Teachers' Views on the Accommodation of Students' Cultural Diversity in Curriculum Instructional Materials in Use in Primary Schools in Chegutu District Zimbabwe

Francis Muchenje¹ and Prem J. H. Heeralal²

¹University of Zimbabwe, Faculty of Education, P.O. Box MP 167 Mount Pleasant, Zimbabwe E-mail: muchenjefrancis@gmail.com ²University of South Africa, Department of Psychology Education, P.O. Box 392 UNISA 0003 South Africa E-mail: Heerapj@unisa.ac.za

KEYWORDS Ethnic Group. Learners. Multicultural Education. Multicultural Topics. Sub-culture. Textbooks. Diversity

ABSTRACT The study sought to explore teachers' views on the accommodation of cultural diversity in curriculum instructional materials that are in current use in primary schools. This study was carried out in five selected schools in Chegutu district Zimbabwe. Qualitative research was used as the research method with phenomenology being adopted as the research design. Twenty teachers (10 male and 10 female) made up the sample which was selected through purposive sampling technique. Unstructured in-depth interviews and focus group discussions were used to gather data for the study. The study found out that textbooks and curriculum instructional materials that are in use accommodate the nation's cultural diversity. The study recommends that all primary school textbooks through the various subjects should make a deliberate effort to accommodate cultural diversity found in the classroom in its entirety.

INTRODUCTION

Multicultural education seeks to create equal educational opportunities for all learners in the classroom despite their differences. Gorski and Covert (2010) argue that multicultural education is a progressive approach for transforming education that holistically critiques and responds to discriminatory policies in education. They further state that it is grounded in ideals of social justice, educational equity, and critical pedagogy. Textbooks and curriculum instructional materials have a big role to play in the successful practice of multicultural education. The textbook should be seen as a daily programme prepared by members of a discipline (including teachers) that prescribes what is to be taught in schools (Schiro 2013). They should therefore accommodate and positively portray the experiences of learners from diverse cultural back-

Address for correspondence: Prem J.H. Heeralal Professor University of South Africa Department of Psychology Education P.O. Box 392 UNISA 0003 South Africa E-mail: Heerapj@unisa.ac.za grounds. In Zimbabwe curriculum reform initiatives aimed at addressing the imbalances of colonial education have been undertaken in order to accommodate all learners. Ghosh (2002) argues that curriculum reform is necessary because the principle that all human beings have equal value demands that some students should not be given demeaning pictures of themselves in school through the curriculum and school environment. The accommodation of student cultural diversity in curriculum instructional materials and textbooks is important in order to minimise mono cultural education. Mono cultural education; is at best partial education, it deprives students of the diversity that is part of our world (Nieto 2002: 35). This study therefore seeks to examine the extent to which curriculum instructional materials and textbooks accommodate student diversity.

Theoretical Framework

This study was informed by postmodernism. Postmodernism is a theoretical perspective that celebrates diversity that is found in society. Jameson (1991) in Cohen et al. (2011: 27) argues that postmodernism has several distinguishing hallmarks which include: the celebration of depthlessness, multiple realities and the rectitude of individual interpretations and meanings; and relativism rather than absolutism in deciding what constitutes worthwhile knowledge. These assumptions point towards the importance of accommodating students' cultural diversity through the use of curriculum instructional materials that positively portray the nation's plural character. This becomes important considering that postmodernists call for respect and understanding of human differences (Ballantine and Hammack 2012). These differences should be seen in the content of the curriculum particularly in textbooks.

Textbooks and Curriculum Instructional Materials

In the implementation of multicultural education, textbooks play a very important role. The bottom line is that all textbooks used in the school should reflect the plural character of society. Apple (1993) in McGovern (1999) argues that the textbook is one artefact that plays a major role in defining whose culture is taught. Therefore school textbooks should be multicultural in all respects. Ideally, multicultural education, according to the Banks (2009) model, would be infused throughout education content and experiences (Yao et al. 2009). This applies to all textbooks used in the primary school although subjects such as the languages, Social Studies and Religious and Moral Education can be considered to be ideal carrier subjects for multicultural education. Sleeter and Grant (2003) posit that multiculturalism does not belong exclusively in social studies or in museums field trips but is part of every teacher's epistemology. All school textbooks should therefore reflect the multicultural character of the nation.

The experiences of all ethnic and social groups have to be reflected in textbooks that learners read. This means that all textbooks should be saturated with multicultural topics that reflect the plural character of the nation. Gollnick and Chinn (2012: 310) argue that if learners seldom see representations of themselves, their families or their communities, it becomes difficult to believe that the academic content has any meaning or usefulness for them; it will appear that the subject matter has been written and delivered for a different group of students. Ghosh (2002: 57) states that students are valued and devalued through their presence in the curriculum, for example, when a student finds no reference point in texts which she can identify, or if her ethno cultural group is portrayed in a negative light, then he/she feels devalued. Carjuzza (2012: 5) is of the view that many minority groups and American Indians are often inaccurately portrayed and their contributions are inadequately represented in standard k-12 public school curricula. Therefore in the Zimbabwean context Muchenje (2008) has observed that the experiences of all ethnic groups such as the Tonga, Kalanga, Venda, Sotho, Nambya, Shangaan and others should be included in the curriculum and instructional materials used countrv wide .

This should lead to intercultural understanding as well as appreciation of cultural differences. The challenge facing multicultural educators is to select textbooks and other materials that objectively represent various groups and people who have been traditionally either ignored or misrepresented (Manning and Baruth 2008: 210). In China, Wang (2003: 10), building on the work done by Apple and Smith (1991) and Banks (2007), theorises that the exclusion of minority groups' knowledge, language and cultures from school textbooks conveys a message to both minority and Han students that minority knowledge, language and culture are not important and not worth learning (Wang cited by Wang and Phillion 2009: 10). Such a situation tends to lower the self esteem of minority learners and falls short of the goals of multicultural education. The importance of textbooks in multicultural education is shown by the fact that it was an issue of concern during the Civil Rights Movement in the United States. Advocates of ethnic studies sought the replacement of the primacy of whiteness in textbook content and illustrations and an increased accuracy in reporting the history and culture of African Americans, Native Americans, Asian Americans and Latinos (Grant 2008: 7). Educators therefore have a responsibility in the selection of relevant curriculum content.

Research Objectives

The research study was guided by the following research objectives:

- (a) to identify teachers' views on the multicultural character of curriculum and instructional materials currently in use; and
- (b) to examine teachers' views on the representation of different ethnic groups in curriculum instructional materials.

Statement of the Problem

In the practice of multicultural education curriculum instructional materials and textbooks play an important role. A practice that could prevail in a number of countries is one where some ethnic groups particularly minority groups are not accommodated in the content of curriculum instructional materials and textbooks. Such a state of affairs works against the ideals of multicultural education, the goals of multicultural education may not be realised. Hence this study seeks to explore teacher perceptions on the multicultural character of curriculum instructional materials that are in current use.

METHODOLOGY

Design

The research method adopted for this study was the qualitative research paradigm. Qualitative research is a naturalistic inquiry that studies people in their natural settings (Patton 2002; Punch 2004; Marshall and Rossman 2006; Punch 2004; Gibson and Brown 2009). Phenomenology was chosen as the research design. Phenomenology refers to the description of one or more individual's consciousness and experience of a phenomenon (Johnson and Christensen 2008). Data gathering instruments consisted of unstructured in-depth interviews and focus group discussions which were all conducted with the participants at their respective schools.

Population and Sample

The population consisted of all the teachers in the selected five schools. From this population a sample of twenty teachers (10 male and 10 female) was selected through purposive sampling techniques. The logic and power of purposeful sampling lie in selecting information rich cases for study in depth (Patton 2002). All the teachers who were selected into the sample had a minimum of five years post qualifying experience. Purposive sampling techniques were also used to select schools into the sample with the result that one school was selected from each of the following settings: urban high density, urban low density, farm/mining community, communal lands and church/mission. All the participants and their schools were assigned pseudonyms so as to enhance anonymity and confidentiality.

Data Presentation and Analysis

Data were analysed through a thematic analysis. Data analysis in this study placed emphasis on inductive analysis, which involves uncovering patterns, themes and categories in one's data (Patton 2002).

FINDINGS

Portrayal of Zimbabwe's Plural Character in the Curriculum Instructional Materials Currently in Use

Most of the participants (16) were of the view that certain curriculum instructional materials that are currently in use portray Zimbabwe's plural character positively. In their view this is shown in some subjects such as the languages, Music, Social Studies and some co curricula activities like traditional dance. The textbooks in use tend to include learners from diverse cultural backgrounds. A participant opined:

Yes curriculum instructional materials show that Zimbabwe is a multicultural nation. So all pupils are equal. Because of the way the books are written now you find that a certain chapter may cover the Chewa pupils, another chapter Shona pupils. (Mr. Pindukai School 5)

Social Studies was cited as a subject area in which pupils from different social groups are portrayed. The role of Social Studies in portraying the nation's plural character was highlighted by another participant who observed:

Ah! Let me take the topic food and even shelter in Social Studies. We look at shelter for different communities. We look at the rural community first, the huts they live in, the Tonga type of huts, and then we come into urban areas where there are houses which contain some toilets and water system inside. We move on to the skyscrapers and so on. If we move on to food, we look at the food that is eaten by peo-

144

ple in our local community and then others. Others we are looking at the Chinese or the Japanese eating rice. We move on to Tanzania where they use cassava and so on. I think most communities are accommodated. (Mr. Penyai School 3)

The languages (English and Shona) were also considered as subject areas in which the different social groups are portrayed. In these subject areas the stories are drawn from different settings in an attempt to accommodate all different social groups. Religious and Moral Education through a study of world religions was seen as a way of portraying different social groups. A third participant emphasised similar views about the portrayal of the different social groups in the languages as follows:

This is what I have highlighted in the beginning, that in our English language the stories that are contained some of them cover a global nation. Then the other stories, maybe these are from a traditional setting, and some stories may contain an urban set up. So through that we can see that the syllabus is trying to implement multicultural education. Because in other instances you get stories on digging up mice or herding cattle, or in the city and city lights and you can see that it is in the syllabus. They want pupils to know different settings; other topics may cover life in farms and mining communities, as well as the growing of tobacco and so on. We see that they are trying to accommodate diversity. These issues are mostly covered in the languages. If you go to Mathematics we have our own stories but it is not as much as they do in the languages. that is where I see the exposure of multicultural issues. For example if a Chewa (Malawian sub cultural ethnic group) speaking pupil picks a Nhaka Yeupenyu (primary school Shona reader) the child finds that his/her cultural experiences are included, since at times it discusses how Chewa is spoken, and the meaning of words in Shona and Ndebele. Like those UNICEF books, these new books which have recently arrived they can show that kutswa (pounding), and kudzvura (pounding) are equivalent terms and they can give equivalent terms in other dialects. When we go to Religious and Moral Education (R.M.E.) we have all the world's religions although a high percentage is Christianity because it is mostly Christian families that are found in Zimbabwe. We ask questions on Islamic religion, Hinduism, African Traditional Religion and also stories on African Traditional Religion like Mbuya Nehanda. (Mrs. Gotora School 3)

Similar views were expressed in focus group discussions where some subjects that portray Zimbabwe's plural character were identified. The languages, Religious and Moral Education were seen as subject areas which portray the different social groups found in Zimbabwean society. One participant identified the following subjects as the ones that portray Zimbabwe's plural character by remarking:

I think RME, and some content subjects specifically Environmental Science, I think those two subjects actually reflect that combination. Maths since it is a subject that is best learnt in English mostly, there is no way we can measure, there is no indication that there is this accommodation of all cultures since only one language is used and that is English language.(Mr. Mwenga School 5)

Another participant shared a similar view. He was convinced that:

We have got Social Studies and then we also have Environmental Science. These ones have shown that we are a multicultural society. RME yes to some extent, we have got stories that were maybe taken or written by the Shonas, Manyikas, the Karangas and Ndebeles, so these are there. (Mr. Chitanda School 1)

Although most of the participants were of the view that Zimbabwe's plural character is portrayed in textbooks there are some who observed some challenges in this area. These challenges were noted in the languages and they have a bearing on the successful accommodation of learners' cultural diversity. The responses of these participants are significant in an environment where multicultural education should be practised.

The way the books are written particularly in the languages was seen to present some challenges. This results in a situation which makes it rather difficult to find a textbook that caters for all the different sub cultures. With regard to the content of vernacular textbooks one participant proffered the following explanation:

All they are saying basically is that there is a textbook in Kalanga as a language for the Kalanga. So the Kalanga textbook caters for stories in their own language and it centres on their culture, the same with Ndebele textbooks. So there is no common textbook in the languages. The textbooks may mix the experiences of the different social groups but the language used will favour the ethnic group for which it is written. So most of the examples will be those that children understand, if we are talking at primary school level. They want children to relate to their environment. So most of the stories will come from what they experience. Stories about other ethnic groups may be there but these are very few. So basically I think it is the perspective of the writer that influences the content because the writer is writing for a certain group of people. (Mr. Bvumayi School 2)

In the languages there is another challenge that was observed. Multicultural topics tend to be covered more in Shona than in English. This has an impact on the portrayal of different social groups. A participant pursued a similar view by pointing out that:

When you look at cultural topics, yes as far as the subjects are concerned let's say in Shona they explain but when we come to English, usually it is rare to find such topics covering the way people married long back and currently. So there is need for that intervention, at least so that they accommodate the various subcultures. (Mrs. Zongororo School 1)

A bias in the content of curriculum instructional materials in favour of the dominant group was also observed. This presents challenges in the successful implementation of multicultural education. Consequently it tends to disadvantage learners from minority backgrounds in terms of ethnicity and social class. This concern was summarised by one participant who argued:

The plural character of Zimbabwean society is not portrayed in curriculum instructional materials. It is like if we look at Zimbabwe the dominant groups are the ones portrayed for example the Shona, any other ethnic group, smaller minorities are not. So it depends on who has written a book. If somebody is Karanga and has written the book it will be focusing on the Karanga, somebody is Zezuru and has written a book it focuses on Zezuru culture. (Mr. Banda School 1)

Representation of Students from Different Social Groups in Curriculum Instructional Materials

Most of the participants (16) were of the view that all social groups are represented in the content of curriculum instructional materials currently in use. This representation is shown in the different subjects and is in harmony with the preceding section on reflection of cultural diversity. Subjects such as Social Studies, Environmental Science and Religious and Moral Education (content subjects) and Shona were seen as playing a part in the representation of learners from different social groups. A participant had this to say about the content subjects:

Yes the textbooks portray different social groups. There are certain areas where the books contain that stuff especially in the General Paper (content subjects) textbooks. Here we see some of the huts, some of the shelters and some of the equipment used elsewhere illustrated. They are shown in the textbooks so that for example the Tonga child is not a stranger in the textbook. He/she will always find some stuff that he /she uses in his/her local language, local setting. (Mr. Marara School 3)

In support of the above view another participant articulated the following views:

For example, religion, is not a problem, in RME we talk about the multi faith approach. There is the textbook again, which has those different religions. So in RME when talking about religion that is where all the children see that everyone is covered. We talk about African Traditional Religion (ATR), Hindus, Moslems, Christians and so on. So everyone there finds his/her own group, that one is covered. (Mrs. Khumalo School 2)

Shona was seen to represent students from the different social groups. The Shona text book in use contains stories about different ethnic groups as a way of showing cultural diversity in Zimbabwean society. One participant had this to say concerning the content of some Shona textbooks:

We have some stories in that Shona, Nhaka Yeupenyu (Shona primary school reader) about a Ndebele family discussing their social life, a story about the Ndebele people, and a story about the Chewa people in those books. In one or two pages we may know about their ethnic group. Even in Shona we have sometimes lessons where we will be talking about different things. (Mrs. Chumi School 4)

Similar views were expressed during focused group discussions. The language textbooks were identified as representing learners from different social groups through the inclusion of stories from different settings. A participant had this to say about some examples in language textbooks:

146

When they give examples in languages they also talk about different areas; they do not stick to one area. For example they don't talk about Harare only, or Chegutu only or rural areas only. In another story they might talk about rural areas, in another story they may talk about towns. They give examples from different areas. (Mrs. Dube School 5)

Co-curricula activities such as traditional dance tend to provide an avenue for the representation of students from different social groups. The dance themes are drawn from different parts of the country on an annual basis. The role of traditional dance in accommodating cultural diversity was emphasised by one participant who indicated that:

For example in the third term, we participate in traditional dance. Every year they give a topic which caters for every culture. For example last year pupils competed in a dance from Bulawayo, amabhiza (a Ndebele sub cultural dance). This year the dance is from Murehwa (Mashonaland East). (Mrs. Banga School 5)

There are some participants who felt that learners from all social groups are not portrayed in the content of curriculum instructional materials currently in use. This tends to arise out of a situation in which some sub cultures are not highlighted in curriculum instructional materials. One participant registered the following complaint about the content of some curriculum instructional materials:

It is not like that. Other cultures are not even mentioned in the content of curriculum instructional materials in the text books. The burden falls on the teachers, but what happens mostly is that teachers just follow what is in the syllabus and textbooks. Like I said before this is not even talked about at teachers' colleges except for teachers who have gone on to improve themselves academically, they have gone on to acquire degrees those are the teachers who may talk about multicultural education.(Mr. Banda School 1)

This view was supported by another participant who insisted that:

The various social groups are not represented. They are not because from what I have just said that you may not find a Chewa pupil reading about the culture of the Chewa in this set up. So I don't think they are fully represented. For an example in terms of pupils with disabilities here they don't even have books in Braille. (Mrs. Gotora School 3)

DISCUSSION

The views expressed by the participants show that curriculum instructional materials and particularly textbooks accommodate the cultural diversity found in Zimbabwean society. There are also some subjects in which the plural character of Zimbabwean society is reflected more than in other subjects. These subjects include Social Studies, Religious and Moral Education and the languages although there is a challenge in the accommodation of cultural diversity in the languages which needs to be addressed. It appears that the subject range that plays a part in the representation of different social groups is rather narrow. Participants identified Social Studies, Religious and Moral Education and the languages as the subjects in which the cultural diversity of learners is portrayed. One wonders whether other subjects such as Home Economics. Physical Education among many others do not play a role. These views tend to strengthen the view that there are some subjects in which cultural diversity is more highlighted than in others. Gollnick and Chinn (2012: 30) advise that each subject should be taught from a, multicultural perspective. In this regard multicultural education should permeate all school subjects through the insertion of multicultural topics. It therefore becomes imperative once more for a thorough review of school textbooks to be undertaken in order to ascertain the level of accommodation of cultural diversity. The portrayal of pupils in some textbooks should enable learners to acquire multicultural competence which is a dimension of multicultural education (Bennet 2003: 2). Cummins (1996), Igoa (1995) and Wong-Fillmore (1991) cited by Chan (2013) concur with Bennet (2003) and have highlighted the academic, emotional and social importance of acknowledging diversity by engaging students in learning about their home cultures and language.

Against this background educational leaders can no longer pretend not to take note of the reality and manifestation of diversity in schools (Lemmer et al. 2006). Mustafa (2006) states that education from this time forth should appeal to dissimilar voices and the voice of the 'put aside' should be heard in all educational processes. These views strengthen the need for curriculum instructional materials in the form of textbooks to accommodate and reflect the plural character of society. Banks (1995) in Chan (2013) has highlighted the importance of the inclusion of culture in the curriculum as a means of developing positive attitudes among racial and /or ethnic minorities. In this regard the cultural background and experiences of learners should be reflected in curriculum instructional materials currently in use. The participants indicated that some stories in the textbooks are drawn from diverse settings such as urban areas, rural areas, farming communities and others. This does not go far enough in portraying Zimbabwe's multicultural character. It should be observed that these settings are not homogenous communities as there is diversity in terms of social class, ethnicity, gender, religion among others which should feature prominently in the stories that learners read. The different stories should make a deliberate effort to include the diverse cultural experiences of the different social groups. The insertion of cultural topics in textbooks becomes important.

This view is in agreement with the observation of Vandeyer (2003:193) who argues that an ideal form of multicultural education is one that does not only recognise and acknowledge diversity, practices, tolerance and respect of human rights but works to liberate cultures that have been subjugated. This becomes significant when considering the view that multicultural education is a right to difference, students' differences built around social class, gender and cultural differences among others must be validated because they are an important part of one's identity (Ghosh 2002: 2). Portrayal of the cultural diversity of the nation in curriculum instructional materials can also be analysed in the context of the human relations approach put forward by Grant and Sleeter (2009). This approach is directed towards helping learners communicate with, accept and get along with people who are different from themselves (Grant and Sleeter 2004). It is also a way of reducing prejudice which is one of Banks (2009) dimensions of multicultural education. Multicultural topics should therefore be infused throughout the different subject areas in the school curriculum. Thus Apple (1993) cited in McGovern (1999: 2) posits that the textbook is one artefact that plays a major role in defining whose culture is taught. Banks (2009: 240) has observed that there is need to avoid a mainstream-centric curriculum. He argues that it has negative consequences for mainstream students as it reinforces their false sense of superiority, gives them a misleading conception of their relationship with other racial and ethnic groups and denies them an opportunity to benefit from the knowledge, perspectives and frames of reference that can be gained from studying and experiencing other cultures and groups.

There are some participants who felt that some social groups are not portrayed in curriculum instructional materials. The views of these participants are similar to the observations made by Carjuza (2012) in the United States where minority groups and American Indians are inaccurately portrayed in k-12 public school curricula. Writing within Mexican context Valenzuela (2013) argues that schools subtract the resources that students bring to school. She argues that schooling involves either adding on a second culture and language or subtracting one's original culture and language. This happens in situations where learners' cultural backgrounds are left out in curriculum instructional materials and in particular the textbook. Their views are significant and tend to show that there are some learners whose cultural backgrounds are not fully accommodated in some textbooks. In the context of multicultural education the need to accommodate learners from diverse cultural backgrounds in curriculum instructional materials assumes major importance. These views also highlight some of the challenges facing the accommodation of cultural diversity in the text books currently in use. Manning and Baruth (2008: 6) argue that students need curricular materials appropriate to their cultural backgrounds. They further state that these materials should enhance students' self concept, engage student interest in classroom learning and provide examples, vocabulary and models that relate to students cultural backgrounds. Therefore curriculum reform is called for to ensure the relevance of curriculum instructional materials in a plural nation. Portrayal of the different social groups in curriculum instructional materials has a history in the field of multicultural education. It was an issue in the United States of America during the Civil Rights movement of the 1960s.

In the United States of America ethnic groups demanded the revision of textbooks to make them reflect the diversity of people in the United States (Banks 1994 in Lemmer et al. 2006: 4; Gorski 1999). Sleeter and Stillman (2013) are of a similar opinion and posit that historically disenfranchised communities argued that textbooks and other sources of curriculum were too often irrelevant to students of colour. This observation is also relevant to Zimbabwe where an attempt has been made to accommodate learners from diverse cultural backgrounds in curriculum instructional materials though some challenges remain. Positive portrayal of learners in curriculum instructional materials is part of multicultural education. Learners' diverse cultural backgrounds therefore need to be portrayed in curriculum instructional materials that are used. Ideally in the Zimbabwean context the experiences of ethnic groups such as the Tonga, Kalanga, Venda, Sotho, Nambya, Shangaan and others should be included in the curriculum and instructional materials used countrywide (Muchenje 2008: 14).

Representation and portrayal of the different social groups in the curriculum instructional materials serves as a source of motivation. This enhances the chances of all students to achieve which is another goal of multicultural education. Gollnick and Chinn (2012: 310) state that if students seldom see representations of themselves, their families or their communities, it becomes difficult to believe that the academic content has any meaning or usefulness for them; it will appear that the subject matter has been written and delivered for a different group of students. This has implications for the practice of multicultural education in Zimbabwe and elsewhere, where the need to accommodate learners from diverse cultural groups assumes major importance. In China, Wang (2003) as cited by Wang and Phillion (2009: 10) made similar observations. Building on the work done by Apple and Smith (1991) and Banks (2007) he theorised that the exclusion of minority groups' knowledge, language and cultures from school textbooks conveys a message to both minority and Han students that minority knowledge, language and culture are not important and not worth learning. This observation is also applicable to the Zimbabwean situation in the practice of multicultural education.

CONCLUSION

The responses of the participants show that curriculum instructional materials and textbooks in use tend to represent and portray learners' diversity though there are some challenges that have to be overcome. The following subjects were seen as playing an important role in the representation and portraval of students' cultural diversity: languages, Social Studies, Religious and Moral Education and co curricula activities. What can be discerned from this subject range is that it is rather narrowly focused. An ideal situation is one in which all the school subjects represent and portray learners' cultural diversity. However there are some participants who were of the view that learner diversity is not portrayed adequately in curriculum instructional materials currently in use. The views of these participants are significant being made in an environment in which learners' cultural diversity has to be reflected in curriculum instructional materials as part of the practice of multicultural education. These sentiments show some of the challenges in the implementation of multicultural education and also highlight the importance of curricula reform as a way of ensuring that the content of curriculum instructional materials reflects the plural character of the nation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

There is need for a continuous review of the content of school textbooks to ensure that they represent learners' cultural diversity in its entirety. The accommodation of cultural diversity should transcend all the subjects that are taught in the primary school. Teachers need to exercise sensitivity in the selection of textbooks to use in primary schools. Finally book publishers in liaison with the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education should make an effort to accommodate cultural diversity

LIMITATIONS

The research methodology adopted for this study focused on unstructured in-depth interviews and focus group discussions. Document analysis in the form of an analysis of the content of textbooks currently in use should have been undertaken so as to provide a broader qualitative picture.

REFERENCES

- Ballantine J H, Hammack FM 2012. The Sociology of Education: A Systematic Reader. Boston: Pearson.
 Banks J A 2009. Multicultural education characteristics
- and goals. In JA Banks, CAM Banks (Eds.): *Multicultural Education: Issues* and *Perspectives*. New York: John Wiley and Sons, pp. 2-32.

- Bennet CL 2003. Comprehensive Multicultural Education. Boston: Pearson Education.
- Carjuzaa J 2012. The positive impact of culturally responsive pedagogy. *International Journal of Multicultural Education*, 14(3): 1-17.
- Chan E 2013. Teacher experience of culture in the classroom. In: DJ Flanders, SJ Thornton (Eds.): *The Curriculum Studies Reader*. New York: Routledge, pp. 301-314.
- Cohen L, Manion L, Morrison K 2011. Research Methods in Education. London: Routledge.
- Ghosh R 2002. *Redefining Multicultural Education*. Toronto: Harcourt Brace Canada.
- Gibson WJ, Brown A 2009. Working with Qualitative Data. London: Sage.
- Gollnick D M, Chinn P C 2012. *Multicultural Education in a Plural Society*. New York: Macmillan College Publishing Company.
- Gorski PC, 1999. A Brief History of Multicultural Education. From http://www.edchange.org/mulicultural/critical/htm> (Retrieved on 26 April 2012).
- Gorski P, Covert B 2010. Defining multicultural education. From http://www.edchange.org/multicultural/initial.htm> (Retrieved on 26 April 2012)
- Grant CA, Sleeter CE 2004. Turning on Learning: Five Approaches for Multicultural Teaching Plans for Race, class, gender and disability. In G Ladson-Billings,
- CA Grant 2008. The Evolution of Multicultural Education in the United States: A Journey of Human Rights and Social Justice. From http://207.210.232. 43~ download/turin-paper-grantpdf> (Retrieved on 17 May 2012).
- Johnson B, Christensen L 2008. Educational Research: Quantitative, Qualitative and Mixed Approaches. London: Sage.
- Lemmer EM, Meier C, Van Wyk JN 2006. Multicultural Education: An Educator's Manual. Pretoria: Van Schaick Publishers.
- Manning ML, Baruth LG 2008. Multicultural Education of Children and adolescents. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

- Marshall C, Rossman GB 2006. Redesigning Qualitative Research. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- McGovern S 1999. Education, Modern Development, and Indigenous Knowledge. New York: Garland Publishing.
- Muchenje F 2008. Multicultural education in Zimbabwean primary schools: An agenda of issues. Zimbabwe Bulletin of Teacher Education, 14(2): 7-21.
- Mustafa K 2006. Postmodern education: Critical border pedagogues. Cypriot Journal of Educational Sciences, 1 (2): 84-93.
- Nieto S 2002. Language, Culture and Teaching. Mahwah NJ. : Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Inc.
- Patton MQ 2002. Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods. London: Sapes.
- Punch KF (2004). Introduction to Social Research: Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches. London: Sage.
- Schiro MS 2013. Curriculum theory: Conflicting vision and enduring content. Los Angeles: Sage.
- Sleeter C, Grant CA 2003. Making Choices for Multicultural Education: Five Approaches to Race, Class and Gender. Reviewed by McDougall SC. From http://www.edrevinfo/reviews/rev237htm> (Retrieved ON 17 May 2012).
- Vandeyer S 2003. The jagged paths to multicultural education: International experiences and South African response in the new dispensation. *South African Journal of Education*, 23(3):193-198.
- Wang Y, Phillion J A 2009. Minority language policy and practice in China: The need for multicultural education. International Journal for Multicultural Education, 11(1): 1-14.
- Yao Y, Buchanan DL, Powell-Brown A, Pecina UH 2009. Different Drummers: International perspectives on multicultural education. *International Journal of Multicultural Education*, 11(2): 1-17.

Paper received for publication on September 2015 Paper accepted for publication on April 2016