partly to “promote and cherish the Zimbabwean identity, in particular patriotism ... self-respect and respect for others (Ubuntu/Unhu)...” (MOPSE, 2015:6).

5.4.2 Unique teaching practices

Map study

Of the four teachers in my study, only Bessie and Emmy used map study in their lessons, although I observed many opportunities in Angela and David's lessons where this approach could have been used to enhance students' historical understanding. I observed Bessie using map study in the lesson on the 'Origins of the trans-Atlantic slave trade' (**Lesson segment 3**). She gave students a handout with a map showing the Triangular Slave Trade. After studying the map, Bessie initiated discussion on why and how slaves were taken across the Atlantic, but the discussion abruptly came to an end as Bessie started dictating notes to the class. Emmy also used map study (**Lesson segment 10**) as the focal stimulus to show the route taken by the Pioneers and the forts they built. She initiated class discussion from the map study to stimulate learners' historical reasoning and help them explain why their route avoided Matabeleland.

Although David talked about the use of map study in the interview, I did not see him using this method, even in lessons where its use could have been appropriate. For instance, in the lesson on 'Why the Ndebele settled in Zimbabwe', David did not use any map to show the routes taken by Mzilikazi's group and the other group led by his induna Gundwane. Interestingly, students' textbooks had this map but David did not make any reference to it. Angela did not mention map study in the interviews and she did not make any effort to use this approach in her lessons.

Picture study

Of the four teachers in this multiple case study, Emmy is the only one who used picture study as a way of initiating discussion and the exchange of ideas between teacher and students, and among learners themselves (**Lesson segment 8**). But opportunities presented themselves where the other teachers could have used pictures in the textbooks as teaching-learning media. The other three teachers seemed not to notice the variety these pictures could add to their lessons and the cognitive benefits learners could derive from them. Emmy used Rhodes' picture as the initial stimulus for learners in the lesson on 'Rhodes and the colonisation of Zimbabwe' (**Lesson segment 8**).

The picture study generated a lot of interest and active participation from the learners when Emmy started asking questions on what they could infer from the picture about Rhodes' personality. Geoff (2014:133) cautions that teachers should not "fall for the commonly believed myth that students are fundamentally lazy, preferring activities that intrude as little as possible into their daydreaming. In general, the more active and engaged students are, the better they like it." A very fruitful and interactive discussion emerged from the picture study which directly led to the day's lesson on why Rhodes was interested in colonising the land between the Zambezi and the Limpopo (Zimbabwe). Existing literature has shown that pictures are very useful in helping learners create a mental picture of how historical personalities, settings, events and incidents looked like at particular moments in the past (Stoddard and Marcus, 2010:84; Geoff, 2014:133). Closely linked to the use of pictures in historical studies is the use of the motion pictures in the form of film and video.

Film, video and ICT-based pedagogy

The use of film, video and ICT related technologies has made it possible for film makers and historians to recreate the past so that learners can visually and emotionally experience how the people of a particular time lived, felt and behaved. Schul (2014:15) recognises that, "The emergence of digital technology provides new opportunities for teaching and learning in the history classroom." However, none of the four teachers in my study used film and video over the eight week observation period. Angela, Bessie and Emmy claimed that they did not use film and video in their lessons because their schools lacked the resources. But David indicated that; "we do have the resources – the projectors, historical films and videos" at Delta High School. Why then did he not use these technologies in his practice, I asked him? "The themes that I was covering this term did not demand the use of film and video," he explained. But this explanation was not convincing to me because, to my knowledge, a lot of films and videos have been produced since the turn of the 21st century on Ndebele migrations, Mzilikazi's early contacts with Europeans, Cecil John Rhodes and the colonial occupation of Zimbabwe.

From the lesson observations, interviews and document analysis I made, it was clear that David never planned to use film and video in his lessons and this was not a popular method with him. Research by Cuban (2001) in the Silicon Valley, the technology hub of the USA,

established that the availability of new technology in schools does not guarantee its use by teachers in the classroom. Cuban et al. (2001:816) found that teachers and students use the new technologies “far less in the classroom than they do at home and that teachers who use computers for instruction do so infrequently and unimaginatively.” I found a similar paradox in David’s teaching practice at Delta High School: film and video were available but he was not using them, maybe because he was not experienced in using this technology. Writing on the use of ICT in Africa in general, and Nigeria in particular, Adomi (2010:4) also established that the use of computer-based instruction is not widespread in African classrooms. This is not only because they lack resources, but many teachers lack computer expertise and suffer from technophobia (irrational fear of the computer); to the extent that even where computers are available teachers avoid using them because they do not know how.

The third finding emerging from this cross-case analysis is that, despite the widespread use of modern technology like film, video, internet and computers in everyday life, the use of ICT-based methods in history classrooms is not a common practice in secondary schools in Zitown. Except for Angela who used her tablet as her notebook and downloaded notes onto it – especially on the slave trade – the other three history teachers in my study did not use any ICT devices in their lessons. Bessie, David and Emmy relied mainly on textbooks as their main source of historical information, although they talked about ICTs in the interviews. The limited availability of projectors, historical films, video players and computers seemed to militate against the modernisation and digitalisation of history instruction in three of the four classes that I studied. David did not use film and video technologies over the eight week period I observed him teaching, although these resources were available at Delta High School, perhaps due to lack of familiarity with these technologies. In Zimbabwe, as evidenced by findings from my study, film, video and ICTs are not yet popular teaching methods in the history classroom.

Role playing

Role playing was not popular with three teachers in my study, although existing literature recognises its importance in developing learners’ empathy skills. Mattson’s (2008:101) research on K-12 history education in the United States established that; “Drama deepens

students' ability to critically read the world around them, to think historically, and to imagine and participate in a more just future." Only Emmy used role playing in three lessons: The signing of the Rudd Concession (1888); The Shangani and Mbembesi Battles (1893) and the Matopos Indaba (1896). Although Form 3E had 49 students, they were able to organise themselves and imitate how Lobengula was cheated during negotiations with the concession seekers. They also imitated how the Ndebele fell in large numbers to the white man's Maxim guns at Shangani and Mbembesi; and how the Ndebele negotiated from a position of weakness at the Matopos Indaba after witnessing the devastation caused by the machine gun in the battlefield. The students really enjoyed these role plays, as witnessed by the laughter during the dramatisation and the lively discussions that followed it.

Bessie explained that the lack of student discipline in Form 3B and the large class size (45 students) made her shun role playing and simulation. "To be honest with you, I haven't used these methods because of the issue of indiscipline on the part of the students. For example, if you assign roles to pupils, they become overwhelmed and get out of hand ... and after the role play de-rolling will be a problem", Bessie explained her predicament. David talked about role playing during the interviews but never used the approach in the lessons I observed him teach. Angela blamed the school setting for her non-use of role playing saying that; "We operate under a hot-seating setup and some of the methods like role playing need time. We have only four periods per week, but we cannot talk of the four periods per week as there are many other activities in the school which may disrupt the four periods." I observed Angela and Form 3A losing considerable learning time due to these unplanned disruptions as Angela missed some lessons because she was invigilating and students had to attend the compulsory SASAF and DASAF cultural festivals introduced by the new curriculum.

Educational tours

The two teachers in the government high schools (Angela and Bessie) gave the lack of financial resources as the main reason why they did not take their Form 3 classes on educational tours in 2017 although the new History Syllabus 4044 they were implementing clearly states that, "learners must go on educational tours at least three times a year" (CDTS, 2015:2). Angela articulated why they did not undertake any tour in 2017: "The school is broke,

parents are broke as well.” Bessie also echoed similar sentiments: “There is silence like death over the issue of trips. School administration is uninterested because of the costs. The procedures are also tiresome and engaging that in the end you give up ...” The literature I reviewed in Chapter Two shows that the use of field trips to places of historical interests has always been a refreshing welcome to history teachers and students (Marcus and Levine, 2011:104). But educational tours are not undertaken often due to financial and logistical constraints, especially in the developing world.

In my study David and Emmy viewed educational tours from a different perspective, maybe because their schools were better resourced. They stressed the educational benefits of learning history outside the classroom. David calmly explained that; “Every term we have an educational tour. The tours are very enlightening and students learn a lot. So far we have visited Great Zimbabwe, the National Archives, the National Heroes Acre and the Domboshava rock paintings which were done by the San. We have also visited the National Museum.” In the second term of 2017, they visited the National Archives and the Heroes Acre in Harare. But in the Third Term of 2017, the educational tours were shelved by the school administration due to the cash crisis Zimbabwe was going through.

Emmy also told me that; “In 2016 we went to Victoria Falls, Bulawayo and Matopos. Last term [Term 2, 2017] we went to the Heroes Acre and we also visited Parliament here in Harare. The parents are always willing to finance the trips and the school provides the bus.” But Emmy was uncomfortable that only a few benefit from these tours because only those with parents who can afford to pay can go. The trips can be expensive if students are going on long trips and for many days. For instance, Emmy had earmarked a trip to Victoria Falls (which is over 1 100 kilometres from Harare) for the Third Term of 2017 and the cost of the four-day trip was pegged at US\$260 per student. Emmy explained to me that; “The trip failed to take place because of the harsh economic times and the liquidity crisis in the country. Only three Form Ones and none of the Form Threes had paid up. So we cancelled the trip.” The national economic crisis in Zimbabwe was impacting negatively on Emmy’s practice as a history teacher as she failed to take students on the tour she had planned for the Third Term of 2017.

5.4.4 Patterns of practice

Emmy's patterns of classroom practice set her apart from the other three teachers in this multiple case study. Here patterns of teaching were distinctively progressive, learner-centred and activity-based. Her methods in the 15 lessons I observed supported what she had said in the pre-observation interview: "Even before the new curriculum, I had already moved from the teacher dominated approach ... I have been using these learner-centred methods, they are not new to me."

But Bessie's patterns of practice in the classroom showed strong elements of pedagogical conservatism, although she had accepted the history curriculum reforms from the time they were introduced. Bessie made some attempts to use learner-centred approaches in her lessons but always regressed back to dictation and exposition, often abandoning class discussion mid-way in frustration. In the exit interview, she concluded that; "Yes, I cannot do without dictation and lecturing." This reflected Bessie's beliefs and values as a traditional history teacher, although she had embraced the new curriculum from its introduction. Bessie was finding it difficult to reform her teaching methods because of her past experiences in which she had dominated classroom activity, although she had a positive attitude towards the new curriculum. Bessie's continued attachment to old practices in her implementation of a new curriculum which sought to do away with the same practices reflected the constant struggle between tradition and change in the teachers' minds and practices. Cohen's (1990:323) case study of Mrs. Oublier established that teachers are "historical beings" with inherited habits and practices which they cannot easily slip off like dirty old coats and adopt new teaching methods on a clean slate. As a result teachers tend to mix the old rote pedagogy with the new recommended learner-centred methods in their teaching, like what Bessie was doing.

Angela and David attempted to reform their patterns of practice towards learner-centred pedagogy but always found the temptation to go back to note dictation and teacher-talk too strong to resist. The lesson observations I made neatly tallied with Angela's self-assessment of her teaching patterns. "It's a mixture of progressive and traditional methods," she said to me. From my observation, I concur with her. David also felt that his teaching methods during the term were "more of progressive, and traditional methods would only come here and there."

But he went on to contradict himself when he insisted that; “The history teacher remains the master of the subject. Here and there the teacher must give students notes because it’s not everything which is found in the school textbook.” This reflected the struggle David was facing at the cross-roads as he tried to move towards learner-centred pedagogy, but the tradition of note giving and dictation continued to pull him back to orthodox practices. The struggle between tradition and change which David was facing in trying to reform his practice reflected that “trying to change teaching practice is one area of schooling which has proved the most resistant to change” Desimone (2002:434).

Discussion

One unexpected finding emerging from my multiple cases was that higher levels of academic training do not necessarily make teachers progressive and receptive to history curriculum reform implementation. I had expected that higher levels of academic training and exposure to research based learning in masters’ degree programmes would make Angela and David more receptive to reform policy implementation and pro-active in adopting learner-centred pedagogy as recommended by the new history curriculum. Instead, Angela and David, the teachers with Masters Degrees in my study, were very critical of the history curriculum reform initiatives. The two still believed that dictation and note giving were essential teaching methods and this militated against the transformation of their classroom practices. Angela insisted that her attitude towards the reforms “has never become positive” and that “Methods have not really changed ... we are still using our traditional teaching methods mainly because resources are not available.” David shared similar sentiments: “To say the truth, I did not welcome this idea of the new curriculum because of the amount of work – tasks, projects ... but teaching methods haven’t changed very much.” Interestingly, the most progressive and reform oriented teacher in my study was Emmy who only had a first degree in history and a Post-Graduate Diploma in Education.

My study established that, at times, academic training may sometimes only bring artificial changes to one’s teaching methods without any fundamental shift in one’s classroom practices. Bessie had graduated with a B.Ed. degree in history in December 2016, had accepted the 2017 curriculum reforms from the beginning, but she had difficulties in

transforming her practice towards learner-centred pedagogy. Her use of learner-centred methods was very superficial and mechanical, and she quickly resorted back to lecturing and dictation of notes in all her lessons, without fully utilising the learner-centred approaches she would have initiated in the lessons. Bessie's surface level approach to history instruction may be partly attributed to her late attraction to the subject. As a secondary school student, Bessie never dreamt of becoming a history teacher: "When I was doing "O" Level I used to hate the subject history." Bessie became a history teacher by chance. She taught the subject as an untrained teacher after completing "A" levels and that is when she realised that she "could become a history teacher." Unlike Emmy, teaching history was not in Bessie's nature as she had a late attraction to the subject. Bessie's "late turning point" (Drake, 2006:589) to history may partly explain her superficial and disengaging approach to the teaching of the subject which is characterised by dictation and writing of notes on the chalkboard.

For David and Emmy, Form 3 and 4 appeared to be decisive periods for them to make decisions and career choices to be history teachers. David explained: "I liked the way he [Mr. Moyo] was teaching us. I thought one day I would like to be a history teacher. I was in Form 4." Emmy also explained that she made the decision to be a history teacher when she was still at secondary school. "My brother was a history teacher and I used to have all the textbooks I needed. So I developed interest in history at secondary school and that is when I decided to be a history teacher," she told me. David and Emmy had "early turning points" (Drake, 2006:589) to history and this early attraction made them develop an enduring passion for the subject. This love for history and their professional training as history teachers partly explains why David and Emmy taught the subject in a discursive and interrogative manner involving student participation, rather than simply regurgitating preconceived conclusions and reproducing cold sterile facts, dates, names and events.

5.5 CURRICULUM REFORM IMPLEMENTATION

This section addresses the third sub-research question: What are the relations between curriculum reform policy and history classroom pedagogy, if at all? This theme explores how the continuous assessment tasks brought by the new history curriculum may have influenced the way the four history teachers taught their lessons and how they were reforming their

classroom practices to meet the pedagogical demands of the new history curriculum reforms. The theme is explored under three sub-themes: Continuous Assessment Task 1, Reforming teaching practices and Teacher-student discourses.

5.5.1 Continuous Assessment Task 1

One novel change in the history curriculum reforms was the introduction of the research based tasks which contribute 30% to the student's final mark in "O" Level history. There were common elements, as well as vast differences, in the way the different teachers understood and implemented the subject based tasks. One commonality among the teachers was a general dislike for the research-based continuous assessment task, except for Bessie. Always cool and conforming, Bessie was more accommodative to Continuous Assessment Task 1 for Term 3, 2017. "I embraced the tasks because they have got their own advantages. Pupils can do their own researches and you as the teacher you try to evaluate what they have discovered," she explained to me. The combative Angela did not mince her words: "I never liked the tasks. Yes we are implementing because that is what we are instructed to do. The implementation is actually dictated upon teachers." Emmy voiced similar sentiments: "The introduction of the tasks, I did not like it per se but we were forced to like it." David was also uncharitable towards the research based tasks: "I did not want to use this term, but let me use it, it was chaotic. The introduction of the tasks was haphazard. There was no uniformity. Different schools received the continuous assessment task at different times."

The four teachers received the same tasks on different dates in the four schools. Emmy (at the boarding school) was the first to receive the task on the 3rd of October 2017. She and her 49 students received the 10 page task document in hard copy from the History Head of Department. Second to receive the task was David (at the mission day secondary school) on the 4th of October 2017, and all the 20 students in Form 3D got a copy each. Angela and Bessie (in the day government secondary schools) were the last to get the tasks on their smart phones on the 11th of October 2017 from their respective school administrations.

All the four teachers had not schemed and planned for these tasks since they received them after schools had opened. After receiving the tasks, each teacher had to alter his/her teaching patterns in order to accommodate this change. After receiving the tasks on their smart

phones, Angela and Bessie had to summarise the key points from the task document on the chalkboard for students to copy. All the four teachers had to take time from their planned lessons to talk about the tasks and help learners understand what the research task required them to do. The teachers had to assist learners prepare the interview guides for the local political leadership, analyse the findings and do the research write up.

But taking away time from the planned lessons to do the research task adversely affected the teachers' content coverage for the Third Term of 2017; making Angela and Bessie resort to lecturing and note giving to cover up for lost time. Angela complained: "I was affected greatly by the continuous assessment tasks. I failed to look at the Scramble and Partition of Southern Africa; I did not finish the colonisation of Zimbabwe, let alone the First Chimurenga." Bessie also complained that:

The tasks affected my lessons a lot because the moment you go for a lesson the first thing that you have to do is to check how far they have gone with these tasks. And some of the answers you get from the pupils are worrying: 'madam, we are finding it difficult. We are nowhere and can you assist us?' And at some point you just leave teaching the actual lesson you planned for and start looking at the tasks.

As the dates for submitting the tasks got closer Angela and Bessie resorted more and more to rote practices of note giving, note writing and dictation. Angela acknowledged that; "Sometimes I used the lecture method, sometimes I dictated notes, which is not acceptable in this new curriculum. But this was because I wanted to cover for time lost doing the tasks and invigilating ZIMSEC examinations." Bessie also explained that; "When we got the tasks I could foresee that the Form 3s that I teach will not have their lessons the normal way because the tasks needed to be completed. So I had to use the lecture method so that I try to cover a lot of ground."

However, David and Emmy's teaching methods and content coverage for Term 3 of 2017 were not affected much by the tasks. David was proud that he had adhered to his schemes of work for the Third Term of 2017. This was because David and his class of 20 students did the tasks outside the normal teaching hours because Delta High School does not have hot

seating (half the school coming in the morning and the other half in the afternoon). Emmy was also happy that at a boarding school you can stretch the day and make the students work overnight. As a result, she covered most of the work she had planned for the Third Term of 2017 except the Second Chimurenga.

It is interesting to note that, despite her positive attitude towards the history curriculum reforms, Bessie's students had not completed the task when I held the exit interview with her on Monday 13th November 2017. She told me that; "I have received only four files in a class of over 45 pupils. And today is Monday and we are talking of exams this Friday; even if I use the iron rod to push them it won't work." However, when I held the exit interview with Angela on the 14th of November 2017, most of her students had handed in their tasks, except "four or six." All of David's 20 students had completed the tasks and he was almost through with the marking. Emmy, the pacesetter, was "almost through with the marking" of the 49 tasks from Form 3E.

5.5.2 Reforming teaching practices

Although all the four teachers made attempts to implement the history curriculum reforms and reform their patterns of practice towards learner-centred pedagogy, their commitment and success differed significantly. Some of the teachers appear to have made significant progress in transforming their classroom practice, while the others seem to struggle to make any meaningful strides towards learner-centred pedagogy. Success or failure to implement reform seems to depend on the sense the teacher made of the policy signals. How teachers understand the policy message determines whether they "change their behavior and implement the policy, ignore it, or work at sabotaging or circumventing it" (Spillane, 2000:145). Emmy and David managed to reform their practice, in part because they had gradually accepted the policy changes (although they initially disliked them) and appreciated the pedagogical benefits of learner-centred practices. Angela made some attempts at reform, without much commitment and success, because she only accepted the changes as a matter of policy, without appreciating their substance and purpose. Angela complained that "the curriculum was dictated upon us. We were told to accept it whether you like it or not." So Angela's implementation of reform was not whole hearted as she had never accepted the changes in the first place. Bessie attempted many times to use class discussion but students'

lack of participation made Bessie revert back to traditional methods of lecturing, dictation and note writing on the chalkboard. Bessie remarked that; “As a teacher I have to find a way out if students refuse to co-operate and remain quiet; and then you find me dictating the notes instead of them finding out the information from the text.”

David had made some progress towards learner-centred instruction, but always found himself dictating some notes to his class because of his traditional belief that “the teacher remains the master of the subject and so must give notes. The teacher must play a critical role especially in subjects like history where we have limited text recovery.” Emmy was way ahead of the other three teachers in terms of reforming teaching practices towards learner-centred pedagogy, as recommended in the history reform policy. She emphasised that she no longer used lecturing and dictation after realising that “progressive methods are exciting, children participate, they understand better, they are motivated, even the examination results actually show that when children do it they will understand better and pass.” The findings of this study indicate that all the four teachers implemented learner-centred pedagogy differently in their classes mainly because they had different interpretations of the same policy they were implementing and teaching-learning resources differed from one school to the other. These findings give support to Spillane’s (2002:388) thesis that teachers’ sense-making of policy implementation is shaped by the teacher’s cognitive structures (knowledge, beliefs, and attitudes), policy signals and the situation (school and classroom) the teacher operates in.

5.5.3 Teacher-student discourses

In her classroom discourses, Angela made some efforts to assist students go beyond basic factual knowledge and gain a deeper understanding of the historical issues at stake. She made use of some progressive activity based practices but could not do away with orthodox practices like lecturing and dictation which limited the scope and level of her interactions with students. Despite her positive attitude towards the new curriculum, Bessie interacted with learners and discussed historical issues on a perfunctory and artificial level, without any deep and broad analysis of issues. Most topics were only covered at surface level and students only gained factual historical knowledge without much interrogation of issues. Bessie justified her non-interrogation of issues and dictation of notes on the grounds that her learners were

of below average ability and “when students refuse to co-operate and remain quiet, then you find me dictating the notes”.

McLaughlin (1987:173) established that as teachers make sense of the meaning of reform policy, they can respond in any of the three ways: non-compliance, co-optation (symbolic response) or mutual adaptation. Co-optation or symbolic response is when teachers and students implement changes on the surface and in a superficial manner without actually changing classroom practice, like what Bessie seemed to have been doing. Bessie was teaching the new history curriculum through the methods she was experienced in: dictation and note giving, with a superficial sprinkling of pair work and class discussion. Writing on the South African experience with reform implementation, Hoadley and Jansen (2009:224) found that some South African teachers only responded to the implementation of the first post-apartheid curriculum (C2005) in a symbolic manner “with no real changes in the teachers and the learners ... These teachers simply interpret the new curriculum through the only lens they have, their old understandings of teaching and learning.” It appears Bessie was also teaching history through her old lenses, as testified in one interview:

My attitude was changed by going to the university [to do B.Ed. in history]. Prior to that, I gave pupils notes and sometimes never cared to explain them; I just took the old notebook and then dished out the notes and pupils will just write them. But when I came back beginning this year 2017, I started to see the teaching of history with another eye, with another view; and I was so stimulated, so motivated by the new curriculum.

I would want to argue that, from what I observed in her lessons, not much has changed in Bessie’s actual classroom practice, although she herself sees a lot of change in her own teaching approaches. Cohen (1990:323) has shown that it is not uncommon for teachers to exaggerate the extent to which they have reformed their own practice, although an outsider may only see the use of old methods in new ways, or the use of new methods in old ways, some form of “conservative progressivism”.

Discussion between David and his students was characterised by a deep exploration of historical issues that went beyond the surface level. David made use of multiple historical

sources (two or three textbooks) to present multiple realities on one historical theme (**Lesson segment 5**). This approach helped to develop learners' skills of analysis and judgement as they drew up their own conclusions based on the evidence available. This pedagogical strategy of allowing students to 'wonder' among the different historical sources so that they explore the same issue from a variety of angles and develop a multi-perspective analysis is called "bird-walking". Shedd (2010:452) explains that, "this teaching technique encourages classes to follow a line of thought tangential to the topic at hand so that the teacher and the students can see how the issue under discussion applies to other areas." Despite the obvious drawback of demanding more time (which David did not face because of his double periods), the bird-walking technique is one of the modern constructivist learning approaches which David used often and very well with Form 3D. But he still believed that "here and there the teacher must give students notes," making his interactions with students a mixture of progressive and traditional practices.

Emmy's discussions with students were characterised by an in-depth exploration of historical issues which showed that her teaching aimed at fostering historical understanding in learners. Her approach was that students read and write notes on their own before the topic is taught. In her lessons, Emmy's main function was to facilitate learning and clarify issues as students engaged in the study of primary and secondary sources, presentations, discussions and role playing. Students would then enrich their notes by adding new ideas emerging from the class discussions. Emmy's teaching patterns may be viewed as consistent with the principles of the "flipped classroom." Fitzpatrick (2016:91-92) explains that;

In a flipped classroom, students are expected to complete readings and recommended tasks before coming to the classroom. Class time is for engaging students in activities such as experiments or debates that allow students to use course concepts ... Instructors play a facilitative role to help students glean insights from activities.

In my analyses, Emmy is the only teacher who did not use the lecture method, dictate or write notes on the chalkboard and may even have used the concept of the flipped classroom, perhaps without even knowing it. "There is no room for dictation in the new curriculum," Emmy had insisted in the pre-observation interview. Her practice lived up to her

word, showing that Emmy's response to the new curriculum was that of mutual adaptation (McLaughlin, 1987:173). Mutual adaptation involves teachers embracing reform policy and then modifying it to suit their classroom situation, taking into cognizance resources available and learner attributes. Emmy made efforts to transform classroom practice so that it was congruent with the reform policy signals and the learners' cognitive abilities. Emmy's patterns of teaching in Form 3E seemed to reflect a 'flipped classroom' (Fitzpatrick, 2016:91) in which the traditional roles of the teacher and the students were reversed; with students talking more than the teacher and engaging in a variety of learning activities (Refer to Section 2.6.8).

5.6 UNDERSTANDING AND EXPLAINING REFORM

In this section, I attempt a response to the fourth sub-research question which anchors this study: How can the patterns of practice that characterise history classroom pedagogy be understood and explained? The section explores the reasons why the four history teachers taught and implemented the history curriculum changes the way they did in the early implementation stage of the 2017-2022 reforms. I did not make any attempt to establish the major themes and categories for addressing this question a priori, but instead generated them from the findings that emerged from the cross case analysis. Three sub-themes emerged to explain the central findings, viz: classroom based factors, school based factors and teacher background.

5.6.1 Classroom based factors

Class size

Two teachers in my study – Angela and Bessie – expressed the view that huge class sizes made them resort to teacher centred practices in their lessons. Angela's Form 3A had 49 students and Bessie's 3B had 45, against the officially recommended teacher-student ratio of 1:35 (MOPSE, 2017:2) in the New Curriculum Framework. The large class sizes made Angela and Bessie shun group work (and prefer pair work) fearing that large groups might make noise and they would be unable to control them. They also avoided role playing for fear of disciplinary problems in their huge classes. In Bessie and Angela's cases, huge class size seemed to impact negatively on their practice as it made them shun some progressive teaching methods like group work and role playing.

However, Emmy's classroom practices seemed to contradict the view that huge class sizes make teachers resort to chalk-and-talk. With 49 students, Emmy had one of the largest classes in this study but she did not use lecturing and dictation. Despite the abnormal class size, Emmy used text, map and picture study, presentations, discussions and role playing, supporting what she had said in the interview: "There is no room for dictation in the new curriculum." Thus, one of the unexpected findings from my study was Emmy's use of learner-centred methods in a class with 49 students when Bessie and Angela avoided such methods for fear of disciplinary problems. Existing literature also indicates that when classes are large, teachers tend to shun learner-centred pedagogy in favour of rote learning practices like lecturing, dictation and note giving (Geoff, 2014:133), like what Angela and Bessie were doing. But Emmy successfully used role playing in three different lessons with Form 3E despite its abnormal size, making her teaching methods contradict existing literature and stand out as unique in this multiple case study. The reasons why Emmy was able to use role playing, presentations and discussions in an abnormally large classroom can partly be attributed to the nature of learners at Exit High School, the school setting and Emmy's background and personal philosophy as a history teacher.

Nature of learners

Emmy acknowledged that most of the students in Form 3E were of above average ability. This motivated her to use learner-centred approaches as the students were eager to learn and try out new things. “The learners are not bad, as most of them are of above average ability. They are quite eager and they are innovative, they actually motivate the teacher. They give you motivation and they are disciplined,” she said. Enrolment at this boarding school is based strictly on merit – good Grade 7 results – meaning that Exit High School only recruits the cream of the crop in its Form 1 enrollment. Furthermore, the students in Form 3E had made their own choice to take history; so they liked the subject as evidenced by their enthusiastic participation in lesson activities and writing of their own notes well ahead of the lessons.

David also linked the learners’ ability with the teaching strategies he selected to use in Form 3D. “Usually I favour discussion because they are above average and have the language to engage in discussion,” he explained to me. The nature of learners in Form 3D positively influenced David to use progressive learner-centered approaches, as recommended by the history curriculum reforms he was implementing; although he found the temptation to go back to lecturing and note giving too hard to resist.

But Angela and Bessie were bitter that the best classes are given the sciences in line with the government’s STEM policy, and history is only given to the low ability classes. So the classes offered history in the new curriculum were less gifted and the students found the subject difficult because of its abstract nature. Faced with lack of participation from students, Bessie always ended up lecturing and dictating notes. Angela also complained that streaming affected her selection of teaching methods: “I cannot dictate notes to 3¹⁰ (the last class in 10 streamed Form 3 classes) because they can’t comprehend what I say. I have to write the notes on the chalkboard.” The present study found a strong relationship between the cognitive ability of learners and the teaching methods the four teachers selected to use in their lessons. It appears that the more gifted the learners, the greater the likelihood that the teacher would use learner-centred practices, and the lower the learners’ perceived academic abilities the greater the chances of using teacher dominated practices.

5.6.2 School based factors

School size and setting

Though geographically located in Zitown, Exit High School is socially isolated from the high density townships that surround it because it does not accept any day scholars. This gave the boarding school a school culture which is very different from that in the other three day schools in my multiple case study. Students at Exit High have more learning hours because they have supervised study after school compared with their peers in day secondary schools. Emmy explained that; “When time is not enough you have to stretch the day. This is the advantage of a boarding school ...The boarding environment is very suitable for group activities, preparing presentations and role plays after school hours.” Emmy utilised the boarding school setting to reform her teaching methods long before the introduction of the new curriculum. The interviews I held with Emmy, the document analysis of her schemes of work and the lesson observations I made, all revealed that she did not dictate or write notes on the board, or lecture to students. She preferred engaging students in discursive, analytical and empathetic activities which developed their historical understanding and higher order thinking skills.

Bessie blamed Bridge High School’s catchment area, the ghetto neighbourhood of Oldbricks Township, from which most of the students come from, for the misbehaviours that distracted students’ attention from school work. Rampant absenteeism and cutting of classes were common problems at Bridge High, to the extent that over the eight week fieldwork period I never observed Form 3B as a full class (**Section 4.2.5**). When students were few in class, due to unexplained absenteeism, Bessie dictated notes to the few students present arguing that she could not engage them in class discussion when they were so few. She lamented that; “Sometimes there are very few students in the class [Form 3B] and so I cannot do the lesson and learning time is lost. To cover up for lost time, I resort to dictation or simply writing notes on the board.” Thus, the school culture of absenteeism at Bridge High school negatively influenced Bessie to use dictation and note giving.

Angela explained that the size of Arise High School and its hot-seating practice militated against her attempts to reform practice in line with the demands of the new history curriculum.

She did not use role playing and dramatisation because; “We operate under a hot-seating set up and some of the methods like role playing need more time. Because if you are to dramatise you may find that the 35 minute lesson is not enough.” Limited contact time with students at Arise High School because of the hot-seating practice and the huge class size forced Angela to shun role playing in her lessons and resort to dictation and note writing on the board.

Resource availability

The issue of resource shortages was more pronounced in the two government high schools than in the mission day and trust run boarding schools. Emmy’s 49 students at Exit boarding school had two textbooks each, one issued by the school and the other bought by the parent. This enabled them to carry out research on their own, read ahead and write their own notes. Emmy was also free to use the school photocopier to reproduce teaching materials, like maps, research tasks and other primary and secondary evidence. David at the mission day school, also acknowledged that textbooks were adequate for his Form 3D, as he had issued two textbooks to each student. The school photocopier was readily available any time he needed it.

But the story was different in the two government schools where the shortage of school textbooks appeared to be a common problem. At Bridge High School, Bessie issued one textbook to two students but, “If you give them homework, out of maybe 55 pupils only four will bring their books, the rest they will not,” she complained. To go over this, hurdle Bessie had adopted a new principle: “No homework because when you want to record the work only four pupils have brought the books and the rest haven’t and then you have problems with gaps in the record book. So it’s better they do it in class.” I probed Bessie if she had ever weighed the disadvantages of not giving homework to students but she explained that this is what works in her situation, given the learners’ below average cognitive abilities and their attitude towards school work. Angela also failed to use film, video and computers in her lessons because “the school is incapacitated to engage in such methods. There are no films and videos. We have one projector for the whole school and one computer lab and this is not enough.” Angela also complained that; “We don’t have new textbooks; they introduced the new curriculum without relevant books. It’s one of the major challenges.” Shortages of

textbooks made Angela download notes onto her tablet and dictate them to the class, or write them on the chalkboard. But Angela and Bessie's use of dictation and note writing can also be explained in terms of their personal backgrounds and experiences in teaching history. These teacher-centred practices can also be explained in terms of how the two teachers were taught history at secondary school when they were still students.

5.6.3 Teacher backgrounds

Teacher background and reform implementation

There appeared to be some relationship between one's occupational aspirations as a secondary school student and the adoption of reform oriented practices when one became a teacher. Angela and Bessie found themselves in the history classroom by default and chance. Angela became a teacher mainly because her initial career aspirations to be a lawyer, a nurse or police officer had been frustrated and she had no other viable alternative (**Section 4.1.1**). "Sometimes I do regret I became a teacher because of the low remuneration in the teaching profession," she lamented. Interestingly, Angela used some progressive learner-centred methods like text study, class discussion and ICT-aided instruction in her lessons (**Section 4.1.3**). But she also used rote practices like teacher-talk and dictation of notes, to the extent that she characterised her own classroom patterns as "a mixture of progressive and traditional methods" (**Section 4.1.3**). The 13 lessons I observed in Angela's Form 3A corroborated her self-assessment: "It's a mixture of progressive and traditional methods."

Bessie's early experience with history as a secondary school student was unpleasant, so she hated the subject and never thought of becoming a history teacher (**Section 4.2.1**). Bessie only thought of becoming a history teacher because of her experience as an untrained teacher in Harare. She explained how she "accidentally" discovered that she could teach history (a subject she used to hate as a Form 3/4 student): "I was given a contract as a temporary teacher to teach history at Harare High School for six months. After the termination of my contract I was given another contract at Mbare High where I was also teaching history. This made me realise that I could be a history teacher." Bessie then went to train as a history and geography teacher at Hillside Teachers' College in Bulawayo.

Bessie's late turning point to history may partly explain her lack of patience when using learner centered approaches. In all her lessons, class discussion was abandoned mid-way (**Lesson segments 3 & 4 in Section 4.2.5**). Once students failed to respond to her question, Bessie would simply abandon the discussion and start dictating notes instead of unpacking the question to assist learners. She was adamant that "Dictation and lecturing, we cannot do without," a statement which seemed to solidify her position as a traditional history teacher. Bessie could not do away with traditional teaching practices because these are the teaching methods she had experience in using in her lessons. The methods Bessie used to hate when she was a secondary school history student, dictation and note writing, (**Section 4.2.5**) were the same methods I saw her using, although she thought that she had reformed her practice. In a study in American schools, Reese (2013:324) found that "teachers want to teach the way they themselves were taught." This observation may be true for Bessie.

David and Emmy had childhood ambitions to become teachers mainly because of family influences. David became a teacher partly because his father always said; "This one is going to be a teacher, like me" (**Section 4.3.1**) His "O" level history teacher also inspired him to be a history teacher. Despite his observation that history teachers cannot avoid being progressive "otherwise they face extinction like the dinosaurs"; David still believed that; "The teacher remains the master of the subject. Here and there he is to guide the students. Some of the textbooks which are used by the students lack facts and that is where the knowledge of the teacher becomes very important." Although David used some traditional classroom practices, he also employed some progressive methodologies making his teaching methods a hybrid of learner-centred and traditional teacher dominated practices. The present study established that the fulfillment of one's career aspirations does not necessarily make one a progressive teacher. David was satisfied with his 25 years' experience as a history teacher (**Section 4.3.5**) but he still remained at the crossroads of curriculum tradition and reform, and appeared to lack the will power to make a decisive break with orthodox practices.

Emmy became a history teacher mainly because of her brother's influence (**Section 4.4.5**). He was a history teacher in the 1990s when she was doing her secondary education. "My brother influenced me to be a history teacher," she told me. Besides her brother's influence,

Emmy also felt that teaching was a natural calling for her: “I am a teacher. Born a teacher by nature and I enjoy teaching. I like teaching, it’s part of me. I am motivated and I want those results, and the students are proud to be associated with me.” That Emmy’s occupational dreams were fulfilled cannot be doubted as she had never thought of any other job in her life besides teaching history. “I think my background is useful in explaining my classroom practice. I have my honours degree in history. I am into history, I love it. If I love the subject it will translate to the students because of the methods that I use.” True to her word, the students in her class seemed to love both the subject and the teacher partly because her teaching methods involved them in a variety of learning activities (**Lesson segments 7, 8 & 9 in Section 4.4.3**).

Literature shows that students like to engage in active learning activities like discussions, role playing and educational tours. Geoff (2014: 133) advises that; “Students like action: talking in groups, making things, being creative, doing things. Passive methods get an emphatic thumbs-down; bottom of the list is the lecture.” Thus, Emmy was doing what students like most: learning through activity and ‘doing history’ through role playing, map study, picture study and class discussion (**Section 4.4.3**). This made her patterns of classroom practice progressive and different from those of the other three teachers in the present study. Emmy attributed her progressive approach to history instruction to her B.A. Honours degree in History. “I have always been progressive. I acquired it from university – we used to research and so I saw the research approach work, especially in history where students have to search for information,” she explained. The Post-Graduate Diploma in Education widened her knowledge of learner-centred pedagogy. “When I teach history I make the students active and I become the facilitator. It’s very interesting because learners want to learn new things; they want to try new things themselves,” she said. Emmy also recognised the perceived above average ability of the students in Form 3E and their positive attitude towards history as factors that motivated her to engage them in a variety of learning activities (**Section 4.4.5**). The boarding school setting, from Emmy’s point of view, also afforded students the opportunity to carry out research and prepare for class presentations, role plays, discussions and debates because the students were together most of the time, unlike day scholars. Emmy’s early

turning point to history and her love for the subject also help to account for her progressive approach to history instruction.

5.6.4 Career choice and classroom practice

Career aspirations to be history teachers when they were still secondary school students help in explaining why Emmy and David were more proactive and receptive to curriculum reform implementation than Angela and Bessie. Drake (2006:591) talks of “turning points” in teachers’ lives – when teachers suddenly “see” and “hear” a subject in new ways and start to appreciate it. Angela and Bessie only liked history teaching much later in their life, only after they had completed high school. Research by Drake (2006:597) in American primary schools found that teachers who had a late turning point to mathematics, due to an earlier unfavourable encounter with the subject, tended to have an artificial approach to the teaching of the subject. This superficial approach also characterised Angela and Bessie’s surface level exploration of historical issues in their lessons. The two focused more on basic knowledge and comprehension level skills while paying cursory attention to the development of higher order thinking skills in learners. They were more interested in getting correct answers from students without probing them to justify their answers.

Jita (2004:11) coined the concept “resources of biography” as a way of trying to make sense of how teachers’ early life experiences shape the way the teachers construct their teaching methods in response to curriculum reform policy, much later in their lives. The teacher in Jita’s (2004:16) study, Movement Sithole, was able to overcome his previous marginalisation and negative school experiences (as a black secondary school student growing up under apartheid) to teach Biology passionately and differently in the post-apartheid era. The challenges Movement faced while growing up made him believe that he could “change things”. These difficulties in his early life made him a better teacher, later. This is unlike Angela in my study. Angela appeared unable to overcome her earlier career disappointments and was still unsatisfied with her job as a history teacher; even after ten years in the classroom.

Career satisfaction and the future

When I asked Angela about her career satisfaction she was forthright: “To be honest teaching is no longer in me. Yes, I have adjusted to be a history teacher but I still have ambitions. I am thinking of lecturing.” But Bessie was happy that she was now teaching history, a subject she used to hate: “Now I am enjoying it, even classroom management, I can even manage the pupils. But I think teachers can be trained, like myself I was not born a teacher, but now I enjoy it. I really was trained to become one.” David had no regrets in terms of career satisfaction as a history teacher: “I am operating in a territory where I can really say I wanted to be. My occupational dreams were fulfilled.” David’s commitment and love for history teaching was reflected in the lessons I observed as he mainly adopted the dialogical approach and taught for historical understanding, though he still believed that note giving by the teacher is inevitable in history instruction. Emmy was happy and proud to be a history teacher and, like David, had no other future career aspirations: “I don’t intend to leave teaching. I am a teacher. Born a teacher by nature and I enjoy teaching. I like teaching, it’s part of me.”

5.7 SUMMARY

A number of interesting and unexpected findings seem to emerge from this cross-case analysis. One unexpected finding was that higher academic qualifications do not necessarily make teachers progressive and receptive to reform policy. Angela and David had Masters Degrees but their teaching methods vacillated between tradition and change. Emmy only had a first degree but she was the most progressive teacher in my study. Another interesting finding was Emmy’s use of learner-centred methods in a class of 49 students, contradicting literature which shows that when classes are large, teachers tend to use rote pedagogy (Honig, 2006; Geoff, 2014). The third unexpected finding was Emmy’s use of progressive learner centred pedagogy before the curriculum reform initiatives of January 2017; although existing literature shows that history teachers are generally conservative, boring and unimaginative in their classroom practices (Seltzer-Kelly, 2009:160; Reese, 2013:324). Another finding was the limited use of ICTs in the history classrooms in Zitown, despite the widespread use of modern technology in everyday life. The next chapter (Chapter 6) gives a summary of the major findings of this study and the conclusions that can be drawn from them. It also makes recommendations on how reform implementation can be improved to reduce the policy- practice gap, for the ultimate benefit of the learners.

CHAPTER 6: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

This study examined how history teachers interpreted curriculum reform signals as contained in various reform policy documents and how their sense-making of policy influenced the way they taught history in some Zimbabwean secondary schools. Most of the studies available on history curriculum reforms in Zimbabwe are qualitative and quantitative descriptive surveys on why and how changes were initiated in the 1990 and 2002 history curriculum reforms. There are very few studies in Zimbabwe which involve direct classroom observations using cognitive sense-making as a theoretical framework and the multiple case study as the research design. Most researchers tend to use once-off questionnaires and interview surveys; and quickly leave the school setting after obtaining the fixed-time data (Proctor, 1990; Taruvinga, 1997; Ranger, 2004; Chitate, 2005; Barnes, 2007; Moyo & Moyo, 2011; Matereke, 2011; Mapetere, 2013; Moyo, 2014). I used prolonged non-participatory observations and interviews to explore how history teachers understood and implemented reform policy in the first year of teaching the new curriculum.

To the best of my knowledge, a multiple case study approach has not been used to research how secondary school history teachers make sense of reform policy and construct their classroom practice as they implement policy in the context of Zimbabwe. Through multiple casing, I gained in-depth insights into how the history teachers were transforming their classroom practices, or failing to do so, in the process of implementing the new history curriculum. To the best of my knowledge, no case study or multiple case studies involving prolonged stay in the classrooms have been carried out in Zimbabwe to study how history teachers were deconstructing traditional teaching practices and constructing new ones in the process of implementing a new curriculum. Classroom based research on how teachers change their teaching methods as they respond to reform policy is still in its infancy in Zimbabwe and my study contributes to the growing body of knowledge on reform implementation studies in this country.

6.2 SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

This study examined how four history teachers were making sense of reform policy and transforming their teaching methods towards learner-centred pedagogy as demanded by the new history curriculum which they started implementing in January 2017. To shed more light on my study, I opted for sense-making as the theoretical framework to help me explore how teachers interpret reform policy and how this interpretation influences their teaching methods. Cognitive sense-making is appropriate for studying how teachers understand policy as contained in the different official documents because teachers are the “final brokers” in the policy implementation process (Spillane, 2000:142). Their understanding of policy, or misunderstanding of it, is what will finally be found in the classroom. The sense-making theory assumes that teachers engage in individual, much more than collective, sense-making (Gephart et al., 2010: 286). Even if teachers may engage in discussions with other teachers on the meaning of new reform policy and how to implement it, they finally implement policy as individuals in the classroom; according to their own understanding of what the other teachers would have said. In this study, I looked at the classroom as “a secret garden”, a space of teacher autonomy (Sheldon, 2012:259), because the teacher has the freedom to select the teaching methods to use in each lesson. The sense-making perspective assumes that despite implementing the same official reform policy, each teacher’s practices are likely to differ from those of the other teachers because different teachers have different interpretations and understandings of the same policy.

The literature reviewed in this study showed that when teachers make sense of reform policy and implement changes in their teaching methods, they do so within the context of their past experiences, existing knowledge, values and beliefs, because teachers are “historical beings” who cannot simply throw away their old ideas and practices like “a shabby coat, and slip on something new” (Cohen, 1990:323). Teachers always understand and interpret change using the lenses of what they already know, their old practices, habits and values. It would be naïve and unrealistic for policy makers and reformers to expect curriculum reform to be a complete change in what is taught and learnt in schools because there will always be elements of past practices when teachers try out new methods. The literature also revealed that local factors and choices/decisions made by teachers to put policy into practice (or not to) have a more

significant impact on policy outcomes than external inputs like funding levels, programme design, technology provision and supervision of teachers (McLaughlin and Mitra, 2001:301). Teachers' sense and decision making to implement reform, or not to, are central to unlocking the puzzle why, more often than not, reform policy goes unimplemented. Reese (2013:323-324) has shown that; "Progressive ideas are easier to proclaim than act upon." Implementation research also shows that reform policies are rarely implemented as written or as intended by their initiators (Ganon-Shilon & Schechter, 2017:4). As a result, official curriculum reform policies are often misinterpreted and misunderstood and are partially implemented or totally ignored by teachers. This is despite the fact that a lot of funding and other material resources have been committed to various curriculum reform initiatives throughout the world, making curriculum reform "big business politically and economically" (Fullan and Miles, 1992:747). Despite the political and economic spin-offs associated with reform, the gap between policy and practice in schools has remained wide making it necessary to reform the curriculum "again, again and again" (Cuban, 1990:3). "Why are classroom practices so hard to change?" McLaughlin (1998:70) asked some twenty years ago. This over-arching question has not been fully answered up to the present day, and my study partly grapples with it.

My study employed the qualitative research approach because qualitative research focuses on contexts and situations without seeking objective and universal explanations on why teachers engage in certain behaviours and practices (Minichello and Kottler, 2010:12). I found the qualitative approach useful in seeking insights and explanations on how teachers were making sense of reform policy and implementing the recommended changes in their lessons in the first year of implementing the reforms. The qualitative approach also aligned neatly with the theoretical framework of cognitive sense-making. They both view meanings, knowledge and reality as dynamic and in a constant state of change and reconstruction in their localised settings and contexts. The qualitative research design that I selected was the multiple case study which gave me the opportunity to immerse myself in each teacher's classroom for an eight week period, and observe how each teacher was teaching the new history curriculum.

6.3 KEY FINDINGS AND THEIR SIGNIFICANCE

The data collected from the document analysis, interviews and observations sought to answer the main research question which anchors this study: How do history curriculum reform policy guidelines in Zimbabwe shape and help to explain the secondary teachers' patterns of classroom practices? Four sub-questions were developed and these guided the presentation of key findings and their significance. These sub-questions are:

1. How do history teachers make sense of the curriculum reform policies that guide their teaching practice in Zimbabwean secondary schools?
2. What are the characteristics and patterns of history teaching in some of Zimbabwe's secondary schools?
3. What are the relations between curriculum reform policy and history classroom pedagogy, if at all?
4. How can the patterns of practice that characterise history classroom pedagogy be understood and explained?

6.3.1 Making sense of policy

Different interpretation of policy guidelines

The first important finding from my study was that the four teachers had different interpretations of the history curriculum reforms they were implementing, depending on the meaning they attached to the different reform policy signals. Angela saw the curriculum reforms as characterised by confusion and inconsistency (**Section 4.1**). For Bessie, the new curriculum was a welcome new experience to history pedagogy (**Section 4.2**). David saw no difference between the new history curriculum (Syllabus 4044) and the old curriculum (Syllabus 2167) (**Section 4.3**). Emmy saw herself as well ahead of the reforms as she was already using learner centred pedagogy before January 2017 (**Section 4.4**)

That the four teachers interpreted the same curriculum reform policy in different ways is in line with existing literature which shows that each teacher engages in individual sense-making of what the policy means to him or her as an individual in light of the knowledge, experience,

skills, beliefs and values they already possess (Cohen, 1990; Spillane, 2000, Tabulawa, 2009). “Based on their experiences in the profession, teachers develop a personal system of knowledge and beliefs that act as a cognitive and affective lens through which they look at their job, give meaning to it and act in it,” argue Marz et al. (2013:15). A teacher’s understanding of curriculum reform is closely linked to the teacher’s life history, knowledge of a particular subject, teaching experience and attitude towards change.

Angela, in particular, was quite angry with the way the 2017 reforms were introduced because she felt that they were forced upon them without adequate teacher preparation (**Section 5.3.1**). Even the proactive Emmy also complained about the knowledge void created in her mind by her poor sense-making of the reforms due to the non-availability of specimen examination papers on the new syllabus they were teaching (**Section 5.3.1**). The significance of these findings is that the teachers in my study, except Bessie, did not fully understand the reforms they were implementing making them dislike the reforms. Secondary school teachers use their subject areas as “filters” through which they plan their work and respond to curriculum reform policy (Day and Lee, 2011:11). Consequently, curriculum changes in the subject areas can be seen by teachers as challenging their content knowledge, pedagogical skills and professional self-understanding, and this partly explains why their reaction to curriculum reform is often emotionally charged.

Lack of knowledge to implement reform

Three teachers lacked knowledge on the curriculum reforms they were implementing. Only Bessie claimed to have adequate knowledge on the reforms because her B.Ed. training had exposed her to the use of computers as research and instructional tools, learner-centred pedagogy and research-based learning (**Section 5.3.1**). The other three teachers complained that the reforms were hurriedly introduced without explaining to teachers why the reforms were necessary and how to implement them. Only a single workshop was held at the end of 2016 to sensitise the teachers on the demands of the new curriculum before it was rolled out in January 2017 (**Section 4.1.2**). David pointed out that no pilot study was carried out to test the feasibility of the history curriculum reforms and no specimen papers were produced to orient the teachers on the nature of examination questions for the new history curriculum.

Angela and Emmy complained that they did not know where they were going with the new curriculum since they spent almost a year waiting for the continuous assessment tasks **(Section 5.5.1)**.

In a study done in Malawi, Chirwa and Naidoo (2014:343) established that reforms are often introduced in a hurry without adequate teacher preparation. Phiri (2015:1) was bitter that the 2013 curriculum reforms in Zambia were “hastily implemented by people who seemed to be pursuing something or were being pursued by something.” The policy makers who introduced the new curriculum in Zimbabwe in January 2017 also appeared to be in a hurry as they did so without adequate teacher preparation. McLaughlin and Mitra (2002:306-7) caution that when teachers lack knowledge of what the reforms intend to change (and how) they risk constructing “lethal mutations in their classrooms, as they modify practice, or extend it and unintentionally violate rudiments of the reform’s theoretical base.” Teachers may misinterpret and misrepresent reform in their practice when they lack knowledge of what they are supposed to change and how to change it, as was the case with Angela, David and Emmy **(Section 5.5.2)**. This finding is significant in that it sounds the clarion call to policy makers and curriculum supervisory authorities in Zimbabwe that they are not doing enough ground work to prepare and equip teachers with knowledge and skills that help them, not only accept the new curriculum, but understand and implement it as the policy makers intended.

Meaning of learner-centred pedagogy

Another finding was that the four history teachers had different conceptualisations of what learner-centred pedagogy involves. Earlier research by Kelchtermans (2005:996) reported that the theory of sense-making stresses multiple interpretations of policy intentions to the extent that implementation is likely to vary from one teacher to the other. For Emmy, learner-centredness meant students taking a leading role in a variety of learning activities with the teacher as the facilitator **(Section 4.4.2)**. She emphasised the intellectual and interactive benefits of individual and group presentations, class discussions and role playing in a learner-centred classroom. Educational tours and research by students were central to David’s understanding of learner-centered instruction **(Section 4.3.3)**. Angela and Bessie associated the new curriculum with the use of ICTs, the internet and interactive boards **(Section 5.4.2)**.

The meaning of a reform is individually constructed by each teacher and also collectively constructed during interaction with other teachers in the localised environment. “Meaning is negotiated, contested and mutually co-constructed,” advise Maitlis and Christianson (2014:66). The meaning of reform is, therefore, influenced by the individual teacher’s socio-academic background, level of training, experience in the classroom and the professional community the teacher shares ideas with. The significance of this finding is that researchers and curriculum supervisory authorities are likely to find variations in the way different teachers implement the history curriculum reforms. These variations should not be surprising because, even if teachers share ideas, they implement policy as individuals.

6.3.2 Characteristics and patterns of teaching

Persistence of traditional pedagogy

My study also found that the use of traditional teaching methods – dictation and note giving – is still prevalent in most schools in Zitown, although the new history Syllabus 4044 requires teachers to use multi-sensory learner-centred approaches. Three of the four teachers continued to use rote pedagogy in their lessons, with some limited learner-centred approaches, what Cohen (1990:323) would call “conservative progressivism” – a mixture of traditional teaching methods with some activity based learning. Only Emmy had completely moved away from dictation and note giving in her practice and focused on developing learners’ historical skills, role playing and ability to write their own notes with minimum teacher guidance and supervision. The reasons why Angela, Bessie and David had not completely reformed their teaching practices as required by the new history curriculum were complex, varied and intertwined. But the different reasons largely had to do with the teachers’ unfavourable attitudes towards reform, the teacher’s personal background, abnormal class sizes and resource limitations, as discussed earlier in Chapter 4 (**Sections 4.1.5; 4.2.5; 4.3.5 & 4.4.5**) and Chapter 5 (**Sections 5.6.1; 5.6.2; 5.6.3 & 5.6.4**) of the present study.

My study established that some history teachers in Zimbabwean secondary schools continue to use traditional teaching methods, although the new history curriculum they are implementing calls for use of learner-centred pedagogy (**Section 5.4.4**). The significance of this finding is that a multifaceted approach is needed by policy makers and curriculum

supervisory authorities (and the teachers themselves); if teachers are to successfully transform their classroom practices towards learner-centred pedagogy, as required by reform policy. The view that teachers are mere “recipients” and implementers of curriculum developed by specialists “elsewhere” is not supported by many and may be the cause for the failure of many curriculum reform initiatives (Carl, 2005:228). Teachers need to be actively involved in reform policy formulation so that they have a sense of ownership of the reforms they will, inevitably, implement.

Limited use of ICTs in the history classroom

Despite the widespread use of modern technology like film, video, internet and computers in everyday life (and in some schools), my study established that the use of ICTs in the history classrooms is not a common practice in secondary schools in Zitown (**Section 5.4.2**). Only the techno-savvy Angela made use of her tablet to dictate notes to her class, much to the chagrin of the school administration which preferred seeing her with the traditional notebook. But Angela, like Bessie and Emmy, indicated that her school lacked the ICT resources to use with students in the history classroom. Only David indicated that his school (Delta High) had the resources – the projectors, historical films and videos. But David did not make use of this technology in the eight weeks I observed him teaching. He claimed that the themes he covered in the Third Term of 2017 did not demand the use of film and video (**Section 4.3.5**). To my knowledge, a lot of films and videos have been produced on the Scramble and Partition of Southern Africa, but David did not make use of them. Maybe this was because of David’s past experiences which had not exposed him to these methods, and his existing knowledge which did not appreciate the value of film, video and computers in history instruction. The significance of this finding is that the availability of technology like film, video, computers and the internet in the school does not guarantee their use by teachers in the classroom or that teachers are going to change their teaching methods. Writing on the use of ICT in Sub-Saharan Africa Hennessy and Wamakote (2010:42) found that; “It is a common misconception that access to technology on its own motivates teachers to apply it in their teaching...availability does not necessarily translate to use.” Slay et al. (2008:1338) also established that the greatest barrier to ICT use in South African schools appeared to be lack

of ICT literacy among teachers and students, rather than the cost of technology. David's teaching practices appear to confirm Slay et al. (2008) and Hennessy and Wamakote's (2010) findings that the teacher's mindset, competency and level of computer literacy are the ultimate determinants of whether ICT is used in classroom practice, or not.

Busting the myth of class size

One of the unique findings from my study was the use of learner-centred and activity based methods by Emmy in a class with 49 students, when the official teacher-student ratio in the new curriculum framework is 1:35 (MOPSE, 2017:2). Available literature (Carpenter, 2006:13; Geoff, 2014:135) suggests that when classes are too big, teachers tend to use rote practices like lecturing, dictation and note writing on the chalkboard, and reduce discussion and collaborative learning activities. In my study, Bessie and Angela actually avoided role playing in their classes of 45 and 49 students, respectively, because they were afraid that the method might cause disorder in their abnormal classes (**Sections 4.1.5 & 4.2.5**). It was rather unexpected that Emmy used activity based approaches like picture study, map study and role playing in such a huge class without any disciplinary problems like noise making and lack of co-operation from students.

Emmy proved that, even when classes are too big, students actually enjoy getting involved in well-organised learning activities like role playing and student led class discussions. This finding busts the commonly held myth that "students are fundamentally lazy, preferring activities that intrude as little as possible into their daydreaming" (Geoff, 2014:133). The learners in Emmy's Form 3E actually enjoyed and benefited from activity based learning. The more active they were the more they enjoyed the learning process, as shown in the role play they performed (**Lesson segment 9**). The significance of this finding is that it seems to be going against the grain of existing literature. Bessie was able to use activity based methods in a class of 49 students, although extant literature shows that when faced with large classes teachers are likely to resort to rote pedagogy.

It is interesting to note that, although David had a class of only 20 students, he continued to dictate notes partly because he believed that the history teacher remains the master of the

subject (**Section 4.3.3**). Honig (2006:2) established that; “Some research on class size reduction links smaller class sizes with increases in student performance but other research reveals no improvement.” For instance, Molnar and Zahorik (2002), and Earle and Molnar (2004) established that when classes are small teachers use learner-centred instruction, but when classes are large teachers dominate instruction leading to reduced learner performance. Emmy’s teaching methods in Form 3E seemed to demystify the myth of class size as she used inquiry based methods with a class of 49 students.

6.3.3 Curriculum reform implementation

Continuous Assessment Tasks: the common enemy

One critical finding from the current study was a general dislike for the research based Continuous Assessment Tasks among the history teachers, except for Bessie (**Section 5.5.1**). Part of the puzzle the present study sought to unravel was why Continuous Assessment Tasks were so unpopular with both teachers and students. One of the reasons why the teachers had an unfavourable attitude towards the tasks was that they had to undergo a 10 months period of anxiety and frustrated expectations as they waited for the Continuous Assessment Tasks from January to October 2017. The tasks were also introduced in an unsystematic manner with different schools receiving them on different dates and through different channels (**Section 5.5.1**). Angela and Bessie received the tasks through social media (Whatsapp) while David and Emmy received them as hard copies from the school administration. Furthermore, the tasks had not been planned for in the teachers’ schemes of work and teachers had to take away time from their planned lessons to assist learners carry out the research based tasks.

Among the four teachers, Angela was the most critical of the tasks and she ruled them out as “a total failure” (**Section 4.1.4**). I labelled Angela ‘the soul rebel’ because of her combative and outspoken dislike for the new curriculum in general and the continuous assessment tasks in particular. David pointed out that, although the introduction of the tasks in schools was chaotic and haphazard, he appreciated that the new history curriculum introduced the skills of the historian to the students at a tender age (**Section 4.3.4**). Emmy also believed that the idea of tasks is not bad, but the tasks cannot be done in all the subjects, as required by reform

policy (**Section 4.4.4**). Although the other three teachers were critical of the way Continuous Assessment Tasks were introduced, all the four teachers agreed that some form of research project in history would be beneficial in developing learners' skills of critical analysis and reflective thinking (**Section 5.5.1**).

Bell (2010:39) emphasizes the benefits of Project-Based Learning (PBL) to secondary school students: "Project-based learning is an innovative approach to learning that teaches a multitude of strategies critical for success in the twenty-first century." These skills range from ICT literacy, proficient communication and problem solving skills. But available literature shows that the use of PBL is a relatively recent innovation in the secondary school history curriculum dating back to the 1990s in the developed world and is almost unknown in the developing world (Thomas, 2000:1, Savery, 2006:9, Krajcik & Blumenfeld, 2010:317). Implementing PBL in traditional school and classroom settings has been a complex challenge as this requires significant changes in the way teachers teach and students learn. Consequently, PBL has not been very popular with teachers and students who are used to summative evaluation and external examinations (Solomon, 2008:2). The 2017 New Curriculum Framework is the first reform initiative in Zimbabwe to use research based continuous assessment tasks in the teaching and learning of secondary school history. Like what literature indicates, the research projects were unpopular with both teachers and students in the present study. This was because teachers did not know how (and to what extent) they were to guide students in carrying out the research tasks.

The New Curriculum Review Symposium (NCRS) held in Harare in December 2017 recommended suspending the tasks "to enable wider consultations and a comprehensive re-engineering process to take place until such a time a viable model has been developed" (NCRS Report, 2017:15). The tasks were eventually officially suspended from the new curriculum in March 2018 (The Sunday Mail, 4 March 2018:6). The significance of the suspension of the tasks is that reform implementation scholars in Zimbabwe need to come up with a research based task model which does not require students to go out of the school yard to collect data, as was the case with the suspended tasks. As part of the contribution to new knowledge on reform implementation in Zimbabwe, the present study has developed an

alternative research model for secondary school history students in Zimbabwe (**Figure 14 in Section 6.5.2**).

Learners' cognitive ability and teaching methods

Reviewed literature has shown that history teachers are generally conservative and unimaginative in their classroom practices, irrespective of the ability of the learners they are teaching (Reese, 2013:323, Moyo, 2014:16, Schul, 2015:24). However, the present study established some relationship between the cognitive ability of learners and the teaching methods the four teachers selected to use in their lessons. The more gifted the learners the greater the likelihood that the teacher would use student centred practices. The lower the learners' academic ability, the greater the chances of using teacher dominated practices like lecturing and note giving. Emmy perceived Form 3E an above average class which motivated her to engage them in a variety of learner-centred activities (**Section 4.4.5**). Bessie regarded Form 3B students as below average performers which made her abandon class discussions midway and write notes on the chalkboard (**Section 4.2.4**). Angela complained that students in Form 3A were average performers only and so they could not write notes on their own, making her combine traditional and progressive learning approaches in her lessons (**Section 4.1.5**). However, David continued to use dictation and note giving although he perceived the 20 students in Form 3D as above average performers (**Section 4.3.2**).

Positive attitude and reform implementation: the questionable relationship

One interesting finding coming out of my intra-case and cross-case analysis is that a positive attitude towards curriculum reform policy does not necessarily make one a progressive and reform oriented teacher in the classroom. Bessie was the only teacher in the present study who accepted the new history curriculum from its inception in January 2017 (**Section 5.3.1**). In the 10 lessons I observed her teach; Bessie often started with some learner-centered methods (like text study and pair work) which she usually abandoned once students failed to answer her questions (**Lesson segments 3 & 4 in Section 4.2.5**). She would then write notes on the chalkboard for students to copy into their notebooks. She was also clear in the exit interview that she cannot do without lecturing and dictation (**Section 5.5.2**). The finding that a positive attitude to reform does not necessarily mean one is implementing the changes is

significant in that it shows how past experiences, existing practices and habits can act as barriers to the practical implementation of new teaching methods, even if the teacher is not opposed to policy, as was the case with Bessie. Without changing Bessie's philosophy to history instruction, it would be unrealistic to expect her to change her classroom practices because she still believes that lecturing and dictation are unavoidable in history instruction.

6.3.4 Explaining patterns of practice

The factors that make teachers reform (or fail to reform) their practices from traditional teacher centred to progressive reform oriented methods are complex, hazy and intertwined, to the extent that it may not be so easy to identify, separate and explain them. "Education is a complex system, and its reform is even more complex," advise Fullan and Miles (1992:746). I had to explore the complexity and difficulty of reform as I tried to explain why some teachers appeared to succeed, while others appeared to be struggling to reform their practice as required by reform policy in Zitown. The factors that emerged as useful in explaining teachers' sense making of reform policy and the relationship between reform policy and history classroom pedagogy in the present study are: initial career aspirations, early and late turning points to history, attitude towards reform, personal philosophy to history instruction and career satisfaction.

Initial career aspirations

Each teacher's initial career aspirations and early (or late) attachment to history appeared to have some influence on the teaching methods the teachers used and how they understood and implemented the history curriculum reforms. Emmy made the decision to become a history teacher when she was in Form 3 because of her brother who was a history teacher and personal role model. **(Section 4.4.5)** Her university training, personal philosophy to history instruction, experience in the classroom and love for history had made her reform her teaching methods towards learner-centred practices before the curriculum reform initiative of January 2017. David had aspired to be a history teacher while in Form 4, but at one time he had considered being a police officer - he loved the uniform and the motor bikes **(Section 4.3.1)**. Despite early resistance to the new history curriculum, David was quick to accept the history curriculum reforms. I likened David to a traveller at the crossroad **(Section 4.3.5)** who

is undecided about which route to follow because he was going through a process of metamorphosis while preserving lecturing and note giving as indispensable practices to history instruction.

Angela and Bessie struggled, without much success, to make their lessons learner-centred **(Section 5.4.4)**. They seemed to lack patience and commitment to engage learners in discussion and critical analysis, shortcomings that may be traced back to the two teachers' early career aspirations and late turning points to history teaching. Although history was her favourite subject at secondary school, Angela never wanted to be a teacher because of the perceived low remuneration associated with the profession. She wanted to be a lawyer, a police officer or a nurse **(Section 5.6.4)**. Bessie used to hate history because it was taught through rote pedagogy and only realised that she could be a history teacher while teaching history as an untrained teacher **(Section 5.6.4)**. Angela and Bessie's late turning points to history teaching made the two teachers depend on lecturing and dictation which did not require much preparation and intellectual input on their part. They justified their rote practices on over-crowded classes and lack of resources like computers and interactive boards **(Section 5.4.2)**.

Early and late turning points to history

David and Emmy had "early turning points" (Drake, 2006:589) to history as secondary school students. Early association with history made them develop an enduring passion for the subject **(Section 5.6.3)**. Their love for history may partly explain why they taught the subject in a discursive and interrogative manner involving student participation, rather than simply reproducing preconceived conclusions and sterile facts. Bessie and Angela had late turning points to history **(Section 5.6.4)** and this appeared to have some influence on their classroom practice. Angela and Bessie's late turning points to history teaching as a profession may partly explain their superficial and teacher dominated approach to history instruction as reflected by dictation and writing of notes on the chalkboard.

Attitude towards reform

Angela insisted that her attitude towards the reforms “has never become positive” and that she was still using teacher exposition, lecturing and note giving mainly because ICT based resources were not available at Arise high School (**Section 4.1.5**). This negative attitude may be the underlying reason why Angela was not making any meaningful progress in reforming her teaching practice because she did not accept the changes in the first place. Initially David, like Bessie, disliked the reform but his attitude gradually mellowed as he interacted with the other history teachers (**Section 4.3.5**). The current multiple case study seems to indicate that higher levels of training do not make teachers progressive and receptive to reform policy and its implementation. Angela and David had Masters Degrees (in Development Studies and educational administration respectively) but both were finding it difficult to transform classroom practice as required by policy guidelines (**Section 5.5.2**). The two still believed that dictation and note giving were essential teaching methods and this militated against their attempts to change classroom practices.

Bessie, unlike the other three teachers in this study, had a favourable attitude towards the new curriculum. She believed that her university training had prepared her for the demands of the new curriculum, especially the use of ICTs, learner-centred pedagogy and research methods (**Section 4.2.2**). Although Bessie had accepted the new history curriculum from its introduction in January 2017, she still believed that lecturing and note giving were indispensable to her practice. This showed that Bessie could not simply shed off her old teaching methods “like a shabby coat, and slip on something new”, to use Cohen’s (1990:323) analogy. Past experiences, existing habits and beliefs seemed to act as barriers to Bessie’s practical implementation of the new history curriculum.

Personal philosophy to history instruction

Emmy’s personal philosophy to history instruction is summarised in her belief that: “There is no room for dictation in the new curriculum” (**Section 5.3.2**). Emmy defied existing literature by using activity based practices in a class of 49 students. Fulfilled initial career aspirations, job satisfaction, university training and love for the subject are some of the factors that appeared to work in unison in making Emmy a progressive and reform-oriented teacher. David’s personal philosophy as a history teacher made him believe that the history teacher remains the master of the subject and so he continued to dictate notes to a class of only 20

students (**Section 5.4.4**). Similarly, Bessie's personal philosophy to history pedagogy made her believe that she cannot do without dictation and lecturing (**Section 5.6.2**).

6.4 CONCLUSIONS

One conclusion from this study was that teachers lacked knowledge on the curriculum reforms they were implementing. Angela, Emmy and David complained that the reforms were hurriedly introduced without adequate training on why the reforms were necessary, which aspects were changing, and how the changes were to be implemented (**Section 5.3.1**). Because of lack of knowledge and a common understanding on the reforms they were implementing, each teacher had a different meaning of the new curriculum. Only Bessie claimed to have adequate knowledge on the history curriculum reforms she was implementing (**Section 5.3.1**).

The four teachers' sense making of curriculum reform policy differed in many ways. Each teacher engaged in individual sense making of policy in the light of the knowledge, experience, skills, beliefs and values already possessed (**Section 5.3.2**). The differences in the teachers' sense-making can be accounted for in terms of lack of a common understanding of reform policy and each teacher's individual sense making of policy signals. My study concluded that each teacher's interpretation and understanding of curriculum reform policy is closely linked to the teacher's socio-academic background, attachment to the teaching profession, teaching experience and attitude towards change.

Three of the four teachers in my multiple case study continued to use lecturing and dictation with some limited learner-centred approaches in their lessons. It appears that the patterns and characteristics of secondary school history teaching in some secondary schools in Zitown remain teacher dominated. Only Emmy had moved away completely from rote pedagogy and allowed for learners' democratic participation in the lessons. Emmy's patterns of classroom practice stood out as unique in this study as she used activity based learning with an abnormally large class of 49 students. This finding demystified the myth that large classes make teachers resort to lecturing, dictation and note writing on the chalkboard. As a result I reached the conclusion that: the use of learner-centred pedagogy may depend on other teacher factors rather than the size of the class.

There was a common dislike for the research based Continuous Assessment Task 1 among the history teachers, except for Bessie (**Section 6.3.3**). Only Bessie embraced the tasks because she felt that the tasks taught learners skills of gathering and analyzing information. David, Emmy and Angela felt that they had not been properly guided by the policy reformers on how and the extent to which they were to guide the learners in doing the research task. So each teacher and his/her class were doing the task the way they understood it. The guidelines in the task document were not exhaustive, for instance, the length of the final write up and a template of the structure of the research project are not given (ZIMSEC, 2017:5).

This study also established that a positive attitude towards reform policy does not necessarily make one progressive in his/her practice (**Section 6.3.3**). There was a wide gap between what Bessie said (theory) and what she actually did in the classroom (practice). Among the four teachers in this multiple case study, Bessie was the only one who embraced reform policy from its inception and liked the introduction of research based tasks at Form 3 level. But Bessie's Form 3B failed to complete Continuous Assessment Task 1 on time. Her teaching methods also reflected that lecturing and dictation remained an integral part of her practice. This study then reached the conclusion that, to change Bessie's patterns of classroom practice, it will be necessary to change her philosophy to history instruction as well. It would be unrealistic to expect her to change her teaching methods when she still believes that lecturing and dictation are indispensable to her practice.

My study finally concluded that the teachers' patterns of classroom practices can only be understood and explained within the context of a multiplicity of factors which are interwoven and inter-related. The factors that worked in unison (rather than isolation) in shaping the teachers' sense making of policy and its implementation in the classroom include: the teacher's background, career aspirations, level of training, resource availability, school location, type of school, and the nature of learners. The teacher's personal philosophy to history instruction, turning point to history and attitude to reform appear to have more influence on how one teaches history and implements curriculum reform policy than all the other variables. It is the teacher as an individual who makes sense of reform policy, decides to

adopt it, or not to, depending on the meaning constructed from the policy signals contained in the reform documents. The findings of the present study seem to concur with Zindi (2018:25) whose study concluded that; “teachers generally harbour negative and unconstructive feelings about the new curriculum.”

6.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH, POLICY AND PRACTICE

This section discusses the recommendations on how history teachers’ sense making of reform policy and its implementation can be improved, so that the gap between policy and what actually happens in the classroom is reduced in Zimbabwean secondary schools.

6.5.1 Recommendations for future research

The present multiple case study examined early implementation and focused on how teachers were making sense of reform policy and how this sense making affected their classroom practices in the first year of implementing the seven year New Curriculum Framework 2015-2022. This study established that, to a large extent, history teachers were struggling to comply with reform policy. Only Emmy had successfully reformed her practice in line with the reform policy. David and Angela were vacillating between traditional teacher dominated and progressive learner centred practices, while Bessie remained bogged in orthodox rote learning practices. The study suggests that it may be academically worthwhile and intellectually gratifying to pursue further research on how history teachers respond and implement the new history curriculum after the turbulent experiences of the first years. Future research can trace how history teachers have transformed their teaching practices in response to the New Curriculum Framework and examine the efforts of various stakeholders to capacitate teachers with the knowledge and skills to make their patterns of classroom practice more activity based as required by reform policy.

Future research may also widen the size and scope of reform implementation studies in Zimbabwe by targeting more schools and more teachers who are involved in the comprehensive seven-year curriculum reform initiative whose implementation started in January 2017. My multiple case study involved four teachers in four secondary schools in

Zitown, thus limiting the transferability of the findings of the study to schools in mostly urban high density settings. A survey across the strata of secondary schools in Zimbabwe (urban high-density, urban low-density, rural government, council, mission, rural boarding etc.) might be an eye opener on how reform policy is understood and implemented by teachers in the different schools across the country. I suggest a large scale mixed methods study as perhaps a follow up to my explorative qualitative multiple-case study on how history teachers understand reform policy and how their sense making shapes implementation of policy at school and classroom levels. The themes and conclusions that have emerged from my qualitative multiple case study can be tested in a broader survey. How widespread are such exceptionally progressive practices and teachers, such as Emmy, in Zimbabwe? Future research may be interested in exploring this major question. Within school variations in understanding and implementing reform policy may also be worth exploring as my study has shown that individual sense making influences the way different teachers understand and implement reforms.

6.5.2 Recommendations for policy and practice

Knowledge of change process

As shown in this study, putting a new curriculum into practice has never been an easy process. Only Emmy's teaching methods were completely learner-centred, as required by reform policy. There was a wide gap between what reform policy said and the teaching methods the other three teachers actually used. Angela, Bessie and David lacked knowledge and understanding on why lecturing and dictation were not recommended teaching methods in the new curriculum; that is why they thought that these methods were so important and indispensable in their practice. To empower teachers with the knowledge of the change process, this study recommends that: policy makers put in place comprehensive change strategies and implementation mechanisms so that teachers understand why it is necessary to change the curriculum and how they can implement the required changes. At District and school levels it may be necessary to engage teachers in extensive training programmes (not once-off workshops) on the meaning, necessity and mechanisms of implementing reform before rolling out the changes into schools. Teachers need to be engaged on the need and

content of a curriculum change before they can try it in the classroom. Giving new syllabuses to teachers does not necessarily make them change their practices.

Teacher involvement in reform planning

Traditionally, the teacher's role has been to implement reforms planned and developed elsewhere, without any questioning or even understanding of reform policy (Carl, 2005:223, Ganon-Shilon & Schechter, 2017:4). Their job was to simply implement policy that came from the top, or risk being penalized for non-compliance by the curriculum supervisory authorities. All the four teachers in my study complained that they were not consulted and did not have any meaningful input into the new curriculum. Angela pointed out that she only attended one consultative meeting (at the end of 2016) where she felt that their input was not taken seriously because the meeting was facilitated by fellow teachers who had been trained for two days only, and not the policy makers. This study recommends that at national level, where decisions are made to reform curriculum policy, teacher interests must be represented by teachers from the classroom and not some bureaucrats from teacher welfare and trade union organisations, as is currently the situation. At school level teachers must have subject representatives who will stand up for their interests and contribute to the curriculum reform committees at national level. Reform decision making should not be left to some experts and government technocrats who are far removed from the classroom and the teacher's daily work.

Development of a Research Task Model (RTM) for secondary schools

The proposed Research Task Model (RTM) developed from the present study is informed from three angles: the research findings of the present study; the recommendations of the New Curriculum Review Symposium (December 2017); and existing literature on Project-Based Learning in secondary schools. The research findings seem to indicate that history teachers lacked knowledge on how to implement Continuous Assessment Tasks, partly because they had not been adequately trained to assist learners carry out the research based projects. The Research Task Model (**Figure 14**) developed by the current study starts with the in-servicing of teachers on research methods so that they have knowledge and skills on the value and nature of research based learning in secondary schools. The current study also established that teachers and students disliked going out into the community to gather data. The RTM in Figure 14 does not require learners to go out of the school yard to collect data. Instead students will collect data using ICTs as research tools, the school library and the newspapers.

Figure 14: Proposed Research Task Model (RTM) for secondary school students

Stage →	1. Teacher in-servicing	2. Basic Research Methods	3. Data Collection	4. Findings	5. Lessons From The Past
Time	Before implementation	1 st Term/Form 3	2 nd term/Form 3	3 rd Term/Form 3	1 st Term/Form 4
Activity	Teacher orientation on research based learning in schools	-Learners introduced to basic research concepts -Learners identify historical event or personality of interest	-Computer search for event/personality -Library search -Newspaper search	-Presentation of findings by students -Learners examine the meaning of their findings	Learners explain what they learnt from the event and/or personality they studied
Source of information	In-service course	-In-serviced teachers -Learners	-Computers -Library -Newspapers	Data gathered in Stage 3	Analysed data & learner sense-making

Besides being informed by the findings of the present multiple case study, the conceptualisation and development of the RTM, was also informed by the recommendations

of the New Curriculum Review Symposium (NCRS Report, 2017:15) which state that; “Tasks and projects should be scrapped up until such a time a viable model has been developed.” Consequently, the continuous assessment tasks were indefinitely suspended from the curriculum in March 2018, until such a time a viable continuous assessment research model is crafted. I took up the challenge to develop an alternative research based task model because I feel that, if properly planned and implemented, continuous assessment tasks offer a more progressive approach to student assessment than once-off summative evaluations most teachers are used to.

Extant literature also emphasizes the importance of Project-Based Learning (PBL) in nurturing learners’ survival skills in the fast-paced technology-driven 21st century. Hernandez-Ramos and De La Paz (2009:153) stress that the skills learners get from PBL (like computer literacy, proficient communication and innovative problem solving) are necessary for success in the 21st century. The proposed RTM (**Figure 14**) gives the student the freedom to choose either a single historical event or a personality that piques their curiosity, and then research on it as a case study. Bell (2010:39) advises that; “Student choice is a key element of this approach [PBL].” But Research Task 1, given to learners in the Third Term of 2017, required all the Form 3 history students in Zimbabwe to do the same task: “Carry out an investigation on the appointment of local leadership showing challenges in their appointment and offer solutions to the challenges” (ZIMSEC, 2017:3). By giving all the Form 3 history students in Zimbabwe the same research task, the policy makers were giving a prescription which went against the concept and nature of PBL: students’ choice to study what interests them. The RTM (**Figure 14**) attempts to correct this oversight in the mind of the initiators of the 2017 history curriculum reforms by giving students the freedom to choose what they want to research on. The RTM also proposes that students draw personal lessons from their research, rather than recommendations. I feel that by reflecting on their research findings and drawing lessons from them, learners develop skills of sense-making, analysis, empathy, judgement and historical skepticism.

The RTM is one of my contributions to scholarship in teacher sense-making of reform policy implementation in secondary schools in the developing world. The proposed model can be

applied in history and similar subjects interested in the study of the past, like Social Studies and Heritage Studies. This proposed RTM, of course, is not cast in stone. It is open to deconstruction and reconstruction by all stakeholders so that, in line with current global trends, Project-Based Learning becomes a reality in the Zimbabwe secondary school history curriculum.

6.6 FINAL THOUGHTS

My study established that most teachers did not like the research tasks because they did not know how to guide learners in carrying them out. Although some workshops were held in preparation for the implementation of the new curriculum, no workshops or in-service training for teachers were held to specifically induct teachers on how to guide learners in carrying out the Continuous Assessment Tasks. Teachers negatively associated the tasks with the single-minded determination of the then Minister of Primary and Secondary Education, Dr. Lazarus Dokora. He refused to pay heed to the teachers' concerns that: they did not have enough knowledge on the tasks; the tasks were too many as they were done in every subject; and exposed the girl-child to a lot of risks as she gathered data outside the school among influential and powerful males. With the fall of the Mugabe regime in November 2017 Dr. Dokora was also removed from government and some of the changes associated with him were immediately questioned. Top on the list were the tasks. Less than a month after Zimbabwe's 'November 2017 Revolution,' a New Curriculum Review Symposium (NCRS) was held in Harare on the 12-13 December 2017. It recommended that: "It was necessary to set the tasks aside to enable wider consultations and a comprehensive re-engineering process to take place" (NCRS Report, 2017:4). The tasks were officially suspended from the new curriculum in March 2018 (The Sunday Mail, 4 March 2018:6)

The new Minister of Primary and Secondary Education, Prof Mavhima emphasised that the tasks were not being thrown away completely but were only being "suspended to enable wider consultations"; insinuating that sufficient consultations may not have taken place before the introduction of the tasks in schools. Teachers in particular, as shown by the four cases in my study, were not work-shopped or in-serviced on how to implement the research based tasks. This is the reason why I have proposed a RTM (**Figure 14**) which starts with the in-servicing of teachers so that they have knowledge on why and how research based learning benefits

students, and teachers as well. If progressive changes are to take place in classroom practice, as required by curriculum reform policy, it is necessary to change the teacher's mindset and improve teacher sense-making of reform policy and its implementation.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

PRE-OBSERVATION INTERVIEW PROTOCOL: FOR SECONDARY SCHOOL HISTORY TEACHERS

SCHOOL: **TEACHER CODE:**

DATE: **TIME:** **VENUE:**

(Before the interview, I will record the following: pseudonym of interviewee, gender, school, date, place & time)

Type of Interview: Face-to-face, one-on-one, pre-observation interview held at the start of the eight week fieldwork period

Patterns of classroom practice and the history curriculum reforms in Zimbabwean secondary schools.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. You are requested to respond to the following set of questions to the best of your ability.
2. You are kindly notified that the conversation will be recorded and after the research has been completed they will be destroyed.
3. You will be expected to sign a consent form before the commencement of the interview.

TEACHER BACKGROUND

- **Gender**
- **Age**
- **Experience**.....
- **Qualifications**.....

MAIN RESEARCH QUESTION	How do history curriculum reform policy guidelines in Zimbabwe shape and help to explain the secondary teachers' patterns of classroom practices?
SUB-QUESTIONS	INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR HISTORY TEACHERS
1. How do history teachers make sense of the curriculum reform policies that guide their	1. What comes to your mind when you hear about the New Curriculum Framework? 2. What does the new history curriculum mean to you? 3. Which important documents convey the new curriculum?

<p>teaching practice in Zimbabwean secondary schools?</p>	<p>4. How do these policy documents influence your practice? 5. To what extent do you adhere to these reform policies in your practice?</p>
<p>2. What are the patterns and characteristics of history teaching in some of Zimbabwe's secondary schools?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Can you please explain the methods that you often use in your lessons? How often do you use each method? 2. In which situation(s) do you use each of these methods? 3. Do you think teachers should give notes or students should write own notes? Why? 4. Should history teachers teach history content or historical skills? Why? 5. How often do you use source based materials in your lessons? Why? 6. What are the challenges associated with using source based materials in your classes? Resource availability, nature of examinations, timetable 7. What is your opinion on the use of source materials in history instruction
<p>3. What are the relations between curriculum reform policy and history classroom pedagogy, if at all?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Describe some of your experiences with the New Curriculum Framework 2015-2022. Exciting moments, downturns, 2. What is your understanding of curriculum reform in history? 3. Have your teaching methods changed in response to the demands of the new History syllabus 2015-22? If yes- what are the new practices? If no-why? Challenges 4. Which new teaching approaches have you adopted in response to the new history curriculum? 5. The new History Syllabus 2015-2022 requires teachers to move away from teacher dominated pedagogy. Is this requirement being met in history classes? Why do you say so? 6. How often do you go for history educational tours? 7. How did you receive the changes from Syllabus 2167 to Syllabus 2015-2022 in January 2017?

<p>4. How can the patterns of practice that characterise history classroom pedagogy be understood and explained?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How does the classroom situation influence your classroom practice? Class size, nature of learners 2. In what ways does your personal background influence the way you teach? Educational background, level of training, personal attitude 3. Explain how school based factors influence your classroom practice. Location of school, school administration, school culture 4. How do external factors guide/ influence your teaching? Examination boards, CDU, parents 5. Does curriculum reform policy influence the way you teach? 6. How would you characterize your teaching style? Traditional, progressive, reform oriented, hybrid
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	<p>6. Have you attended any workshops/ seminar on continuous assessment & how you are supposed to implement the policy?</p> <p>7. Are you prepared & ready to assist students start working on their continuous assessment tasks?</p> <p>8. How familiar are you with ZIMSEC’s (2017) “Continuous Assessment Implementation Guidelines for Schools”?</p> <p>9. To what extent are you adhering to the requirements of the new history curriculum in your classroom practice?</p>
<p>2. What are the patterns and characteristics of history teaching in some of Zimbabwe’s secondary schools?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The researcher does not intend to ask the teachers any questions on this sub-research question mainly because lesson observations are still going on for the next four weeks and so the researcher can see for himself, rather than hear from the teachers, the methods they are using in their lessons • The researcher feels that any questions to the teachers on the teaching methods they are using (or not using) at this moment would undermine his efforts to see the history teachers conducting their lessons as they normally do even in his absence
<p>3. What are the relations between curriculum reform policy and history classroom pedagogy, if at all?</p>	<p>1. Any new teaching methods you have so far tried as a result of the coming in of the new history curriculum?</p> <p>2. Has the coming in of continuous assessment tasks influenced the way you teach history? <i>If yes, how? If not, why not?</i></p> <p>3. Are teachers adequately prepared/ trained to use this assessment procedure?</p> <p>4. Do you think continuous assessment is objective?</p> <p>5. How have the students received the continuous assessment tasks?</p> <p>6. Do you think it is feasible for the student to carry out research in all the 8 or so subjects they will be taking at “O” level?</p> <p>7. Have you assigned any lesson(s) to the discussion & assistance of students on how they can start working on Continuous Assessment Task 1?</p> <p>8. Is the school administration supportive of the continuous assessment projects? <i>eg. provision of photocopying facilities, stationery, research/internet/library facilities</i></p> <p>9. The new history curriculum requires that students go for history educational tours at least three times a year. What have you done for your Form 3s this year?</p>

<p>4. How can the patterns of practice that characterise history classroom pedagogy be understood and explained?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Are your form three classes streamed according to ability? <i>Explain how the streaming is done, criteria used</i> 2. Does this streaming affect your teaching methods, motivation...? <i>In what ways/how?</i> 3. How do learners affect your teaching methods? <i>Learner ability, learner interest, learner discipline</i> 4. When did you decide to become a history teacher? <i>Why?</i> 5. Did your family background influence you in any way to make this decision? <i>How?</i> 6. Why and how did you get attracted to history as an academic subject? <i>Any influence from a particular teacher, family member?</i> 7. How did you learn history at secondary school – through rote pedagogy or activity centred learning? 8. Do you see any differences (or similarities) in the way you teach history and the way you were taught the subject? <i>At secondary school, high school, college, university?</i> 9. Did you do any other job before becoming a history teacher? 10. How does this initial occupation or training influence your current practice as a history teacher? 11. Which job(s) did you dream of as a secondary school/ high school/university student? 12. How were your dreams shattered/ fulfilled? <i>How then did you find yourself as a history teacher</i>
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APPENDIX C

EXIT INTERVIEW PROTOCOL: FOR SECONDARY SCHOOL HISTORY TEACHERS

SCHOOL:

TEACHER CODE:

DATE:

TIME:

VENUE:

(Before the interview, I will record the following: pseudonyms of interviewee & school, date, place & time)

Type of Interview: Face-to-face, one-on-one, exit interview held at the end of eight weeks of lesson observations in the classroom.

Patterns of classroom practice and the history curriculum reforms in Zimbabwean secondary schools.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. You are requested to respond to the following set of questions to the best of your ability.
2. You are kindly notified that the conversation will be recorded and after the research has been completed they will be destroyed.
3. You will be expected to sign a consent form before the commencement of the interview.

MAIN RESEARCH QUESTION	How do history curriculum reform policy guidelines in Zimbabwe shape and help to explain the secondary teachers' patterns of classroom practices?
SUB-QUESTIONS	INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR HISTORY TEACHERS
1. How do history teachers make sense of the curriculum reform policies that guide their teaching practice in Zimbabwean secondary schools?	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. How far did you adhere to your history schemes of work in your actual teaching this term?2. Any teaching-learning activities you engaged in but were not planned for in the scheme of work?3. What about the Continuous Assessment Task 1, had you planned and schemed for this?4. Which specific teaching/learning activities did you engage in to meet the requirements of the new history curriculum?5. To what extent did you adhere to curriculum reform policy this term? Why do you say so?

<p>2. What are the patterns and characteristics of history teaching in some of Zimbabwe's secondary schools?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. When you reflect on your teaching methods over the past eight weeks, which learner-centred activity based methods did you use? 2. Which traditional teaching methods did you use? Why? 3. Use of film and video are some of the approaches recommended in the new history curriculum. Why did you not use these this term? 4. Role playing, simulation and dramatization are also recommended. How often did you use these this term? Why? 5. What about the use of resource persons? Have you ever considered this approach in your practice? Why? 6. How would you judge your teaching methods this term? Progressive, traditional or a mixture of the two?
<p>3. What are the relations between curriculum reform policy and history classroom pedagogy, if at all?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How has your attitude towards the new history curriculum changed over time? What were your feelings in January 2017, and now? 2. What has led to your gradual acceptance of, or continued resistance to the new history curriculum? 3. Which new teaching methods have you adopted this term as a result of the new history curriculum? 4. How far have your students gone with the Continuous Assessment Task 1 for Term 3 2017? 5. Do you think Continuous Assessment Task 1 was adequately covered by the students? 6. Did the teachers offer enough guidance to learners on the C.A. Task 1? 7. Do you think teachers had enough time to assist the students work on their C.A. Tasks? 8. Which skills and new knowledge did learners benefit by doing the C.A. Task 1? 9. From your experiences with C.A. Task 1, do you think it is feasible (practically possible) for each student to do four C.A. Tasks and one project over a two year period?

	<p>10. How did the C.A. tasks improve your own practice and skills as a history teacher?</p> <p>11. Was your lesson time and syllabus coverage for this term affected by Continuous Assessment Task 1? If yes, how? If no, how did you create time for the Task?</p>
<p>4. How can the patterns of practice that characterise history classroom pedagogy be understood and explained?</p>	<p>1. Which new history topics have you taught this term (and year) to your Form 3 class?</p> <p>2. Do you think that this repetition of topics is necessary and beneficial to learners?</p> <p>3. How does this repetition of topics affect the way you teach the topics?</p> <p>4. What is your opinion on examination questions that ask “O” Level students to name, identify or list any six kings in the Mutapa Empire, or six forts built by the whites in colonizing Zimbabwe?</p> <p>5. Do you think that these questions are challenging enough or deserve the six marks awarded to them in the examinations?</p> <p>6. Does the new history curriculum encourage students to develop higher order thinking skills? Why do you say so?</p> <p>7. To what extent does the nature of examination questions influence the way you teach?</p>

APPENDIX D

DOCUMENT ANALYSIS PROTOCOL

Focus is on analyzing documents that guide the teaching-learning of the new history curriculum at Form 3 level.

- ❖ History Syllabuses 2166, 2167 and 4044
- ❖ New Curriculum Framework for Primary and Secondary Education 2015-2022
- ❖ Continuous Assessment Implementation Guidelines for Schools (2017)
- ❖ Continuous Assessment Task 1
- ❖ Schemes of work
- ❖ New Curriculum Review Symposium [NCRS] Report (2017)
- ❖ Examine these documents for their usefulness (or lack of it) in promoting a progressive learner-centred history curriculum in secondary schools.

DOCUMENTS ANALYSED → ASPECTS ANALYSED ↓	History syllabuses 2166, 2167 & 4044 Influence of old history versus new history approach. Progressivism versus Traditionalism	New Curriculum Framework , Assessment policy; Research Task 1; NCRS Report Reform policy signals Continuous assessment policy	Teachers' Schemes of work Adherence/compliance to syllabi & curriculum reform policy signals. Use of traditional or progressive practices
1.Aims Traditional or progressive	Do they reflect old or new history?	Old or new history?	Old or new history?
2.Objectives Teacher-centred, learner-centred or activity-centred	Lower order or higher order? Teacher-centred or learner-centred?	Lower order or higher order objectives in policy documents?	Are the objectives teacher-centred or learner/activity centred?
3.Content Influence of nationalism, patriotism, propaganda, localisation versus globalisation	Which influences are reflected?	Which influences are reflected in the policy documents?	Which influences are reflected in the schemes of work?
4. Historical skills Traditional Narration, description, note taking Progressive	Which historical skills must be developed in learners according to	Which historical skills do the policy documents seek to promote in learners?	Which historical skills do the teacher plan to develop in learners as reflected in the schemes of work?

Interpretation, skepticism, dictation of bias/prejudice, comparison, analysis, evaluation, synthesis discussion, argument, role playing, drama, note making	each national syllabus?		
5.Traditional teaching methods Exposition, narration, story-telling, question& answer, group work, pair-work, individualized teaching, dictation, , note taking	Do the syllabuses encourage the use of traditional teaching methods?	Which teaching methods are promoted by the policy documents?	Which teaching methods does the teacher plan to use in his/her lessons?
6.Progressive teaching methods Use of source based materials- original documents, oral sources, Pictures/drawings of archaeological artifacts, map study, photographs, cartoons, computer mediated instruction	Do the syllabuses encourage the use of progressive teaching methods?	Do the policy documents encourage the use of progressive teaching methods?	Which progressive teaching methods does the teacher deliberately plan for in the schemes of work?
7.Progressive activities Games, quizzes, simulation, role play, drama, song, videos, film, , discovery, debate, discussion, resource persons, computers, project, tours	Are progressive teaching methods encouraged by the syllabuses?	Are skills based learning activities encouraged in the policy documents?	Do teachers deliberately plan for the use of skills based learning activities in their lessons?
8.Teaching/learning media Charts, maps, pictures , drawings, models, video/film, projector, computers	Which forms of learning media are encouraged by each syllabus?	Which forms of learning media are encouraged by the policy documents?	Which media does the teacher plan to use in his/her lessons?

APPENDIX E

OBSERVATION GUIDE FOR HISTORY LESSONS

Type of observer: Non-participant

SCHOOL CODE: _____ CLASS: _____ NO. OF STUDENTS _____ DATE: _____

DURATION: _____ TIME: _____ TOPIC: _____ TEACHER CODE: _____

OBSERVATION	DESCRIPTION
1. Lesson preparation Teaching materials/media, prepared, collected	
2. Lesson objectives Use of lower, higher order objectives, learner-centred, skills-based, content centred	
3. Class readiness Class set up, Learner preparedness, settling down, discipline	
4. Lesson introduction How? Teacher-centred, activity-centred	
5. Lesson progression Teacher/ student activities, use of chalkboard & textbooks, organization of activities	
6. Traditional teaching methods Exposition, narration, teacher-talk, lower-order questions, dictation, note taking, content centred teaching.	
7. Progressive/Skills based methods Presentations, discussions, group work, pair-work, textbook study. Use of source based materials- original documents, oral sources, Pictures/drawings of archaeological artifacts, map study, photographs, cartoons, computer mediated instruction, individualized teaching, higher-order questions, problem solving, inquiry-based learning	

<p>8. Historical skills taught Traditional Recall, narration, description, note-taking Progressive Interpretation, skepticism, dictation of bias/prejudice, comparison, analysis, evaluation, synthesis, discussion, argument, , role playing, dramatization, note making</p>	
<p>9. Learning media used Charts, maps, pictures , drawings, models, video/film, projector, computers</p>	
<p>10. Lesson conclusion Teacher/ learner centred activities</p>	
<p>11. Other observations</p>	

APPENDIX F

ETHICS CLEARANCE: UFS-HSD 2017/0523



Faculty of Education

11-May-2017

Dear Mr Godsend Chimbh

Ethics Clearance: Patterns of classroom practice and the history curriculum reforms in Zimbabwean secondary schools.

Principal Investigator: Mr Godsend Chimbh

Department: School of Mathematics Natural Sciences and Technology Education (Bloemfontein Campus)

APPLICATION APPROVED

With reference to your application for ethical clearance with the Faculty of Education, I am pleased to inform you on behalf of the Ethics Board of the faculty that you have been granted ethical clearance for your research.

Your ethical clearance number, to be used in all correspondence is: **UFS-HSD2017/0523**

This ethical clearance number is valid for research conducted for one year from issuance. Should you require more time to complete this research, please apply for an extension.

We request that any changes that may take place during the course of your research project be submitted to the ethics office to ensure we are kept up to date with your progress and any ethical implications that may arise.

Thank you for submitting this proposal for ethical clearance and we wish you every success with your research.

Yours faithfully

Dr. MM Nkoane
Chairperson: Ethics Committee

Education Ethics Committee
Office of the Dean: Education
T: +27 (0)51 401 9683 | F: +27 (0)86 546 1113 | E: NkoaneMM@ufs.ac.za
Winkie Direko Building | P.O. Box/Posbus 339 | Bloemfontein 9300 | South Africa
www.ufs.ac.za



APPENDIX G: PERMANENT SECRETARY'S LETTER OF PERMISSION

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



**Reference: C/426/3 Harare
Ministry of Primary and
Secondary Education
P.O Box CY 121
Causeway
HARARE**

09 June 2017

Chimbi Godsend Tawanda
22819 Riverside Park
Chitungwiza
Harare

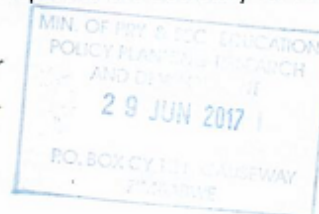
**Re: PERMISSION TO CARRY OUT RESEARCH IN HARARE METROPOLITAN
PROVINCE: CHITUNGWIZA DISTRICT: ST MARY'S, NYATSIME, SEKE 1,
SEKE2, ZENGEZA 1, ZENGEZA 2 AND ZENGEZA SCHOOLS**

Reference is made to your application to carry out research at the above mentioned schools in Harare Metropolitan Province on the research title:

**"PATTERNS OF CLASSROOM PRACTICE AND THE HISTORY CURRICULUM
REFORMS IN ZIMBABWEAN SECONDARY SCHOOLS"**

Permission is hereby granted. However, you are required to liaise with the Provincial Education Director, Harare Metropolitan Province, who is responsible for the school which you want to involve in your research. You should ensure that your research work does not disrupt the normal operations of the school. You are required to seek consent of the parents /guardians of all the learners who will be involved in the research

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



Dr. S.J Utete-Masango
SECRETARY FOR PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION
cc: PED – Harare Metropolitan Province

APPENDIX H: PROVINCIAL EDUCATION DIRECTOR'S LETTER OF PERMISSION

All communications should be addressed to
"The Provincial Education Director"

Telephone : 792671-9
 Fax : 796125/792548
 E-mail : moeschre@yahoo.com



ZIMBABWE

Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education
 Harare Provincial Education Office
 P. O. Box CY 1343
 Causeway
 Zimbabwe

04/08/2017

CHRISTOPHER GONDENDI TAJIANDA
 22819 RIVERSIDE PARK
 CHITUNGWIZA
 HARARE

RE: PERMISSION TO CARRY OUT RESEARCH IN SOME SELECTED SCHOOLS
 AT ST MARY'S HIGH SCHOOL, MATSIME COLLEGE SEKE 1 HIGH SCHOOL,
 SEKE 2 HIGH SCHOOL, ZENZEZA 1 HIGH SCHOOL, ZENZEZA 2 HIGH SCHOOL
 AND ZENZEZA 3 SECONDARY SCHOOL ON THE RESEARCH
 TITLE "PATTERNS OF CLASSROOM PRACTICE AND THE HISTORY
 CURRICULUM REFORMS IN ZIMBABWEAN SECONDARY SCHOOLS"

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
 CHITUNGWIZA DISTRICT OFFICE
 EDUCATION INSPECTOR
 07 AUG 2017
 M. Duma
 P.O. BOX 624 58, CHITUNGWIZA
 TEL. 0270-24073/0270-3120-

Reference is made to your letter dated 03/08/2017

Please be advised that the Provincial Education Director grants you authority to carry out your research on the above topic. You are required to supply Provincial Office with a copy of your research findings.

CHRISTINE GIM (HRO)
 FOR: PROVINCIAL EDUCATION DIRECTOR
 HARARE METROPOLITAN PROVINCE

MIN. OF PRY. & SEC. EDUCATION
 DISCIPLINE SECTION
 HARARE PROVINCE
 04 AUG 2017
 P.O. BOX CY 1343 - CAUSEWAY
 TEL. TEL. 04-792671/7793146

APPENDIX I: CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH BY HISTORY TEACHERS

Invitation letter to history teachers to participate in a research study

22819 Riverside Park
Chitungwiza,
Zimbabwe.

1st September 2017

The History Teacher
ARISE HIGH SCHOOL
Chitungwiza District

Dear Sir/ Madam

REF: INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH STUDY

I hereby kindly invite you to participate in a research study.

My name is Godsend Tawanda Chimbi, and I am currently studying for a PhD with the University of the Free State (UFS). As part of my studies, I am required to conduct research on an aspect of interest with a view to making a contribution to our knowledge and understanding of the issues under study. The title of my thesis is:

Patterns of classroom practice and the history curriculum reforms in Zimbabwean secondary schools.

The purpose of the study is to shed light on how teachers' patterns of instructional practice are influenced and shaped by curriculum reform initiatives from the government. The research is of potential interest to curriculum reform planners, supervisory authorities and curriculum reform implementers at school and classroom levels, as it will offer recommendations on how curriculum reform guidelines can be implemented by teachers in their classroom practice. Not much research has been carried out on how history teachers' patterns of classroom practice are influenced and shaped by curriculum reform initiatives disseminated using the centre-periphery model of curriculum reform implementation. The selected schools will also benefit from this study since research findings will be shared with them. The Ministry of Education will also benefit as the findings will be shared with the authorities on how curriculum reform implementation can be used to improve teachers' classroom practices.

The study will involve: 1) Sixteen lesson observations from each of the five history teachers involved in this study. The researcher will be a non-participatory observer; 2) Document analysis of school syllabi and scheme-cum-plan; and 3) Interviewing each teacher three times over the eight week fieldwork period. Each interview is expected to last one hour, and these will be conducted when the teacher is not teaching.

A total of five schools will be selected from the list below; the other two schools will be used in case there are challenges in accessing some schools.

List of schools purposely selected:

1. Zengeza 1 High School
2. St Mary's Mission High School
3. Nyatsime College
4. Seke 1 High School
5. Seke 2 High School
6. Zengeza 2 High School
7. Zengeza 3 Secondary School

I undertake to observe confidentiality and to protect participants from physical and/or psychological harm. No names of the schools and/or persons shall be used in any reports of the research. All participants will be asked to participate voluntarily in the study and may withdraw at any time should they so wish.

Upon the completion of the study, I undertake to provide the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education with a copy of the research report and to share my findings with District and school officials.

If you need any further information you can contact the undersigned who is my research supervisor: Professor L.C. Jita on +2751401722 or JitaLC@ufs.ac.za.

Thank you in advance.

Yours faithfully

Godsend Tawanda Chimbi

Mobile 0775 511 667 or gchimbi1967@gmail.com

If you agree to participate in the study entitled:

Patterns of classroom practice and the history curriculum reforms in Zimbabwean secondary schools.

Please complete the attached consent form

- I hereby give free and informed consent to participate in the above mentioned research study.
- I understand what the study is about, why I am participating and what the risks and benefits are.
- I give the researcher permission to use recording device (yes/no).

- I give the researcher permission to make use of the data gathered from participation, subject to the stipulations he has indicated in above letter.

Participant's Signature.....*RAZUMBAWA*.....

Date.....*25-09-17*.....

Researcher's Signature.....*[Signature]*.....

Date.....*20/09/17*.....