

Ideology and the Curriculum: How did Socialist Curriculum Development and Implementation in Zimbabwe from 1980 to 2004 Take Place Through the Social Studies Curriculum?Clever Ndebele¹ and Reuben Tshuma²¹*University of Venda, Centre for Higher Education Teaching and Learning, P Bag X 5050, Thohoyandou, 0950 South Africa*²*Zimbabwe Open University, Quality Assurance Unit, Matabeleland South Region, Box 346, Gwanda, Zimbabwe*Telephone: ¹<0027159628650>, ²<0284-22965/6>, ¹Cell: 0772755370E-mail: ¹<clever.ndebele@univen.ac.za>, ²<reubentshuma1@yahoo.co.uk>**KEYWORDS** Independence. Consciousness. Educational Policy. Self Reliance. Decolonisation Socialism

ABSTRACT This study sought to examine how socialist curriculum development and implementation took place in Zimbabwe from 1980 to 2004 through the Social Studies primary school subject. Grounded in the qualitative research tradition, a semi-structured interview guide was used to collect qualitative data. Through stratified sampling, 3 schools were selected from the three primary school classification categories in the primary schooling system. For data analysis emerging themes were identified through content analysis of the interview transcripts. From the findings, positive indications are that through the Social Studies curriculum unacceptable racist and Eurocentric content was removed from the national curriculum. Under constraints, first, the concept of socialism was not clearly understood by the implementers and was not always practiced as expected. The teaching methodology used was not as interactive and consistent with socialist praxis as suggested in the syllabus. Secondly, there was a shortage of resources to support the implementation process. Thirdly, no public debate seems to have been initiated to seek views on the new innovation and the modalities for its implementation. The study recommends adequate preparation of personnel before an innovation is implemented, benchmarking with countries that might have already tried similar innovations, provision of adequate human, financial and material resources to support any new education policy initiatives and increased stakeholder awareness and participation in the curriculum development process.