BINDURA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION

DISSERTATION REPORT

FACTORS INFLUENCING PERFORMANCE OF PUPILS IN AGRICULTURE AT SECONDARY SCHOOL: A CASE STUDY OF THREE SCHOOLS.

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The undersigned certify that they have read and recommended to Bindura University of Science Education for acceptance of a project entitled “Factors influencing performance of pupils in agriculture at secondary school: a case study of three schools, one school as pilot study in Shamva district” submitted by Kasawaya Dorica in partial fulfilment of the requirements of Post graduate diploma in education.

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DEDICATIONS

This dissertation is dedicated to my children Tariro, Takudzwa and Tanaka Pfupa. They supported me from the start of the project to the end. If it was not for them, I would not have been motivated to finish this work.
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ABSTRACT

The research sought to reveal factors which affect the performance of pupils studying agriculture at secondary schools in Shamva district. The target population of the pilot school was ninety two (92). The sample size was thirty (30) pupils out of 300 pupils studying agriculture at the three schools and three (3) key respondents (one head and two agriculture teachers). Stratified random sampling technique was used for pupils which is a probability method. Purposive sampling was used to select the teachers and the school head who are the key informants. The researcher used both the qualitative and quantitative research methodologies, the main reason being that they cover each other’s weaknesses. Data was collected using questionnaires and focus group discussion from the participating pupils, and guided interviews for the three key respondents. Data collected was analyzed and presented through pie charts, tables, and utilizing a thematic approach. Most rural schools introduced agriculture as a practical subject but do not have much material support to attract interest of the pupils studying the subject. As a result the performance of the pupils has been affected due to lack of tools to use during the practical of the subject, how the lessons are delivered also the negative influence of parents. Using the theoretical paradigm of curriculum change and innovation, the study revealed that the performance of the pupils towards agriculture is influenced negatively among the secondary school pupil studying the subject. The research recommends improvement of tools to use in agriculture, training of the teachers and parent awareness. Parents to positively motivate their children towards the subject since agriculture is the backbone of Zimbabwe’s economy.
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ACRONYMS

A’ level - Advanced Level

O’ level - Ordinary Level

*These are levels of education in Zimbabwe*

BGCSE - Botswana General Certificate of Secondary Education

CA - Continuous assessment

FGD - Focus Group Discussion

NGOs - Non-Governmental Organizations

UNESCO - United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

UNICEF - United Nations Children’s Fund

ZIMSEC - Zimbabwe School Examinations Council
DEFINITION OF KEY TERM

Secondary school level:
This is a level which follows after one finishes primary level in Zimbabwe’s education system.

School leaver:
A school leaver has been defined as one who has left school usually after completing studies of that particular level. Also defined as a young person who has just left secondary school.

Performance
This is the ability to accomplish a given task measured against preset known standards of accuracy, completeness, cost and speed.

Practical
Disposed of action as standards opposed to speculation or abstraction.
CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction
Agriculture as a practical subject has been overlooked in most secondary schools over the past years and this has influenced performance. The improvement of performance in the subject is beneficial to the education curriculum as well as to the students. This chapter serves to introduce the foundation of the whole research through important components of the study. This foundation is going to come in the form of the problem statement, background of the study, aim and the objectives. Problem statement will give information on what exactly is the problem behind the study. Background of the study will give a wide overview on the study explaining its history. The aim will give a statement on what the study intends to achieve while guided by the objectives. Other components which are going to be covered under this chapter are research questions, assumptions, justification and significance of the study. These components will guide the study as a whole and will give the reader an insight on what is to come in other chapters to follow.

1.2 Background of the study
Education is an important social activity all over the world and it is viewed differently due to various factors such as different levels of social status. In addition, the subjects offered are viewed differently and this later result in influencing performance and this issue has been relatively ignored (Zendera, 2013). In Zimbabwe children pass through different levels of education from pre-school, primary, secondary, high school and then tertiary education in that order. Zimbabwe's education system consists of 7 years of primary and 6 years of secondary schooling before students can enter university. The seven years of primary schooling culminate in a national Grade 7 examination in Mathematics, English, Content and an indigenous language (ChiShona /IsiNdebele/Tonga/Nambya). The Content paper is a combination of pure and social sciences. Practical subjects, such as Home Economics and Agriculture are examined in the content paper. Thus practical subjects in Zimbabwe, begin at grass roots level in primary schools (Misozi, Edziwa, Jumo, & Chakamba, 2013).

Ordinary level examination certifies student level of academic achievement. A letter grading system A, B, C, D, E, F, and U is used by the Zimbabwe School Examinations Council (ZIMSEC) with A being the highest grade achieved and U (unclassified) being the lowest.
Agriculture is a subject which is related to the environment of most schools and is part of the life experience of most students hence the teaching and learning of the subject should take full advantage of the resources of pupils' experience and environment around the schools.

When Zimbabwe got its political independence in 1980 there was the introduction of education for all policy which led to increased numbers of pupils enrolling in the primary and secondary schools. The abolition of tuition fees from third term in 1980 encouraged many children to be enrolled (Ndlovu, 2013). Those who were unable to enter school during war registered even though they were overage. Prior to independence, one of the major grievances of African Rhodesians had been that of secondary schooling which was harshly restricted by a selection process at Grade 7. The new government made an early decision and made an announcement that all children completing grade seven could automatically proceed to form 1 regardless of examination results. The places were now made available for all.

Agriculture has been declared one of the practical subjects in the Zimbabwean education curriculum from primary school up to Advanced level. It was emphasized by the president that students were to have interest in undertaking agriculture since the industry was not able to employ everyone (Zendera, 2013). There was need to train in agriculture so that the land which is in abundance would be used for survival and contribute to the national basket. Agriculture has been introduced to start at grade 3 at primary level. Studying agriculture in Zimbabwe would promote self-employment and food security. Good or better performance in the subject would then ensure potential for better Agriculture skills acquired during secondary school.

According to Ndlovu (2013) education should fulfil the demands and aspirations of the general populace to have children educated and emerge from poverty into a more comfortable life with modern amenities. The F2 schools dwelt more of children being trained in practical skills where they would be equipped with skills for survival. When the F2 examinations were phased out all pupils would follow the same academic curriculum and enter for Cambridge ‘O’ level examinations at the end of the four years. The education system and curriculum was immediately after independence overhauled to allow students to progress without bottlenecks. Zendera (2013) says that the strict rules that demanded one to pass examinations at each stage before going to higher class was dispensed with. Practical subjects like woodwork, building, agriculture and metal work were looked at with disdain.
In Zimbabwe, the presidential commission of enquiry into education and training headed by Nziramasanga (1999) endorsed that as Zimbabwe enters into the third millennium which is dominated by economic competitiveness and communication technology, the state is required to revamp or change and innovate its educational curriculum. Konyana & Konyana (2012) state that for any curriculum to remain relevant to the people it serves, it has to continue to serve the needs and interests of these people.

Practical subjects including Agriculture formed a part of the curriculum with pupils generally being offered one from a selection depending on what the school offered. Practical subjects must be compulsory for all pupils so that they attain skills that will not make them seek employment (President Mugabe, 2013). Training in manual work was essential in developing self-sufficient citizens who would manage to survive even economic hardships. He also indicated that there was no employment but land could be used. People should not be deceived that everyone should work in industry but was need for people who would work on land which was in abundance.

At Nyamaropa secondary school there are several subjects offered including Agriculture. There are various factors that affect performance in agriculture practical subject. Agriculture is one of the important economic sectors in the country so performance in the subject can have an impact on the sector as a whole. Some of the students choose to drop the subject at the secondary school and some choose to skip class especially the practical lessons. There are factors, among others, which contribute in determining the performance of these students. Looking at a wider perspective this cannot be pointed out to the students only but some other factors at play working in tandem with each other.

Therefore, this research seeks to understand the factors influencing performance in agriculture as a secondary school subject. The background of the study gave an overview on how practical subjects were introduced and this research goes further to understand performance and factors influencing that.

1.3 Statement of the problem

In an ideal secondary school set up, it is expected that students commit to all the subjects offered since they are not yet able to choose what they will do after leaving school. This is in order for them to discover their talents and reach their full potential as well as to have wide options to choose from. Currently, this is not the case, there are factors that seem to be negatively influencing pupils’ performance in Agriculture subject at Nyamaropa, Mushowani
and Mutumba secondary schools in Madziwa area. It is therefore, important to understand this phenomenon.

1.4 Aim
The study sought to ascertain the factors influencing pupils’ performance in Agriculture at three secondary schools in Madziwa.

1.5 Objectives of the research
The study seeks to:

- To determine how teachers attitudes influence performance of pupils in Agriculture at Ordinary level.
- To determine how availability of materials to use in Agriculture contribute to the overall performance of students learning agriculture at secondary schools in Madziwa.
- To identify how parents’ views towards agriculture influence performance of students studying Agriculture at Ordinary level.
- To identify how the school administration determine performance of pupils studying Agriculture at Ordinary level.

1.6 Research questions
The researcher will seek to answer these questions:

- How does the attitude of the agriculture teachers towards the subject influence performance of pupils at secondary schools in Shamva?
- How does the shortage of agriculture tools affect the pupils’ performance?
- How does the impact of school administration’s response influence the performance of pupils studying Agriculture at Ordinary level?
- How does the parents’ views influence the performance of agriculture pupils?

1.7 Assumptions
- The major assumption is that the researcher will get honest and accurate information from the respondents.
- The relevant informants will be available at the agreed time to enable the researcher to finish the study within the projected time frame.
- The resources needed for the study will be available for example, stationary, printing facilities as well as funds would be available when need arises for transport cost.
1.8 Justification
The essence of the study will be to understand the factors leading to the poor student performance in agriculture. These students might provide information on their own understanding what leads them to poor performance in the subject. Such information may be useful in coming up with strategies to improve the teaching and learning of Agriculture. This will later help the students because they can be helped effectively since the factors leading to poor performance would have been understood. It is intended that the findings of the study will stimulate further research on this subject thereby increasing the body of knowledge. Results from this study will hopefully assist students who are failing to perform well in agriculture by making suggestions for example, improving teaching techniques in the subject to stimulate interest. The research findings can be used by relevant institutions like the government Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education and other important NGOs which are interested in education issues like UNICEF and UNESCO.

Agriculture is the backbone of Zimbabwe’s economy in as much as Zimbabweans remain largely a rural people who derive their livelihood from agriculture and other related rural economic activities. It creates employment and income for 60-70 percent of the population, supplies 60 percent of the raw materials required by industrial sector and contributes 40 percent of total export earnings. Zimbabwe has a total land area of over 39 million hectares of which 33.3 million hectares are used for agricultural purposes. The remaining 6 million hectares have been reserved for national parks and wildlife and for urban settlements (FAO, 2005). This justifies the research’s interest in agriculture as a secondary school subject.

1.9 Chapter summary
This chapter has presented the background information of the study. In this chapter it was noted that agriculture is an important subject not only to students but to the nation as a whole. The statement of the problem, justification of the study, assumptions, the aim of the study, objectives and research questions were also highlighted and covered under this chapter. The next chapter will review literature from various sources as well as the theoretical framework on factors influencing agriculture performance in secondary schools.
CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction
This chapter serves to highlight the conceptual and theoretical framework on which the study is based on. This chapter also discusses the literature which will guide the study and its relevance to the whole study. Theoretical framework will explain the relevant theories on which this study is based on. The ‘human capital’ model was used to emphasize the importance to agriculture as a subject in developing countries like Zimbabwe. The main research materials on factors influencing agriculture performance were done by several researchers which are going to be discussed in this chapter. Relevant literature review will be followed by theoretical framework on the factors influencing performance in the agriculture practical subject.

2.1.1 Importance of education
Academic performance, which is measured by the examination results, is one of the major goals of a school. Foster (2007) argued that schools are established with the aim of imparting knowledge and skills to those who go through them and behind all this is the idea of enhancing good academic performance. Much as the situation described here causes concern, it is not yet known why some students fail to attain the standards expected of them. Several researches have been carried out locally and abroad but no research has been done in the area under study to ascertain factors influencing academic performance of agriculture students.

Education at secondary school level should supposedly be the bedrock and sure foundation for higher knowledge in tertiary institutions. It is an investment as well as an instrument that can be used to achieve a more rapid economic, social, political, technological, scientific and cultural development in the country (Aremu & Sokan, 2013). In Nigeria, the Federal Ministry of Education (2007) emphasized the National Policy that secondary education is an instrument for national development that fosters the worth and development of the individual. There was emphasis on further education, general development of the society and equality of educational opportunities to all Nigerian children, irrespective of any real or marginal disabilities (Aremu & Sokan, 2013). The role of secondary education is to lay the foundation for further education and if a good foundation is laid at this level, there are likely to be fewer problems at subsequent levels.
Chinyamunzore (1998) stated that education plays a very crucial role in our everyday life. Education, in general, is the provision and acquisition of basic skills used to adapt and solve everyday problems in life. The majority of our problems in life are socio-economic and in turn relate to the level of development. Therefore practical subjects like agriculture are important because they produce technical skilled students to deal with socio-economic challenges. Development is used here as being a state of better and sustainable style of living measured, roughly, by the national income per person (Colman and Nixson, 1988).

Evonsayiis (2013) states that the school is an important institution since it teaches children essential skills that will enable them to contribute effectively to the human capital development later in life. Education is therefore a fundamental right and a prerequisite for economic growth, human development and poverty reduction. According to Ndlovu (2013) it gives people the ability to make informed socio-economic and political decisions thus it is an important sector in the country which deserve to be prioritized. However, to ensure that the aforementioned is achieved there is need to ensure that students participate effectively in the education system to produce desirable results. Effective participation of the students depends on various factors for example, family background as supported by Evonsayiis (2013) that children from different family backgrounds perform differently thus it is important to look at the effects of home environment on academic performance.

According to Hanyani (2014) the policy of having subjects like agriculture, needlework, cookery, woodwork and metal work in primary education was abandoned in the 1990s leaving the primary curriculum dwelling more on theoretical subjects. He also indicated that in secondary schools, subjects such as building, technical drawing, agriculture were introduced but more often than not those subjects were optional. There were few takers rendering the teachers of these subjects redundant since students chose and preferred a mix between arts, sciences and commercials. This was exacerbated by the fact that at ‘A’ level few, if any schools offered practical subjects such as metalwork and woodwork at that time. This resulted in having educated but unskilled graduates, subjects like Agriculture would save the country by producing technically skilled academics.

The country would have practically skilled graduates who would become employers not employees. Hanyani (2014) says that countries world over economically develop because of having people with different skills that match the needs of the country, not educated people without practical skills. There was creation of psychomotor ministry which is to make sure that
practical subjects are taken seriously. The ministry will fully implement the Nziramasanga commission recommendations on education so that Zimbabwe produces productive people. The ministry is to synchronize primary, secondary and vocational training to make sure students are well equipped with both theoretical and practical skills. Hanyani(2014) emphasizes that practical subjects in schools coupled with people having innovative minds, will be a panacea to the country’s woes as graduates from colleges and universities become employers, not job seekers.

There is also focus on the contribution education can make in terms of equipping the unsuccessful school leavers with skills and qualifications (Dean, 2002). Improving skills and qualifications will enhance employability and prospects of entrepreneurships (self-sufficiency). It is therefore imperative that the skills and qualifications of unsuccessful school leavers be improved to empower them to alleviate their socio-economic wretchedness (Dean, 2002). Creating a second chance for unsuccessful school leavers in education to acquire knowledge, skills and values and build a significant educational foundation could give these learners hope for further education, development and improved prospects. Agriculture as a practical subject is aimed at improving the socio-economic prospects of these youngsters, includes teamwork and customer service skills.

Finding employment, which matches and provides favourable returns to the qualifications obtained while studying, is probably the ultimate goal of every students. According to Kogan and Schubert (2003), while not solely a youth problem, unemployment can however reach particularly high levels among young people in countries where school-to-work links are loose. Young people lack work experience and are often short of skills and knowledge as well as the qualifications required for certain jobs, which makes them exposed to extended periods of job search and even to long-term unemployment. In this case agriculture can provide another option for livelihood.

2.1.2 Contributing factors leading to poor performance in Agriculture

According to Misozi, et al (2013) sex influences students’ attitude towards agriculture even as females exhibit a more positive attitude to agriculture practical subject than males. Location of schools influence attitude towards agriculture. Students from rural areas exhibit a more favourable attitude towards agriculture than their counterparts from urban areas. The school type influence student attitudes towards agriculture (Ankrah, 2011). The implication may be that female students have better attitudes towards agriculture as compared to male students.
Students located in rural areas have a better attitude towards agriculture. On the issue of gender lately there has been an upgrade on the legislation which has tried to level the opportunities for both males and females, this might improve the attitude of female students towards the agriculture subject.

According to Ndlovu (2013) most African universities do not specifically train Agriculture students to work on farms in the same way medical schools train students to work in hospitals. This lowers the interest of students towards the subject, the students may not perform as expected in various tasks in the subject. A study carried out in Nigeria showed that most students do not like and would not practice agriculture as a career or study it in college because of the drudgery involved in Nigerian agriculture, parents and peer influence, low prestige associated with farming in Nigeria and low/slow cash return/profit (Oladele, Ayodele, Oluyide & Alawode, 2013). Therefore, students will not be motivated enough to perform well in the practical subject rather time consuming some end up dropping it.

On a study which was carried out by Nyaguthii (2013) in Kenya which consisted 240 form two students from secondary in Thika district. This study was focused on the attitudes towards agricultural careers which can be related to their performance. In order words if a student has positive towards an agricultural career it most likely perceived that the student will perform way better than those with negative attitudes. Agriculture scores were obtained from the school records to measure agriculture academic performance (Nyaguthii, 2013). Career choices were measured through a questionnaire which also carried students’ background information. The study established that majority of the students in Thika District did not express career aspirations in agriculture. This was despite the fact that majority of the students had positive attitudes towards agricultural careers. The study established that only 33.3% of the students were low achievers in agriculture, indicating that academic performance in the subject was not to blame for low number of students who choose agricultural careers.

Significantly more boys than girls had chosen agricultural careers, despite the fact that more girls than boys had positive attitudes towards agriculture, and girls performed slightly better than boys in the subject. The findings of the study led to the conclusion that failure by students to choose agricultural careers is neither as a result of poor academic performance in the subject nor by attitudes towards agricultural careers (Nyaguthii, 2013). There could be other factors that cause students’ not to choose a career in agriculture. Therefore, there is more research needed to find out the role of factors like career guidance in
schools, government policies on agriculture, teaching methodologies employed by agriculture teachers, role of mass media in promoting agriculture careers like agribusiness, and other related factors that could impact on students’ choice of agricultural careers.

After explaining the effects of poor performance in practical subjects on an individual it is also important to examine the effects on the broader level which is the national level. According to Mufanechiya and Mufanechiya (2011) the issues of opportunities have demotivated the youths who are yet to go through the same educational system. The economic and social situation obtaining in Zimbabwe has not encouraged secondary school students to take education seriously and prepare themselves for service and contribution to nation building and self-development (Mufanechiya and Mufanechiya, 2011). This will even put practical subjects more distant from the students’ interests. The great economic meltdown of 2001 to 2008 in Zimbabwe did not help matters either, the country is not yet fully stable (Chikuhwa, 2008).

2.1.2:1 Challenges schools face and their contribution to poor performance

In a study on performance, Kiadese (2011) found out that problems such as poor school infrastructure, lack of qualified teachers, poorly equipped workshops and laboratories as well as parents’ attitudes affect the teaching of prevocational subjects like Agriculture. These findings are consistent with those of Uwaifo and Uwaifo (2009) who established that in Nigeria there was still a strong tendency towards white-collar jobs as a result of the low status associated with most kinds of technical and vocational education. Because of this cold attitude towards technical and vocational education, some decision makers do not think the subject is sufficiently important to deserve funding. This negative attitude has an indirect but strong influence on student performance in technical subjects of which Agriculture is one.

The location, ownership, academic and financial status of schools do count in making a school what it is and in turn influences the academic performance of its students because they set the parameters of a student’s learning experience. According to Saiduddin (2003) it is a convenient scapegoat to pass the blame and responsibility for the low academic performance to factors such as socio-economic status, family, culture and the learner being less intelligent than the others. The research he conducted at high schools in South Dakota showed that all learners are educable, and that the way in which the school is managed is the most critical factor in determining the quality of education for its learners. The study was undertaken at a high school and the bone of contention was how students can pass a subject without the necessary learning materials and equipment. This may apply to teaching of agriculture in Zimbabwe since it is
a practical subject which requires facilities like laboratories, equipment and other materials to carry out practical operations. If a school offering the subject cannot provide these requirements, there is a possibility that students will not perform well. Schools that offer students a positive learning environment, including the use of technology in the classroom and a quality library, give students an edge in mastering Mathematics, English and Science subjects. Up-to-date textbooks and other materials to use during lessons and other teacher presentations are also important (Ketchum, 2013).

The school under study is rural based and poorly resourced. In another study in Zimbabwe, Mandima (2012) discovered that schools with more resources had higher achievement scores than those with fewer resources. Therefore, where there are limited or no resources the pupils had low academic achievements showing that there is a strong correlation between the level of provisions and the pupil’s achievements. So resource availability is a contributory factor to performance in schools.

2.1.2.2 Teacher’s attitude

Mwamwenda (2012) states that a teacher should love his job to enhance students’ academic performance. Teacher to have knowledge on the subject matter improved ways of impacting knowledge. Misozi, et al (2013) support by stating that students do well if their teachers know them and have profound knowledge of their state of physical, intellectual and psychomotor readiness.

2.1.2.3 Gender

Gender as a factor influencing performance in agriculture as there is a belief that male students perform better than their female counterparts’ in many subjects such as mathematics and science (Bonga, 2010). Agriculture being a practical subject it has a scientific aspect. This difference in performance can be pointed up to that male students always get encouragement from the family members to achieve more. However, it must be noted that female students are exposed to household chores after school which affect their academic performance. Female students are normally occupied with work while their male counterparts will be focusing on education or resting (Bonga, 2010).

Contrary, to the above view on disparity between male and female academic performance, in another study there was also a significant difference observed between a male and a female student’s success in which female students were more successful. On the other hand, Savelyeva
(2005) proposed that male students outperform their female counterparts in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics while female students most likely excel in Humanities, Social Science and Writing. This clearly points out that the problem is on the attitude of the learner, and not necessarily gender.

2.1.2.4 Proper guidance

Guidance is of paramount importance since it enables students to improve their study attitudes and it is directly proportional to academic performance. Children who are guided by their parents are more likely to pass. Low levels of parental guidance are likely to be detrimental to children especially those from poor family backgrounds who reside in areas with high anti-social behavior prevalence. Since parental supervision will be minimal, the children are more likely to venture into deviant acts at the expense of their education thereby affecting their education negatively. Zendera (2013) emphasized that guidance from parents indirectly influence the performance of students. This is because it reinforces autonomy enabling the children to learn time management and study skills. Parental involvement in the education system is a positive step towards best academic performance.

2.1.2.5 Family educational background

The socio-economic background of students affects their performance in school. Poor parental background contributes to poor performance by their children. The learner’s background relating to availability of educational resources at home; like books, electronic resources such as television, computer, study desk and table for their own use and general academic support at home are crucial. Learners who have access to such resources have a sound head start compared to those from poor families since they will be more informed about the latest developments around them thereby, assisting them to improve their performance at school (Konyana & Konyana, 2012). Thus, non-exposure to educational resources on learners from poor families affects their performance compared to their counterparts who have access to such resources. There is a lot of educational information that can be accessed through the televisions and computers that are connected to the internet to assist learners source information for school assignments and projects.

Rotherstein (2004) states that parental education predicts education achievement. Children choose their prospective professions and the importance of education from their parents. Eamon (2005) states that educated mothers have higher self-esteem and their children obtain
higher test scores. Parents’ level of academic attainment is of paramount importance in academic performance of students since this enable them to improve the performance of their children. Educated parents can understand the nature of education and actively intervene to improve children’s academic performance. This proves to be a factor that influence performance in all subjects including our area of concern which is agriculture.

Awe (2002) revealed through her study that parents’ attitude towards Agricultural Science has an impact on students’ performance in the subject. She discovered that students whose parents’ attitude towards Agricultural Science is encouraging performed better in the subject compared to students whose parents have a non-challant attitude towards the subject. In general the performance of students in this subject depends on parental interest more so in Zimbabwe where during the colonial rule the subject was meant for the less academically gifted students. In the same vein, Oladele et al (2013) discovered that lack of qualified teachers, lack of well-equipped libraries, parental or guardian influence, attitude of students, instructional materials and time allocation were other important factors affecting students' performance in Agricultural Science in secondary schools. In Zimbabwe, most secondary schools especially in rural areas do not even have a library such that the only textbook available would be for the teacher.

In another study on performance, Bonga (2010) indicated that family (e.g., parental education) and personal (e.g., nutritional history) factors, demographic factors (e.g., walking distance to school), in combination with social characteristics (e.g., age, sex and English proficiency), contribute to the academic progress of school children. He also hypothesized that the language spoken at home would affect students learning. In most Zimbabwean families vernacular is used yet the language of instruction at school is English. Schools thus use the ‘wrong’ language to talk about their culture resulting in poor grasping of concepts by students. Teaching or learning of Agriculture is no exception. Also, in Botswana, Ramathala and Nenty (2014) write that students have a negative attitude towards learning Agriculture because it is taught in English. This practical subject is mainly linked to the African culture since it makes up most of African economic structures. It means maybe if the subject is to be taught in their local language they would improve in their attitude towards the subject.

The rural areas where schools were poorly equipped and offered little choice learners were offered any practical subject (Ndlovu, 2013). In farming areas agriculture should be made compulsory and farming as a business should be mainstreamed in such environments (Aremu
Practical subjects were taught as theory and there was no practical training and experience where there were no resources.

2.1.2.6: Attendance

Regular attendance and prompt arrival at school predicts a positive academic performance outcome. Students with high self-efficacy seem to be more successful in maintaining consistence attendance thus they are more likely to be successful since the greater part of the syllabus will be covered while they are present. Poor attendance hinders academic achievements and creates room for maladjusted behaviour. Balogun (2012) states that the domino effect starts with poor attendance, low achievements and increase in dropout rates. Proximity to school influence the regularity of attendance thus it is important for parents who stay away from their students’ schools to ensure that their children are motivated to attend school so that their academic performance is not affected.

2.1.2.7 Individual’s attitude and motivation

Motivation is also a requirement for effective learning. A study in England noted many factors that influence both the rate and enjoyment of learning (Gillman & Anderman, 2006). Once an individual has experienced something, and has stored that experience, the individual is able to refer to and use it at a later stage. As such, learning and memory are inextricably linked. The reward and punishment levelled at learners in the past will affect their motivation and attitude towards learning in the present. The expectations of others and the climate which surround learners will determine their readiness to learn, which in turn will affect their academic performance (Foster, 2007). Another study suggests that maintenance of high motivation influences psychological and social functioning and facilitates academic performance as well as positive school perceptions (Gilman and Anderman, 2006). The learning environment therefore has an impact on performance by students. Learner attitude towards learning also affect their performance. Attitudes are learned throughout life and are embodied within our socialization process. The negative attitude towards learning could result in learners performing poorly preventing them from obtaining required results for university entrance.

In a study by Mbugua (2012), students’ personal factors contributing to poor performance in Mathematics were found to be gender, economic factors and attitude towards Mathematics. Mwamwenda (2012) argues that the achievement of students in a subject is
determined by their attitudes rather than inability to study. Mbugua (2012) indicated that the cause of most failures in schools might not be due to insufficient or inadequate instruction but by active resistance by the learners. This argument suggests that favourable attitudes towards a subject should be developed for better achievement in the subject. In her study, Biriwasha (2012) noted that the dwindling popularity of Agriculture among the younger generation reflects a general trend towards de-agrarianisation in the continent linked to environmental degradation and reduced availability of land, economic pressures which have undermined peasant agriculture, and a realignment of rural populations’ changing aspirations. This leads to the students not taking the subject seriously thereby affecting their performance.

A student's negative behaviour within an educational environment may just be the result of how that environment is presented. Classroom motivation may be affected by how the teacher provides encouragement, opportunities, structure and a strong student-teacher relationship. The research conducted in Spain (Marchesi and Martin, 2002) found that the relationship between the learner and educator are some of the factors that determine academic performance. Characteristics of the educator are considered as key elements for the learner’s personal and academic development. Hence, it is crucial that educators should be role models worth emulating by the learners.

According to Pillay (2005), where pupils have not been involved in the planning and management of projects and where they do not share directly either the produce of the profits of the project, they have tendency to reject the work resulting in project failure. Children are happy when produce for their efforts is used for their benefits. He also emphasized that academic education is found by most students and parents to provide a route to better jobs and incomes that other forms of education.

2.1.3 Efforts done to improve the performance of secondary school Agriculture students.

Investing in students through practical subjects can be a good way forward which can be done by the education curricula (Chikuhwa, 2008). The gist of the research is to understand how agriculture as a practical subject can be viewed differently. This will help in the improvement of attitude and performance in practical subjects in particular agriculture. According to Smith (2011) in many countries the lack of skilled workers is accompanied by massive youth unemployment. In South Africa a quarter of the workforce is unemployed and up to 55% of young people in the country’s volatile townships are without jobs.
According to Callaway (2008) throughout west, east and central Africa today a time when all these countries want to quicken the pace of development, enhancement of young people’s mindset will help towards that goal. Many primary school leavers with an access to traditional farming they have become the first generation wage earners. But neither the jobs nor the vocational training exist that can meet their educational needs, and as each year passes the numbers of unemployment swell. In a report by the then education minister Coltart explained that Zimbabwe was unable to provide its youths enough opportunities. Therefore, the agriculture practical subject will improve a sector than can create economic opportunities.

Research by Evonsayiis (2013) revealed that the educator’s expectations significantly influence the learner’s results. In other words the greater the learner’s intelligence, the better the academic results and the better reciprocal appreciation between the educator and the learner. In line with that, Eamon (2005) found out that test performance is influenced greatly by teacher attitudes and expectations of students. Teacher pupil relationships could have some influence on teaching and learning of Agriculture hence student performance. Teachers are significant role players in shaping students’ attitude and achievement in their study (Cullen, 2000). Therefore, agricultural science teachers are the main source and facilitators of the knowledge transfer in the subject. In this respect, the level of knowledge being acquired by students depends, partly on the level of knowledge and attitude of their teachers (Lashgarara, 2011). Therefore, the teacher’s qualification and attitude towards his/her work have a significant impact on student performance.

2.1.4 Agriculture subject performances and other secondary school subjects

Education for all is an aspiration and desire to create a universal society of enlightened persons, persons with understanding, feelings and an attitude of co-operation, helpfulness, sharing and many other traits (Ndlovu, 2013). It is also the process of preparing individuals to meet the requirements of their existence as members of functioning communities and it is the responsibility of all societies. Therefore, one of the aims of education is that human beings should attain a certain level of development where conflicts and wars that are due to differences in caste creed, religion, language and nationality are replaced by human values and oneness of all persons (Ndlovu, 2013). Education leads to individual creativity and improved participation in social, economic, cultural and political life of the country. So if there is investment in practical subjects it help in the development of a nation by creating a technically skilled group.
According to Kidane and Worth (2012) there was very limited analytical research which has been conducted in the South Africa in the area of agriculture. Smith (2011) writes that in South Africa, there were varying attitudes among people since they came from varying geographical location and land ownership. The young people from rural settings where subsistence farming was dominant would understand the value of agriculture and its key components of food security. However, it might have negative effect on them since they may feel that it is not very progressive as most people in their communities might still be subsistence farmers who are struggling to not only carry their financial needs but also progress from subsistence farming to commercial farming (Smith, 2011). The teacher and community leaders have never been exposed to any agriculture while these could have been sources of learning agriculture. Lack of career guidance in schools is one huge component that derails youth participation in agriculture.

In Botswana, the Ministry of Education (MOE) in collaboration with Botswana Examination Council (BEC) and Department of Curriculum and Evaluation has recommended school-based continuous assessment (CA) for practical subjects, such as agriculture. Schools assess practical activities carried out by students and grade them for assessment of learning purposes (Ramatlala, 2009). Thobega & Masole (2008) in their study on use of forecast grades at Botswana General Certificate of Secondary Education (BGCSE) found out that the mean mark for agriculture practical at BGCSE was skewed towards the highest possible mark whereas for theoretical papers were around the median. The purpose of the study was to determine whether agriculture scores predict academic performance in other subjects and equally so for urban, peri-urban and rural schools. Some earlier studies by Thobega & Masole in 2008 and Masole & Utlwang in 2005 have revealed coursework and forecast grades to be good predictors of BGCSE grades and in agriculture grades, but none have been found trying to determine location-based predictive validity. Hence their study aimed at investigating the predictive strength of these two variables on Junior Certificate agricultural examinations.

Secondary education starts from Form one and parents send their children to either private or government schools depending on their financial ability (Kanyongo, 2005). Mathematics, English, Science, Shona, Ndebele, Geography and History are core subjects that students are required to take. Officially students should take a minimum of eight subjects in secondary education. In some schools students have the opportunity to choose the optional practical subjects they want to pursue according to their interest. Most of the teachers indicated that all students should learn practical subjects instead of offering them to those who are
academically weak. The teachers’ views on this issue appear not to be in keeping with traditionally held values which associated practical subjects with weak students. Vocational subjects are crucial to widen the opportunities for an individual after leaving school. Agriculture as a secondary school subject should be given much attention just like all other subjects which are considered to be ‘more important’ like Mathematics and English.

Accordingly, findings of a study by Mandima (2012) have also revealed that the greater percentage of Food and Nutrition teachers in Zimbabwe were underqualified. The findings indicate that there are inadequate Food and Nutrition teachers in the schools. On the other hand the only available teachers are not adequately trained; hence they lack the innovativeness and resourcefulness entailed in the teaching and learning of Food and Nutrition. Similar scenarios could also haunt the teaching of Agriculture in Zimbabwe. The other challenge identified was that of poor societal perception. The majority of the parents and most of the students who participated in the Mandima (2012) study (above) had a negative attitude towards practical (vocational) subjects and looked down upon technical and vocational education teachers regarding them as failures in life (Mandima, 2012). This attitude has continued to stifle both the implementation progress and performance in these subjects.

2.1.5 Awareness of the importance of Agriculture subject to different stakeholders

Foster (2007) interviewed 210 Ghanaian 'academic school' students preparing to look for work or continue with their education. Given the freedom to choose what kind of employment they would most like to obtain, 62% said they wanted to become artisans or farmers and only 30% favored white-collar employment. This finding seems to suggest that technical oriented courses can be attractive. Considering the time this interview was conducted the responses would have changed suppose they were this year or last year. Modern era has changed students attitudes towards practical this end up influencing performance in agriculture. Every student now thinks they would get employment in formal sector which is not always the case. Elsewhere, in Africa specifically in Uganda, there was a reduction in the number of students passing agriculture in examinations (Awe, 2002). The numbers were decreasing every year examinations were written. The information was based on the results from National examination Board of Uganda. The reduction of number of students passing shows that the students were not interested and committed to the subject in order for them to improve performance.

Since most parents have a strong preference to other subjects being studied by their children excluding agriculture, this contradicts Aremu & Sokan (2013) that in farming areas agriculture
should be made compulsory and farming should be a business which should be mainstreamed in such environments.

Practical education has a key role to play in the acquisition of social capital and access to career opportunities and life chances. According to Cullen (2000) students after leaving school they should be able to fit in their society and lack of technical skills will result in the failure to access life chances and social exclusion. The level of cultural capital is also significant; parents with higher levels of education will have a better understanding of the benefits of education and be more equipped to help their children (Dean, 2002). Gone are the days when children longed to go to school and learn as well as prepare themselves for service in the community and the nation. The mere thought of going to school, to those going to school for the first time, was fascinating, generated hope for a bright future and was seen as the only honest prospect for decent future survival (Mufanechiya and Mufanechiya, 2011). A lot that learning has promised has not materialized and has left students leaving school in a tough situation so agriculture will provide another alternative for a decent survival.

According to Mufanechiya and Mufanechiya (2011) parents and guardians still look up to school as the only viable option for their children. They struggle through the most difficult moments to raise school fees, buy uniforms, books and all other school requirements hoping to reap from that investment and also secure a future for their children. Some even dispose their hard-earned properties to fund their children’s education. They are spurred on by the intrinsic value that they attach to education. One can then wonder the consequence when the school leaver is stuck after going through this education system with no proper alternatives.

According to Adesina (2013) the rapid rise in the country’s unemployment rate has become a major source of concern not only for employable adults but for school leavers as well are finding it difficult to secure employment. It is no longer about going to school, but about the education which is being acquired as well as its relevance to this modern era (Adesina, 2013). Technical knowledge will provide another option, in these days where there is little hope of what the future holds. The study will add literature to the existing which relate to issues of the importance of secondary schools practicals especially agriculture as well as building a relationship with those researches’ finding. Raising awareness to the government and the community on how curriculum reform is being by students is another significant part of the study.
Having worked at full throttle to translate the philosophy of compulsory education into reality, the focus of the Zimbabwean government now is on the improvement of the quality and relevance of education. Failure of students at school means the government, which would have invested in their education, makes a loss. The students would not be able to proceed to colleges and universities and students would have wasted time pursuing a subject they would not benefit from. Parents get worried about the fees they will have paid for their children. This study therefore sought to find out factors that could be contributing to low performance in the agriculture and come up with insights and suggestions on how the performance can be improved.

2.3 Theoretical framework

The major theory in the issues related to practical subjects’ performance is arguably the ‘human capital’ model which was proposed by Becker (1975). This theory was propounded as part of developmental theories. Like many theories, there has been development and modification of its views over a long period of time.

2.3.1: Human capital model

This main theory apart from other theories relating to development tries to explain the issues to do with performance in practical subjects in this case agriculture. According to the human capital model (Becker, 1975) skills acquired in education represent human capital. Investment in human capital is useful to the development of a nation as a whole. When applying this theory to the issue of practical subjects’ performance it stresses the importance of investing in students. This is done in order to prevent school leavers from facing challenges instead this will enhance their lives. This theory states that human capital is in exhaustible (Becker, 1975) this is supported by the fact that every year there are new students leaving school. This model calls for human resources development through appropriate education, training and empowerment. As postulated by this theory students need to be equipped with a variety of technical skills like those in agriculture in order for them to be able to secure opportunities.

This theory was propounded by Becker in 1975 as an alternative to theories of career development. Like many theorists, Becker has developed over a long period of time to make the theory remain relevant in the modern era. The theory is now relevant to the development efforts of developing countries with an emphasis on human capital. Students are the most essential asset of any educational institution (Ndlovu, 2013). Students’ performance plays an important role in producing quality graduates who will contribute to the country’s human
capital bringing socio-economic development. According to the human capital model (Becker, 1975) skills acquired in education represent human capital. Investment in human capital is useful to the development of a nation as a whole. When applying this theory to the issue of agriculture practical subject it stresses the importance of investing in it for human capital. This is done in order to produce school leavers who are capable of functioning in the informal sector of the economy to enhance their lives.

Human development is partly a matter of people and communities improving their own lives and taking greater control of their destiny. Human capital theory reveals that individuals and the whole society gain economic benefits from investments in people (Nafukho, Hairston and Brooks, 2004). Human capital theory rests on the assumption that formal education is highly instrumental and even necessary to improve the production capacity of a population. In short, the human capital theorists argue that an educated population is a productive population (Olaniyan and Okemakinde, 2008).

Since the resurgence of the human capital theory, several studies have revealed that investment in practical education is both profitable to the individual who undertakes to invest in himself and the society as a whole (Melody, 2002). Practical subjects are, therefore, a major factor in national building, in consolidating national independence and sovereignty, in generating and fostering the cultural identity of people and promoting social and economic progress. Students as suggested under this model are seen as investments which in return are expected to produce fruits which will help the whole society. Education, particularly in developing countries, must help people to better understand their conditions and enable them to take action necessary to improve these conditions (Abdulahi, 2012). Students who would have gone through the education system therefore they need to be included in activities to provide this human capital. If they do not succeed to provide human capital then there are left to face socio-economic challenges also hindering the nation development.

According to human capital theory, the skills acquired in education represent human capital (Becker, 1975). Investments in human capital are useful, as long as they lead to higher productivity on the labour market. Employers value labour productivity by offering the highest wages to those individuals who have obtained most human capital. Therefore, practical subjects should be invested on, for they help to come out with the most active group in the society. They need to be in cooperated as suggested by this theory.
2.4 Gaps
After reviewing most researches relevant to the factors influencing performance in secondary school education, one can identify certain gaps in which this study sought to fill. The main gap is that most factors influencing performance are classified as all practical subjects this study will focus more on agriculture in particular. Also most developing countries for example, Zimbabwe tend to ignore practical subjects at primary school, however, this might not be intentional. Youth development is enhanced when practical subjects are taken seriously so children need to be encouraged which will also provide another alternative when they leave school.

2.5 Chapter summary
This chapter has presented the literature related to the study by looking at the factors that influence performance in the agriculture subject. This chapter has also discussed the relevant conceptual frameworks which guided the study. The literature was from several random counties from all over the world as well as in Zimbabwe on the importance of agriculture as well as performance in practical subjects. The next chapter will cover the research methodology, while discussing the research design, sampling and other components of the study.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction
This chapter provides an overview of how the research was conducted in order to investigate the factors influencing performance of students in Agriculture at secondary school. This section describes how the research was undertaken by outlining the research methodology and the data collection techniques as well justifying them. Since this is an academic research both qualitative and quantitative research methodologies were utilized to make the findings rich with information, this chapter discusses and justify them. Sampling size, sampling techniques, study area, target population and research limitations are all components covered under this chapter.
3.2 Research design
Research methodology which is the plan and strategy of investigation conceived with the aim of obtaining answers to research questions and to control variance (Creswell, 2007). The researcher used both the qualitative and quantitative research methodologies the main reason being that they cover each other’s weaknesses. Under the qualitative research methodology the research made use of the case study research design. Qualitative research is a systematic subjective approach used to describe life experiences and give them meaning and its main goal is to gain insight, explore the depth, richness, and complexity inherent in the phenomenon (Maxwell, 2013). Qualitative research was chosen for it provides any in-depth analysis in the phenomenon in question in this case the factors influencing performance of students in agriculture at Nyamaropa, Mushowani and Mutumba secondary schools. Therefore, qualitative research was used for it studies complex human behaviour and it enriches the results with people’s action and words, while a quantitative approach was adopted in order to enrich the research results with a statistical perspective of the phenomenon. Quantitative was used for it gives the findings a figurative perspective which then can be used to compare with other earlier findings.

3.3 Study population
3.3.1 Study area
The area which went under study is Nyamaropa, Mushowani and Mutumba secondary schools which are in Madziva area, Shamva district and it is important to note that it is in a rural area. Nyamaropa secondary school which 7 kilometers east of Madziwa which is along Bindura-Mount Darwin road. It is 700 m north of Kandawasvika business centre. The school is located on a crest in Reza village. Its boundaries are Gwetera River, Dikitira Mountain and Reza village. Nyamaropa secondary school has an enrolment is 320 pupils. Mushowani secondary school is 3.5 kilometers east of Madziwa which is along Bindura–Mount Darwin road. Its boundaries are Gwetera River and Haja Mountain. Its enrolment is 168 pupils. Mutumba secondary school is in Maja village and its boundaries are Nyarukunda River and Hadya Mountain and it is found 3 kilometers west of Madziwa which is located along Bindura–Mount Darwin road. The enrolment at Mutumba secondary school is 1200 pupils. The total number of pupils studying agriculture from form three to four is 300 pupils. This area is in Mashonaland
Central Province of Zimbabwe and it has Bindura as the administrative capital of the province. Bindura is located approximately eighty-eight kilometers from the capital city of Zimbabwe which is Harare.

3.3.2 Target population

Study population is the entire collection of people or elements which one is interested in studying (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011). Under this research the targeted population are all students who have agriculture as a practical subject being offered in their class at Nyamaropa, Mushowanji and Mutumba secondary schools. Since this target population is complex a specific figure can be given on the pilot school which is Nyamaropa secondary school. There are sixty four (64) students in Form three and twenty eight (28) in Form four who are being offered agriculture in their respective classes. Therefore, it totals to ninety two (92) pupils as the target population, the total group of people from whom information was needed and collected from. The total number of the target population was obtained from the agriculture class registers. The research could not include pupils not doing agriculture because it would result in missing the objectives of the whole research.

3.4 Study sample

3.4.1 Sample size

A sample was defined as a special subset of a population observed for purposes of making inferences about the nature of the total population itself (Rubin and Babbie, 2007). Basic principles of statistical sampling demonstrate that the accuracy of an estimate from a probability sample is strongly influenced by the size of the sample itself. The sample size was thirty (30) student participants out of 300 pupils studying agriculture at the three schools and three (3) key respondents (one head and two agriculture teachers). This decision was made according to the available resources (time and cost) for the study. For this research that was the sample size used to represent the entire group of the larger population. Since it was also mainly a qualitative research it was of much importance to focus on a small group and research deeply on the chosen respondents. Sampling was done due to limitations of resource to conduct a full board survey and as well due to the time limitations for the researcher. The sample however was expected and assumed to be precisely a representative of the total population.
3.4.2 Sampling techniques

Probability and non-probability sampling techniques were both used in coming up with the sample size of pupils and key respondents (teachers and school head) respectively from the target population.

3.4.2.1 Stratified random sampling

According to Babbie (2001), probability sampling is a sampling technique where the samples are gathered in a process that gives all individuals in the target population equal chances of being selected. Under probability sampling stratified random sampling technique was chosen. Which is defined by Cohen et al (2011) as a process which involves the division of the population into two or more relevant and significant strata based on one or a number of variables. The sampling frame is divided into a number of subsets to ensure that it is representative since the students will be proportionally represented. The sample will be divided using two variables notably sex and academic level, this is meant to avoid selecting students from the same sex and academic level. After dividing the sample, random sampling will then be used to draw data from each stratum. This sampling method was chosen because every student has a chance of being selected and it ensures proportional representation.

3.4.2.2 Purposive sampling

Purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling method in which the researcher uses their judgment in the selection of sample members (Rubin and Babbie, 2007). Purposive sampling was used to select the teachers and the school head who are the key informants. Rubin and Babbie (2007) go on to state that purposive sampling involves the researcher’s judgment in selecting respondents that will best answer the research questions and meet the research objectives. Therefore, the key informants were selected on the preset that they understand the factors influencing agriculture performance at Nyamaropa, Mutumba and Mushowani secondary schools since they are professionals which pupils look up to. The key informants in the research were three (3) teachers and the school head. These key informants were being targeted for their knowledge on the research subject matter emanating from the positions that they occupy.
3.5 Data collection

3.5.1 Methods

Questionnaires were used for all form three and four pupils studying agriculture. Focus group was used for selected pupils while interviews were conducted for the heads and administrating staff.

Questionnaire

The researcher used questionnaires (Appendix A) to collect data from the actual agriculture pupils. This refers to a method of data collection in which respondents are asked to respond to same set of questions in a predetermined order (Maxwell, 2013). This was utilized as an instrument for data collection in order to investigate factors influencing performance of students in Agriculture at the secondary schools. A questionnaire being a data gathering instrument through which respondents answer questions or respond to statements in writing on that particular paper. Questionnaires were used and proved to be a relatively fast and effective method of obtaining information. The researcher made use of them in order to ask a lot of questions and get answers in a short space of time from several respondents. This also helped the respondents who could not express themselves verbally.

Although they are often designed for statistical analysis of the responses, this is not always the case. The researcher observed that questionnaires were cheap, and did not require as much effort in explaining because they had standardized answers that made it simple to compile data. Questionnaires involved little personal involvement on the part of the researcher, reducing the time needed by the researcher to complete the study. Questionnaires were used to assist to answer objectives.

Focus Groups

The researcher used a focus group discussion (FGD) to collect data from the pupils at Nyamaropa, Mutumba and Mushowani secondary schools. According to Gilbert (2008), a focus group consists of a small group of individuals (usually 8 to 12) who meet together to express their views about a particular topic defined by the researcher. This method was chosen on the reason that pupils will perform well in group setups so the researcher utilized this group setting in order to get the required information. Focus group interactions were used to get information from students on what are the contributing factors influencing performance in
Agriculture secondary subject. This enabled the participating pupil’s to share their viewpoints in a discussion or interactive form.

Focus group discussion guide (Appendix B) as the data gathering tool. A focus group discussion is a group interview or discussion. The researcher was the group facilitator and she administered the questions to the respondents and took notes. The researcher used a focus group discussion because it is relatively inexpensive and individuals are more likely to provide candid responses. However, focus groups rely heavily on assisted discussions to produce results and consequently, the facilitation of the discussion is critical. While a focus group format prevents the dangers of a nominal group process, outspoken individuals can dominate a discussion at the expense of others views.

Interviews

The researcher conducted interviews with the key respondents. Kvale (1983) defines an interview as a data collection method whose purpose is to gather the life-world of the interviewee with respect to interpretation of the meaning of the described phenomena. Standardized, open ended interviews were used to collect data from key informants through the use of standardized-open ended interview guides. According to Valenzuela and Shrivastava (2008), standardized, open-ended interviews entail a set of the same open-ended questions that are asked to all interviewees as this facilitates faster interviews that can easily be more analyzed and compared. This was done in order to get information on what they think are the reasons that are influencing or resulting in poor performance in Agriculture subject.

An interview guide (Appendix C) was used when the researcher collected used the general interview guide approach which according to Valenzuela and Shrivastava (2008) is intended to ensure that the same general areas of information are collected from each interviewee, this provided more focus than the conversational approach, but still allowed a degree of freedom and adaptability in getting the information from the interviewee. An interview guide being list of data from the key respondents in this case were the teachers and the school head. The research questions, topics, and issues that the researcher wanted to cover during the interviews was used. This helped the researcher with the advantage that it made data collection easier and it also reduced time and cost. This guide containing a list of topics, themes, and areas to be covered in the interview, made the interview free flowing and organized. They were created in advance by the researcher and they were constructed in a way to allow fluidity and flexibility in the topics and areas that were covered.
3.5.2 Data collection procedure
The researcher collected data on the factors influencing performance of students in Agriculture at three secondary schools in Shamva district, Mashonaland Central, Zimbabwe. The researcher administered questionnaires to agriculture pupils. Pupils took part in focus group discussion with the researcher as the facilitator being guided by the focus group guide in an area at the secondary school. The interviews were conducted by the researcher to the key informants. The head and the agriculture subject teachers were interviewed at the school in their offices. Interviews and focus groups were recorded using notes by the researcher.

3.6 Findings
3.6.1 Presentation of findings
The data collection process was carefully done to give a more realistic observation upon each variable. Focus groups and interviews were used to collect qualitative because there was need to get an in depth understanding of the factors influencing performance in agriculture. Collected data was presented in form of tables, bar graphs and pie charts which will be illustrated in the next chapter. The choice of using tables as one of data presentation tools is because of their ability to clearly classify different data. Quantitative data collected was analyzed through different analytical methods such as the mean and median.

The qualitative data was coded followed by categorization, abstraction, comparison, and integration before it was interpreted. Interview responses were treated the same since both the questionnaire and the interview produced quantitative and qualitative data. Although quantitative paradigm was also used by the researcher in this research its greatest weakness of the approach is that it decontextualizes human behaviour in a way that removes the event from its real world setting and ignores the effects of variables. Summarily, the gathered information was presented in graphs, pie charts and also in narrative format depending on what was suitable on the covered area and type of data.

3.6.2 Analysis of findings
Data analysis started by going through all the data collected, followed by removing what was considered to be irrelevant to the study and bringing together what was important. This idea enabled the researcher to verify the collected data in which significant observations were made to remove some unnecessary information thereby reducing the volume of data. Thematic analysis was used to analyze the collected data. Thematic analysis is a form of data analysis used in qualitative research and focuses on examining themes within data (Maxwell, 2013).
The collected data was coded, edited, summarized and interpreted for presentation as findings. Simple descriptive statistical analysis was employed. This involved use of figures, and percentages to describe the responses on relevant issues that emerged from the research study. It also includes frequency, tables, charts and graphs which were also used to enhance clarity of the findings. The data from both interviews and focus groups was analyzed qualitatively by categorizing it into emerging themes for clear presentation.

Data was also analyzed and presented electronically using Microsoft Excel. The researcher used Microsoft Excel because it is capable of analyzing large amounts of data and due to is flexible filtering and sorting tools, users are able to find and examine vast information quickly (Bernard, 2013). With Microsoft Excel, data can also be presented in a tangible way with the use of tables and graphs. However, Microsoft Excel is too complex and requires training for one to be able to use it effectively. Data was also presented in narrative form with tables and graphs.

3.7 Ethical issues

The researcher asked permission to get information from respondents by explaining the purpose of the research. The researcher did not impose the study on unwilling pupils. Seeking permission was also done to the school head to carry out a research at this school. The researcher made herself known by providing identification of the university identity card. The data gathered by the researcher was strictly used for this research project only. The researcher was well aware of the ethical considerations that go with a research project. The subject’s rights were safeguarded throughout the research process. In this regard, all the information that was supplied to the researcher remained confidential. The data collected was not tempered with in any other way other than the purpose of analyzing and interpreting it as discussed above.

The researcher considered and upheld the American Psychological Association’s human research ethics and they include anonymity, informed consent and confidentiality. Upholding individuals’ rights to confidentiality and privacy was done in this research. Participants signed forms which promised them of their confidentiality being maintained. The information gathered would be used for academic purposes only and names of the respondents will not be used to protect their privacy.

3.7.1 Anonymity

The principle of anonymity essentially means that the participant will remain anonymous throughout the study. That is, only the respondent knows that he or she participated in the
survey, and the survey researcher cannot identify the participants. Also the use pseudo-names if there is need to, just to protect the participants’ privacy.

3.7.2 Confidentiality
Confidentiality can be defined as an explicit or implied guarantee by a researcher to a respondent whereby the respondent is made confident that any information provided to the researcher cannot be attributed back to that respondent. The information obtained from participants will be kept confidential by the researcher and it will only be used for academic or developmental purposes only.

3.7.3 Informed consent
The principle of informed consent entails that potential respondents must be given sufficient information to allow them to decide whether or not they want to take part in the research. The researcher explained everything that was involved in the research and he considered voluntary participation such that only those willing to participate in the research were considered.

3.8 Feasibility
This study was feasible since the study area was readily accessible to the researcher. The researcher had all the resources and materials needed to carry out this study. The researcher sought and was granted authority to carry out the research at Nyamaropa, Mutumba and Mushowani secondary schools from the school heads. Sampling also helped the researcher to deal with a practical group and carry out the research instead of dealing with the whole target population. Respondents were willing to participate in the research study. The Ministry of Secondary and Primary education also gave permission to the researcher to carry out the research.

3.9 Limitations of the study
- Cost was also a limit to the research, cost in terms of transport and stationery. The researcher had to effectively plan visits to the study area to maximize the little time available. In terms of stationery in some cases the researcher made use of the back of used bond papers during the research.
- Dishonest was also another limitation, its natural some respondents might have a tendency of twisting information to their desired effect. The researcher tried to clarify issues for example, explaining that nothing was to be done immediately after the
research. The researcher also used personal judgment in identifying dishonest situations.

- Gathering of data can also be delayed when some of the participants might not be available at the time needed for example, the school head attending to some other needs. This can slow down the data collection process.

3.10 Delimitations
The research was carried out in areas which are in Madziva rural area, in Shamva district. Nyamaropa secondary school which 7 km east of Madziwa which is along Bindura- Mount Darwin road. Mutumba secondary school is 3 kilometers west of Madziwa which is along Bindura –Mount Darwin road while Mushowani is 3, 5 kilometers east of Madziwa which is along Bindura –Mount Darwin road. Bindura is capital of Mashonaland Central Province located approximately eighty-eight kilometers from the capital city of Zimbabwe which is Harare. Bindura is located in the northeast of Harare the capital of the country. Nyamaropa secondary school is located on a crest in Reza village. Its boundaries are Gwetera River, Dikitira Mountain and Reza village. It is 700 m north of Kandawasvika business centre. Mutumba village is located in Maja village while Mushowani is located in Haja village. The study focused on pupils being offered agriculture in their classes, form three and four.

3.11 Chapter summary
This chapter covered the methodology of the research, by explaining the research design and also justifying why it was chosen. Data collection methods and techniques were also discussed in this chapter showing how the research was conducted. The researcher stated how the sample was drawn from the target population and also justifying the sampling technique used. Limitations of the study, delimitations, feasibility of the study and ethical issues were also discussed under this chapter. The next chapter covers the data presentation, analysis and discussion of collected data.
CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction
This chapter focuses on presenting, discussing, and analyzing the data collected on the factors influencing agriculture performance at schools in Madziva. This chapter will also present the demographic details for the participants for this research as guideline to the characteristics of the whole target population. The findings are from the research instruments which are questionnaires, focus groups and interviews. The data is presented using mainly using pie charts and graph and a table.

4.2 Bio data
4.2.1 Sex (№30)
Fig 4.1 Sex

The chart shows representation of participants from the three schools. There was equal representation of males (15) and females (15). The age groups were between 16 and 18 years.

Most of the respondents 17(57%) were 17 years old.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Sex and age of the participants</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 years-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 years</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 years+</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.3 Agriculture lessons

4.3.1 Teaching of agriculture
Fig 4.2 Teaching of agriculture

Pupils were asked if agriculture was being taught well. Most of the respondents 20 (67%) said that agriculture was being taught well in schools. In focus group discussion pupils shared the same idea that agriculture is being taught well. One pupil during the focus group discussion said, “Agriculture was being taught well in theory”. Agriculture teachers indicated that they are teaching according to the curriculum. One administration staff said, “Theory lessons are being mixed with practical lessons”. Another school administration staff member said, “Some teachers take pupils to do general work instead of practical lessons”.

According to the findings from the focus groups, questionnaires and the interviews it shows that agriculture is being taught well in theory.

The findings are supported by Mwamwenda (2012) who states that a teacher should love his job to enhance students’ academic performance. Teacher to have knowledge on the subject matter and improved ways of impacting knowledge. Misozi, et al (2013) supports by stating that students do well if their teachers know them and have profound knowledge of their state of physical, intellectual and psychomotor readiness.

4.3.2 Interest in agriculture
Fig 4.3: Interest in agriculture

The respondents were asked whether they had interest in learning agriculture. The majority of the participants 25 (83%) indicated they did not have interest in learning agriculture. In the focus group discussion, the pupils indicated they were sometimes taken to do other jobs at school not practically related to the subject. One of the pupils mentioned that, “instead of doing agriculture practicals, sometimes we are tasked to do other school activities for example, sweeping, carrying bricks or even cleaning toilets”. One administration staff member echoed, “We are surprised to see pupils doing any type of work during agriculture practical lessons.”

One of the administration staff said, “The pupils were made to do some other work when they were supposed to be doing practicals related to the theory lessons for the week.”

The pupils have no interest in learning agriculture at school, since they are taken out to do any type of work (sweeping, carrying bricks or even cleaning toilets) which is not linked to the theory of a given,.

This is in contradiction with the claim that Ankrah (2011) that pupils located in rural areas exhibit a more favourable attitude towards agriculture as compared to their counterparts from urban areas. Ankrah (2011) goes on to state that, the school type influences student attitudes towards agriculture.

4.3.3 Skills in agriculture
Fig 4.4: New Ideas in Agriculture

The respondents were asked whether there were learning skills in agriculture practicals. The majority of the respondents 26 (87%) showed that there were no new ideas they were learning in agriculture. In focus group discussions the pupils indicated that their parents said, “*Our children have been dealing with and working in the garden and the field as well as working with the animals and its high time our children learn new things and ideas.*” One agriculture teacher at one of the schools said, “*We teach skills according to the requirements of the subject, despite shortage of relevant requirements.*” One administration staff member said, “*We rarely see pupils undertaking agriculture practicals.*”

The findings from the focus groups show that parents were not motivating their children towards the subject, they thought their children had all the knowledge required in growing crops and rearing animals which might not be correct.

The aspect of learning new ideas is supported by Aremu and Sokan (2003) who claims education is an investment as well as an instrument that can be used to achieve a more rapid economic, social, political, technological, scientific and cultural development in the country.

4.4 Materials to use in agriculture
4.4.1 Availability of materials
The respondents were asked whether there were enough books and tools to use in agriculture. Most of the respondents 24 (80%) showed that there were not enough tools and books to use in agriculture. During focus group discussion the pupils indicated that the school should get assistance to purchase more tools which can be used in agriculture. One of the teachers indicated that, “the tools are being shared with other departments and it was difficult to maintain them”. Another agriculture teacher said, “There is need to have different store rooms, for the agriculture department and that one of the school for maintenance and care of tools”. According to the findings from focus group discussions, questionnaire and interviews there were not enough tools to use in agriculture. This is in line with what Kiadese (2011) found out, problems such as poor school infrastructure, lack of qualified teachers, poorly equipped workshops influence practical subject performance.

4.4.2 Supplementary tools
Fig 4.6 Supplementary tools

The respondents were asked where they get supplementary tools to use in agriculture. Most of the respondents 24 (80%) indicated they brought tools from home. In the focus group discussion, one pupil stated, “We bring tools from home or ask for tools to use from nearby homesteads.” Of the pupils one also said, “It is laborious to carry tools and books at the same time and some of the tools were dangerous to carry to school for example, axes and sickles.” The agriculture teachers and school administration shared the same views that pupils had to bring their own tools since the school could not provide enough tools, for the practicals. One of school administrator indicated, “it would be expensive or the school if pupils are injured carrying the tools to school.” One of the agriculture teachers said, “The tools are really dangerous to carry to school, for example, axes for clearing land.” The tools which were brought from home included hoes, slashers, watering tins at school for the subject.

Therefore, from the above findings, tools which were limited in numbers were brought from home by the pupils.

In another study in Zimbabwe, Mandima (2012) discovered that schools with more resources had higher achievement scores than those with fewer resources. Therefore, where there were limited or no resources the pupils had low academic achievements showing that there is a strong correlation between the level of provisions and the pupil’s achievements.

4.4.3 Efforts to provide tools
The pupils were asked if their schools were making effort to provide tools which were not available at school. Most of the participants 26 (87%) responded positively on their school efforts to provide agriculture tools. Focus group discussion also revealed that the schools were making efforts. One pupil during the focus group discussion said, “The school was making great efforts since there were tools bought yearly and broken ones were repaired.” The pupils confirmed the school is making great effort to purchase new tools every year but these are shared among many activities and this has led to a decrease in number of tools which are used in the department.

One agriculture teacher complained, “The tools are used for general work and are stored in the general storeroom and they are difficult to maintain. There is need to have a separate storeroom for the department and that for the whole school. There is usually scramble for tools during agriculture practical sessions and general work requiring same tools.” The school administration staff member said, “We are struggling to secure tools for the agriculture department since there is need to increase the numbers so that all the pupils will be participating at the same time during practical sessions.”

Ketchum (2013) supports the findings by stating that if a school offering the subject cannot provide these requirements, there is a possibility that students will not perform well. Up-to-date textbooks and other materials to use during lessons and other teacher presentations are also important.

4.5 Agriculture produce
4.5.1: Handling of agriculture produce
The participants were asked concerning what happens to the produce from the agriculture department. The majority of the respondents 24 (80%) indicated that the produce is being sold. In a focus group discussion, one of the pupils said, “We are not sure what happens to the money obtained from the sales of agriculture produce.” An agriculture teacher from one of the schools complained, “There is need for the department to run its own funds since the money obtained after selling produce was just put in the school finance books and could take a long time to get money to set up other projects. It would also be clear to explain how funds from department are run to the children.” The administration staff member said, “It is safe for the agriculture teachers to refrain from direct handling of funds since the inputs are bought by the school. The school needs to handle the funds since there are personnel employed to handle money.”

According, to the findings from the focus groups, interviews and questionnaires, the produce is sold and the pupils do not know how the cash is handled and what it is used for.

Pillay (2005), supports by stating that where pupils have not been involved in the planning and management of projects and where they do not share directly either the produce of the profits of the project, they have tendency to reject the work resulting in poor performance. Children are happy when produce for their efforts is used for their benefits.

4.6 Parents’ views on agriculture
4.6.1 Tools in agriculture
The participants were asked if their parents were happy to give them supplementary tools to use in agriculture. The majority of the respondents 22 (73%) indicated that their parents were not interested in giving tools to use during practical. In a focus group discussion, one of the participants said, “My parents complained about providing tools, since I lost a tool at the school.” One of agriculture teachers said. “Parents were coming to school complaining about the loss of tools, which were brought to school for agriculture lessons.” An administration staff said, “We are receiving complaints from school development members about losses of tools brought to school from home.”

According to the findings parents were not happy to provide tools to their children, since they saw it as the school’s responsibility.

This is in line with Awe (2002) revealed through her study that parents' attitude towards agricultural science has an impact on students' performance in the subject. Students whose parents' attitude towards Agricultural Science is encouraging performed better in the subject compared to students whose parents have a negative attitude towards the subject. The issue of attitudes is also further explained by Mufanechiya and Mufanechiya (2011) in their study, according to them, parents and guardians still look up to school as the only viable option for their children. They struggle through the most difficult moments to raise school fees, buy uniforms, books and all other school requirements hoping to reap from that investment and also secure a future for their children.

**4.6.2 Comparison of agriculture and other subjects**
The participants were asked whether their parents compared agriculture with other subjects. Most of the respondents 27 (90%) indicated that their parents strongly compared agriculture with other subjects. In the focus group discussion, one pupil said, “Our parents prefer us to study other subjects other than agriculture, because we already do farming of crops at home.”

The pupils in the focus group also indicated that their parents complained, “We are tired of giving our children tools to use at school. The school needs to be equipped since we have experienced many losses in tools which are left everywhere. The tools are too heavy for the pupils since they will be carrying books and tools during practical days.” One agriculture teacher said, “Some of the pupils do not come to school when the agriculture is the first period of a particular day.” One school administration member said, “We often see pupils roaming around class rooms while others are doing practicals.”

The results from the findings show that, the parents influence their children towards other subjects rather than agriculture.

The majority of the pupils showed that their parents preferred them to study other subjects other than agriculture, this contradicts Aremu & Sokan (2013) view that in farming areas agriculture should be made compulsory and farming should be a business which should be mainstreamed in such environments.

4.6.3 Assistance in agriculture activities at home
The pupils were asked if their parents asked them concerning agriculture activities they have learnt at school. The majority of the participants 27 (90%) showed that their parents did not even ask them on what they have learnt in the subject because they say their children already have the knowledge in crop production and animal rearing.

Since most of the pupils showed that their parents did not ask them concerning agriculture at home this has a negative impact on the interest and performance in the subject at school. This agrees with Ramala (2009) findings by stating that, the socio-economic background of students affects their performance in school. Poor parental background contributes to poor performance by their children. The learner’s background relating to availability of educational resources at home; like books, electronic resources such as television, computer, study desk and table for their own use and general academic support at home are crucial.

4.7 Chapter Summary
In this chapter the collected data was presented analyzed and discussed. Data was presented mainly in pie charts as well as tables and graphs, and in the discussion it ensued that insufficient agriculture materials (books and tools was the leading influence on the performance of agriculture at three secondary schools in Madziwa area in Mashonaland central. The following chapter summarizes and concludes the study and makes recommendations based on the findings discussed in this chapter.
CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction
This chapter concludes the study by summarizing and giving conclusions of the research as well the recommendations. This chapter serves mainly to conclude the research and also contains components which are important to the research as a whole. These components are the summary and some recommendations. The study concerned itself with the factors influencing performance of students in agriculture at secondary schools in Madziva, this chapter seeks to discuss on the findings specifically their implications, conclusions and
recommendaions. The objective being to provide or formulate conclusions based on the findings from the research.

5.2 Summary of project
The first chapter which is chapter one of the research provided the introductory part of the whole study by laying out and discussing the basic components. These components are the background of the study, problem statement, research questions, objectives and the aim of the study. This provided a foundation for the whole concept of the factors influencing performance of students in Agriculture at secondary school in Madziwa area. Chapter one also justified the whole research and covered the study assumptions. The second chapter discussed the relevant theory relating to the importance of agriculture in the country. The chapter also provided the literature review which was used as the knowledge base for the whole research. These components were important in providing the foundation for the findings, by highlighting other research findings and analysis of factors influencing performance in agriculture subject. Chapter three being the research methodology provided the information on how the research was conducted. The sample size, sampling technique, target population and justification on the chosen methods was covered under this chapter. The fourth chapter presented the research findings, discussing and analyzing these findings. The chapter also gave a brief verdict of the whole research by providing major findings. This chapter provide the summary, research conclusions and recommendations.

5.3 Summary of the findings
The aim of the study sought to ascertain the factors influencing pupils’ performance in Agriculture at three secondary schools in Madziwa. The objectives of the study were to determine how teachers attitudes influence performance of pupils in Agriculture at Ordinary level, to determine how availability of materials to use in Agriculture contribute to the overall performance of students learning agriculture, to identify how parents views and attitude towards agriculture influence performance of pupils, and to identify how the school administration determine performance of pupils studying Agriculture. The study was carried out with pupils studying agriculture at secondary school in Madziwa area. A total of thirty (30) participants took part in this research including three (3) key informants school head and two agriculture teachers at each school.
The study was able to identify contributing factors influencing performance in agriculture subject at secondary school specifically in Madziwa area. Contributing factors were outlined as: the pupil himself or herself, teachers, availability of resources, school administration and the parents. The researcher discovered that the factors influencing performance are interconnected and are all at play influencing performance in agriculture as a subject at secondary school.

The second objective was to determine how availability of materials to use in Agriculture contribute to the overall performance of students learning agriculture. Limited materials like tools and books have influenced performance since pupils cannot perform fully with the materials being unavailable. There is a strong link of learning materials and performance since researches discovered that schools with the needed resources for learning perform better as compared to those which do not have. Identifying how parents’ views and attitude towards agriculture influence performance of students at Ordinary level was also another objective. The research discovered that most of the pupils’ parents were demotivating the pupils towards agriculture. They viewed agriculture as common knowledge as suggested by their comments. The research also identified how the school administration influence performance which was the fourth objective of the research.

5.3 Conclusions
5.3.1 The research has shown that there are various factors which influence the performance of pupils in agriculture at secondary schools in Shamva district. The factors include attitude of the teacher, availability of materials (especially tools like hoes, watering cans) to use when undertaking the subject, the response of the administration issues in agriculture and also the parents’ views on agriculture compared to other subjects.

5.3.2 The majority of the pupils who participated showed that although they were interested in learning agriculture they were affected negatively with how the lessons were being conducted for example, doing other activities not related to agriculture practicals.

5.3.3 Most of the pupils were negatively affected by the lack of resources (tools) to use during agriculture practical lesson. They found it laborious to carry tools from their homes as well as books during practical days at school.

5.3.4 Although the majority of the pupils were pleased with their school administration motive to increase the number of tools and books to use in agriculture lessons, they showed that they
were demotivated with how the produce was handled. They also wanted to have information on how produce was handled and what the money was used for. They wanted to see the results of their labour during practical lessons, after all, they were using tools from home.

5.3.5 The negative views of the parents also demotivated the pupils against the subject. The parents wished their children to do other subjects other than agriculture. The parents are not motivating their children towards the subject, therefore influencing performance in the subject.

5.4 Recommendations

5.4.1 There is need for the schools to purchase more tools to use for their general work or agriculture lessons so that the pupils would be motivated to study the subject instead of carrying tools from home. The pupils would be motivated to use the right tools for the right work rather than improvising.

5.4.2 The school administration should respond to issues related to agriculture on time to keep the pupils positively motivated. The financial matters should be made clear to the pupils to create a transparent environment. The pupils should be given part of their Agriculture produce so that their parents become abreast with the benefits of allowing and encouraging their children to partake Agriculture lessons.

5.4.3 The agriculture teachers should get in-service training so that they learn how to deliver lessons properly according to the requirements of the Curriculum development unit in Zimbabwe. If teachers get necessary training they would not abuse Agriculture lessons for the benefit of other school activities.

5.4.4 The school should organize Agriculture days were parents are invited to see their children’s work so that they are enlightened on the activities in agriculture. This will also help in improving communication of the teachers and parents in understanding the needs of the pupils.

5.5 Recommended areas for further study

The researcher proposes that further research be carried out on:

5.5.1 The ways to improve performance in other practical subjects besides agriculture.

5.5.2 The curriculum adjustments which are needed for rural schools.
5.6 Chapter summary
This chapter concluded the study by summarizing the findings, giving conclusions as well as the recommendations proposed by the researcher. It was noted that the factors influencing performance in agriculture subject at secondary school are connected, therefore, there is need to address them at all angles. Relationships between pupils, teachers, school administration and parents need attention to help in improving performance in agriculture subject.

APPENDIXES
APPENDIX A: QUESTIONARE for PUPILS
APPENDIX B: FOCUS GROUP GUIDE for PUPILS
APPENDIX C: INTERVIEW GUIDE for TEACHERS

APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR SECONDARY SCHOOL AGRICULTURE PUPILS
My name is Dorica Kasawaya I am a student at Bindura University. I am conducting a research to fulfill my academic requirements. The topic reads ‘Factors influencing performance of students in Agriculture at secondary school: A case study of three schools in Shamva district’. Your co-operation would be appreciated if you could spare your time to respond to the following questions. Your responses will be treated with utmost confidentiality and no names will be mentioned in the research report. Thank you.

Tick in front boxes and answer in dotted lines

Bio data
Sex Male ☐ Female ☐
Age (years) 16 ☐ 17 ☐ 18+ ☐
Section A

1. Do you think agriculture is being fairly taught?
   Yes [ ] No [ ]

2. What is your view on agriculture?
   Important [ ] Not important [ ]

3. Are there new skills that you learn in agriculture
   Not at all [ ] many skills [ ]

Section B

4. Are there enough resources to use in agriculture?
   Yes [ ] No [ ]

5. If no, where do you get resources to supplement those not a school
   Home [ ] Nearby homesteads [ ]

6. Is the school making efforts to provide tools which are not available at school?
   Yes [ ] No [ ]

Section C

7. What happens to the produce from the agriculture department?
   Sold [ ] Given to teachers [ ] shared between students and teachers [ ]

8. If it is sold, do you think money from selling produce is used to benefit the pupils?
   Yes [ ] No [ ]

9. Do you think the produce is being fairly treated?
   Yes [ ] No [ ]

Section D
10. Are parents happy to give you supplementary resources to use in Agriculture?

Yes ☐   No ☐

11. Do parents compare agriculture with other subjects?

Strongly ☐   Weakly ☐

12. Do parents ask you related to what you have learnt in agriculture?

Yes ☐   No ☐

Any suggestions for improvement or any additional information?

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

Thank you for your co-operation

APPENDIX B

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE FOR SECONDARY SCHOOL AGRICULTURE PUPILS

My name is Dorica Kasawaya and I am a student at Bindura University of Science Education. As a requirement of my degree programme, a student is expected to conduct a research and my topic reads ‘Factors influencing performance of students in Agriculture at secondary school: A case study of three schools, one school as pilot study in Shamva district’. The discussion we are going to have is called a focus group. For those of you who have never participated in one of these sessions I would like to explain about this type of research. Your responses will be treated with utmost confidentiality and no names will be mentioned in the research report. Thank you for agreeing.

Focus groups are used to gather information informally from a small group of individuals who have a common interest in a particular subject in this instance, you are all agriculture pupils.
In focus groups, there are no right or wrong answers. We want to hear from everyone and do not hesitate to speak up when you have a point you would like to make. I will be facilitating the session and moving us along so that we touch on all of the key subjects on our agenda. The information will be kept confidential and used for academic purposes only. Your participation is voluntary and the discussion will take approximately 45 minutes. Do you have any questions before we begin?

Discussion questions

1. a. How do teachers conduct lessons?
   b. How do teachers treat pupils during lessons?
   c. Do teachers demonstrate new skills?

2. a. Are there enough agriculture material to use?
   b. What is done to supplement shortages in resources?
   c. Is the school making efforts to furnish the department?

3. a. Does the school sell produce from the agriculture department? If yes, what is the money used for?
   b. Do pupils benefit from the produce from the Agriculture department?
   c. What are the feelings of pupils on produce?

4. a. How is your agriculture performance pass rate as compared to other subjects?
   b. How do parents view and support agriculture as a subject in relation with other subjects?
   c. Are pupils learning agriculture consulted by their parents?
   d. What would you suggest as a way to improve performance in agriculture?

Thank you for taking part in the discussion
APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR KEY INFORMANTS (TEACHERS AND SCHOOL HEAD)

My name is Dorica Kasawaya and I am a student at Bindura University of Science Education. As a requirement of my degree programme, a student is expected to conduct a research and my topic reads ‘Factors influencing performance of students in Agriculture at secondary school: A case study of three schools, one school as pilot study in Shamva district’. Your responses will be treated with utmost confidentiality, this study is for academic purposes only and no names will be mentioned in the research report. Nothing you say will be personally attributed to you in any reports that result from this interview. All of our reports will be written in a manner that no individual comment can be attributed to a particular person. You are free to decline answering some questions or withdrawing from the interview. This interview is going to take approximately 20 minutes. Thank you for agreeing.

Interview questions
1 a. How do teachers treat pupils during lessons?
   b. How are practical lessons treated?
   c. Are skills properly imparted to pupils?

2 a. Are there enough resources?
   b. What is done to supplement resources which are not available?
   c. Are the efforts to provide resources not at school?

3 a. How does the school interfere with produce? Is it sold?
   b. How do agriculture pupils benefit from produce?

4 a. What are the views of parents on agriculture?
   b. How do parents relate agriculture with other subjects?
   c. Do parents benefit from their children learning agriculture?

Thank you for your time and co-operation
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