Investigating Community Participation Dynamics in Education: The Case for Manicaland Province - Zimbabwe

BY

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TO

ZIMBABWE OPEN UNIVERSITY

SUPERVISOR: DR. H. NYANUNGO

JUNE 2014
STATEMENT OF ORIGINALITY

I Mesheck Godfrey Sango declare that this thesis: ‘Investigating Community Participation Dynamics in Education: The Case for Manicaland Province – Zimbabwe’ is my own original work and that all sources have been accurately indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references. This document has not previously in its entirety or in part been submitted at any university in order to obtain an academic qualification. It is submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Educational Management at The Zimbabwe Open University.
ABSTRACT

Community participation has been adopted world wide as a means for improving the quality of basic education in primary schools. The aim of this study was to investigate how community participation dynamics influenced quality of basic education in rural primary schools in Zimbabwe.

To begin with, insights were drawn from a review of literature that focussed on local and international perspectives on community participation in providing education. Literature revealed that community participation had some influence on quality of basic education provided by schools. However, literature had also warned that the relationship between community participation and provision of quality basic education by primary schools was not an automatic one.

In carrying out this study, a qualitative paradigm was adopted and subsequently a qualitative multiple case study design provided the methodological framework that guided the study. The research sites were selected on the basis of relevancy to purpose of the study as well as convenience of access to the researcher. Data were generated through in-depth interviews and focus group discussions. Additional data were gathered through non participant observation and scrutinising of relevant documents in the selected primary schools. A grounded theory approach in which themes were identified was used in analysing the research data.

The study found out that community participation was being influenced by economic and financial dynamics, social dynamics, as well as cultural dynamics and subsequently had some negative influence on various aspects of the quality of basic education provided by the rural primary schools. Thus, the communities had not provided adequate support on essential educational inputs, teaching and learning processes, and on improving the scope of the primary schools’ curriculum.

And, based on these findings, recommendations to facilitate positive influence of community participation on quality of basic education were made. There was need for community level mediation by Ministry of education representatives from district level offices to balance up financial participation among community members of different income levels. In addition, the study recommended that the primary schools could organise community participation orientation programmes for all new parents joining them. And, schools could also create time for children to engage in school organised study sessions in which they could do their ‘home work’ at school.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Thank You GOD Almighty

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Special thanks go to my wife Jane and children, Ruth, Tabitha, Leonard, and Tinotenda for all the encouragement throughout the study- thank you. Also, I want to sincerely thank Mr Phillip Nenohwe, who is a colleague and friend, for the encouragement given during the course of this study particularly when the morale was low.

Finally, I want to thank the parents, other members of the communities, as well as the teachers who participated in this study. God Bless You All.
DEDICATION

THIS DISSERTATION IS DEDICATED TO

MY PARENTS: ELIZABETH and NATHAN,

WIFE: JANE AND CHILDREN: RUTH, TABITHA, LEONARD, and GODFREY

BROTHER: LEONARD- FOR ALL THE SUPPORT AND ENCOURAGEMENT THROUGHOUT MY EDUCATIONAL ENDEAVOURS AND CAREER.
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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THE STUDY

AGM  Annual General Meeting
BSP  Better Schools Programme
DEO  District Education Officer
ECD  Early Childhood Development
ERA  Education Responsible Authority
ETF  Education Transition Fund
LIB  Legally Incorporated Board
MPSE Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education
NAPH National Association of Primary School Heads
PED  Provincial Education Director
PTA  Parents and Teachers Association
SADC Southern African Development Community
SDA  School Development Association
SDC  School Development Committee
SGB  School Governing Board
SI  Statutory Instrument
UK  United Kingdom
UN  United Nations
UNESCO United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNICEF United Nations International Children’s Education Fund
USA  United States of America
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<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>USAID</td>
<td>United States Aid for International Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VEC</td>
<td>Village Education Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WCEFA</td>
<td>World Conference on Education for All</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZIMSEC</td>
<td>Zimbabwe School Examinations Council</td>
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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background to the study

Community participation in education, which is viewed as a means of qualitatively and quantitatively increasing basic education (Bray, 2003; Govinda and Bandyopadhyay, 2010; Pradhan et al, 2012; Rose, 2003; Shaffer, 1994; World Conference for Education for All, 1990), is not a new concept in school systems world over. It is widely acclaimed as a means for improving both the quantity and quality of education in both the developing and developed world.

1.1 Community participation in the developed World

In the United Kingdom (UK), ever since the 1967 Plowden Report, the involvement of parents and community members in pedagogical and administrative issues in schools has become a policy issue (Cuckle, Dunford, Hodgson, and Broadhead, 1998). The 1988 and subsequent 1993 educational reforms reinforced the participation of parents and community members in the pedagogical and management aspects of schools (Abu-Duhou, 1999; UK Department of Education, 2012).

Meanwhile, similar developments were taking place in the United States of America (USA) and Australia. In the USA, because of the world wide upsurge of interest in decentralising the provision of public services beginning around the 1970s (McGinni and Welsh, 1999), made moves that have seen more responsibilities being given to local authorities (Bray and Lillis, 1988; Ornstein, 1975). In the education sector, members of school boards work with parents,
community members, teachers, and superintendents in every community to achieve educational goals (Jehl, Blank, and Mccloud, 2001). And, in Australia, the ‘Schools of the Future’ and ‘Better Schools’ reforms of the 1990s were policy drives to encourage parents and community members to become active participants in the management of local schools (Abu-Duhou, 1999).

1.2 Community participation in Asia

Community participation in providing basic education has also been phenomenal in the Asian countries. Most of the countries have community participation enshrined in national constitutions and various pieces of legislature, which include educational policies. India, for example, has a long history of community participation. The national constitution of 1950 emphasised the formation of ‘panchayati raj’ (basic units of administration) at village level (Govinda, 1997). Various amendments have since been made on the founding national constitution and the 1993 amendment has provided for the establishment of Village Education Committees, Ward Education Committees, and Tea Garden Education Committees that lawfully participate in the issues of local schools (Govinda and Bandyopadyay, 2010).

1.3 Community participation in Africa

In Africa, like in the developed world, most countries have long histories of community participation in education. In Kenya, the history spans back to the time of the popular Harambee schools at independence in 1963 (Onsomu et al, 2004). In the Harambee movement, communities pulled their resources to build schools for their children on a self help basis. And, in more or less the same period, Ugandan parents and communities were involved in building
schools for primary education of their children with the missionaries (Passi, 1999). Then, for Nigeria, as early as the 1960s, groups of town workers from the western part of the country, had contributed money to build schools and for scholarships to deserving sons and daughters back home (Abbass, 2011; Bray and Lillis, 1988). Currently, parents and community members in these countries actively participate in various ways in local schools (Onsom et al, 2004; Passi, 1999).

Lastly, this background to the study focuses on the countries in the southern part of Africa and closer to the focus of this study.

1.4 Community participation in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region

Like in most other African countries, community participation in education is not new practice in SADC countries. Most of the countries in the SADC region have legally incorporated parents and community members’ participation structures in their respective basic education systems. By the education policy of 1997, the government of Zambia expected communities to meet the full capital costs of primary school projects (Bray and Lillis, 1988; Okitsu, 2012).

At the same time as Zambia, in 1997 the government of the republic of South Africa, introduced school governing boards (SGB) which required the use of parental involvement to drive school development (Prew, 2009). This introduction of SGBs was a result of the Hunter Commission of 1995 that had recommended greater community participation in the governance of education. And, the composition of the SGBs was made up of representatives
of parents of children at the school, teachers at the school, other members of staff who were not teachers at the school, as well as school children in the eighth grade or higher at the school (Ministerial Review Committee Report, 2003). In addition, parents of children in the school were expected to be in the majority of the members of the committee.

Then, in Botswana the revised national policy on education of 1994 emphasised the need to improve the partnership between schools and community in improving the schools (Bray and Lillis, 1988; Nana Adu-Pipim Boaduo, Milondzo, and Adjei, 2009). The coordination of community activities in the schools was done through the Parents Teacher Association (PTA). Also, the PTA was expected to work with school leadership in the pedagogical and administrative aspects of the school. Lastly, community participation also had a long history in Zimbabwe.

1.5 Community participation in Zimbabwe

In Zimbabwe, local communities have participated through various ways in the development of formal education ever since the establishment of the first missionary run school at Inyati in 1859 (Gwarinda, 1985; Judges Commission on Education, 1962; Passmore, 1972;) through to the end of the colonial period (Pamberi ne Education, 1984). Further, in the post independence era, local communities were the main vehicle for the reconstruction of schools that had been destroyed during the liberation war, along with the construction of new ones to meet an ever increasing post-war demand for education (Chung, 2008). The communities, being driven by the independence euphoria, had volunteered their labour in moulding and laying bricks, while the government
provided cement and roofing materials, bringing about an unparalleled increase in the number of primary and secondary schools in rural areas (Chung, 2008).

The above referred massive reconstruction of schools resulted in a huge expansion in the education system, where primary school enrolments nearly trebled (Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture, 2000; Zimbabwe Government, 1990), as shown on table 1:1 below:

Table 1:1 Primary School Enrolments in Zimbabwe: 1979 to 1989; 1994 to 2000.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Primary School Sector</th>
<th>Enrolment</th>
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<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>2 401</td>
<td>819 600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>3 161</td>
<td>1236 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>3 689</td>
<td>1715 200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>4 234</td>
<td>2216 900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td>4 501</td>
<td>2269 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>4530</td>
<td>2366220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>4723</td>
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<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>4741</td>
<td>2460669</td>
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</table>

The above rapid expansion in all levels of education, as shown in table 1:1 above, resulted in escalating recurrent education expenditure on the state budget (Pakkiri, 1989). The country, according to Pakkiri (1989), was at the same time going through a slowdown in economic growth, had a burden of servicing its foreign debts and was experiencing an escalating budget deficit. Consequently, there was a reduction in fiscal allocation to school budgets (Levine, 1996). This could have worsened the development of education in Zimbabwe, had communities not increased their participation in developing schools for quality education (Chung, 2008).

The economic downturn meant that, the immense expansion of the education system at independence would no longer be complemented with sufficient financial support from the national budget (Pakkiri, 1989), and subsequently most rural primary schools could not acquire sufficient teaching and learning materials for their teachers and pupils respectively (Nyagura, 1991). Thus, the form of education produced in such schools could be of poor quality (Govinda and Bandyopadhyay, 2010). To reduce the possibility of worsening the quality of education, communities increased their participation in the provision of labour and paying building fees for putting up extra facilities and buying teaching and learning materials demanded by more enrolments.

1.6 Introduction of the School Development Committee/Associations (SDC/SDA)

The government of Zimbabwe, realising the advantage of involving community members in curbing the fall in quality of education in rural schools, designed
policy to officially involve communities in managing schools (Chung, 2008). The Education Act of 1987 was thus amended to include legislature on community participation in education. This was followed by the Education Amendment Act of 1991 which prescribed the establishment of School Development Associations (SDA) for the mostly urban government schools and School Development Committees (SDC) for non government schools, the majority of which are rural schools. Subsequently, the Statutory Instruments number 87 of 1992 prescribes that SDCs should facilitate community participation in the operations and development of their schools, to achieve high quality education.

The above policy was in line with what the international assembly of educational experts recognise as community participation. Community participation has been internationally recognised as a fundamental strategy for improving quality of education in both developed and developing nations (Bray, 2000; Pradhan et al, 2012; Shaerffer 1994; UNESCO, 1994; WCEFA, 1990). Literature has shown that community participation in education can help increase the volume, relevance, impact and the amount of resources available for education (Bray, 2000, Rose, 2003). As a result, community participation in education has become a common area of interest in many policy documents, not only for governments but also for international development organisations.
1.7 **Continued observations of poor quality of basic education**

However, contrary to government expectations of producing high quality basic education in rural schools through parents and community effort in this regard, research has revealed substantial indicators of poor quality education. Nyagura (1991) and Sango (2000) observed, with great concern, that rural primary schools were still critically constrained by shortages of classrooms, classroom furniture and qualified teachers; insufficient textbooks, exercise books, pens and pencils, chalk and paper; inadequate or even no administration facilities such as, school office, file cabinets, telephone services and lack of information computer technology. This was supported by the Nziramasanga Commission on Education and Training (1999) which also found out that, in many rural areas visited by the commission, donor-assisted school buildings were still without roofs, doors and windows, because the responsible authorities and communities had failed to complete the projects.

In recent needs assessment study carried out in Chimanimani district in Manicaland province in Zimbabwe, The Zimbabwe Open University (2009) also reported that, schools had dilapidated classrooms and teachers houses. Teachers did not have essential teaching materials and reference books. Also, most school children did not have basic textbooks, and necessary writing materials, a situation most school heads blamed on lack of community commitment in the education of their children. Further, pass rates in grade seven final examinations (end of primary school examination) were declining, as shown in table 1:2 below.
Table 1:2 National Pass rates at Grade Seven Level from 1993 to 2001

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>23,1</td>
<td>22,9</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>21,2</td>
<td>20,7</td>
<td>14,58</td>
<td>15,69</td>
<td>13,88</td>
<td>12,67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rate</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Zimbabwe Schools Examinations Council (ZIMSEC) report of 2002.

Moreover, the grade seven pass rates continued to decline and some schools started scoring 0% pass rates. Manicaland province had 56 such schools in the 2009 examination (Ministry of Education Sport Arts and Culture, 2010).

For Manicaland Province, the grade seven examinations pass rate, although improving slowly, had remained fluctuating in the low pass rate range, except for the 2009 examination in which 60, 94% of the candidates had passed as given in table 1:3 below.

Table 1:3 Manicaland Province Pass rates at Grade Seven Level from 2003 to 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>15,32</td>
<td>13,94</td>
<td>27,9</td>
<td>40,2</td>
<td>60,94</td>
<td>44,64</td>
<td>34,77</td>
<td>36,32</td>
<td>40,04</td>
<td>47,0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rate</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
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<td>%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cognisant of the deteriorating education quality, and in a bid to rescue the situation, the Ministry of Education, Sport, Arts and Culture found it necessary to train all school development committees across the country. The SDC training programme focused on equipping SDC members with relevant skills for mobilising communities to improve participation in developing their respective schools.

Despite the SDC members’ training, grade seven results have continued to disappoint, with some schools still scoring 0% pass rate (Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education, 2014; News Day, 11 December 2013; The Manica Post, 17-23 January 2014).

The researcher, having participated in the Chimanimani needs assessment study, was appointed to contribute in writing training materials for School Development Committees, which were to be used in the 2010 United Nations Children’s Education Fund (Unicef) sponsored National School Development Committee Training Programme in Zimbabwe. In pilot testing the materials, the researcher visited Mutare, Mutasa, Nyanga, and Makoni districts, all in Manicaland province in Zimbabwe. On these visits, the researcher observed that school infrastructure and facilities were generally in a pathetic state. Most buildings had broken doors and window panes, roofs had parts of the asbestos sheets removed and furniture damage was extensive. In one school, it was unbelievable to see cartons of text books that had been damaged by termites beyond recognition. Although, the few community members that the researcher interacted with showed some concern about the state of their schools, they did not express any signs of initiative to address the situation. The community, school heads and teachers did not seem to have a shared
concern for improving the state of their schools. This researcher was left unsettled by this observation as he reflected on the implications for the quality of education.

Most school development committee members, as the researcher found from his interactions with them, were quick to lay blame for the poor state of schools on the government, school heads or their teachers. On the other hand, the school heads were blaming the community members for poor participation in school operational activities. They seemed to apportion blame on some negative influences from some sectors of the community who would oppose decisions made by the school head. One school head lamented, “There are some people out there who work against school progress”. This remark by a school head triggered the researcher’s thought on the possible existence of undercurrents that seem to operate below the surface of what we see communities doing in schools. These underlying factors that may not have been fully explored seem to shape the nature of the actual community participation impacting education quality we see on the surface in schools.

It seems the participation arena is more complex than is commonly supposed by many macro-policy documents. Scholars have observed that macro – policies, both at international and national levels have been designed on the false assumption that a community comprises of a homogeneous group of individuals, or has mutually compatible interests (Crewe and Harrison, 1998 cited in Uemura, 1999; Bray, 2003; Dunne, Kwame, and Humphreys, 2007). In reality, a community is a heterogeneous group of individuals whose differences occur with respect to age, gender, wealth, social status, and ethnicity and race (Figueira-McDonough, 2001; Dunne, Kwame, and
Humphreys, 2007). Therefore, individuals and groups in a community are most likely to have different interests in participating in education (White, 1996; Cleaver, 1999; Cornwall, 2008).

In the same vein, a group of community development scholars led by White (1996) believe in possibilities that, the participation process can be stage-managed and abused by the more powerful in pursuit of both their covert and overt interests. Therefore, the community participation process in education is dynamic as power relations are played out on a daily basis in accommodation and resistance throughout the course of action (White, 1996; Pryor, 2005). Surprisingly, there has been relatively little said about the characteristics of ‘participatory relationships’ in development in general (Kelly and Vlaenderen, 1996) and very little is known about community dynamics in participating in education (Dunne, Kwame, and Humphreys, 2007) in particular. This reveals a critical inadequacy in the understanding of ‘participation relationships’ which seems to be a fundamental phenomenon that determines what actually happens on the ground as community members participate in providing basic education (White, 1996, Cleaver, 1999; Cornwall, 2008) and hence shape the quality of education produced.

It was these disturbing experiences, together with insights from literature that aroused the researcher’s interest to investigate how community participation dynamics were influencing school quality in the rural areas in Zimbabwe.
1.8 Statement of the Problem

As acknowledged world over, community participation has potential to improve the quality of education in primary schools. In light of this recognition, the government of Zimbabwe went on to make education policy that would facilitate increased community participation for improving quality of education in the schools. The policy was instrumental in the formation of SDCs that had power to coordinate and represent community members at school management level. The SDCs were trained in skills for effective management practices as well as coordination of community participation activities.

However, it appears that, despite concerted government effort in increasing power and scope of community involvement in school operations, educational provisions and quality have remained critically low particularly in rural schools. Most primary schools do not have essential writing and text books, teachers’ stationery, adequate classrooms and suitable furniture, lack of clean water and electricity too. In most schools, teachers’ accommodation is of poor quality and teachers’ and children’s enthusiasm to teach and learn seems low. The pass rate in the grade seven final examinations have continued to disappoint.

Therefore, the different and complex participation relationships among community members and school teachers are evidently not yielding the expected positive influence on school quality. This raises questions on the nature of the different relationships and dynamics in community participation in providing quality education. In light of this complex and contentious nature of the relationship between community participation and quality of education
in rural schools, this study attempts to answer the following overarching research question:

How do community participation dynamics influence quality of basic education in primary schools in rural communities?

1.9 Research Questions

This study was driven by the following research questions:

- How do community residents define community participation in providing quality basic education?
- How are community residents involved in providing quality basic education?
- What are the factors that promote or hinder community residents in providing quality basic education?
- How does community participation influence quality of education in schools?
- How can community participation in providing quality basic education be improved?

1.10 Assumptions of the Study

The study was carried out on the assumptions that community participation in school activities is a ‘good’ thing in education as it is likely to improve education quality. It is also assumed that the level of and scope of community participation differs in each community. Further, it is assumed that communities have natural interest in the education of their children. Also assumed is that, communities have elected school development committees
that are functioning to coordinate participation activities in their schools. Finally, the researcher also assumes that community residents would be willing to participate and provide honest data for the study.

1.11 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to identify dynamics in community participation and how they influenced provision of quality basic education, through interrogating community participation processes and practices in rural primary schools.

1.12 Significance of the Study

Community participation in education has been widely acclaimed to improve the quality of education in schools. The findings of this study provide invaluable insights that facilitate the management of participation dynamics in school contexts. The study could also increase decision makers’ understanding of community participation in context, hence provides sound background knowledge for moderating macro level policies that regulate community participation in education.

Further, the study could provide a platform for community level actors to bring out their voice and thereby highlighting their ‘participation’ and ‘quality’ perspectives at local level where education quality is shaped, enjoyed, threatened and denied (Dunne, Kwame, and Humphreys, 2007). The voice of the community offers valuable philosophical and practical insights that help
shape basic education policy in general and community level participation in particular. Lastly, the research effort could provide locally relevant evidence from which to construct more considered and appropriate local education quality intervention strategies and advocacy.

In development literature, debate on the effectiveness of community participation as a vehicle for sustainable long term development has increased (Cleaver, 1999). Although this study has focussed on the education sector in community development, it renders a credible contribution to this debate through transfer of findings to illuminate on how community level dynamics may influence development initiatives in other sectors such as, health and agriculture.

In addition, this study could provide information on how to improve SDC policy and training programmes. It could also avail information on how teachers and community members can be trained on how to work together and improve the teaching and learning conditions in their schools.

Lastly, the study could avail information that could be useful in advancing the researcher’s knowledge horizons on this topic and subsequent contribution to designing as well as reviewing related student study modules in educational management degree programmes.

1.13 Delimitations of the Study

The research was a case study of three schools located in rural communities in Manicaland province in Zimbabwe. Data were generated from parents of
children in the schools, residents without children in the school, local headman, local councillor, head teacher, and class teachers.

1.14 Limitations of the study

A technical limitation of this study was that, in translating the data from Shona into English and transforming the data from word to text, inevitably a part of the richness, meaning, and cultural flavour was lost (Halai, 2007). However, the researcher employed the services of language experts so as to minimise the loss in meaning.

1.15.0 Research Methodology and Design

This section focuses on explaining the methodology that was adopted in this study. Community participation in education, by nature, is an interactive process in which people engage in cooperative tasks aimed at improving education quality. Therefore, for the researcher to understand the influence of participation on quality, qualitative data from the people who are directly involved in the participation process were most relevant for answering the research questions developed for this study. For that reason, this study was carried out under the influence of the qualitative research paradigm. The figure 1:1 below summarises the methodology that was adopted for this study.
1.15.1.0 Research paradigm

Each research is carried out in the framework of a specific philosophical interpretation of reality and how that reality is perceived and revealed as a form of knowledge (Trochin, 2000). A research paradigm is understood to be
a “basic belief system or world view that guides the investigation” (Guba and Lincoln, 1994: 105). A review of literature on research methodology seems to point at three major research paradigms. These are the quantitative paradigm, the qualitative paradigm, and the mixed methods paradigm.

The quantitative research paradigm believes that ‘meaning’ exists in the world out there waiting to be discovered and verified through direct observation or measurement (Coll and Chapman, 2000). In sharp contrast, qualitative research paradigm is steeped in the belief that there is no objective reality (Carter, 2007). And the mixed methods paradigm, which seems to be a relatively new paradigm, believes that quantitative and qualitative oriented philosophy can complement in the same research study (Trochin, 2000).

This study was carried out in the realm of a qualitative paradigm. The qualitative research paradigm is based on two philosophical assumptions, firstly, is the ontological orientation that ‘reality’ is not fixed and theory-like in nature (Berger and Luckman, 1966; Carter, 2007; Trochin, 2000) but it is created through subjective experiences by those experiencing the phenomenon; and secondly, the epistemological philosophy that ‘meaning’ does not exist in the world out there, rather, it exists in our interpretation of the world (Berger and Luckman, 1996; Carter, 2007). Thus, there are multiple realities constructed by human beings who experience a phenomenon of interest (Carter, 2007).
1.15.1.1 Justification for qualitative paradigm

Cavaye (1996) has advised that the choice of a research methodology is not a matter of commitment to a particular philosophy but ought to depend on what one is investigating. Given that the objective of qualitative research is to understand the complex world of people’s experiences and behaviour through the lens of those engaged in the phenomenon of focus (Krauss, 2005), it becomes the most suitable paradigm for guiding this study. Community participation in providing basic education is a phenomenon beset with complex relationships among stakeholders and the various unique situations that people involved find themselves in can only be told by them.

1.15.2.0 Research Design

The qualitative research paradigm works with several research designs. And, Creswell (2003) identifies case study, grounded theory, phenomenology, ethnography, and narratives as some of the research designs that comply to qualitative research. These research designs have special characteristics that make them more appropriate for particular purposes in research.

The case study approach is more suitable for investigating singular entities, grounded theory for discovering new models, phenomenology concerns with the ways people understand the world around them, ethnography focuses on investigating peoples’ culture, and narratives are most suitable when studying people’s lives (Neuman, 1997). The case study design was considered and adopted for this study.
1.15.2.1 The Case study design

A qualitative case study was adopted as the framework for guiding data generation and analysis processes as it presented appropriate methods for the study. However, a case study design can take either a single case or a multiple case framework. A single case focuses on studying a single entity and a multiple case study involves studying more than one similar case which is studied as independent units (Yin, 2003). This study adopted a multiple case study design.

1.15.2.2 Adopting the multiple case study design

A multiple case design is when the study as a whole covers several cases (Yin, 2003) and each site is the subject of an individual case study. Thus, the design follows replication logic, and therefore there is no special distinction in the methods. However, the major advantage of using the multiple case study design is that the evidence from multiple cases is more convincing. Therefore, the research is generally considered to be more robust (Yin, 2003).

1.15.2.3 Justification for case study design

Most important to this study, the case study design recommends the use of a variety of data collection and analysis methods (Yin, 2003) in carrying out the investigation. In addition, the use of this wide range of data collection methods allows the researcher to collect large amounts of data on a few cases (Neuman, 1997), thus getting more details on the cases being studied.
Further, the case study design provides opportunity for the researcher to go in for greater depth into the case of interest (Babbie, 2010; Chisaka and Vakalisa, 2000) and achieve a thick description of the phenomenon. And, another fundamental advantage of the case study design is that it allows the investigation to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real life events that offer opportunity to observe salient features of the phenomenon under study (Stake, 1995).

1.15.3.0 Sampling techniques

The review of literature on research methodology has revealed that there are two major groups of sampling techniques that are used when carrying out research. These are the probability or random and the non-probability or non-random sampling techniques.

On one hand, the probability or random sampling group of techniques include simple random sampling, systematic random sampling, and the stratified random sampling techniques (Borg and Gall, 1989; Cohen and Manion, 1980; White, 2000). This group of sampling techniques is preferred when one requires carrying out any form of statistical analysis (Borg and Gall, 1989).

On the other hand, the group of non-probability or non-random group of techniques include convenience sampling, purposive sampling, quota sampling, cluster sampling, and the snow ball sampling techniques (Borg and Gall, 1989; Patton, 1990; White, 2000).
These non-probability sampling techniques are distinguishable by their unique purposes in research. The convenience sampling technique involves choosing the nearest individuals to serve as respondents as they are readily available to the researcher (Cohen and Manion, 1980), and the purposive sampling technique involves the selection of a sample that the investigator believes will provide the best data for the study (White, 2000).

In addition, while the quota sampling technique attempts to obtain representatives of the various elements of a large total population in the proportions in which they occur there (Cohen and Manion, 1980), the cluster sampling is used when the population is too large for random sampling and instead natural subdivisions of the population are sampled for a study (Cohen and Manion, 1980; White, 2000).

And, the snow ball sampling technique involves the researcher identifying a small number of individuals who have the required characteristics and these in turn identify others who qualify for the study (Cohen and Manion, 1980). Thus each one of the non-probability sampling technique has special characteristics that make it most appropriate in a given particular research situation.

In this study that focussed on interrogating community participation processes and practices required that cases that exhibited ample processes and practices be identified for the study. Therefore, the non-probability, purposive and the convenient sampling techniques were considered most appropriate for the study.
The case study design provides opportunity for the use of convenient and purposive sampling techniques (Stake, 1995) thus maintaining internal consistency in the methodology (Creswell, 1994).

1.15.3.1 **Purposive sampling**

The purposive sampling technique, which sometimes referred to as judgemental sampling (White, 2000), is when the researcher picks individuals to be included in the research sample on the basis of his or her judgement of their typicality (Cohen and Manion, 1980). The cardinal advantage of this sampling technique is that the researcher builds up a sample that can deliver the best information to address the needs of the research questions satisfactorily (Cohen and Manion, 1980; White, 2000).

1.15.3.2 **Convenience sampling**

Convenience sampling technique, which is sometimes referred to as accidental, sampling (Cohen and Manion, 1980), involves choosing the nearest individuals to participate in the study and continuing the process until the required sample is attained. Thus, the sampling technique can have significant benefits in situations when the researcher has limited travelling time and money. And, more so in qualitative research where extended stay and visits to research sites are crucial for seeking additional data or verification of data and research findings (Babbie, 2010; Ritchie and Lewis, 2003; White, 2000).
1.15.4.0 Data generation in case studies

One of the significant features of a case study design is that it uses a wide range of techniques for data generation and collection. These methods include interviews, documents, observation, focus group discussion, questionnaires, and diaries (White, 2000; Yin, 2003). This study used interviews, focus group discussion, documents and observation as data generation strategies.

1.15.4.1 Interviews

Interview data generation technique has been described in numerous ways in literature. Some of the terms that have been used to classify interviews are face to face interview, telephone interview, structured interview, semi structured in-depth interview, unstructured interview, group interview, or individual interview (Guion, Diehl, and McDonald, 2006). This study adopted a semi structured in-depth interview technique. The in-depth interview technique has the advantage that it makes use of open ended questions. Open ended questions have potential to elicit deep information and thus allow the interviewer to explore the respondent’s feelings, experiences, and perspectives (Guion, Diehl, and McDonald, 2006). In addition, the in-depth interview allows for a face to face encounter between the interviewer and the interviewee, hence both have the opportunity to question what they do not understand (White, 2000). The interviewer has opportunity to clarify issues, change the order of questions, or even rewording the questions as need arises (Boyce and Neale, 2006).
However, in-depth interviews have a challenge in that they can be time consuming and the interviewer, in some cases has to travel to long distances to get to the interviewees. In addition, interviewees may respond in a manner so as to please the interviewer, thus bringing in bias in responses (White, 2000). Further, the success of the interview is critically dependent on the relationship between the interviewer and interviewee (Boyce and Neale, 2006).

1.15.4.2 Documents

Documents are an important source of data for case studies. Some of the main sources of documented data are letters, minutes of meetings, reports, and formal evaluation reports (Yin, 2003). The main advantages of documents stem from their stable and unobtrusive nature. Documents can be reviewed over and over again and the information they contain is information that was not created with the study in mind (Stake, 2005) thus a potentially reliable source for corroborating data from interviews and focus group discussion (Yin, 2003). However, documents may be difficult to access from some organisations, and in other circumstances may be incomplete as well as untruthfully done (Babbie, 2010).

1.15.4.3 Focus Group Discussions

A focus group is made up of people who have specific common characteristic that they are willing to discuss in a focused manner so as to help understand the topic of interest (Krueger and Casey, 2000). The size of the group does
not seem to have a standard although it ranges from as small as four members (Krueger and Casey, 2000) to as many as twelve members (Krueger and Casey, 2000; Ritchie and Lewis, 2003). The major advantages of focus group discussions are that, firstly, it provides a more natural setting than other methods and the group members influence one another during the discussions. Secondly, focus group discussions are particularly effective in bringing out people’s perceptions, feelings, experiences, or thinking about an issue of interest (Krueger and Casey, 2000; Ritchie and Lewis, 2003; White, 2000).

However, the group discussion can potentially get disorganised and lose direction if the moderator does not refer regularly to a list of prepared topics for the discussion. Also, some of the group members may not participate actively if they are not encouraged by the moderator (White, 2000). And critically, the group moderator needs to avoid pressing for consensus, and embarrassing group members (Krueger and Casey, 2000).

1.15.4.4 Observation

It is almost obvious that once the researcher makes a visit he or she is bound to make some observations that are relevant to the phenomenon being studied. However, formal observation takes place in two forms, participant observation and non participant observation (White, 2000; Yin, 2003). Participant observation is when the observer becomes part of the activities he or she is observing (White, 2000). And, non participant observation is when
the observer is not involved in the activities he or she is observing (Yin, 2003). This study employed the non participant observation technique.

1.15.4.5 Non participant observation

Non participation observation activities have been understood “to range from formal to casual data collection activities” (Yin 2003: 92) thus the researcher creates an opportunity for observing each time he or she visits the research site. Data could be gathered through observations of meetings, buildings, routine activities such as school assemblies and participant’s reactions during interviews (White, 2000; Yin, 2003).

The main advantage of using the observation technique is the first hand experience that provides a better insight when interpreting data (Babbie, 2010, Ritchie and Lewis, 2003). In addition, observation represents reality as it covers events in real time (Yin, 2003). However, observations might be time consuming, and may be subjected to bias when the observer does not agree with some of the situations that may arise (White, 2000).

1.15.5.0 Data Analysis

Qualitative data were analysed through grounded theory analysis techniques which involved translating and transcribing, reading and re-reading the data (Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Pope and Ziebland, 2000). Data were coded iteratively and categories and themes emerged, from where findings and conclusions for the study were discerned (Kruger and Casey, 2003; Miles and
Huberman, 1994). In addition, case study research strategy allowed for in-depth study of participation processes in their natural set up which enhanced the construction of a total picture of how participation influenced quality of education, as presented in chapter 4 of this study (Kruger and Casey, 2003; Pope and Ziebland, 2000;). Also, effort was made to enhance the credibility of the research findings by following specific quality assurance procedures.

1.15.5.1 Research quality assessment

In carrying out this study, the researcher adopted several quality assurance procedures that made the research a robust and credible study. These quality assurance procedures focussed on achieving credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability aspects of the study.

1.15.5.2 Credibility

In this research, the researcher ensured credibility of the study by using multiple data generation strategies that included focus group discussions, in-depth interviews, document analysis, and observation. In addition, the in-depth interviews and focus group discussions were held in a free atmosphere which encouraged open sharing of ideas, views, and opinions.

Further, triangulation of data from different groups of parents, teachers, SDC members, councillors, and headmen strengthened the study. Also, the use of language experts in translating and transcribing oral data to written texts increased accuracy of transcripts (Birbili, 2000; Halai, 2007). And, the use of
direct quotations, as well as the scrutiny of interview protocols by the research supervisor, all enhanced the credibility of the study (Krefting, 1991; Markel, Richard, and Rich, 2011).

Credibility was further enhanced by bringing in the voice of the participants through direct quotations that were used in the final report (Chenail, 1995). Finally, the researcher also verified data with participants as he had an extended contact with the community residents through frequent follow up visits that were made.

1.15.5.3 Confirmability

The second quality assurance aspect to be considered in this study was confirmability of the research data and findings. The equivalent concept of confirmability in quantitative research is objectivity (Krefting, 1991). Confirmability has been explained as the extent to which the results of the research could be confirmed or corroborated by others (National Health Services, 2006; Streubert and Carpenter, 1995).

This researcher ensured confirmability of the results from this study through triangulation of data sources. The use of multiple data sources helps in confirming the authenticity of the study results. In addition, the researcher upheld the virtue of honesty throughout the research process, sought depth during the data generation processes and widened the scope of the data that was generated (Shenton, 2004) in an effort to strengthen confirmability in this research study. Furthermore, the rigour with which digital data were
transformed to written data was such that it enhanced confirmability. The views and opinions of the participants were represented without bias from the researcher thus enhancing the confirmability of the results as well as dependability of the study.

1.15.5.4 Dependability

In this study the researcher made use of peer reviewed interview and focus group discussion protocols that guided this researcher in conducting interviews and focus group discussions (Gall, Gall, and Borg, 2003; Turner, 2010). Therefore, the data collection process was systematic and data were recorded accurately and kept securely as part of an ‘audit trail’ that could enhance dependability of the results of this study (Babbie, 2010).

In addition, the researcher followed a systematic and traceable coding and recoding technique in analysing data that should adequately guide a different researcher in carrying out a similar analysis. Moreover, the researcher has provided thick descriptions of the research methods that were followed in this study, thus this could facilitate step by step replication of the study and produce similar results (Krefting, 1991; Robinson, 1993; Streubert and Carpenter, 1995).

1.15.5.5 Transferability

From the quantitative research orientation, external validity is the equivalent concept for transferability (Krefting, 1991). Transferability is the extent to
which the results of qualitative research can be transferred to other settings or contexts (National Health Services, 2006; Shenton, 2004; Streubert and Carpenter, 1995).

In this study, the researcher made use of a sample of three schools which, from a quantitative perspective, was too small for generalising, but was appropriate for transfer of findings to schools in similar environments (Krefting, 1991; Streubert and Carpenter, 1995). The researcher has provided dense descriptions of the geographical set up of the study sites including the socio-economic background of the people, and the methods that were used to collect the data, all of which enhance transferability (Krefting, 1991; Shenton, 2004).

In addition, the researcher further enhanced transferability of the findings of this study to similar settings by the systematic and detailed data analysis process that was achieved. Thus, through systematic research data analysis, authentic results were realised, and could be transferable to similar settings.

Alongside research quality issues are legal and ethical issues that were considered and adhered simultaneously when carrying out this study. Researchers, like in all other professions, have responsibility over the safeguarding of the rights and safety of the people involved in their studies (Streubert and Carpenter, 1995). This responsibility is clearly articulated in literature as ‘the research ethics’, and include issues regarding consent, confidentiality, and anonymity (Babbie, 2010; Streubert and Carpenter, 1995; White, 2000).
1.15.6.0 Ethical and Legal Considerations

This section provides details of the ethical and legal considerations that were made in this study. The study was carried out with strict observance of research ethics and legal requirements. Permission to carry out the research in Manicaland Province was sought and granted by the Provincial Education Director (PED) for Manicaland Province (Guion, et al. 2011). Permission was also sought and granted from the District Education Officers (DEO) for Mutare and Mutasa districts.

1.15.6.1 Informed consent

The researcher visited all sample school sites and discussed with the head teachers, head men, councillors and teachers separately. The discussions focussed on issues relating to the nature and purpose of the study, explaining why those communities were chosen for the study, negotiating entry and access to the participants, as well as seeking permission to carry out interviews with head teachers, headmen, and councillors as well as focus group discussions with teachers’ and parents’ groups (Hossan, 2008; Ritchie and Lewis, 2003). In all cases permission was granted.

1.15.6.2 Confidentiality

The researcher always assured his participants that all information obtained during the study was to be used for the purposes of the research only (Babbie, 2010). In addition, the researcher made sure all data that were used
in this study did not carry names of participants or detail that could link back to the participants. More over, the research materials were handled in such a way that the participants would not be identified.

1.15.6.3 Anonymity

In this study, names of participants were not used (Pope, 2000). Further, the research sites were identified by pseudo names that do not relate directly to any community that is known to this researcher. Also, the names of respondents were not, in any way, linked to any of the data that were generated, presented and discussed in this study.

1.16 Definition of Terms

In carrying out this study, the following terms carry specific meanings.

1.16.1 Community

In this study, a community is defined in concordance with the Zimbabwe Ministry of Education Sport, Arts, and Culture (1993: 73) as, “a group of individuals and organisations that exist within a geographical area identified with the school”. The community therefore includes decision making units such as individuals, groups of individuals, households, formal leaders such as village heads, councillors, and school heads, various organisations such as, business, professional, political or non governmental organisations who all live in the catchment area of the school (Figueira-McDonough, 2001).
1.16.2 Basic Education

Basic Education, in this study, is defined as formal primary education normally starting between the ages of 5 and 7, designed to give a sound basic education in reading, writing, and mathematics along with an elementary understanding of other subjects (UNESCO, 2011) that is offered in primary schools.

1.16.3 Community participation dynamics

In this study, the term ‘community participation dynamics’ refers to the relationship between stakeholder group members which change during the course of the group participation process and influence the energy and direction of the participation group. They are shaped by processes which may be evident in any small group and which vary depending on the stage of the group, and are also influenced by the composition of the group, the subject matter, the broader environment. These dynamics include behaviour arising from various stakeholder backgrounds such as age, socio-economic status, gender, culture and level of education (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003).

1.16.4 Stakeholder

A person, group or organisation that has direct or in direct stake in an organisation or project because it can affect or be affected by the organisation’s actions, objectives, and policies (Business Directory, 2012). Key community based stakeholders in basic education include parents,
teachers, and members of the community who might not have children in the school but see the school as theirs.

1.17 Chapter Summary

This chapter has provided the background to the study and thus putting the research problem into context. The research questions have been articulated and the assumptions, significance, delimitations, and limitations have been discussed. A summary of the research methodology was given, in which qualitative methodologies formed the guiding framework for the study. Ethical and legal considerations that were made in this study have been highlighted and special terms that were used in this study have been clarified. Finally, this chapter has identified the research gap that will be clarified further through literature that is reviewed in the next chapter.
CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

This study focuses on developing an understanding of how community participation dynamics influence quality of education in primary schools in rural areas in Zimbabwe. The chapter is accordingly organised around these two main concepts: Community participation and quality of education. The chapter presents a summary of the general discourse on community participation so as to lay the foundation for a more informed understanding of literature on community participation in education. Further, the chapter presents both a conceptual framework as well as a theoretical framework through which the study is understood and executed. Three models, Petty (1995) typology of participation model, White (1996) typology of interest model, and the UNESCO (2004) model for understanding quality in education, build up the conceptual framework. Lastly, literature on quality of education has been reviewed so as to identify the quality aspects that are potentially subject to influence from community participation dynamics.

2.2 Overview of Community participation

Many scholars believe that the philosophy of community participation has it’s origins in the ideas of Paulo Freire, a Brazilian education philosopher of the 20th century. In his most celebrated literature, ‘Pedagogy of the Oppressed’ Freire argued that, all people, and especially the poor and disadvantaged, have both the right and duty to be involved in decisions that affect their daily
lives (Freire, 1974). This philosophy was of great appeal to both development practitioners and academics; particularly Chambers (1983) who maintained that ‘putting the last first’ was the only way to achieve ‘real’ rural development, as he advanced his advocacy for Participatory Rural Appraisal techniques in development projects.

The term, Participation, in the development context is defined as, “a process through which people with an interest (stakeholders) influence and share control over development initiatives and the decisions and resources that affect them” (African Development Bank (2001:6). However, the definition of participation given here is subject to various interpretations that define community participation in alignment with specific expectations of those initiating participation in different sectors of community development such as agriculture, tourism, health, and education as well as by those defining the nature of participation (Cleaver, 1999). In this study, the definition of community participation in education focuses on how community residents are involved in the education of their primary school children within their various contexts.

Therefore, this study, though steeped in the education discipline, borrows significantly from development studies discourse. The study borrows two principal theories from development studies discourse to illuminate relational issues involved in community participation in providing basic education. These theories are the ‘typology of community participation’ by Pretty (1995) and the ‘model of interests in community participation’ by White (1996). The concepts that have been articulated in these theories, together with the education quality framework (UNESCO, 2004), have influenced the researcher’s
conception of the relationships involved in community participation in providing basic education.

2.3 The conceptual framework

The conceptual framework has been referred to by several scholars as the researcher understands of the relationships in the natural progression of the phenomenon under study (Camp, 2001). In this study, the conceptual framework is provided in figure 2:1 depicting the stakeholder relationships involved in community participation in providing quality basic education as conceptualised from literature. This is a simplified conception of the otherwise complex structure of relationships that helps explain the natural progression of community participation in basic education. Boxes A to G represent potential zones of influence that generate diverse decisions and experiences for community actors.
Figure 2.1: The Conceptual Framework Guiding the Study

Community Participation in Education

- **External Influence** of national education policy - Education Act - (A)
- **External Influence** of community context: social, cultural, economic, technological, and institutional factors - (C)
- **Experiences from Diverse Interests** from Participation Agents: School head, teachers, community representatives - School Boards - (B)
- **Provision from** - Power and Politics energising the process - (F)
- **Experiences from Diverse Interests** from Participation Agents: School head, teachers, community representatives - School Boards - (D)
- **Experiences from** - The ACTION performed in school activities and allied outputs - (E)
- **Education quality** - (G)

Learner Characteristics/Learning Environment/Education Content/Learning Processes/Education Outcomes

Figure 1: Relationships in Community Participation in Education

Source: Own Perception
Zones (A) and (C) – represent external forces that influence community participation processes. These forces emanate from the education policies on community participation (A) and also from the community context (C). Education policies (A) provide guidelines for creating participation structures; pronounce national education aims and objectives; and state government support for education. The community contextual factors (C) which include, cultural, socio-political, economic, technological, historical, and institutional factors, shape the community members’ individual and group interest and expectation from participation along age, gender, class, financial and status variables.

Zones marked (B) and (D) represent community members’ interaction space. In zone (B) elected community representatives bring with them community as well as individual interests and expectations from participation to engage in school level management decision making processes. The school leadership, on their part, also bring along professional as well as individual interests and expectations, thus creating a maze for competing overt as well as covert interests and expectations for negotiation at management level. Power relations are at the centre of this interaction whose outcome has influence on community members’ decisions.

In zone (D) community members who have been influenced by external forces from zone (C) bring along their group and individual interests for negotiation at community level, where decisions to include or exclude; participate or not to participate emerge as competing interests and power relations among members of the community drive the process.
The output from school management level (B) and community level (D) shapes the nature of the final participation action in zone (E) which has a direct influence on quality of education (G). Zone (F) represents the presence of power and politics that energise the whole process and the arrows represent the relationships among the zones. The information given in this conceptual framework is further elaborated in the literature review section where key concepts are defined and explained.

2.4 Theoretical Framework

This study focused on investigating how community participation dynamics influenced quality of basic education in rural primary schools in Zimbabwe. Therefore in order for the researcher to put the study into appropriate theoretical context, this section discussed relevant ‘participation’ and ‘education’ theory. The theory laid the foundation for developing the ‘lense’ through which the expectations of the study’s research questions were best understood and directed. Three theories contributed immensely in clarifying participation concepts and relationships as reflected in the conceptual framework in figure 2:1 above as well as giving direction to the research process.

The first theory discussed was the Pretty (1995) typology of participation. This theory suggests that there are different levels of participation that range from low level participation- manipulative participation, to the highest level -self mobilisation participation. Also, the theory argues that the intentions of the initiator of participation exert significant influence in shaping the manner with
which participation is modelled and organised. In this study, the theory was useful in understanding the nature of participation relationships that developed among school staff who usually initiated community participation activities and community residents who were usually requested to participate.

The second theory that guided this study was White’s (1996) typology of partners interests’ model. The model argues that participation is an arena where different people’s interests are overtly or covertly contested. Further, this model is most relevant to this study as it introduces the issue of dynamics into participation discourse. The model maintains that community participation dynamics arise from differences in partners’ perceptions due to gender, politics, education levels, age, socio economic status, technical skill levels, and even culture (White, 1996). This theory assisted the researcher in conceptualising and making sense from how and why the research participants were doing things they said they did or not doing what they did not do on various occasions in providing basic education.

The third theory that was discussed was the UNESCO (2004) model for understanding education quality. The model attempts to collate the many different perceptions of quality education into a framework that emphasises the importance of the key dimensions that constitute education quality. The framework identifies the critical quality dimensions in education as: healthy and motivated learners, competent teachers who use progressive teaching methods, relevant curricula, sound school leadership, and adequate resources (UNESCO, 2004). The framework was relevant to this study as it identified and unpacked education quality dimensions, from where the influence of participation dynamics can be observed and assessed.
The theories that have been discussed in this section have briefly highlighted critical tenets that define community participation theory that was relevant to this study. These tenets included issues relating to levels of participation, contesting interests, different forms of participation, purpose of participation, and dynamics in participation. The next section discusses participation typologies, interests, and dynamics in participation in more detail, with particular reference to this study.

2.5 Understanding community participation

Most of the literature on community participation, which has been reviewed in this study, has always started by acknowledging that ‘participation’ is a fairly elusive concept and possibly with as many interpretations as those who have written about it.

However, Paul (1987: 2) has argued and maintained his view that, “....participation is an active process by which beneficiaries or client groups influence the direction and execution of a development project with a view to enhance their wellbeing in terms income, personal growth, self reliance, or other values they cherish.”

Similarly but with a different thrust, the World Bank (1992:2) defines participation as, “a process through which stake-holders influence and share control over their development initiatives, decisions and resources which affects them.” Further, Oakley and Marsden (1987) have viewed community participation as the process by which individuals, families, or communities assume responsibility for their own welfare and develop a capacity to
contribute to their own and the community’s development. And, the USAID (1995) in attempting to embrace most of the tenets, views participation as engagement of partners and customers in sharing ideas, committing time and resources, making decisions, and taking action to bring about a desired development objective.

It is almost obvious, from the definitions of participation cited above that, the concept community participation is constructed on the premise of involving beneficiaries of development in the development project processes. Thus, the hallmark of participation is the bringing in of beneficiaries to collaborate in development projects (Paul, 1987).

In education, therefore, a general use of the term community participation has been used to refer to the collaboration of parents and other members of the community in providing quality education to the children (Handbook on School Administration for Heads (1993).

### 2.6 Objectives in using community participation in development projects

Like with the definition of participation, various development practitioners express different goals for adopting community participation in their development projects. In a study of several development projects, most of which were from the World Bank, Paul (1987) came up with three major objectives for community participation in development projects.

Firstly, community participation was adopted in development projects as a strategy for empowering communities. The adoption of community participation as a means of empowering communities has also been
acknowledged by reputable scholars in development discourse (Mathbor, 2008; Oakley, 1999; Uphoff, 1966). An empowered community is one that can identify and analyse its development needs, initiate as well as implement solutions (Mathbor, 2008). However, some scholars, for example Cleaver (1999) and White (1996), have expressed some doubt on the possibility of attainment of the empowerment goals for community participation, in practice.

The second objective for community participation in development projects was to attain effectiveness of programmes (Oakley, 1999). The involvement of community members is likely to improve programme design through incorporating local experience. In addition, community members have more local experiences which may be useful during implementation of development programmes, and there is likely to be a better congruency between programme outputs and community development needs (Paul, 1987).

Project efficiency is the third goal that was identified in the study of development projects by Paul. By project efficiency, Paul meant that, community members would timely supply materials for programme implementation. In addition, communities would contribute labour, money and would offer to assume responsibility for project maintenance (Oakley, 1999; Paul, 1987; Mathbor 2008).

Lastly, community participation, as a development strategy has been adopted in projects with the objective of facilitating acceptance and adoption of the innovation by project beneficiaries. Rifkin and Kangere (2001) have observed that, when project beneficiaries are involved in the planning and implementation of development projects, they are more likely to develop
deeper appreciation of the innovation as well as the services being recommended.

Most important at this point is the realisation that, an understanding of the objectives of community participation on development lays the basis for a more informed understanding the goals of participation in education. And, more so at basic education level where expansion has been massive in rural areas in Zimbabwe (Chung, 2008) and in other developing countries (World Conference Education for All Secretariat, 1990). Next, this review of literature focuses on the levels at which participation takes place. And, Arnstein (1969) is one of the scholars who the significance of the different levels at which participation can take place in project cycles.

2.7 Arnstein’s Levels of community participation

Many scholars who have contributed to community participation discourse have acknowledged that Arnstein (1969) had the seminal theoretical work on the subject and produced a typology for understanding the different levels of participation, see figure 2. 1 below:
In this typology, which is still relevant and widely referred to in most participation discourse, Arnstein (1969) realises that there are different levels of participation that range from manipulation to citizen control. These levels of participation were further divided into three categories that were based on the extent to which community residents had power to influencing decisions that were made in development projects (Cornwall, 2008). In developing these categories, namely, non participation, tokenism, and citizen power, Arnstein was viewing participation from the perspective of the community residents. Most important for this study, is that Arnstein’s (1969) levels of participation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Citizen Control</th>
<th>Citizen Power</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Delegated Power</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partnership</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultation</td>
<td>Tokenism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Placation</td>
<td>Non Participation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Therapy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manipulation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: adopted from (Wilcox, 1999)
model provides a basis for understanding community resident’s perception of
the forms and purpose of participation that happens in providing quality basic
education. Then, building on Arnstein’s (1969) typology, but unlike Arnstein
(1969) who viewed participation from the community perspective, Pretty
(1995) developed a similar typology but from the perspective of the initiator of
the participation.

2.8 Pretty’s model on meanings of different levels of community
participation

Pretty viewed the concept participation from the perspective of government
and non governmental development organisations’ agents who initiate the
participation that takes place. The participation model that was developed by
Pretty (1995) is given in table 2.1 below.
Table 2:1 Pretty (1995) Typology of Participation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Meaning of each type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>passive participation</td>
<td>People participate by being told what has been decided or has already happened. It involves unilateral announcements by an administration or project management without any listening to people’s responses. The information being shared belongs only to external professionals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation by consultation</td>
<td>People participate by being consulted or by answering questions. External agents define problems and information-gathering processes, and so control analysis. Such a consultative process does not concede any share in decision making and professionals are under no obligation to take on board people’s views.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation for material incentives</td>
<td>People participate by contributing resources; for example, labour, in return for food, cash, or other material incentives. Much on farm research falls into this category. Farmers may provide the fields and labour, but are involved in neither experimentation nor the process of learning. It is very common to see this ‘called’ participation, yet people have no stake in prolonging technologies or practices when the incentives end.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Functional participation</td>
<td>Participation is seen by external agencies as a means to achieve project goals, especially reduced costs. People may participate by forming groups to meet predetermined objectives related to the project. Such involvement may be interactive and involve shared decision making, but tends to arise only after major decisions have already been made by external agents. At worst, local people may still be co-opted to serve external goals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interactive participation</td>
<td>People participate in joint analysis, development of action plans and formation or strengthening of local institutions. Participation is seen as a right, not just the means to achieve project goals. The process involves inter disciplinary methodologies that seek multiple perspectives and make use of systemic and structured learning processes. As groups take control over local decisions and determine how available resources are used, they have a stake in maintaining structure or practices.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-mobilization</td>
<td>People participate by taking initiatives independently of external institutions to change systems. They develop contacts with external institutions for resources and technical advice they need, but retain control over how resources are used. Self mobilization may spread if government and NGOs provide an enabling framework of support. Such self initiated mobilization may or may not challenge existing distributions of wealth and power.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Adapted from Cornwall (2008).
As given in Table 2:1 above, Pretty’s (1995) views participation from the perspective of the people initiating participation. His categories of participation range from passive participation, which he describes as ‘bad’ participation, to self mobilisation, which he describes as ‘better’ participation. In between, Pretty identifies four other types: participation by consultation, participation for material incentives, functional participation, and interactive participation. Further, Pretty’s (1995) typology highlights that the motivation of those who decide to engage, adopt and practise participatory approaches is an important factor in shaping the nature of the participation that is initiated (Cornwall, 2008).

Therefore, according to Pretty (1995), with reference to this study, the interests of the partner who initiates participation, be it the government, school staff, or community residents, are likely to shape the nature of participation that happens. Then, the question of whose interests are fulfilled by the participation that takes place should arise and who of the participating parties has power to influence the decisions in participation, certainly comes into play. An attempt was made to address these very pertinent questions, by White in 1996.

2.9.0 Whites’ model of different interpretations of forms of community participation

White (1996) has made effort in addressing the question of interests through her model that offers an understanding of stakeholder dynamics of interests in participation, see table 2:2 below.
Table 2: White (1996) model of forms, function, and interpretation in participation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Form</th>
<th>Top - Down: What ‘participation’ means to the implementing agency (interests in participation)</th>
<th>Bottom-Up: What ‘participation’ means for those on the receiving end</th>
<th>Function: What ‘participation’ is for</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nominal</td>
<td><strong>Legitimation</strong>-to show they are doing something</td>
<td><strong>Inclusion</strong>-to retain some access to potential benefits</td>
<td>Display</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instrumental</td>
<td><strong>Efficiency</strong>- to limit funders’ input, draw on community contributions and make projects more cost effective</td>
<td><strong>Cost</strong>-of time spent on project related labour and other activities</td>
<td>As a means to achieve cost effectiveness and local facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Representative</td>
<td><strong>Sustainability</strong>-to avoid creating dependency</td>
<td><strong>Leverage</strong>-to influence the shape the project takes and its management</td>
<td>To give people a voice in determining their own development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transformative</td>
<td><strong>Empowerment</strong>-to enable people to make their own decisions, work out what to do and take action</td>
<td><strong>Empowerment</strong>-to be able to decide and act for themselves</td>
<td>Both as a means and an end, a continuing dynamic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Adapted from (White 1996)

From table 2:2 above it can be seen that White based her model on three key variables in participation, which are: form of participation, perception of
participation by stakeholders, and the function of participation. And, these variables are explained below.

2.9.1 Different interpretations of forms and functions of participation

White (1996) based her model on four potential forms of participation that may arise in community development projects, as indicated in table 2:2 above. These forms of participation range from nominal to transformative participation. She then argues that those who initiate participation and those who are invited to participate ‘see’ participation differently. Further, the community residents do have interests that are covertly or overtly safeguarded or treaded during participation. Thus, participation becomes a site for conflict and use of power (White, 1996). She then uses the ‘top-down’ column to represent the interests of the people initiating the participation process.

The ‘bottom-up column represents how the people in the receiving end of participation interpret the form of participation at hand. The function column represents the purpose of adopting participatory approaches in a particular project as illustrated in table 2:2 above. And, differences arise in interpretation of purpose and function mainly due to differences in perception as a result of whether one is the initiator or invitee in the participation process. Also, differences in perceptions within groups of partners arise from differences in background factors such as age, socio-economic status, education, gender, and culture (White, 1996; Dunne et al. 2007).

White’s (1996) model was relevant in this study as it clearly highlighted the existence of different interests that were at stake in various forms of
participation as teachers and community residents participated in providing quality basic education. In addition, the model was useful in identifying conflicting ideas from the data, as well as understanding how and why participatory approaches had been engaged on various occasions in the schools.

However, the researcher maintained a high consciousness of the limitations that were inherent in the theories. Firstly, the scholars’ (Arnstein, 1969; Pretty, 1995; White, 1996) typologies had adopted a normative approach, where they each perceived participation as a phenomenon that ranged from lower levels to higher levels, thus suggesting that higher level participation were better than lower levels participation. Yet, in practice the value of participation is dependent more on the context in which it takes place than the rank level in the typology. In this study, as an example, attending a meeting could be seen as low level or token participation according (Arnstein, 1969) but, depending on the quality of the information shared, attending a meeting could be very valuable in promoting the critical element of transparency in participatory processes (Bray, 2003; Shaeffer, 2004).

Further, transformative forms of participation, in which development agencies expect communities to ‘self mobilise’ (Pretty, 1995), may not be effective approaches to community development, particularly in situations where technical and financial resources are not readily available. Also, an emphasis on transformative forms of participation may be viewed as contradictory to community expectations, in contexts in which providing services such as basic education is viewed by community residents as government responsibility, for
example, as enshrined in national education policy in Zimbabwe (Education Act Revised 2006).

In addition, there is a tendency in the rhetoric of participation to assume that communities have unlimited capacity to participate in development projects (Cleaver, 1999; Shaeffer, 1994). However, in practice there are real structural and resource constraints operational on communities, most severely on the poor (Cleaver, 1999; Mathbor, 2008), who may fail to make cash or labour contributions and thus may be excluded from participation (Cleaver, 1996). In addition, most development agencies seem to believe in the myth that, it is always good for people to participate in every community development project, yet in practice, research has illustrated that levels of community participation tend to drop over time (White, 1996). And, obviously, people do have interests from other crucial activities such as, household chores, field work, and even leisure activities which also require their attention.

The three theories that have been discussed in this section have raised critical issues about differences in people’s interests and power to make decisions in participation (Cornwall, 2008). These issues, that concern people’s different interests and power in participation, need further theoretical clarification since they seem to shape the nature of relationships and dynamics that characterise participatory practices (Kelly, and Vlaenderen, 1996; White, 1996).

Kelly, and Vlaenderen (1996) have observed that, the character and interest that people bring into participatory community development project engagements is a result of existing socio-economic relations in that
community and society at large. These different people’s interests shape the nature of participatory performance in community development projects.

This section has discussed the tenets of community participation that are critical to this study. In this discussion, it was established that, people may participate at different levels in participation processes. And, although these levels ranged from low level to high level participation, in practice, the value of any of the levels was dependent on the context in which participation was taking place. In addition, the nature of the performance in participation that happened at community level was shaped by the different interests of the people who were involved in the participation. Finally, it was observed that, the people’s social positions such as, age, gender, and education, shaped their perceptions about the desirability of participation in community development projects (White, 1996). Therefore, this section has laid an unassailable basis for understanding the nature of community participation processes that take place as parents and other community members get involved in providing basic education to their children.

2.10.0 Barriers to effective community participation

There are various barriers that militate against effective community participation in development projects. One of the major barriers that have been seen to militate against successful implementation of participation activities in community development projects is community capacity.

2.10.1.0 Community Capacity
McArthur (1996) is of the opinion that it takes sometime substantial length of time of capacity building before a community can have adequate confidence to become involved in a community development partnership. And, it is the responsibility of the agents facilitating community participation to ensure that, community capacity is present to support participation activities.

It is almost obvious that capacity is a critical variable that drives and determines the quality of participation that a community may exercise in development projects. However, there are variations in the understanding of capacity among scholars in development discourse, although there is a general agreement among them that capacity, as defined by UNDP cited in Balassanian (2006), is the ability of individuals, institutions, and societies to perform functions, solve problems, and set and achieve objectives in a sustainable manner. It basically represents the interaction of human capital, organizational resources, and social capital that exists within a given community that may be harnessed to solve group problems and improve or maintain the well being of that community (Chaskin, Brown, Sudhir, and Videl, 2001). In addition, as a way of elaborating the concept of capacity, scholars in development have identified several community characteristics that when put together constitute community capacity.

In this study, identifying and understanding community capacity attributes is of critical importance because it provides a basis for interpreting community behaviour in educational programmes. More so, in understanding how and why participation activities are done in the manner with which they are done.
There are several characteristics that when put together describe what community capacity really is. These characteristics include a sense of the community, commitment to community issues, ability to solve problems, and access to resources. These characteristics are described below in more detail.

2.10.1.1 The feeling of togetherness

The basic attribute of community capacity has been identified as the general feeling of togetherness or a feeling of community (Chaskin et al 2001; McMillan and George, 1986). The sense of community brings community members together for common purpose (Miyoshi and Stenning, 2008) as they are bound by collectively held values, norms, and vision for their collective welfare (Chaskin et al 2001). The people feel that they belong to the community and have an important role to play for the effective functioning of that community. It is this feeling of belonging to a community or group that promotes commitment in terms of contributing labour, time, and financial resources for the development of their community (McMillan and George, 1986). Thus, the capacity to take up individual and group tasks for the benefit of ‘our community’.... ‘Our dip tank’..... ‘Our school’, and indeed...‘our children’. In most rural communities, this sense of belonging is sometimes built through shared historical background, and it builds that kind of love for one’s community, as well as adherence to a set of shared values, norms and meaning (Figueira-McDonough, 2001). In contrast, research has shown that, without a sense of belong to their community people will have a tendency to
take advantage of one another, leading to corruption and apathy (Brown cited in Banyai (2009).

2.10.1.2 Commitment

The next attribute is commitment, which is a result of people’s interest, concern and desire to contribute to the welfare of their community. People see themselves as stakeholders in issues regarding their community and are prepared to get involved in common challenges that may arise from time to time (Chaskin et al 2001). However, it is important to note that for commitment to develop there is need for tangible benefits that arise from the one’s membership of that community (McMillan and George, 1986). And, only then, that significant community development can take place, and people are committed to investing themselves and their resources to that development.

2.10.1.3 Ability to solve problems

Community capacity is also characterised by the community ability to solve its problems. This characteristic refers to the ability of the community members, whether as individuals or groups to solve the problems and challenges that they face in their day to day living. However, the thrust of this characteristic is the ability of the community to work through and overcome problems collectively (Wachowski, 2009).

2.10.1.4 Access to resources
Another attribute of community capacity is the community’s capability to identify and access resources for development projects. The resources that may be available for communities are numerous and include economic, human, physical, and political resources (Chaskin et al 2001). Some of these resources can be accessed from within the community or through the various types of networks that people in the community may form.

Zacharakis and Flora (2005) advise on some of the ways through which communities can access local resources for community development that include, financial investment in community projects by privileged community members, the payment of taxes by community members, and the creation of inventive mechanisms for channelling resources to community initiatives such as ground breaking ceremonies, appointing senior and wealthy members of the community as patrons to community ventures, and holding community fundraising functions.

Therefore, there is need for regular assessment of potential resources that could be accessed for local development within the community. Ironically, it is only when people know that something in a community has value, either for social or economic purposes, that it can be accessed for use (Wachowski, 2009). Abundant labour, assets such as senior citizens, items such as abundant fruits and trees, or traditional and under-appreciated skills in art, or indeed indigenous crops and domestic animals can be over looked within a community and therefore may never be considered and accessed for community development (Banyai, 2009).
Besides the community capacity, there are other factors that are critical to community participation that have significant influence on the effectiveness of participation engagements. For the purposes of this study, this review of literature focuses on the influence of the community agent and the community context.

2.10.1.5 Community Agent

Community agent can be defined as any person or group of people who bring about change within the community. Examples from a development context would include field officers of donor organisations, or the SDCs or SDAs from the education sector. These community agents are the catalysts for action in a community and they lead the rest of the community into participating in specific development activities. The ability of the community agents to mobilise people within the community to see themselves as important stakeholders and take up responsibility has a significant bearing on the effectiveness of community participation activities in the community. Also, this trigger to take up responsibility in community issues, in turn has the effect of activating community capacity potential (Wachowski, 2009).

In practice, community capacity is engaged through varying combinations of three levels of social agency: individuals, organizations, and networks of associations (chaskin et al 2001). Individual social agents can be local leaders such as councillors, head men, and kraal heads and other significant people within the community. The individual level of social agency concerns the leadership of individual residents of a community as well as their skills,
knowledge, resources, and participation in community activities. The examples of individual level agents include retired teachers, soldiers, and policemen.

Organisations can also be social agents for community participation in development projects. And, examples of organisational social agents include local schools, small men’s or women’s clubs, community based charitable organisations, local businesses, and family trusts. These groups can collectively evoke change within a community and spur other individuals and organisations into action when necessary (Banyai, 2009).

2.10.1.6 Contextual Influences

Literature has shown that the contextual Influences are to some extent similar and related to the idea of Maslow’s hierarchy of needs. The research studies by the famous psychologist concluded that people need to have their basic needs met before they can begin to engage in anything beyond mere livelihood activities (Marslow, 1968). Literature advises that these basic needs are the basic factors that govern and shape the type of life in the community. And, they may not be changed through simple capacity building initiatives. Therefore, the state of availability of basic needs among families is considered as a natural circumstance of the community.

In addition, factors such as safety, residential stability, closeness of interpersonal relationships and acquaintance, structure of opportunities, patterns of migration, race and class dynamics, and the distribution of power and resources constitute the contextual conditions of a community (Chaskin et
al, 2001). Wachowski (2007) adds that, in the context of a developing community, the basic economic conditions and physical location of the community must be taken into consideration.

### 2.10.2 Other dimensions that may hinder community participation

It is however, pertinent to highlight that there are other community participation process dimensions that have some influence on the effectiveness of community participation activities. These dimensions have been identified by Wilson and Wilde (2003) cited in Cag-consultants (2012) as dimensions of community participation. And, these bench marks include: influence, inclusivity, capacity, and communication dimensions, as given in table 2:3 below.

Table 2:3 Dimensions of community participation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Influence</th>
<th>Inclusivity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How do schools involve communities in the shaping of school quality development activities?</td>
<td>How do schools ensure that all groups and individuals in the community can participate? How is inequality addressed?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>Capacity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do schools develop effective ways of sharing information with communities and clear outlines of procedures that maximise community participation</td>
<td>How do responsible authorities provide the resources required by communities to participate? How do responsible authorities support local people to develop their understanding, knowledge, and skills in participation?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Wilson and Wilde seem to argue that, the extent to which community members are involved in making decisions regarding participation issues, has a bearing on the effectiveness of community participation as a strategy for implementing development projects. And, the more the more the community members are involved in decision making the more their influence on the nature and direction of participation that takes place. Thus, increased influence that community members have on the nature and direction of the development project tends to promote the success of that project.

In the same grain, regular communication of project issues between the development project agency and community members has the tendency to create positive perceived project transparency and increased trust among community members (PSA, 2012). In turn, a development project that is implemented in the context of a positive perception of transparency and trust among community members is more likely to be completed efficiently and effectively (Cag-Consultancy, 2012).

And, development agents need to ensure that the various sections and groups and their interests are represented at the different levels of project development and implementation. In addition, there is need to ensure that economic, social, and cultural differences among community members are addressed for successful participation in development projects (Cag-Consultancy, 2012).

2.10.3 Bench marks for successful community participation
Further, Wilson and Wilde (2003) cited in Cag-(consultancy, 2012) extended their observed process dimensions in table 2:3 above to develop a framework of benchmarks that could be used for assessing community participation, as given in table 2:4 below.

Table 2:4 The benchmarks of community participation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Influence</th>
<th>Inclusivity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• The parents and other community members are recognised and valued as</td>
<td>• The diversity of local community is reflected and interests is reflected in all school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>equal partners in all school quality development activities.</td>
<td>quality development processes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• There is significant representation of various sectors of the</td>
<td>• School policies on equal opportunities have been made, and also being implemented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>community in decision making structures at the school</td>
<td>• People who provide free services and donations to the school are recognised and are valued</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• All people making the community have an opportunity to participate in</td>
<td>by the school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the issues affecting the school</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The people have access to and control of school resources</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Evaluation of school quality should also include the expectations of</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the community</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Communication</th>
<th>Capacity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• There is regular dialogue between the school and the community</td>
<td>• The community has sufficient resources to participate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• School quality development documents are clearly designed and are</td>
<td>• Community members have been developed so as to have sufficient knowledge and skills for</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>readily available for scrutiny</td>
<td>meaningful participation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The assessment grid may be used in evaluating the nature and extent of potential effectiveness of planned community participation in various development projects. However, the assessment grid, though useful in identifying potential barriers to effective community participation, has some limitation in that it does not seem to recognise that equal participation is not always desirable, given the various circumstances in which community members often find themselves existing in.

Thus, a grounded understanding the theories underpinning community participation, barriers to community participation, and assessment of community participation in development projects has laid a relevant base for discussing community participation in education.

### 2.11.0 Community Participation in Education

The concept of community participation in education has been popular practice in most countries for a very long time, but has now gained international prominence as a strategy for improving the quality of education since the world declaration on education for all in Jomtien in 1990 (Bray, 2003). And, to understand the concept of community participation in providing education in its new constitutional and policy context, it is imperative that it be understood in the frame work of decentralisation processes in national governance practices.

### 2.11.1 Decentralisation processes in education
The concept of community participation in providing basic education has its roots in decentralisation practices by national governments in providing public services to the citizens. It is therefore pertinent to have a brief discussion on decentralisation so as to lay a foundation on which to construct an understanding of participation in general development and subsequently in providing basic education. Decentralisation entails moving decision-making and other functions to some lower level in the formal hierarchy of governments (Odden, 1995).

Rodgers and Ruchlins (1971) note that decentralisation had five components viz. Devolution, delegation, deconcentration, and privatisation. They went further to assert that, the move would be to increase administrative efficiency, experimentation, and parental influence in the provision of educational services.

Foustor (1995) in his study of five Latin American countries established that decentralisation of the provision of educational services was justified from ideological, political, economic, administrative, and pedagogical perspectives. Foustor seems to perceive the ideology behind decentralisation of the provision of educational services as one of democratic governance, leading to greater engagement of parents and neighbourhood citizens in the process of schooling. Stinnette (1995) notes that, teachers and parents had a legitimate stake in the content and quality of education provided to their children hence deserve to participate in the process. This participation is expected to foster in the community members, a strong ownership of the school mission, and greater commitment by staff and higher morale.
Banks, cited in Hawes and Stephens (1990) also notes that, decentralisation guarantees that the school and its programmes remain in touch with the wishes and needs of the local community. It is however important to note that the community may not be homogenous in terms of wishes and needs hence may perpetuate domination tendencies.

Decentralisation of education according to Faustor (1995) accrues economic benefits to schools. He observes that decentralisation of the provision of educational services raises additional public and private funds for education and secures greater economic efficiency. Decentralisation would lead to sustained integration of the school with community resources and agencies as Hawes and Stephen (1990) note that the quality and quantity of the physical resources of schools are determined by what the community can offer through democratically elected local parents’ bodies as instruments for community participation in these schools. It needs to be noted however that communities may not have the same economic statuses hence disparities may be created. Disparities can be created where they did not exist and can be worsened where they existed. Schools would then tend to reflect the socio-economic status of their communities.

Faustor (1995) found out that, decentralisation streamlined the organisation of the education system, making it less bureaucratic and more efficient through out. In his study, Stinnette (1995) observed that education could be improved through moving decision-making and accountability closer to the child and classroom. Improvement came in through improved decision making about curriculum, instructional practice, specialised programmes and resource utilisation. It would seem as if better decisions are made at local levels.
because of better access to essential information and are made in the local context. Odden (1995) has found out that, decentralisation allows for site based management which facilitates higher student achievement, more efficient use of resources as well as increased satisfaction in school administrators and teachers. Local authorities tend to understand better their local people, their context, make more accurate assessments of needs, desires, problems, constraints, and opportunities (Machinga, 1996). It is however pertinent to note that the perception is made on the assumption that the local management has the skills, knowledge and resources to operate effectively, as Stinnette (1995) argued that, in order for decentralisation to be successful, head teachers need to be strong instructional leaders, astute community organisers, sharp managers, skilful facilitators, and visionary shapers of positive school cultures.

It is therefore against this theoretical background that central educational administrators and the policy makers made decisions concerning decentralisation of educational services.

2.11.2 Decentralisation of educational services in Zimbabwe

In Zimbabwe, according to the Chairman’s report (August, 1999) to the decentralisation sub committee, the government has since independence in 1980 advocated the policy of decentralisation and its attributes as evidenced by the rural district councils act, chapter 29:13 and the urban councils act chapter 29:15 which have been enacted. The Acts permit Rural District Councils and Urban Councils to among other functions provide health and
education services to people residing in their areas of jurisdiction. The education Act 1987 sections 12, 15, and 23 also point out and stress the need to share functions in the provision of education to the nation. This is a clear manifestation of the government’s desire to decentralise power and responsibilities to the lower tier structures.

The long term goals and strategy of the Ministry of Education and Culture as stated in the chairman’s report (August 1999) included the following:

Local Authorities, both urban and rural will be responsible for the sitting, location, construction, and maintenance of school buildings and grounds as well as management of staff- teachers and administrators.

Local Authorities will be encouraged to work closely with other ‘responsible authorities’ and School Development Associations.

School Development Associations and School Development Committees will be responsible for procurement of text books and stationery and the collection of levies and fees.

The decentralisation programme to be done in phases. The Ministry of Education in Zimbabwe (1999) viewed decentralisation as a legitimate transfer of functions from central government to local authorities such as Rural District Councils and municipalities.

Therefore, it is against this decentralisation background that community participation in providing education has gained new prominence world wide and especially in the developing countries. However, for a clear understanding of the current status of community participation in providing
education, one may need to understand the historical developments and trends in providing education to the people.

2.11.3 Historical background

The practice of involving communities in providing basic education has a long history that has gained impetus since the beginning of the twentieth century Cummings and Riddel, in Bray (2001). Before the turn of the 21st century, most basic education in developing countries was provided by private people or by churches. And, according to Uemura (1999), the model of state provided education only started during the 19th century, and continued growing up – to the middle of the 21st century (Bray, 2001). The United Nations (1948)’s Universal Declaration of Human Rights included the clause (Article 26) that elementary education should be compulsory.

The notion that governments should provide basic education was developed through advocacy from various international non-government organisations such as the United Nations organisation. And, according to Bray (2001), this advocacy had influenced many countries, especially those gaining independence after the 2nd world war, to enshrine free and compulsory basic education in their national education policy statements. Zimbabwe was no exception, on attaining independence in 1980, the government declared that basic education was to be free and compulsory (The Education Act of 1987).
However, by the late 1980s, the thinking had changed and triggered a fundamental shift from government provided education to privatisation policies which were believed to provide a more client centred education (Bray, 2001). Also, government provided education had proved to be too costly for low income countries, and the possibility of greater contribution to education by the private sector would offer the desired relief from the heavy load of operating education systems (Bray, 2000).

Cognisant of the economic challenges bedevilling developing countries, the Jomtien 1990 Education for All declaration had advocated for stakeholder partnerships and participation in providing resources for education at community level (WCEFA, 1990). In addition, the Delhi Education for All Summit acknowledged the need for stakeholder participation in providing basic education as the summit reported thus,

"...education is, and must be, a societal responsibility, encompassing governments, families, communities and non-government organisations alike, it requires the commitment and participation of all, in a grand alliance that transcends diverse opinions and political positions (UNESCO, 1994)."

Thus, the Jomtien World Conference on Education for All (WCEFA) 1990 Declaration, and the Delhi Declaration of 1994 brought community participation into mainstream education policy of nations through advocating decentralisation of responsibility for education provision and encouraging
partnerships at community level (Bray, 2000, 2003; McGinni and Welsh, 1999). Subsequently, communities have become more actively involved, through various ways, in the education of their children (Bray, 2003; Pryor, 2005; Rose, 2003). However, the nature of the community participation that was being encouraged here seemed to focus more on community contribution of educational resources so as to relieve the ‘burden’ of providing basic education from the governments of third world countries such as Zimbabwe.

However, as is always expected, the move to encourage community participation in providing basic education was not without debate from both community development and education scholars.

2.11.4.0 Arguments for community participation in education

Several scholars in education have argued in support of community participation in providing basic education. While scholars like Bray (2003), Shaeffer (1984), and Uemura (1999) argue from a macro level and decentralised education system perspective, others like Olsen and Fuller (2012) argue from a micro level and classroom perspective. From a macro level perspective, several benefits that derive from community participation in providing basic education have been identified and discussed. Many scholars have identified sharing of expertise as one of the benefits of community participation.

2.11.4.1 Sharing expertise
To begin with, those scholars who advocated for community participation in education argue that, participation in providing basic education would facilitate the involvement of a wider spectrum of stakeholders in providing quality basic education at the local level, Nyawaya, Muia and Okedi cited in Bray (2003). Further, it is argued that partnerships in education would facilitate the sharing of professional expertise as well as experiences from non professional in planning and implementing educational projects in schools. Hence, people would have the opportunity to focus on their areas of specialisation in developing their schools, as well as boosting each other’s morale when in crisis (Bray, 2003; Shaeffer, 1984).

2.11.4.2 Citizen exercise of democratic right

In agreement, Governments and international agencies, who also happen to have been the leading advocates for community participation in education, have maintained that, participation besides being a means for community residents to put into practice their democratic right in the education of their children, it was a strategy for raising resources for improving quality of education.

2.11.4.3 More resources for education

And, for the World Conference on Education for All (WCEFA) held in Jomtien in 1990, stressing on community participation in providing basic education was as strategy for raising financial, material as well as human resources for
achieving education for all aims and objectives, as evidenced by the main
goal that focused on resources, as stated below,

“Partnerships at the community level and at the
intermediate and national levels should be encouraged; they
can help harmonise activities, utilise resources more
effectively, and mobilise additional financial and human
resources where necessary” (WCEFA Secretariat, 1990: 58).

This prime objective for community participation in education, as stated by the
WCEFA (1990) explicitly expects communities, including rural communities in
developing countries, to participate through paying money to finance various
school programmes, and providing labour when building school facilities such
as classrooms and teachers’ houses.

2.11.4.4 Increasing enrolment of children in schools

In addition, community members have been observed to participate in
education by encouraging each other to send their children to school Tavola
(200), and encouraged their teachers to help the children to learn happily and
thus stay in school to the end of the course.

2.11.4.5 Increasing children’s academic performance
Further, advocates of participation in education (UNESCO, 1994; Tavola, 2000 and De Grauwe et al, 2005) posit that, community participation in education increases the output of schooling. Pupils in various contexts were observed to have improved their scores in mathematics, reading and writing (Muskin, 1999) and in national school examinations (Anderson and Nderitu, 1999) which was mainly due to the monitoring of teacher behaviours by parents and their representatives (Sawada, 1999).

2.11.4.6 Empowering communities

In tandem, scholars from the community development stable (UNICEF, 1998; USAID, 1998; White, 1996) have argued that, participation has potential to empower communities to assume control of the education needs of their children. They concur in that, an empowered community has potential to carry out their educational needs assessment, identify and prioritise their needs, plan as well as implement strategies to meet these needs, and have capacity to ensure that programmes and projects for their children are kept going through political, technical, managerial and humanitarian support systems.

It is therefore important to note that the foregoing discussion, by illuminating potential benefits from community participation in education, has defined relevant education quality areas to focus on during the study.

On the other hand, scholars who have argued from a micro level perspective have classified benefits that derive from community participation according to benefits for the children, teachers, the school, and the parents. For the children, Olsen and Fuller (2012) have revealed that, children tend to improve
their behaviour at school, develop stronger self esteem, record higher test and class work scores, attend school more regularly and work consistently on their home work.

The teachers were also seen to benefit from community participation activities in providing basic education. Teachers in schools that had high levels of community participation were seen to experience high levels of morale (Olsen and Fuller, 2012; Uemura, 1999). Also the teachers as well as the school heads would receive more professional respect from parents and other community members because of increased contact and improved communication (Olsen and Fuller, 2012; Uemura, 1999). Equally important, teachers would gain some deeper understanding of parents’ diverse backgrounds and thus tend to understand and appreciate their unique circumstances better.

And for the school, community participation tends to improve the quality of educational programmes and thus establish better reputation in the community (Olsen and Fuller, 2012) and increased material support (Uemura, 1999). Lastly, parents also benefit from participating in providing basic education to their children. First, parents develop a more informed understanding of educational issues and how teachers go about doing their work. In addition, Olsen and Fuller (2012) maintain that parents also gain knowledge on how children develop and therefore become more aware of the needs of their growing children. Secondly, parents become wiser in using rewards and punishments with their children. Lastly, parents develop more positive perceptions and bonding with their children’s school (Olsen and Fuller, 2012; Uemura, 1999). However, despite the potential benefits from
community participation discussed above, there are various shortcomings that go frustrate participation efforts.

2.11.5. 0 Arguments against community participation in education

The literature that has been reviewed has shown that there are several limitations in adopting community participation as a strategy for improving the quality education in schools. And, the very nature of the community poses some challenges to effective participation in educational projects.

2.11.5. 1 The diverse membership of communities

The first major area of contention among scholars of community participation in education is the way communities are conceived in educational policies, both at macro and micro levels. Most scholars have observed that international development agencies and governments seem to perceive communities as homogenous, harmonious, and static groups whose resources can collectively be mobilised for a perceived collective community good (Bray, 2003; Dunne et al. 2007; Shaeffer, 1994; Uemura, 1999).

Yet, in reality, the concept of community, with reference to education, may be defined in several ways. For example, the Zimbabwe Ministry of Education Sport, Arts, and Culture (1993) define community by geographical location; and Bray (2000) defines community by three other attributes, which are race, religion, and shared goals and concerns. Therefore communities in education
may constitute various sub communities which are determined, to an extent by age, gender, ethnicity, religion or function within the community (Dunne et al. 2007). And, these sub communities may not share the same educational goals with the larger community.

2.11.5.2 Dynamic nature of community

Moreover, a community is dynamic as power relations are played out on a daily basis in accommodation and resistance (Cleaver, 1999; White, 1996). Besides, it is apparent that the composition of communities is not constant, it is naturally ever changing as some people die and others are born, some move out and others come in (Dunne et al. 2007). In the same vain, Sommers cited in Bray (2003) argues that communities are no longer the idealised ‘traditional’ communities that seem to be conceived in most educational policy documents, but are now fragmented communities that have evolved over time through influences such as modernisation and urbanisation.

2.11.5.3 Diverse perceptions of community participation

Thus, one can conclude that, given the nature of the composition of communities, there cannot be just one experience or understanding of school-community relations within a particular community. Different groups as well as individuals have different experiences and understandings from community participation processes. It is also important to realise that these experiences and understandings change within individuals dependent on social circumstances and practices (Dunne et al. 2007).
2.11.5. 4  School fees challenges

The second area of contention among scholars of community participation is the issue of school fees. The literature that has been reviewed for this study has shown that the most prominent forms of participation in schools in third world countries was paying school fees or levies and providing labour during school construction projects (Bray, 2000; Chung, 2008; Rose, 2003). This is because all schools need money for to support their local operational budgets (Bray, 1996) hence the need to impose fees or levies on the communities. However, the critical point of contention is that poor communities, mostly in third world countries, are the ones that are expected to financially contribute more to their schools. This scenario tends to exacerbate regional and urban-rural disparities and intra-community inequities Bray, 1996; Bray, 2003).

Then, most critical to this study, is the observation from literature that little is mentioned about how parents and children who are unable to contribute financially have been treated in the various communities and how that treatment impacts on the quality of education.

In the same vain, asking children to pay school fees and levies for primary education is viewed by many scholars as being contradictory to the children’s right to education.

The United Nations (1959) Declaration on the Rights of the Child declared that the child is entitled to receive education, which shall be free and compulsory, at least in the early stages; and Article 28 of the 1989 convention
on the Rights of the Child indicated that signatory states would make primary education “compulsory and available free to all”.

But, in contradiction several associate states, Zimbabwe included, allow schools to directly and indirectly charge school fees for primary education through giving way to school boards to raise funds for their operations (Shaeffer, 1994) from the poverty stricken rural poor.

2.11.5.5 The effects of poverty on community members, capacity to participate

In a descriptive survey study in the rural areas of Kenya, Ngesu, Gakuru, okuro, and Kahingi (2013), found out that a high cost of living, high unemployment rate, and low morale had negatively affected community participation in developing early childhood development education centres. Further, Howley and Maynard (2007) emphasised that poverty posed serious challenges to rural people’s effort to provide educational support resources for their children in the homes. Thus, most parents were seen to have low morale and negative attitude towards participation in providing education.

2.11.5.6 The effects of community members’ attitude towards education

In a study that was carried out in rural areas, Capper (1993) cited in Howley and Maynard (2007) had found out that some of the rural communities had not shown that they valued the education of their children. Capper had found out that most of the rural parents had lower levels of education than parents of children in urban schools, and they did not feel comfortable in being involved in school procedures and meeting with teachers. In support, Howley and
Maynard (2007) in their study had also observed that parents who themselves had not engaged in education beyond primary education usually failed to perceive the value of education for their children thus they had a resistant attitude towards participating in providing education. In addition, Williams (1994) developed a model which shows the relationship between parents’ attitude towards education and community participation in providing education.

Table 2:5 Community attitude towards education by demand for education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>High Local Demand</th>
<th>Low Local Demand</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Initial Community Attitude Toward Education</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Indifferent/Resistant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role of Community</td>
<td>Potential support to supplement &amp; reinforce government action; Can support schools in ways government cannot</td>
<td>Can block/undermine educational efforts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key Variables Determining Community Role</td>
<td>Community lacks ways to provide support</td>
<td>Match between content/delivery of schooling &amp; local values, needs, economic constraints</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal of Government Intervention</td>
<td>Provide useful ways community can support schools</td>
<td>Adapt content/delivery of schooling to local context; Provide education useful to community</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


In this model, Williams argues that when the initial community attitude towards education is negative, the members of that community become resistant and participate to block educational effort in that community. And, when the initial
community attitude is positive, the members of that community become supportive in providing education to the children and thus create the need for organisational structures for coordinating community participation.

2.11.6.0 School level structures for community participation

Literature that was reviewed in this study has revealed that there are various structures that countries have developed to facilitate community participation in schools. These structures range from legally incorporated school boards to village education committees.

2.11.6.1.0 Community participation through school boards

Community level organisational structures are an essential component for efficient and effective community participation in education. Literature provides three basic models for facilitating community participation in education.

2.11.6.1.1 Legally incorporated boards

The first and most popular model is the legally incorporated boards (LIB) which are created in accordance with the education policies of that particular education system (Bray, 1996). These legally incorporated boards are known by different names in various countries.

In the United Kingdom they are referred to as boards of governors (Cuckle et al.1998; UK Department of Education, 2012). In the United States of America
they are known as the school boards (Jehl et al. 2001; Ornstein, 1987). School Development Councils is the term used in Sri Lanka (Bray and Lillis, 1988).

School committee is the term used in Kenya (OnSomu, 2004; Bray and Lillis, 1988). In New Guinea and Nigeria, they are known as Parents Teachers Associations. In South Africa they are referred to as School Governing Boards (Prew, 2009). And, in Zimbabwe they are known as School Development Committees (Zimbabwe-Education Amendment Act of 2006).

In this model, the community participation policies prescribe guidelines for establishing school governing boards as well as specifying the nature of the functions of the members of the boards. A general observation from literature shows that membership in school governing bodies usually comprises elected parents, the school head, and representatives of other stakeholders such as classroom teachers, churches, and local government authority (Bray, 1996). Therefore the members of the board would come from various backgrounds and hence are likely to bring along with them educational interests as articulated by the different constituencies that they represent.

In addition, some of the common functions observed from literature include receiving a budget from central government, decide how it is spent and keep accurate accounts and thus be accountable to the parents; appoint additional staff and have supervision, disciplinary and grievance handling arrangements for pupils and staff; and to have a policy to control the use of school premises outside the school day.
2.11.6.1.2 Parents Teachers Association

The second is the Parents Teachers Association (PTA) model which is not bound by legal statutes but is based on the assumption that, parents have a natural interest in the education of their children (Bray, 1996). In the PTA model, membership, in most settings, is automatic by virtue of having a child in the school. However, in other contexts, a membership in PTA is by annual payment of affiliation fees (Bray, 1996, 2000). And, for effective coordination, Parents Teachers Association members elect an executive committee that organises parents’ activities in the school. The functions of the executive committee are specified in a PTA constitution which is the supreme policy document for the association (Abdullah, 1996; UK-Department of education, 2012).

2.11.6.1.3 Village education committee

The third model is the Village Education Committee (VEC) model which, like the LIB, is established through the provisions of the national education policies (Bandyopadhyay, 2010; Pradhan et al, 2012). However, the VEC is different from the LIB model in that it coordinates community participation activities in more than one school. In the VEC model, the committee members coordinate community participation activities for several schools in a single village with multiple schools or may serve schools in several villages in some cluster arrangement (Bandyopadhyay, 2010; Pradhan et al, 2012). The VEC
is a common structure in primary schools in India (Govinda and Bandyopadhyay, 2010).

Nevertheless, the potential of these models of participation in facilitating effective community engagement in school activities is decidedly dependent on the context of the community (Bray, 2000) and the relational dynamics that construct that participation (Cleaver, 1999; White, 1996).

2.11.6.2 Criticism on school boards

However, most of the school boards have been criticised for unfair practices in their operations. Research in various African and Asian contexts has shown that there is unequal access to participation in such bodies according to socio-economic status and race (Marawanyika, 1995). School Heads, in particular, have been singled out in a number of studies as having especially strong influence on these bodies (De Grauwe et al., 2005; Soudien and Sayed, 2004) and in many instances they have been criticised for abusing public funds. Nevertheless, school boards coordinate community participation in various ways in the education process.

2.11.7.0 Dimensions for community participating in basic education

The range of educational aspects in which community members participate in has evolved over time. These aspects of community participation have evolved from the traditional provision of labour in building classrooms to participation in actual teaching and learning processes. This section focuses
on providing brief insights in both traditional and new dimensions in community participation.

2.11.7.1 Traditional dimensions for community participation

The shift by governments towards increased partnerships in education has placed more responsibilities for providing education on communities (Condy, 1998; Rose; 2003). In the twentieth century communities were intentionally focused on the provision of infrastructure, through contributing labour for construction of school physical structures that include classrooms, teachers’ houses, toilets and sports fields (Chung, 2008); payment of money to pay for school projects (Bray, 2000; Condy, 1998). Therefore, community participation was restricted to providing basic but important inputs for improving education quality, but with little or no influence on the important school processes where actual teaching and learning takes place (UNICEF, 1998).

2.11.7.2 New dimensions for community participation

However, new forms of community participation have emerged since the (WCEFA) 1990 resolution that adopted community participation as a strategy for improving quality of education. The thrust in community participation today is participation in decision-making in issues affecting curriculum and school management (Baku and Agyeman, 1997 cited in Condy, 1998; Govinda and Bandyopadhyay, 2010; Shaeffer, 1999). These include participation in management of schools through representation on School Management Boards, curriculum design, delivering actual lessons as resource persons for
some culture-related topics; supervision and monitoring of teachers’ attendance at school, teaching and learning processes, monitoring of pupils’ attendance, involvement in pupil enrolment processes and supervision of pupils’ after school studies (Baku and Agyeman, 1997 cited in Condy, 1998; Govinda and Bandyopadhyay, 2010), therefore making community participation a critical cog in providing quality education (Unicef, 2000).

The enlarged community participation area of responsibility, which has been described above, has inevitably widened the scope of people’s relationships and dynamics that would come into play in these various dimensions. And administratively, the increased community responsibilities entailed creating relevant structures for managing community participation in schools.

2.12.0 Community Participation in Zimbabwean Primary Schools

Community participation in education in Zimbabwe has been facilitated by various acts of parliament which compel responsible authorities for schools to establish school committees. The Rural District Councils of 1982 provided for the establishment of school committees by district councils for each of the schools under their jurisdiction. Later, the Education Amendment Act of 1991 required the establishment of SDCs in non government schools and SDAs in government schools. Further, community participation in providing basic education has been enhanced through the Education Amendment Act of 1996 N0. 2 in Section 36 of subsection 2). The education act referenced above compels every Education Responsible Authority (ERA) to establish a School Development Committee in each of their schools. Membership of the school
development committee comprises five persons elected, by parents of pupils at the school; the head of the school; the deputy head of the school; a teacher at the school, who shall be appointed by the Secretary; a councillor appointed by the local authority; or a person appointed by any other responsible authority for the school (SI 87 of 1992).

A school development committee is expected to work with the school head teacher in coordinating parents and other community members in developing the school.

2.12.1 The objectives for community participation in schools in Zimbabwe

The parents and other residents should focus on the following dimensions of education: firstly, they should provide financial and material resources and assist with labour in the operation and development of the school. Secondly, the parents and other community residents should assist by providing financial, human and material resources for advancing the moral, cultural, physical and intellectual welfare of pupils at the school. Lastly, the community residents should provide financial, material, and human resources for promoting the welfare of the school for the benefit of its present and future pupils and their parents and its teachers (Statutory Instrument (SI) No. 87/92; section 4).

And, a close analysis of the objectives of the SDC reveals that the thrust for school development is in tandem with the quality dimensions that have been identified in the UNESCO (2004) framework for understanding quality of education. Thus, the SDC objectives provide adequate theoretical scope for
2.12.2 The membership of the SDC

The membership of the SDC is prescribed in the act as follows:

Part II (Sub-section 6) of SI 87 of 1992 goes further to provide that a School Development Committee shall consist of the following:

(a) five persons elected, subject to these regulations, by parents of pupils at the school; and

(b) the head of the school; and

(c) the deputy head of the school; and

(d) a teacher at the school, who shall be appointed by the Secretary; and

(e) where the responsible authority of the school is — a local authority, a councillor appointed by the local authority; or for any other authority or body, a person appointed by the authority or body.

However, given that community representatives on the SDC are chosen through an election, there exists some likelihood that some minority groups in the community may not be represented and thus may be denied a voice on some of the issues in community participation.

Further, upon reflecting on the composition of the school development committee, outlined above, it is observed that it brings together people from different social, economic and academic backgrounds. The SDC members representing different constituencies in the community, and therefore, will obviously bring along different expectations, perceptions, values as well as
overt and covert interests in the participation arena (Cleaver, 1999; White, 1996).

Also, in order for the SDCs to effectively carry out the activities for achieving the objectives given above, the committees were granted power through the same Statutory Instrument no 87/1992.

2.12.3 Powers of the SDC

In terms of Part II (Section 5) of the same instrument, the School Development Committee has the following powers:

(a) To take all measures that appear to it to be necessary or expedient to preserve and maintain the property and facilities of the school; and
(b) to employ or hire staff to serve the needs of the school on such terms and conditions as committee may fix with the approval of the Ministry (of Education); and
(c) to borrow money on such terms and conditions as the committee considers expedient and to receive grants and donations, whether from parents of pupils at the school or from other persons; and
(d) to apply its funds towards the promotion of its objects; and
(e) to invest its funds as are not immediately required; and
(f) by means of insurance policies, to protect its property and the property of the school; and
(g) to take professional advice on all matters affecting the committee and to institute, conduct, defend, compound or abandon legal proceedings; and
(h) generally to do all things that, in the opinion of the committee are necessary or expedient for, or are reasonably incidental to, the operation, extension and development of the school in the best interest of its present and future pupils, their parents and its teachers.

These powers that have been listed above provide SDCs with the scope of legitimacy in which to initiate, invite and coordinate parents and other community members in participating in providing quality basic education to their children. Also, the powers provide the SDC with the authority to facilitate the design and implementation of school level policies with regard to engaging the community in participation issues.

And, inevitably, the financial, management and curriculum development roles expected to be performed by communities, as discerned from the objectives of the school development committees, have provoked debate around issues of capacity and interference, from among education practitioners. Thus the effectiveness of community participation as a strategy for improving quality of education, particularly in rural areas, has come into academic spotlight.

From the discussion above, one can conclude that communities have been given a huge responsibility to actively participate in improving quality of education in their schools. In addition, it can also be concluded that there is doubt in the effectiveness of involving rural communities in improving education quality. Now, given the contrasting arguments and subsequent doubt on effectiveness of community participation, particularly in rural areas, the question is: How is community participation promoting or impeding quality of basic education in rural primary schools?
2.13.0 Quality of Basic Education

Issues of quality in education have received prominence in education discourse ever since the declaration of education for all in Jomtien in 1990 (Unesco, 2000). However, there are various perceptions to quality in education originating from various philosophical standpoints of educational stakeholders.

2.13.1 Defining Quality in Education

Quality, as a concept in education is often discussed but rarely defined. And, as such, Sayed (1997) advises that the concept is elusive and thus may be defined in various ways. This study adopted the Unesco (2000) definition in which education in conceived as a complex system that is influenced in various ways by the political, economic, and cultural orientation of the communities in which it takes place (Unesco, 2004).

By understanding education from a systems perspective, quality is thus discussed from the inputs, processes, outputs and outcomes perspective. However, quality of education is not as simple and lineal as reflected through the systems mirror, rather it is a complex system that is embedded in international as well as local community political, cultural, and economic contexts (Unicef, 2000). Therefore, establishing a contextualised understanding of education quality means including relevant stakeholder
perspectives in that process (Motala, 2000). However, stakeholders often hold different views and meanings of educational quality.

2.13.2.0 Perspectives in Quality of Education

This section discusses two relevant philosophical perspectives within the education quality discourse, which are of significance to assessing issues of quality in this study. These are the classical liberalist, and the economist perspectives of education quality.

2.13.2.1 The classical Liberalist Perspective

The central idea of the liberal philosophy, sometimes called classical or traditional philosophy, is that education should develop intellectual powers of the mind and to develop a person in a very wide spectrum of essential skills. Education should produce individuals who possess functional intellectual skills and are equipped with local values, ethics as well as the ability to participate in civic activities (Conway, 2010). There is the belief that education is good for its own sake and should thus, children should be treated equally irrespective of their various backgrounds. Proponents of this perspective hold the conviction that children should be brought up through education up to a level where they can make their own informed decisions about moral truths (Tollefsen, 2010). Therefore, the quality perspective from a liberal philosophy is portrayed on the extent with which a school adopts and excels in a traditional, non technical arts and science curriculum (Conway, 2010).
What is important for this study from liberal philosophy is the emphasis on equality of educational opportunity as being essential aspect of educational quality. Thus it is this perception of quality that the United Nations (UN)’s Universal Declaration of Human Rights is based on, is that all individuals are born free and equal in dignity and right without distinction of race, colour, and religion, national or social origin (UN’s Declaration of Human Rights (1948): Article 26). Everybody has the right to education. Education shall be free at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Parents have a right to choose the kind of education that should be given to their children (UN’S Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948).

In response to the UN declaration, most governments in Africa, including Zimbabwe made pronouncements for free and compulsory basic education. Subsequently, the principle of equal opportunity for education for all children has become almost universally accepted, however in practice, universal education has not been achieved in full. In Zimbabwe, for example, some school authorities demanded high school levies that were beyond the means of some parents, especially from low income earning members of their communities, as a way of segregating them from enrolling at elite schools (Marawanyika, 1993).

2.13.2.2 The Economic Perspective

The economic perspective of education views education as investment from which benefits should accrue from increased future earnings. This
perspective, which is often referred to as the World Bank perspective, draws from the Human Capital theory (Lockhead and Vespoor, 1991). The theory is more concerned with issues of efficiency in educational processes such that it makes use of quantitative measures such as enrolment rates, drop out rates, transition rates and pass rates for assessing education quality (Haws and Stephens, 1990).

Therefore, the human capital perception on community participation is that individuals invest in their own education. The argument is based on the argument that people invest in education as individuals and are rewarded as individuals through higher earnings. Therefore, there is no justification for involving the rest of the community in paying for their education (Baptiste, 2001).

In the economic perspective, the education quality focus is on school effectiveness (Beeby, 1966; Hawes and Stephens, 1990) thus the implied notion of quality education may be summarised as cost – efficient in producing academic achievement, as indicated by pupils having a high probability of completing the primary school cycle without repetition (Verspoor, 1991).

It can therefore be concluded that quality in education can be seen from various perspectives which in turn, makes people develop diverse perceptions on education quality, and participation. The two philosophies have been useful in shedding light on potential qualitative indicators of education quality.

2.13.3.0 Education Quality Indicators
In line with the quality perspectives discussed above, scholars in education are divided into two main camps. In one camp are the liberalists, who view quality of education from a micro perspective and in the other are the economists who focus on the macro viewpoint of quality education.

2.13.3.1 The macro-level perspective

From the literature that has been reviewed in this study, the macro-level debate on education quality seems to have been dominated by those who operate in the areas of policy, accountability and funding rather than in the field of practitioners. Thus, quality at that level has not been seen as what it actually is but as how it can be assessed (Berrett, 2006). The indicators for quality at the macro-level are usually quantitative in nature and focus on various rates of educational phenomena such as pass rate, drop out rate, attrition rate, and completion rate.

2.13.3.2 The Micro-level perspective

But, in contrast, Rudduck, Brown, and Hendy (2006) cited in Alexander (2008) contend that, from the perspective of the learners, educational quality is viewed as the experiences they go through during teaching and learning processes, especially on their feelings about the tasks they do, and the extent to which they find their interaction with peers and the teachers encouraging and warm. Therefore, at micro-level, the preferred indicators are affective as much as cognitive and instrumental (Alexander, 2008). Indicators at micro-level can focus on any or all dimensions of education system quality, which
are learner characteristics, learning environments, education content, learning process, and outcomes (Unicef, 2000).

2.13.3.3 Learner Characteristic Indicators

Quality basic education is often described in terms of the characteristics of the children participating in the education system, as well as the extent to which that education is accessible to most of the children in a community (Unicef, 2000).

2.13.3.4 Accessibility of education

Preceding the discussion on quality of learner is the issue of how the basic education is accessible to all the children in the community. A high quality basic education programme at community level is one that is open and accessible to most of the children in that community. The enrolled children are encouraged to carry on up to the end of the education programme. The quality basic education programme should be characterised by low absenteeism and drop out rates (Unicef, 2000).

2.13.3.5 Pre-formal learning

Now, focussing on the characteristics of the learner, it is widely acknowledged in literature that, the standard of living and pre-formal learning experiences that a child goes through in early life determine the nature of learner they can
be. Also, children who are well fed and healthy show positive learning characteristics (Kleinman et al. 2002). They are usually cheerful, energetic and engross themselves in play activities.

Thus, children who experience a healthy livelihood in early childhood are more likely to experience success in formal school programmes (Heneveld, 1994; McCain and Mustard, 1999).

In addition, research has shown that to achieve academically, children must attend school regularly (Unicef, 2000; Douglas and Ross (2011) and get adequate parent support and involvement (Heneveld, 1994). Thus, healthy children with positive early learning experiences and supportive, involved parents are most likely to succeed in school (Sylva, Methuish, Sammons, Blatchford, Taggart, 2004).

Most of the learning at the pre-formal learning stage is done through play. It is through play that children develop most of the social attitudes and personality characteristics that they will show later in life (Farrant, 1988). And, through play children are exposed to experiences that form a sound foundation of their learning later in primary school. In addition, play activities increase children’s opportunities to learn about the world around them (Stebbin, 1999), helps the children to be independent, learn and mix freely with others in class, express him/her self confidently, and gain experience, all at the same time (Farrant, 1988). Also, positive early learning programme experiences and interactions are vital to disadvantaged children for formal learning (Unicef, 1998).
Thus, a quality primary school is expected to have clearly designated ECD centre which is adequately equipped with relevant play materials and equipment (Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education, 2000).

2.13.4.0 **Learning Environment Indicators**

High quality physical, psychosocial and service environment in schools set the stage for learning to occur effectively. A school learning environment comprises physical facilities and psycho-social conditions that facilitate children’s learning. Both, the physical and psych-social components of the learning environment have some influence on how children learning.

2.13.4.1 **Physical environment**

A quality learning environment should have adequate and relevant physical facilities that include buildings such as classrooms, offices, toilets, specialist rooms; adequate furniture and other teaching and learning materials and equipment; adequate teachers and children’s text books and stationery; and sports fields and attractive school grounds. These physical facilities have some influence on teachers working conditions and class sizes (Unicef, 2000; Kaarina and Gonzale, 2011).

In Zimbabwe, Heneveld (1994) noted that a conference by senior local educators was held in Gweru in January 1992. The senior educators developed standards expected for a quality rural primary school in Zimbabwe. In the area of buildings, the conference recommended that a quality rural primary school should have a classroom for each class; a head teacher’s
office complete with strong room, safe, and storage room; a staff room at least
one classroom in size; a store room or cupboard for each classroom; a
collection of teachers’ resource books; teachers’ houses as per government
recommended accommodation regulation; and pupils’ and teachers’ ablutions
according to regulation (Heneveld, 1994).

In the area of school grounds, the minimum quality expectations for rural
primary schools in Zimbabwe were prescribed in the Hand Book on School
Administration for Heads (1993). They include a school sign post; a car park
with trees or shrubs for shade; the growing of trees or ornamental bushes and
shrubs; soil conservation, fencing or walling of the school premises; a sign
giving direction to the school office; protection of the grass and flowers from
excessive wear; and sporting grounds for the major games (Ministry of
Education and Culture, 1993).

Further in the physical environment indicators, each classroom was
recommended to have at least one chalk board with ruler and chalk duster;
display area-pin board; teacher’s desk or table and chair; a dictionary; and a
syllabus and teacher’s guide for each subject taught.

And lastly, the conference recommended that each pupil in a school should
have a minimum of a desk and seat each; one text book between two children
per subject; exercise books at the rate of one per subject per child; and
stationery-(one pen, pencil, ruler per child).

It is however, pertinent to note that these are really basic requirements and
school pupils need to have much more than these stipulated, Heyneman
(2004) observed that the education of teachers and the availability of furniture,
equipment and materials in developing countries are normally well below the standards considered minimal for schools in developed societies. Also, in Zimbabwe, most urban primary schools have additional materials from those set out by the Gweru conference. These urban primary schools, according to Nyagura (1991) have additional staff, administration facilities, office equipment, vehicles, and specialist rooms for example, computer rooms.

Therefore, in this study this baseline level that is expected in rural primary schools as set out by the Gweru conference will provide a useful point of reference in describing community contribution in providing basic education in rural primary schools in Zimbabwe.

2.13.4.2 Psycho-social environment

The psycho-social environment should be safe for children, non threatening, peaceful, and non discriminatory (Unicef, 2000). An ideal quality psycho-social school environment is that type of school environment in which children interact with each other and their teachers in harmony. It is one in which the teachers are firm but friendly, and show some relaxed but distinctive teacher-pupil relationships (Farrant, 1988). Also, teachers and community members interact regularly in agreement and children feel safe and secure as they get along with learning activities.

In addition, a quality psycho-social school environment is one in which teacher and children’s discipline prevails. That is, teachers are not too authoritarian but they are approachable and have a genuine concern for the welfare of their children. And, in agreement, Lavoie (2005) has observed that
children who experience a supportive psych- social environment experience less learning difficulties. Finally, a positive school environment facilitates adoption of new teaching methods and prompt adoption of educational change (Kaarina and Gonsale, 2011).

### 2.13.5 Education Content Indicators

The curriculum content for basic education is developed from national goals for education (Unicef, 2000). Usually, basic education curriculum content covers a range of knowledge disciplines that includes mathematics, science, and social studies (Muskin, 1999). In addition, national and local values contribute to curriculum content for basic education (Gatawa, 1990). Besides, literacy, numeracy, and relevant life skills remain the main focus of curriculum content at the basic education level (Gatawa, 1990; Unicef, 2000). In Zimbabwe, the minimum curriculum expectations were clearly laid down in the Hand Book on School Administration for Heads (1993). The hand book stipulates that each primary school child has lessons in Music, Art, Social Studies, Shona or Ndebele, English, Reading, Mathematics, Religious and Moral Education, Physical Education, Environmental Science, Home Economics, and some co-curricular activities (Ministry of Education and Culture (1993). In some of the primary schools, additional subjects such as Agriculture, computers, and crafts are being studied as technical and vocational options.

A quality primary school is one in which an expanded curriculum is offered to accommodate more of the needs of the community, especially skills in
agriculture and local crafts in rural areas. In addition, a quality school organises educational tours for the children as well as cater for a wide range of skills and interests in games, sports, clubs, and cultural activities.

2.13.5.0 Learning Process Indicators

Further to the education content that have been discussed above, learning processes also provide a set of indicators of quality basic education. This part of the discussion has focussed on teachers, school administration, working conditions, and home work.

2.13.5.1 Quality of teachers

Teachers are undoubtedly the most crucial organs in children’s learning process (Stronge, 2014). Therefore, the manner with which teachers and school administrators make use of educational inputs to plan and execute subject lessons that create learning experiences in children is critical in achieving quality basic education. In addition, the quality of teaching and learning processes in basic education is reflected in the quality of teachers responsible for bringing about that quality (Unicef, 2000; Stronge, 2014).

Quality teachers are those who possess a strong mastery of their subject content and pedagogy, use school time effectively, understand the feelings of children, monitors student progress, and maintain regular dialogue with parents (Unicef, 2000; Stronge, 2014).
However in Zimbabwe most of the teachers in primary schools do not receive salaries that are at the level of the national poverty datum line (News Day of February 20, 2014) And, therefore had been receiving additional allowances, which were termed ‘teacher incentives’ but have since been withdrawn (The Chronicle 24 April 2014; The Herald 26 April 2014).

2.13.5.2 Quality of Home work supervision

More so quality learning processes also involve teachers in giving children extra work to do at home. It has been put out clearly in literature over time, that home work extends the children’s learning time and offers them the opportunity to reflect on and consolidate what they would have learnt during the lessons at school. In the Zimbabwean education system, this extra work, commonly referred to as home work, is strongly encouraged through policy. The primary school head teachers are advised, through policy, to design school time tables that could guide their teachers and children in planning for home work (Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education, 1993).

However, research has shown that younger children have less developed study habits and are less able to manage disturbance at home (Cooper, 2008). Also, research has revealed that those children who are slow in class experience more difficulties with home work just because the work becomes more difficult for them and thus rely on their parents for assistance.

Therefore, home work helps to provide a conscious and tangible link between home and school encourages parents to get involved in the learning of their children, thus making them partners in teaching and learning processes. In
this study, an understanding of quality teaching and learning processes would provide some point of reference when describing influence of community participation on quality of basic education.

2.13.5.3 School administration

Also, the quality of administrative and leadership support is a critical element in understanding quality of basic education. Research has shown that regular supervision of teachers improved teaching practice (Miske and Dowd, 1998). Apart from supervising teachers, the school administration has several other responsibilities. In primary schools in Zimbabwe, the school head in collaboration with the SDC, determine the major goals and objectives of the school, and design strategies for attaining those goals. In addition, the school administration is responsible for school public relations, collect and disburse school funds, and look after movable and immovable school property.

Further, a quality primary school administration is one that facilitates staff development of their teachers. Teachers need to continuous be provided with opportunities for advancing their teaching skills as well as induction to the new digital teaching technologies (Stronge, 2014). And, teachers should have supportive working conditions that include suitable accommodation, decent salaries, and opportunities for continuous staff development (Carron and Chaugh, 1996; Unicef, 2003; McGill, 2013).
2.13.5.4 Working conditions for Teachers

Further, quality teaching and learning processes occur when teachers and administration staff work in harmony. Research has shown that respecting teachers’ autonomy and professionalism had some influence on children’s learning (Unicef, 2000). To begin with, schools need to appreciate the professional status of their teachers through providing a favourable work environment in which electricity is readily available for driving essential communication and educational gadgets of this modern world. Today’s teachers need adequate lighting to work after hours as well as connectivity to internet on computers. In support, research has shown that the use of computers and internet by teachers in their planned teaching and learning processes was seen to influence children’s learning (Unicef, 2000).

Secondly, accommodation is a basic need, thus in a primary school of quality, teachers need to have suitable, adequate and decent housing. Chivore (1995) remarked that it is common knowledge that the quality of accommodation is a factor towards the quality of staff and its stability in primary schools. And one needs to note that the quality of accommodation does not only focus on the quality of buildings and grounds but also on suitability to social considerations such as gender, marital status, religion, and family size (Chivore, 1995).

Lastly on conditions of service, teachers have been seen to work well when they are made aware of the conditions of service that bind their contracts and have amicable relationships with the community.
In this study, an understanding of quality issues relating to teaching and learning processes provides essential insights into what to look for when making interpretations from research data on influence of community participation in quality of basic education.

2.13.6.0 Education Outcomes Indicators

Educational outcomes are also a factor in determining the quality of basic education. However, educational outcomes are in two main categories which are academic outcomes and psycho-social outcomes. This section starts by discussing academic outcomes.

2.13.6.1 Academic outcomes

Indicators for quality education outcomes may be classified into two broad categories, namely academic outcomes and psycho-social outcomes. Academic outcomes are those outcomes that relate to academic achievement and related skills in literacy and numeracy. Quality academic outcomes in basic education are indicated by the number of children who perform well in the final examination. In addition, and equally important, the quality of academic outcomes is based on the number of children who are able to read, write and calculate numbers at the end of the primary school cycle (Unicef, 2000). However, research has shown that most parents tend to measure school quality through children’s academic achievement as they believe that education creates employment opportunities for employment and thus social status for their children (Carren and Chaugh, 1996). Therefore, for most
parents, community participation seems to seek to facilitate improvement in the academic performance of their children at school.

2.13.6.2 Psycho-social outcomes

The psycho-social outcomes are those that relate to children’s skills in civic and social aspects of the curriculum. Quality psycho-social outcomes are indicated through the extent to which children are able to demonstrate knowledge understanding of human rights, government institutions, local value systems, relevant domestic skills, and responsibility for each other and the community (Unicef, 2000). However, the issue of values is highly contentious because both official and unofficial values co-exist within a community and the question of whose values are being transmitted during teaching and learning processes has become a perpetual challenge for educators (Dekker and Lemmer, 1993).

In Zimbabwe for example, in relation to values, primary school children are expected to demonstrate an understanding of ethical principles of conduct including nationhood, good neighbourliness, citizenship, and respect for humanity by the end of the cycle (Handbook on School Administration for Heads, 1993). However, in sharp contrast, some of the community members seem to publicly demonstrate action that is in sharp contrast to such curriculum goal. Thus quality values, in such a scenario become difficult to identify.

2.14.0 Research on community participation
Substantial amount of research studies have been carried out on community participation in education, as a strategy for improving quality of education in both developed and developing countries. Most of the research has been carried out in the auspices of decentralisation in education, which is the principal concept from which community participation is closely linked.

To begin with, selected research that has been reviewed in this study has shown both positive and negative impact of community participation in education in the various settings studied. In one hand, in a comparative study of educational decentralization in four Latin American countries, (Argentina, Chile, Columbia and Mexico), Prawda (1993) concluded that, decentralisation in education had not produced tangible results in relation to improvement in quality of education, but rather had tended to widen the equity gap between the poor and more provided schools. Similarly, Hinsz, Patel, Meyers and Dammet (2006) in a quantitative survey study in East Asia and Pacific Islands, also acknowledged that community participation in education, although it had improved test scores in Mathematics and English, had tended to create disparities in accessing quality education.

And from a public sector perspective, Francis and James (2003) argue that, research carried out in some African countries, Uganda, Botswana, Nigeria, Cote d Ivoire, Kenya and Tanzania, has shown that there had been no real indicators of improved development at the local level concerned. These studies seem to point out that decentralisation and indeed community participation, though promising in principle, is not a ready made approach for improving quality of education.
Nearer home, in his empirical study on educational decentralization in Zimbabwe and Malawi, Chikoko (2008) found out that the relationship between decentralization and the improvement of education quality was not guaranteed. Like wise, De Grauwe (2001), in a study that focussed on role of communities in educational supervision in four African countries, found out that, rural communities in Zimbabwe had not contributed significantly to monitoring presence and performance of teachers in local schools. Lastly, Peresuh and Nhundu (1999); Nyagura (1991) and Nziramasanga (1999), through independent survey research work in Zimbabwean communities, found out that most School Development Committees had problems in raising enough funds for improving school facilities and providing teaching and learning materials. Therefore it would seem that, community participation as a strategy for improving quality of education had not produced the expected positive influence on schools that were studied.

However, on the other hand, The Word Bank (2001) reported that, in El Salvador, by increasing the participation of parents, community managed schools had shown significantly lower rates of student and teacher absenteeism. Similarly, UNICEF Education for All report (2000) shows that, many developing countries had successfully mobilized school communities in financing education. Likewise, the Zimbabwe government, to the Education for All Conference (2000) reported that some of the SDCs and SDAs had successfully improved quality of education in their schools by developing them to levels that central government alone could not have reached.

It would seem that these international reports point towards greater overall benefits from community participation from a macro level aggregate of
individual communities’ performances, some of which might have be negative as reported in research above.

Critically, and significant to this study is that, despite the varying degrees of success in community participation, the indication is that the benefits that result from increased community participation in education should not be under estimated (Blair, 2000; Crooker and Manor, 1998). The challenge is to identify the conditions under which increased participation in schools is conducive to enhance the quality of educational inputs, processes and the subsequent outputs.

It seems as though not much has been discussed in literature on and how best to take advantage of experiences of communities in participating in school activities. Very little seems to have been done to use the voice of the rural poor to understand more the dynamics in participation in school activities. Social community realities must, therefore be recognised to foster unyielding support for school activities. It is in this realisation that this study seeks to add on to the existing thin literature on community level experiences from the people who participate in providing basic education.

Current literature on community participation in education, as evidenced in this review, has tended to focus on identifying impact of community participation on education systems. Many scholars (Chikoko, 2008; Peresuh and Nhundu, 1999; Nyagura, 1991; Swift-Morgan, 2006; UNICEF, 2000; World Bank, 2001;) have carried out studies on the impact of community participation on education systems from a holistic and policy maker’s perspective which has tended to under play the detailed in depth study that is
desired in understanding community dynamics in participation (Bray, 2000; Shaeffer, 1994).

These studies, focussing on community participation in education, which are mostly quantitative studies, have mainly focused on identifying impact of decentralization on education system in various countries. Most of the current studies have been done through, questionnaire surveys and subsequent calculation of indicators for enrolment rates, retention rates in a trend analysis framework. There is little empirical evidence on how communities go about the business of improving quality of education in their schools. This study seeks to add on to this evidence by contributing new knowledge on community dynamics in participation. Therefore, in order to have a deeper understanding of how communities participate in basic education issues, this study is carried out from a community perspective. The researcher engaged in a detailed and in-depth qualitative study to bring out the voice of the community on dynamics impacting community participation processes in school activities.

2.15 Chapter summary

This chapter has discussed literature that has revealed that community participation in education is a process that is heavily influenced by dynamics that arise from differences among community members’ backgrounds in relation to aspects such as culture, socio-economic status, age, and gender (White, 1996). In addition, the nature and extent of community participation in providing education is shaped by the interests and power of those who initiate
participation from within or from outside the community (Pretty, 1995). And, quality in education is understood as a concept that can be perceived from various perspectives that include liberal as well as economic stand points but is generally evaluated through a systems model (UNESCO, 2004) thus stakeholders in education hold various perceptions on quality of education. Therefore, optimum community participation for effective quality improvement in education is likely to occur in a situation where a unique balance of complex interests, expectations, and available resources among community members and other stakeholders is achieved.

Finally, the three key terms, community participation, community participation dynamics, and quality of basic education, which are critical concepts in this study, and contribute significantly in directing extended analysis of research data and subsequently shaping of the study conclusions and recommendations (Bezeley, 2009; Miles and Huberman, 1994) have been discussed.
CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

3.1 Introduction

The goal of this study was to explore and understand how community participation dynamics influenced quality of basic education in rural schools in Zimbabwe. This exploration will provide for an understanding of how the dynamics involved in community participation influence the quality of basic education. This chapter focuses on presenting a discussion on the largely qualitative methodology adopted for the study. The case study design which was adopted for the study is discussed and its relevance is justified. Focus group discussion and in-depth interviews, as suitable data generation strategies, are presented. In addition, a discussion on data analysis procedures, which were heavily reliant on grounded theory techniques, is also presented. Lastly, a summary of the main issues raised in the chapter is presented.

3.2 Research Paradigm

In order to make a detailed exploration and an in-depth understanding of community actions and experiences in participation, and how these influence the quality of basic education, the researcher carried out this study in a qualitative research paradigm. A research paradigm is understood to be a general and basic belief system or world view that gives direction in carrying out this study (Guba and Lincoln, 1994). There are three major types of
paradigms in carrying out research practice. These are the quantitative paradigm, the qualitative paradigm, and the mixed methods paradigm.

The quantitative research paradigm, which is also known as the positivist paradigm is based on the belief that knowledge is out there and researchers need to discover and verify it through direct observation or measurement (Coll and Chapman, 2000). On the other hand, the qualitative paradigm believes that there is no objective reality (Trochin, 2000). And, mixed methods paradigm believes that both quantitative and qualitative paradigms may complement in the same research project (Creswell, 2003). This study was carried out in a qualitative research paradigm.

This researcher, in response to advice from Cavaye (1996) that the choice of research methodology is not based on mere commitment to a particular paradigm but rather on the nature of the study, settled for qualitative methodology. In deciding on the qualitative paradigm, the researcher was guided by the research questions that required that the ‘truth’ be told by those directly involved and actively engaged in the participatory activities.

This study sought to understand how community participation influences quality of basic education. Therefore, this researcher needed to gut the truth from the experiences, opinions and views of the people who are directly involved in participating in providing basic education. This could best be achieved through a qualitative methodology which has many supportive tenets.

To begin with, qualitative research has its roots in constructivist philosophy which believes that reality is constructed by those interpreting and describing
that reality. Thus, constructivism, by being constructed upon this premise of a social construction of reality (Lather, 19920) insists that knowledge is established through the meanings attached to the phenomenon studied (Coll and Chapman, 2000). And, therefore opened up opportunities for this researcher to get to primary schools and villages to collaboratively interact with the participants and allowing them to tell their stories. Thus, through these stories the participants were able to describe their experiences, opinions, and views of reality that helped this researcher in understanding their actions better. In support, Chisaka and Vakalisa (2000:12) emphasise advise that, “Understanding is maximised by minimising the interpersonal distance between the researcher and participant”.

Further, qualitative research is based on the ontological assumption that reality is constructed from individual interpretation of given situations and is not free from bias and influence of values (Gilbert, 2001). In addition, the epistemological base of qualitative research is that knowledge is gained inductively from particular situations and is not reducible to simplistic interpretations (Berger and Luckman, 1996). Therefore, this study focused more on generating in-depth data that brings out to the fore those feelings, values, attitudes, and perceptions that manifest as participatory behaviour of individuals in providing basic education. Thus, qualitative methodology was most appropriate as it focused more on depth rather than breadth of information (Chisaka and Vakalisa, 2000).

Moreover, the goal of employing the qualitative methodology was to understand the complex world of human behaviour from the perspective of those involved in the participation (Weiss, 1998) by focussing on the
subjective experiences of individuals (Patton, 2002). The qualitative methodology was sensitive to the context in which people interacted with each other (Ritchie and Lewis, 2004). In this research study, the role of the researcher was to collaborate with research participants in generating and gathering data, acquire insight, and explain social reality from the perspectives of different people involved in the participation activities (Carter, 2007).

Finally, Qualitative research can be conducted through various research designs for example ethnographic, phenomenological or case study, grounded theory, and narrative research (Creswell, 2003; Strauss and Corbin, 1990). In this study the researcher employed a case study design.

### 3.3 Research Design

Research design has been described as a general term for a number of separate but related issues that include the aims of the research, appropriate methodology, the data collection techniques, as well as data analysis procedures and interpretation (White, 2003). It is the framework for the research (Creswell, 1994); the blue print or detailed plan through which the study is carried out (Babbie, 2010) and should be consistent with the qualitative paradigm in which this research is carried out.

There are various designs for carrying out research studies. These include survey, experimental, case study, and historical designs (Cohen and Manion, 1980). Each of the designs has special strengths and limitations that define their appropriateness for use in a given research problem. This study, which
sought to understand how community participation dynamics influenced quality of basic education, was carried out in the framework of a case study design.

### 3.3.1 The Case Study Design

According to Yin (2003: 13) a case study is “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context”. In carrying out this study, the case study design had several advantages. Most significantly, the case study provided a platform to use a variety of methods to generate data, thus facilitation of delving deep into the participation processes, gathering and collecting large amounts of information on the few cases, to achieve a rich description of the phenomenon (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003; Creswell, 2003; Stake, 1995; Yin, 2003).

In addition, the case study design was appropriate as it provided an opportunity for investigating a contemporary phenomenon such as ‘community participation’ within its real life context because it allows an investigation to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real life events (Neuman, 1995; Stake, 1995; White, 2003; Yin, 2003). Therefore, although case studies can be rather limited in focus (Babbie, 2010), they can provide for a fuller understanding of a concept, particularly when a concept is heavily influenced by its context (Yin, 2003).

Moreover, since a case study is a way of organising data to keep focus on the totality of the phenomenon under investigation (Weiss, 1998), and demonstrate causal arguments about how general social forces take shape
and produce results in a specific setting (Ragin, 2000) it is a holistic way to approach this research considering the inter relationships between people, institutions, and events in community participation (Weiss, 1998).

Since the focus of this study was on how the dynamics involved in the participation of community members influenced quality of basic education, the case could not be invested seriously without the context of the villages and the school settings in which it happened. It is in these villages and schools that parents and community members live and get involved in providing basic education. Therefore, it could have been difficult for this researcher to construct a true picture of community participation and its influence on quality of basic education without taking into account the context within which it happened.

Also, the case study approach to research provides some guide lines on how the sample for the study is selected, how the data are to be generated, the data collection instruments to be used, as well as how the data will be prepared, analysed, as well as how the findings and conclusions are to be reported (Yin, 2003).

### 3.3.2 Limitations of the Case Study Design

However, in spite of the advantages of the case study design that have been presented above, it has some limitation in that the findings of this research study could only be extrapolated to similar cases (Monnette et al. 2011; White, 2000; Yin, 2003) and may not be generalisable to wider populations. Although, the findings of this study may not be generalisable to wider
population, the research study remains valuable as it was not focussing on
generalisability of the findings but rather on providing a thick description on
how the dynamics in community participation influenced quality of basic
education.

3.4.0 The study Population

Literature advises that, when selecting the sample of the study, it is important
to start by defining the total population from which the sample will be drawn.
Most scholars seem to agree that the population, which sometimes referred to
as the parent population (White, 2003), of a study comprises all the people or
items that we wish to generalise the results of our research, or from which the
sample is to be drawn (Borg and Gall, 1979; Ritchie and Lewis, 2003; White,
2003).

And for this study, the parent population was made up of the entire set of
people of Manicaland province who were potential participants of this study by
being members of rural communities who were involved in basic education
activities in local primary (Bless and Higson (1995).

3.4.1 Geographical location of the study area

This study was carried out in the rural areas in Zimbabwe. Zimbabwe has ten
provinces in all, which include Manicaland. Manicaland province has seven
education districts, namely Buhera, Chirumanzi, Chipinge, Makoni, Mutare,
Mutasa, and Nyanga. This study focussed on Mutare and Mutasa districts
which were purposefully and conveniently selected. The two districts were
selected because of their convenient proximity to the city of Mutare from where the researcher was based and would reduce transport costs to and fro the research sites (Cohen and Manion, 1980; Marshall, 1996). Together, Mutare and Mutasa districts provided a more complete picture of the various geographical backgrounds of primary schools in rural Zimbabwe, which are the former tribal trust lands and now communal areas, the resettlement areas and large and small scale commercial farming areas. Therefore, the population of the study was made up of all members of rural communities in Mutare and Mutasa districts. The geographical location of the districts is given in the map of Manicaland Province that is given below.
3.5.0 The study sample

Research scholars have observed that, in most cases it is difficult, if not impossible, to question every member of the total population, hence the need to confine the study to a limited number of the population (White, 2003). It is argued that, the use of a sample enables the researcher to use the resources available for the study more effectively and thus the quality of data generated and how it is managed may be improved. More so, by making use of study samples, the practice of research becomes less expensive, time consuming
and more practical especially when the research population is large (Babbie, 2010).

Since qualitative studies mostly make use of the purposive and convenience sampling techniques (Yin, 2003). And, the focus of this qualitative research is to gain an understanding of the nature community participation in rural primary schools and describe how this participation influences quality of basic education. Therefore, the sample should be purposively selected to ensure inclusion of relevant schools and their communities that should be accessible to this researcher (Cohen and Manion, 1980; Ritchie and Lewis, 2004; White, 2003).

The selection process for the population and the research settings for this study involved identifying those schools and communities which, by virtue of their relationship with this study’s research questions, were deemed suitable to provide the most relevant, comprehensive and rich information (Ritchie and Lewis, 2004; Tellis, 1997; Streubert and Carpenter, 1995). This selection of settings was achieved through the use of both purposive and convenience sampling techniques.

Three primary schools were purposively selected for this study, which are Mafara and Batsirai primary schools from Mutasa district, and Chiedza primary school in Mutare district. And, it is prudent to state here, that the names of the schools that have been used are pseudo names that have been adopted for the purposes of this study only. Mafara primary school is located within a large commercial farming and resettlement area. Batsirai primary school is located in the communal areas and Chiedza primary school within a
small scale commercial farming area. These schools were deemed information rich cases and their selection was achieved through purposive and convenience sampling of the population (Cohen and Manion, 1980; Creswell, 1994; White, 2003; Yin, 2003).

Together, the three communities provided a wide range of the socio-economic backgrounds equivalent to those obtaining in most rural areas in Zimbabwe. Most of the members of Batsirai community were peasant farmers whose livelihood was largely sustained by subsistence farming. Mafara community members were of various backgrounds that included, resettled farmers, former workers of commercial farmers, current workers of commercial farmers, workers of resettled farmers, vendors, workers in indigenous timber processing ventures, vendors, and gold panners. And, most of Chiedza community members were small scale farmers whose livelihoods were dependent on crop farming.

In this study, the research participants, who included the SDC members, parents, teachers, head teachers, headmen and councillors in the respective communities, were purposively chosen for their being the main actors in the participation process. The sample for this study is summarised in table 3:1 below.
Table 3:1 Research sample at each research site

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stakeholder</th>
<th>Data collection strategy</th>
<th>participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Focus group discussion (FGD)</td>
<td>In-depth interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village head</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School head</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local councilor</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School-devt committee</td>
<td>FGD</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>FGD</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opinion leader</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female parents/guard</td>
<td>FGD</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female parent/guard</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male parents/guard</td>
<td>FGD</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male parent/gardian</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female community</td>
<td>FGD</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male community</td>
<td>FGD</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business persons</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL per community</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL for three communities</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Own.

3.5.1 Representativeness of the study sample

The issue of representativeness of research samples is of utmost importance in quantitative research (Borg and Gall, 1989; Cohen and Manion, 1980).
However, the literature that was reviewed for this study has revealed that most research scholars, Babbie (2010) Patton (2001), Monnette et al. (2011), and Strauss and Corbin (1990) agree that in qualitative research, it is not essential to focus on attaining representative samples for the study. Hence, the participants in this study were chosen on the understanding that they could contribute relevant and rich experiences, views, and opinions, for making a thick description of how community participation dynamics influenced quality of basic education.

Equally important was the realisation that, although the residents and teachers in Mafara, Batsirai, and Chiedza communities were not representative of all the teachers and residents in Mutare and Mutasa districts, they were characteristic of teachers and community residents in most rural areas in Zimbabwe. Hence, the findings of this study could be transferred to those similar settings (Babbie, 2010; Ritchie and Lewis, 2003; White, 2003).

Further, in attempting to attain a near complete picture of the various geographical backgrounds of primary schools and communities in rural areas in Zimbabwe, the researcher was not focussing on purposes of generalising research findings on the study population but only to widen the scope and character of the participant experiences under study, thus making the research more robust and credible (Baxter and Jack, 2008; Robson, 1993; Stake, 1995; Yin 2003).
3.6.0 Data generation and gathering methods

Qualitative researchers employ a variety of methods for generating and gathering data (Creswell, 2003). These methods include interviews, observations, focus group discussions, and organisation’s documents (White, 2003). Most of these methods are interactive and much humanistic in nature, thus qualitative research methods are sensitive to participants in the study (Neuman, 1997). This study made use of the interview, focus group discussion, observation, and document analysis methods in generating and gathering data. The use of multiple methods of data generation and gathering was significant increasing accuracy data collected through triangulation of the interview and observation and documented information (Babbie, 2010; Carter, 2007; Turner, 2010).

3.6.1 Data generation and gathering Process

The focus of this study was to uncover the influence of community participation dynamics on quality of basic education in Manicaland province in Zimbabwe. The objective was to investigate community participation processes and how they influenced basic education quality. Three schools that were deemed convenient and capable of providing relevant data for the study were purposely selected. This was followed by selection of research participants at each site through convenient and purposive sampling. Then the data generation processes commenced.
The data generation processes in research should be guided by strict adherence to research ethics (Babbie, 2010; Ritchie and Lewis, 2004; Weiss, 1998). This researcher made a visit to the provincial education director for Manicaland province to seek permission to carry out the study and was granted through the authority of the permanent secretary for education. Then, all three primary schools were visited to discuss with head teachers and headman and councillor on the nature and purpose of the study and sought permission and negotiated entry into the study communities. Subsequently, appointments were made with participants, who were later visited on the agreed upon dates and venues. Data generation and collection programme for this study is summarised in the field schedule given in table 3:2 below.
Table 3: The Field Schedule for data collection

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Why</th>
<th>In-depth interview</th>
<th>Focus group</th>
<th>Observation</th>
<th>Documents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal experiences, views, non verbal cues</td>
<td>Large number of participants, personal experiences and views, aided recall, extended views</td>
<td>State of school facilities, participants’ interaction</td>
<td>Augment and corroborate oral data</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How</td>
<td>Visit schools, audio tape recorder, transcribe</td>
<td>Visit schools, audio tape recorder, transcribe</td>
<td>Naturally occurring Relevant data, sit in meetings, class visits</td>
<td>Access minute books, progress record books, asset registers, fees registers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>where</td>
<td>head teacher’s office headman’s residence</td>
<td>Classrooms</td>
<td>At respective schools</td>
<td>Provided by head teacher and class teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With whom</td>
<td>Head teacher, Headman, Councilor</td>
<td>Parents Other community members Teachers</td>
<td>Parents, teachers, head teacher, headman, councilor</td>
<td>Teachers, head teachers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: own.
The in-depth interview and the focus group discussion were the principal data generation methods that were used in this study. The two methods were used in combination so as to facilitate data saturation (Kumar (2005), which is a point where the researcher found that he was no longer obtaining any new data, or where new data occurred, it was negligible.

3.6.2.0 In-depth interview method

In-depth interviews are one of the main methods used for generating data in qualitative research (Babbie, 2010; Creswell, 1994; Ritchie and Lewis, 2004; Streubert and Carpenter, 1995; Weiss, 1998). By definition, an interview is described as a form of conversation where interviewer and interviewee collaborate in producing retrospective or prospective accounts of their past or future actions, experiences, feelings, and thoughts (Rapley, 2007).

In this study, semi structured in-depth interviews, in which the researcher asked semi structured open ended questions (Babbie, 2010), were used to generate research data.

The in-depth interviews were held with the head teacher, headman, and councillor in each of the three research sites. The role of the researcher in the interview was to initiate conversation, listen to the participant as they describe their experiences in their own words (Weiss, 1998), and asking some questions as well as probing without bias (Rapley, 2007). Also, the researcher made some focussed observations during the interview, and monitored the
direction of the conversation (Gall, Gall, and Borg, 2003) and noted other non
verbal cues from the encounter (Babbie, 2010; Weiss, 1998).

3.6.2.1 Preparing for the In-depth Interview

In carrying out the interviews, the researcher was guided by the interview
protocols that the researcher developed specifically for this study. Upon
completion of the draft copy of the interview protocols, they were forwarded to
the research supervisor for scrutiny and advice. In addition, the researcher
discussed the draft interview protocols with a colleague who has extensive
experience in community participation in schools. The resultant comments
from the supervisor and colleague were factored into the final interview
protocols that were translated into Shona, pilot tested, adjusted before they
were used in this study (Turner, 2010; White, 2003).

The interview protocol is a document that carries questioning guidelines that
are followed to ensure uniformity in carrying out the interviews (Boyce and
Neale, 2006). Thus, the interview protocols that were prepared for this study
contained interview questions that the interviewer used to explore
participation issues during the interview. In addition, the protocols contain a
statement for informed consent and confidentiality of participants in sync with
research ethics (Babbie, 2010; Turner, 2010).

However, the interview protocols were used only as guides and the
interviewer avoided restraining participants from telling their stories (Boyce
and Neale, 2006) in this open ended qualitative research.

3.6.2.2 Conducting the in-depth interview
The interviews were conducted at the primary schools in an open and free atmosphere that enhanced dialogue between the researcher and the interviewee. The interviews were held separately with the head teacher, headman, and councillor in each community. In each case, the researcher started by explaining the objective of the interview, explained why the interviewee had been chosen to participate in the study, provided assurance on confidentiality and sought oral consent and permission to digitally record the dialogue (Boyce and Neale, 2006; Park Studies Unit, 2009; Ritchie and Lewis, 2003; Turner, 2010).

During the interview, the researcher would continuously refocus the interview on the relevant community participation issues. In addition the researcher would prod on issues of interest by asking questions such as ‘would you explain that further, can you elaborate on that idea, would you give me an example’ (Boyce and Neale, 2006:5) as follow up to interviewee responses.

In the process of the conversation, some of the gestures and facial expressions of interest that the interviewee exhibited were recorded by the researcher. Also, the researcher engaged in post-interview reflection sessions in which issues of much interest from the data were captured in precise written notes for use during the data analysis process (Chenail, 1995).

3.6.2.3 Recording data during interviews

The written notes that were capture by the researcher during in-depth interviews were additional to the main record that was captured on the digital recorder. In the beginning of each interview, the researcher sought permission
to record the conversations from the participants. The researcher recorded each one of the interview conversations on digital recorder (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003) and thus creating an audit trail and enhancing credibility of the research study (Markel, West, and Rich, 2011; Corden and Sainsbury, 2006).

3.6.2.4 Benefits from In-depth interviews

One of the major benefits that was realised was that, the in-depth interview technique focused directly on the research topic and provided more detailed information than observation and document analysis methods that were used in this study (Savenye and Robinson, 2001; White, 2003). Also, the in-depth interviews were held in a private set up in which the interviewee was alone with the interviewer, thus was relaxed and opened up to give more detailed explanations of their experiences and opinions that with the other methods that were used in this study. Lastly, the researcher observed that the direct face to face set up facilitated a faster establishment of confidence and trust in the interviewee thereby explaining the participation issues fully and truthfully.

3.6.2.5 Challenges faced with in-depth interviews

The major limitation this researcher observed regarding the use of in-depth interview method of data generation was that it was time intensive. The researcher needed a lot of time follow the process of preparing the interview protocols, travelling to make appointments, carrying out the actual interviews and reflection time after the interviews (Boyce and Nealle, 2006). In addition, the time spent on transcribing the interviews, verifying the transcriptions, and
preparing them for data analysis was immense (Mclellan, Macqueen, Neidig (2003). And, much time was spent on analysing the data, which was done manually (Chenail, 1995; Pope et al. 2000). Another limitation that was observed by this researcher was bias. In one of the in-depth interviews a participant seemed to provide inconsistent explanations to the questions that were raised by the researcher in clear attempt to falsify responses to ‘participation’ policy issues regarding school fees. Thus, the researcher made special effort to corroborate the information with other sources (Boyce and Nealle, 2006).

3.6.3.0 Focus Group Discussion method

The focus group discussion was the other key methods that were used to generate data for this study. Focus groups are when a number of people who posses certain characteristics are brought together and questions are raised for them to discuss (Stewart and Shamdasli, 1990; Weiss, 1998). The homogenous group produces qualitative data, in a group discussion under the moderation of the researcher, to help understand the topic of interest (Kruger and Casey, 2000; Park Studies Unit, 2009).

3.6.3.1 Preparing for focus group discussion

The preparation for carrying out focus group discussions was the same as for in-depth interviews. Focus group discussion protocol was developed and verified with the research supervisor and experienced colleague. In addition,
preparation for focus group discussion involved identifying suitable venues and selection of participants for the discussions.

Participants for participation in the focus group discussions were purposively selected from among the members of each community. Participants were selected on the basis of their relevancy to the community participation issues that were to be discussed (Stewart and Shamdasi, 1990). Separate groups were selected for men and women in an effort to enhance openness and candid participation in the discussion (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003). In the same argument, separate groups were chosen for parents with children in the school and for other community members who did not have children currently in the schools. However, focus groups for the school teachers and SDCs had both male and females in one group.

And, only members who were willing and able to attend the focus group discussion at the agreed upon venue participated in the study (Babbie, 2010; Kruger and Casey, 2000; Ritchie and Lewis, 2003).

Focus group sizes ranged from 5 members for the smallest group up to 12 in the largest group that discussed (Kruger and Casey, 2000; Park Studies Unit, 2009; Ritchie and Lewis, 2003). However, the literature that was reviewed for this study revealed that scholars were not agreed on a standard focus group size, and Kruger and Casey (2000) recommended a range of 4 to 12 members per group.

Most of the group discussions were held in classrooms, as previously agreed with participants, in which benches had been prepared in advance. And as the participants arrived, they were received by the researcher, who served a glass
of orange juice and biscuits to each participant arriving, as a token of appreciation and refreshment from the walk to the venue (Park Studies Unit, 2009), as they engaged in informal chat.

3.6.3.2 Carrying out the focus group discussions

The focus group, as a data generation method, relies significantly on the success of the moderator (Park Studies Unit, 2009; Stewart and Shamdasi, 1990). This researcher, who had relevant previous experience in moderating focus groups, and had studied literature on the same (Park Studies Unit, 2009; Robinson, 1993), was the moderator in this study.

The researcher was able to establish rapport with the group and started each session by thanking the participants for attending, explaining the purpose of the discussion, and why they were chosen to attend. The researcher then went on to explain participant’s right to participate, assuring confidentiality of data and requesting permission to tape record the discussion (Park Studies Unit, 2009; White, 2003).

Then, when all was agreed upon, and the participants were settled and relaxed, the moderator went on to explain how the group was going to function during the discussion. The moderator the introduced the topic and set the discussion in motion by asking the first open ended question from the focus group protocol. However, the protocol remained a guide as the researcher was flexible and asked questions in line with how the discussion unfolded (Creswell, 2003).
3.6.3.3 Role of the moderator

The role of the moderator was to ensure the discussion remained focused and there was adequate interaction among the participants. The moderator was always attentive, listening carefully, and probing when participant’s comments are not clear or to seek further information (Kruger and Casey, 2003; Stewart and Shamdas, 1990). The moderator made sure each participant had an opportunity to speak by encouraging and maintaining eye contact, but avoiding being part of the discussion and seeking consensus on views and opinions that arose (Kruger and Casey, 2003; Ritchie and Lewis, 2003;).

Besides steering the discussion, the moderator was tape recording the discussion and writing down note on important incidents and comments made by the participants.

At the end of the discussion the moderator thanked the participants for participating in the discussion, ensure them that their comment are valuable and some of them will be included in the final report. He then asked the participants to ask any questions they had regarding community participation issues under focus. Lastly, the researcher informed the participants that he may come back for more information if need arose.

3.6.3.4 Benefits from the focus group discussion

The focus group discussion method for data generation was useful as it created a natural life situation conversation setting. In this setting, participants stimulated each other by their comments and others on getting reminded of
their own experiences added on to the comments (Krugger and Casey, 2003). And, because they were all familiar with the community participation topic under discussion, they each had their own individual views, opinions and experiences to share in the discussion (Kruger and Casey, 2003; Ritchie and Lewis, 2003).

In addition, the focus group discussion method was beneficial in that it made it possible for the researcher to obtain more personal experiences, views and opinions from more participants than would have been with individual interviews.

Lastly, although the participants were advised that the aim was not to reach a consensus, the group discussion supported collective sense making process, clearly showing a synergistic character (Stewart and Shamdasi, 1990) and the viewpoint gained was well thought out and group shaped (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003) thus bringing real insight and highlighting lay experiences that could contribute significantly in shaping educational policy (Stewart and Shamdasi, 1990).

### 3.6.3.5 Challenges faced with focus group discussion method

However, the researcher observed some challenges in using the focus group discussion method as a technique for data generation. To begin with, the researcher observed some conformity effects as participants tended to provide views that tended to conform to the general trend of comments. However the moderator was quick to notice and kept reminding participants
that consensus was not the objective of the discussion and individual opinions, views and experiences were important (Evaluation Briefs, 2008; Ritchie and Lewis, 2003).

In addition, in one of the focus group discussions, an outspoken participant, at times, tended to dominate the discussion, and the moderator had to tactfully bring in others participants into the discussion. And unavoidably, the researcher observed that the focus group discussion method of data generated a lot of qualitative data that was time consuming during the data analysis processes (Chenail, 1995; Powell and Renner, 2003).

3.6.4.0 The Observation Method

In addition to interview and focus group methods of generating data, the observation method, which is a common and useful technique in building detailed narratives in qualitative research (Kumar, 1987), was also used in this study. The observation method of data gathering is in two forms, which are participant observation and non participant observation (Yin, 2003; White, 2000). Participant observation is when the observer becomes part of the activities he or she is observing (White, 2000). And, non participant observation is when the observer is not involved in the activities he or she is observing (Yin, 2003). This study employed the non participant observation technique.
3.6.4.1 Non participant observation

In this study, the researcher was actively engaged in identifying and recording naturally occurring data as it presented during the entire study period. The researcher observed relevant issues relating to the state of the school facilities, events such as meetings, children’s behaviour in and out of classes, teacher behaviour, as well as teaching and learning activities in their natural settings in the research sites. Further, the focus of this researcher’s observation effort was to elicit data that helped in further understanding of issues that had been raised during in-depth interviews and focus group discussions as well as to identify any new evidence that was relevant to focal issues in the study.

3.6.4.2 Recording of data

The observation data were recorded in a notebook in which the date and time of the observations were made (Yin, 2003). In some cases some photographs, especially of buildings were taken as a way of recording some of the observations made, as an example, photographs of classrooms and other facilities that were available in one of the primary schools that participated in this study (White, 2003).

3.6.4.3 Benefits of the observation method

This was a cheap method that was useful in providing additional as well as corroborating some of the evidence from in-depth interviews and focus group discussion (White, 2003) especially in relation to influence of participation on
behaviour of children at school, as well as availability of resources for classroom use.

In addition, observation method was useful in establishing the context in which community participation was taking place in the each of the three primary schools (Yin, 2003). However, some challenges were face by this researcher during the process of gathering data through the observation method.

Moreover, the observation was a perfect strategy for studying non verbal communication and the consequences of behaviour and events, which were some of the focal point in this study (Ritchie and Lewis 2004; White, 2003) particularly during in-depth interviews and focus group discussions. Thus, direct observation was useful because it provided the researcher opportunity to study community participation processes in their natural setting, which helped in revealing some of the things that informants were unable to describe during interviews or focus group discussions (Kumar, 1987).

3.6.4.4 Challenges faced with the observation method

The challenge that this researcher faced was that of bias. This researcher, at times observed situations which he did not agree with from a personal point of view, and had to keep self reminding on the need to be objective when interpreting that data (White, 2003; Yin, 2003).
3.6.5.0 The Document Analysis Method

Further, data in this study was gathered through a review of documents from the primary schools. This activity involved the study of existing documents with the aim of understanding their substantive content as well as eliciting deeper meanings that could be revealed by their content (Ritchie and Lewis, 2004).

3.6.5.1 Reviewing the documents

In this study the researcher analysed minutes of school development committee meetings, financial records, asset registers, class progress records, class attendance registers, and minutes of parents meetings. Most of these documents contained confidential information and were kept under lock and key in the head teacher’s office.

The researcher sought permission to review the documents, assured the head of anonymity and confidentiality in handling the data before the reviews. In most of the cases, the researcher had to review the documents in the school office with the head teacher in attendance. Besides providing opportunity to observe interaction between the head teacher and visitors that occasionally came in, the office setting had the convenience of seeking immediate clarification on some of the contents in the documents.
3.6.5.2 Recording documented data

Data that were gathered from various documents were recorded as written notes indicating source and date of recording. The written notes were part of the data that were analysed in this study.

3.6.5.3 Benefits from documented data

In this study, documents provided critical data for corroborating, augmenting, and triangulating with evidence from in-depth interviews and focus group discussions (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003; White, 2003; Yin, 2003). The data, such as from minutes of meetings covered a broad spectrum of community participation issues, and over a long period hence the researcher was able to establish trends on several aspects over time (Yin, 2003). Also, the data was more specific, including names of people and places, quantities and time in transactions and other relevant activities. However, the researcher faced a few challenges in working with the document analysis method of data gathering.

3.6.5.4 Challenges faced with documents method

The researcher faced challenges in that school heads were reluctant in availing some of the documents to the researcher. The financial record book was one example of such records (Yin, 2003). The researcher had to re-affirm confidentiality and anonymity in handling the data, in all three schools. Further, in some of the cases the records were incomplete, especially with regard to children’s progress records, or incomprehensible in some minutes of
SDC meetings. The researcher had to seek clarification and got relevant input from the head teacher.

Therefore, this study was carried out using the following data generation and collection methods: the observation method, document analysis, depth interviews, and focus group discussion methods. Each of these data generation methods was used to solicit specific type of data to satisfy the research questions raised in the study. The observation technique focussed on isolating those subtle participant’s behaviours that usually accompany oral description of experiences in participation, as well as observable features of education quality dimensions. In addition, the document analysis method was most relevant in obtaining documented data from records of participation activities such as meetings and general work in the school. The data from documents was useful in triangulation of data from in-depth interview and focus group discussions. Further, In-depth interviews and focus group discussions were useful in exploring participants’ experiences, attitudes, feelings, and perceptions in community participation in education and subsequent influence on quality of basic education. Overall, by widening the data generation strategies the researcher was able to achieve data saturation as a point was reached when no knew data was obtained from succeeding participants.
3.7.0 Analysing the research data

Data analysis process, which by definition involves the transformation of raw data into research findings and conclusions (Chenail, 1995; Hossain, 2008) is a daunting task. The data that were generated for this study were analysed following a qualitative data analysis process. The process of analysing qualitative data can be done manually or by computerised processes. There are several types of commercial computer software, such as QDA, QSRN4, ND*IST, ATLAS, WinMAX, and free ones such as AnSWR, that are available for analysing qualitative data (Mclellan et al. 2003). However, due to the high cost of commercial computer software and lack of training in using even the free download software, this researcher used the equally robust manual technique (Kruger and Casey, 2003) of analysing the research data.

3.7.1 The data Analysis Process

In this study, the process of analysing data started during data generation and gathering, where the researcher made post interview data reviews and wrote down summary memos of key points raised and took note of ‘interesting’ points for following up in subsequent interview sessions (Kruger and Casey, 2003; Pope et al. 2000). Upon conclusion of the in-depth and focus group discussion interview phase of data generation, the researcher transformed the oral data that was captured on digital tape recorder into written data, through a transcribing process (Mclellan et al. 2003).
3.7.2 Transcribing the interview and focus group discussion data

After data collection, the next step was the critical, time consuming, and tedious task of transcribing the oral interview and focus group discussion data into transcripts that form the base for qualitative data analysis (Powell and Renner, 2003; Mclellan et al. 2003; Yin, 2003; Ritchie and Lewis, 2003). Although the interviews were conducted in Shona, the data were transcribed directly into English (Birbili, 2000; Halai, 2007. The researcher, being proficient in both Shona and English, transcribed the data, word for word, himself from oral to written text (Birbili, 2000; Halai, 2007). And, in order to check translation as well as transcription consistency the researcher sought the services of two language experts who independently reviewed the transcripts against the audiotape recordings (Bailey, 2008; Birbili, 2000; Halai, 2007; Powell, and Renner, 2003). The researcher and the expert reviewers then came to conference, discussed and incorporated the observations made (Birbili, 2000; Halai, 2007) and thus produced the final transcriptions that were used for analysing data for this study. Therefore, in this study, the researcher has used translated words as direct quotes (Birbili, 2000; Chenail, 1995; Halai, 2007).

Equally important, when producing the final transcripts, the researcher printed the transcripts in three different colour codes according to the research sites, for ease of linking data back to particular communities during analysis (Kruger and Casey, 2003).
3.7.3 Data reduction

Data reduction refers to the multi purpose process of selecting, focussing, simplifying, abstracting and transforming the data that appear in written up field notes or transcriptions (Miles and Huberman, 1994). In this stage the researcher worked systematically through the whole data set. Firstly, the researcher was engaged in reading and re-reading the transcripts, highlighting similar data in readiness for cutting and pasting into categories (Hossain, 2008; Kruger and Casey, 2003; Mclellan et al 2003;).

This was in addition to having listened to the tape recorded data over and over during transcribing, reading and re-reading the transcripts, and reflecting on the data and research questions, a process that had immersed the researcher into his data. In the same process, the researcher had engaged in ‘memoing’ as he recorded what was being learnt from the data (Chenail, 1995; Ritchie and Lewis, 2003; Turner, 2010). And, these noted ideas were used as additional data during analysis.

The next stage was to cut off similarly coded data into different packages, thus categories were beginning to emerge (Miles and Huberman, 1994). In short, this meant that the researcher was identifying and coding what different participants were saying about a particular research question (Kruger and Casey, 2003), thus providing a platform for the researcher to compare and contrast each data against the rest so as to establish categories (Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Pope et al. 2000). The data from the categories that emerged was then captured on a ‘master list’ for further analysis and interpretation (Kruger and Casey, 2003; Miles and Huberman, 1994).
3.7.4 Data display

Data display is an organised and comprehensive tabular display of research data that allows the researcher to draw conclusions (Miles and Huberman, 1994). In this study, data displays were created using the word computer software and the resultant tables are included in this report in appendix. The data display tables provided a platform for the researcher to further scrutinise and reflect on the data, continue comparing and contrasting, identifying patterns and inter relationships among the initial categories (Miles and Huberman, 1994; Patton, 1994). In this further scrutinising stage, the researcher focussed on sorting different codes and regrouping them into potential themes and sub categories (Patton, 1994; Miles and Huberman, 1994).

In the process of comparing and contrasting, the researcher saw the final sub categories emerging on one hand, and higher order themes on the other (Kruger and Casey, 2003; Patton, 1994), thus the researcher ended up with a hierarchy of thematic categories and sub categories (Patton, 1994). It was from these coded data, emerging categories, sub categories and themes that findings and conclusions for the study were drawn (Kruger and Casey, 2003; Miles and Huberman, 1994; Patton, 1994).

And most important in this study, the data analysis process was highly inductive (Babbie, 2010; Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Trochin, 2000). Thus, the themes, categories and sub categories were not a-priori theme impositions on the data, but a distillation of from the many voices of the research participants when they described their individual views, opinions and experiences.
The final hierarchy of codes as given below and will be of critical importance when reporting on the findings in chapter four of this study. Critically, displays assist in the understanding research data as well as providing the necessary foot steps to the research conclusions (Miles and Huberman, 1994).

The hierarchy of data codes

**Theme one:** Community contribution in basic education

(i) Preparing children for school

(1) Ensuring that children are fed

(2) Clothing children appropriately

(ii) Building and maintaining school buildings

(1) Construction of new school structures

(a) School buildings

(b) School grounds

(2) Repairing of existing school structures

(a) School buildings

(b) School grounds

(iii) Supplying teaching and learning materials

(1) Stationery

(a) Exercise books

(b) Pens and pencils

(2) Text books

(a) Pupils text books

(b) Teachers’ resource books
(iv) Monitoring teaching and learning processes

(1) Monitoring teachers’ behaviour
   (a) Teachers’ attendance
   (b) Teachers’ behaviour in community

(2) Monitoring children’s learning activities
   (a) Monitoring learning progress
   (b) Monitoring homework
   (c) Monitoring sporting activities

(V) Money for the school

(1) Paying school fees

(2) Fund raising projects
   (a) Sports gala
   (b) Brick moulding

(vi) Decision making

(1) Decisions on school development activities

(2) Decisions on fees levels

Theme Two: Dynamics influencing participation

(i) Economic and financial dynamics

(1) Level of income

(2) Level of involvement in administration of school income

(ii) Social dynamics

(1) Awareness of educational issues

(2) Political affiliation

(3) Level of availability of basic needs
(iii) Cultural Dynamics

(1) Community attitude on education

(2) Community gender role expectations

Theme Three: Influence on quality of education

(i) Teaching and children’s learning

(1) Participation in class activities

(a) Involvement during group work activities

(b) Involvement in individual written work activities

(2) Commitment in teaching and learning

(a) Absent from school

(b) Drop out from school

(c) Lack of commitment by teachers

(3) Relationships in teaching and learning

(a) Teacher and parent relationship

(b) Teacher and child relationship

(ii) Influence on scope of school curriculum

(1) Inability to provide additional school facilities

(a) Inability to provide school buildings

(b) Inability to provide equipment

(2) Inability to hire skilled personnel

The diagrams given below provide a visual representation of the hierarchy of the three major themes starting with theme one.
Figure 3:2 Major theme one - community contribution in providing basic education

- Preparing children for school
  - Ensuring children are fed
  - Clothing children appropriately

- Building and maintaining school facilities
  - Constructing new structures
    - Constructing new buildings
    - Constructing new school grounds
  - Repairing existing school structures
    - Repairing existing buildings
    - Repairing existing school grounds

- Supplying teaching and learning materials
  - Supplying school stationery
    - Supplying exercise books
    - Supplying pens and pencils
    - Supplying children’s text books
  - Supplying school text books
    - Supplying teachers’ resource books

- Monitoring teaching and learning processes
  - Monitoring teachers’ behaviour
    - Monitoring teachers’ attendance
    - Monitoring teachers’ behaviour in community
  - Monitoring children’s learning activities
    - Monitoring teachers’ attendance
    - Monitoring learning progress
    - Monitoring children’s home work
    - Monitoring sporting activities

- Paying money for the school budgets
  - Paying school fees
    - Seeking donations - sports gala
    - Income generating projects - bricks

- Contribution in decision making processes
  - Contributing ideas for school development
  - Participating in setting school fees levels
Figure 3:3 Major theme two- dynamics influencing community participation

- Economic and financial dynamics
  - Level of family income
  - Level of involvement in management of school finances
- Social dynamics
  - Level of awareness of educational issues
  - Differences in political affiliation
  - Level of availability of basic needs in the home
  - Initial community attitude to basic education
- Cultural dynamics
  - Differences in roles by gender
Figure 3:4 Major theme three- Influence of community participation on quality of basic education

Influence of community participation on quality

Influence on teaching and learning

- Influence on participation in class activities
- Influence on commitment in teaching and learning
- Influence on involvement in group work
- Influence on individual written work
- Influence on absenteeism
- Influence on drop out
- Influence on commitment of teachers
- Influence on parent and teacher relationships
- Influence on teacher and child relationships
- Influence on availability of additional buildings and furniture
- Influence on additional equipment and gadgets
- Influence on additional teachers
- Influence on additional technical manpower

Influence on scope of school curriculum

- Influence on availability of additional school facilities
- Influence on additional manpower in the school

Influence on teaching and learning

- Influence on participation in class activities
- Influence on commitment in teaching and learning
- Influence on involvement in group work
- Influence on individual written work
- Influence on absenteeism
- Influence on drop out
- Influence on commitment of teachers
- Influence on parent and teacher relationships
- Influence on teacher and child relationships
- Influence on availability of additional buildings and furniture
- Influence on additional equipment and gadgets
- Influence on additional teachers
- Influence on additional technical manpower
Furthermore, the findings of this research are valid as the study was carried out in strict adherence to qualitative research quality assurance guidelines, throughout the whole study process.

3.7.5.0 Research quality assessment

Literature that has been reviewed for this study (Babbie, 2010; Creswell, 2003, Gall et al. 2003; Patton, 1994; Ritchie and Lewis, 2003), has emphasised that qualitative research is a rigorous process from which credible results may be made. However, for the results from qualitative research to be credible, the researcher needs to follow specific quality assurance procedures that have been clearly articulated in qualitative research discourse. Therefore, in carrying out this study, the researcher adopted several quality assurance procedures that made the research a robust and credible study. These quality assurance procedures focussed on achieving credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability aspects of the study.

3.7.5.1 Credibility

The first quality assurance aspect to be considered in this study was credibility in describing the phenomenon. Credibility is the equivalent concept of internal validity in quantitative research (Borg and Gall, 1979). According to (Markel et al. 2011; Shenton, 2004), the concept of credibility in qualitative research deals with the question of how the findings of the study are congruent, that is adequate representation, to reality as obtaining in the
phenomenon under study (Babbie, 2010; Savenye, and Robinson, 2001; Streubert and Carpenter, 1995).

In this research, the researcher ensured credibility of the study by using multiple data generation strategies that included focus group discussions, in-depth interviews, document analysis, and observation. In addition, the in-depth interviews and focus group discussions were held in a free atmosphere which encouraged open sharing of ideas, views, and opinions.

Further, triangulation of data from different groups of parents, teachers, SDC members, councillors, and headmen strengthened the study. Also, the use of language experts in translating and transcribing oral data to written texts increased accuracy of transcripts (Birbili, 2000; Halai, 2007). And, the use of direct quotations, as well as the scrutiny of interview protocols by the research supervisor, all enhanced the credibility of the study (Krefting, 1991; Markel et al. 2011).

Credibility was further enhanced by bringing in the voice of the participants through direct quotations that were used in the final report (Chenail, 1995). Finally, the researcher also verified data with participants as he had an extended contact with the community residents through frequent follow up visits that were made.

3.7.5.2 Confirmability

The second quality assurance aspect to be considered in this study was confirmability of the research data and findings. The equivalent concept of confirmability in quantitative research is objectivity (Krefting, 1991).
Confirmability has been explained as the extent to which the results of the research could be confirmed or corroborated by others (National Health Services, 2006; Streubert and Carpenter, 1995).

This researcher ensured confirmability of the results from this study through triangulation of data sources. The use of multiple data sources helps in confirming the authenticity of the study results. In addition, the researcher upheld the virtue of honesty throughout the research process, sought depth during the data generation processes and widened the scope of the data that was generated (Shenton, 2004) in an effort to strengthen confirmability in this research study. Furthermore, the rigour with which digital data were transformed to written data was such that it enhanced confirmability. The views and opinions of the participants were represented without bias from the researcher thus enhancing the confirmability of the results as well as dependability of the study.

3.7.5.3 Dependability

The third quality assurance aspect that was considered in this study was dependability of the research findings. According to Krefting (1991) the equivalent positivist concept for dependability is reliability. Therefore, the concept of dependability is concerned with whether the study would obtain the same results if it were to be repeated by another researcher (Babbie, 2010; Robinson, 1993; Shenton, 2004).

In this study the researcher made use of peer reviewed interview and focus group discussion protocols that guided this researcher in conducting interviews and focus group discussions (Gall et al. 2003; Turner, 2010).
Therefore, the data collection process was systematic and data were recorded accurately and kept securely as part of an ‘audit trail’ that could enhance dependability of the results of this study (Babbie, 2010).

In addition, the researcher followed a systematic and traceable coding and recoding technique in analysing data that should adequately guide a different researcher in carrying out a similar analysis. Moreover, the researcher has provided thick descriptions of the research methods that were followed in this study, thus this could facilitate step by step replication of the study and produce similar results (Krefting, 1991; Robinson, 1993; Streubert and Carpenter, 1995).

3.7.5.4 Transferability

From the quantitative research orientation, external validity is the equivalent concept for transferability (Krefting, 1991). Transferability is the extent to which the results of qualitative research can be transferred to other settings or contexts (National Health Services, 2006; Shenton, 2004; Streubert and Carpenter, 1995).

In this study, the researcher made use of a sample of three schools which, from a quantitative perspective, was too small for generalising, but was appropriate for transfer of findings to schools in similar environments (Krefting, 1991; Streubert and Carpenter, 1995). The researcher has provided dense descriptions of the geographical set up of the study sites including the socio-economic background of the people, and the methods that were used to collect the data, all of which enhance transferability (Krefting, 1991; Shenton, 2004).
In addition, the researcher further enhanced transferability of the findings of this study to similar settings by the systematic and detailed data analysis process that was achieved. Thus producing through systematic research data analysis, authentic results are realised, and could be transferable to similar settings.

Alongside research quality issues are legal and ethical issues that were considered and adhered simultaneously when carrying out this study. Researchers, like in all other professions, have responsibility over the safeguarding of the rights and safety of the people involved in their studies (Streubert and Carpenter, 1995). This responsibility is clearly articulated in literature as ‘the research ethics’, and include issues regarding consent, confidentiality, and anonymity (Babbie, 2010; Streubert and Carpenter, 1995; White, 2000).

3.7.6.0 Research Ethics

In carrying out this study, the researcher was closely guided by the moral principles and values that govern researchers, which include informed consent, confidentiality, and anonymity (Streubert and Carpenter, 1995; White, 2003).

3.7.6.1 Informed consent

Through out the data collection process, the researcher ensured that, participants were fully informed of the purpose of the study, why they had been chosen to participate, and had given their consent to take part in the
research (Streubert and Carpenter, 1995). Participants were made aware of their right to discontinue participation whenever they felt like doing so.

In this study, the researcher made initial visits to make appointments with various stakeholders for a formal visit to discuss issues regarding this study. Thereafter, as per appointment times, this researcher visited the PED for Manicaland province, the DEOs for Mutasa and Mutare districts, teachers and Head teachers of the sampled schools, Head men, councillors, parents and other community members. The purpose of the initial visits was to discuss the purpose of the research and seek permission to carry out the study as well as their consent to participate. The PED and DEOs were visited in their respective offices. The teachers and head teachers were visited at their respective schools. The community members were invited to come to the schools where the researcher met them separately from the teachers. Upon explaining purpose of the visit, permission was granted in all cases, see appendices....... the researcher then made further appointment times for interviews and focus group discussions with the selected participants. The head teachers assisted the researcher as gate keepers, and were instrumental in negotiating entry into the communities through the head men and local councillors at a time when the national political landscape was sensitive. However, the head men, councillors and most of the residents had welcomed the proposed research activities genuinely, confidently, and with open interest.

3.7.6.2 Anonymity
The other ethical issue that was closely respected in this study was that of anonymity. Anonymity refers to situations where the names or identity of the participants who have given information are not known outside the research team (Babbie, 2010; Ritchie and Lewis, 2003). In all cases, participants were given assurance that their names and identities were not going to be made known to people outside the research team (Babbie, 2010; Hossain, 2008; Monnette et al 2011).

3.7.6.3 Confidentiality

Confidentiality refers to a situation where the researcher does not refer comments in written or oral presentations to named or identifiable participants (Babbie, 2010; Ritchie and Lewis, 2003).

In this study, the names that have been used to identify the research sites, that is the primary schools and villages, are pseudo names and do not relate to any real community that is known to this researcher. Anonymity and confidentiality are further enhanced as the direct reports that have been used in this report do not refer to participants by nor by any special characteristics that may lead to exposure of participants (Babbie, 2010; Ritchie and Lewis, 2003). Also, in the data that has been stored and kept, actual names of participants and location have not been used.

3.7.6.4 Protecting participants from harm

Protecting participants from harm is mostly related to emotional harm they may follow after a participant has disclosed information they may later regret having divulged (Babbie, 2010; Ritchie and Lewis, 2003). The researcher was
aware that the issues on community participation were not of a sensitive nature but was alert for any arising situation. However, such situations did not seem to have arisen during the data generation exercise. Although near situations were observed in one of the meetings, the meeting was not occasioned by this researcher.

### 3.7.7 Chapter Summary

This chapter has discussed the methodologies that were used in this study. The study focussed on how community participation influenced quality of basic education in rural areas in Manicaland province in Zimbabwe. The study adopted a qualitative case study framework that was steeped in the constructivist and interpretative research paradigm. Three school sites were conveniently and purposely selected from the study and data were generated through focus group discussion, in-depth interview, document analysis, and observation techniques. Interview and focus group data were translated and transcribed onto transcripts that formed the platform for data coding and identification of emergent categories and themes. The findings and conclusions made were presented and discussed in chapter four of this research report.
CHAPTER 4: DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, AND INTERPRETATION

4.0 Introduction

This chapter focuses on presenting the findings that emerged from the data that were collected during field work in Mafara, Batsirai and Chiedza communities, and were analysed in chapter three. The presentation starts by providing a background to each of the primary schools and the respective communities that participated in this study.

This presentation of background details is followed by the presentation of the findings. The research findings are being presented in the context of the research questions that guided this study. And, the themes that emerged during data analysis are logically sequenced to provide the broad sections in which the story is constructed as given in the hierarchy of codes in chapter 3 above. The fist section focuses on how community residents described what community participation in providing quality basic education meant to them as it was found out to be synonymous with their actual involvement in providing basic education. This is followed by the description of the dynamics that influenced community participation in providing quality basic education in their schools. Next, is the section that focuses on presenting the findings on the
influence of community participation on quality of basic education that was provided in the primary schools that participated in this study.

Lastly, a table of the findings that emerged from the study is given, as it is followed by an analysis and discussion of the findings. And, the chapter summary provides an overview of the study findings. Of note here, is the use of codes in presenting verbatim quotes from the voices of the research participants.

4.1 Coding

The findings that are being presented in this story were constructed by community residents, who comprised parents, teachers, school heads, headmen, SDC members, and councillors, as outlined in chapter three of this study. Data were transcribed verbatim to produce transcripts that provided a platform for analysis, thus some sections of that data that are presented in this report to articulate the findings, are coded for ease of reference to the transcripts. The coding system is as follows: Data for Mafara community are prefix coded (M) followed by a code letter to represent the participants, and digits to represent transcript page and line. For example, Mt1:4 represent the following:

M-Mafara community

t-teachers

1- from teachers’ focus group discussion transcript page 1

4- line 4.
Participant codes are as follows:

- t-teachers
- p-parents
- m-mothers
- 1f.f-fathers
- ht-head teacher
- hm-headman
- sdc-school development committee
- c-councillor
- agm – annual general meeting

Data for Batsirai community are prefix coded (B) and data for Chiedza community are prefix coded (C).

4.2.0 School and community geographical background information

This section of the report focuses on providing the geographical location of each of the three primary schools that participated in this study, as well as the socio-economic activities of the members of their respective communities. And, because of the uniqueness of the relevant features of each primary school and respective community, the backgrounds features are described separately so as to bring out the different features that are relevant to this study. The story starts with a description of Mafara Primary school and community in which it is to be found.

4.2.1 Mafara Primary School
Mafara primary school is located in the ‘new resettlement area’ of Muodzi, some 20 km north of the city of Mutare. It lies in a rich valley where the main economic activities of the people are farming, mining, gold panning and saw milling.

The population of Mafara community was composed of two distinct groups of residents. The majority of this community of about 190 households were former commercial farm workers who live in farm compounds either built of pole and dagga or two roomed brick under asbestos houses. They are no longer in full time employment but occasionally hired out their labour to commercial and newly resettled farmers, saw millers or a gold mining company in the locality. Others engaged in illegal panning of alluvial gold along the banks of Muodzi River that runs through the valley. Most of the women who lived in the farm compounds spent most of their time loitering, and a few others were involved in vending of second hand clothing or operating illegal illicit liquor outlets. And, the children in Mafara community worked alongside their parents in these socio-economic activities.

In a focus group discussion with the teachers, they described how some of the community residents would increase the family work force by involving their primary school children in ‘maricho’ (paid labour for weeding other resident’s fields) when business was brisk. In a data corroboration visit, the researcher met one lady teacher on arrival at the school. On exchanging greetings, the research asked, as in Shona custom, ‘how are your children at home and in Class?’ and she responded thus, “aiwa vekumba varipo havo; ava vepano ava, iiiih...mazuva ano maricho kaaaani, iiiih kurovha
zvanyaaaanya”. This translates to “my children at home are fine; but for the
children in my class, these days, absenteeism is too much”.

In the summer season, some of the girls, mostly from the poor families would
forego school to join their parents in weeding the fields of the wealthier
residents for money. And, boys would join their fathers in getting down the
tunnels to dig out gold ore during school time, from where they would make
substantial amounts of money that they spent on luxuries in the compounds.
Some of the school going girls, mostly grade six and seven, who worked
together with their mothers in the illicit liquor and vending trade did not return
to school.

Then, there were the ‘new farmers’ who are people that have come from
different origins of domicile to settle on plots that were allocated under the fast
track land reform programme of the early 90s. The new farmers, like the farm
workers, lived in pole and dagga huts or small brick structures under
asbestos. The women were mostly engaged in peasant farming while most
the men were away at work elsewhere. Then, there were workers of non
resident new farmers, some of whom had worked for the former commercial
farmers, and now lived with their families on the resettlement farms.

4.2.2 Batsirai primary school

In sharp contrast, Batsirai Primary school and its’ community are located in
the traditional rural areas in Manicaland province. Batsirai primary school is
situated in Batsirai community. This community of over 300 households is
located in the Musodza communal lands some 45 kilometres north west of the
city of Mutare. It stretches out on the flanking foot- hill plains of the majestic
Batsirai mountain range. The main economic activity of the people is subsistence farming. The people live in clusters of round huts and occasional brick houses under asbestos or iron roofs. The dwellings are surrounded by open fields where the residents grow maize, sorghum, and rapoko for grain. Most of the members of Batsirai community were subsistence farmers who depended directly on produce from their farming activities for a living. And, excess produce was sold to raise income for family upkeep and school expenses for their children.

The women and girls were mostly engaged in the fields and vegetable gardens while men and boys looked after cattle and goats. However, some of the residents occasionally took up part time jobs within the community or at far away commercial farms. Others, especially younger men, spent most of their time imbibing alcoholic drinks, loitering around the shopping centre or desperately vending local crafts to women who now and then visited the local stores and grinding mills for groceries.

This researcher would marvel at the scenic views of the settlement each time he drove up the winding gravel road that cuts through the village as it winds up to Batsirai primary school and adjacent Matongo rural trading centre that stand at the base of the towering Batsirai Mountain.

4.2.3 Chiedza primary school

Chiedza primary school and community are located in a small scale farming area, some 40 kilometres south of Mutare. It lies in semi arid and sandy plains where the main economic activity is small scale farming. The majority of this
community of about 200 households live on their owned farms with the extended families.

When the rains are favourable, men, women and children spend most of their time in the fields where they grow maize and sun flowers for commercial purposes alongside small horticultural gardens that produce vegetables for sale. In addition, men often engage in fishing activities in the Musori River that meanders down the sandy plains.

Bordering Chiedza community is the peasantry Makota village with which they have a long standing mutual economic and social relationship through barter and cash trading of maize grain for labour as well as sharing social utilities, including Chiedza primary school. Thus, the Chiedza community was composed of two distinct groups of people, the communal peasant farmers and the small scale farmers. However, the livelihoods of the two groups of residents were highly dependent on successful crop production and trading.

Therefore, each of the three primary schools and respective communities had unique features in terms of location, size, composition and socio economic backgrounds. Mafara community was made up of traditional farm workers, resettled farmers, and workers of non resident resettled new farm owners. The main economic activities included casual employment on commercial farms, gold panning, and vending of second hand clothes and alcohol. Parents, especially the poor, would sometimes withhold their children from going to school so as to increase family labour when part-time job contracts were available. Batsirai community was made up of peasant farmers, whose survival was centred on agricultural activities that produced food for direct
consumption and in some cases surplus for sale and raise money for family upkeep and school fees. Lastly, Chiedza community was made up of small scale commercial farmers and peasant farmers who were both dependent on successful crop farming for a living, including meeting children’s school requirements. Each of the communities under study had distinct features in terms of location, social and economic backgrounds that brought out various unique community attributes in their participation in providing quality basic education.

4.3.0 Characteristics of the Primary schools

This section of the story focuses on the background details of the primary schools that participated in this study. The story starts with a brief reflection on the history of the schools before settling on the enrolment, teachers, facilities and resource situation in the schools.

4.3.1 Historical background

The two older primary schools, Batsirai and Chiedza, were built by the Anglican and Methodist missionaries, in collaboration with the local communities in 1943 and 1948 respectively. The newer school, Mafara, was being started by the Matura rural district council under the government fast track land redistribution programme that started in 2002. The new school which was enrolling children beginning from Early Child Development (ECD) level up to grade seven level, had also come to the rescue of about a hundred traditional farm workers’ children who previously had no school facilities in the locality and had to walk long distances of up to 10 km to the nearest primary school.
Most of the residents of Batsirai and Chiedza communities had received their basic education at their respective primary schools, which have since become centres for most community activities, and were described affectionately as “our school” by the community residents.

All three primary schools in the study were enrolling children from ECD up to grade seven level, and each school had different enrolment characteristics. These characteristics are described separately as given below.

4.3.2.0 School enrolment characteristics

The enrolment details of each school are provided in tabular form as a way of increasing precision and breaking monotony in reading the story (Bowen, 2005). First to be presented is the enrolment for Mafara primary school.

4.3.2.1 Mafara Primary School Enrolment

The school enrolment for Mafara primary school was comparatively smaller than that of Batsirai or Chiedza primary schools. A detailed presentation of the school’s enrolment is given in table 4:1 below.
Table 4:1 Mafara Primary School Enrolment -2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ECD (A)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECD (B)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>145</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Research data

Mafara primary school had more children in the infants’ grade levels than in the junior grades, as shown in the table 4:1 above. Most of the new farmers, not satisfied with the facilities at their school, had transferred their children to the ‘better ‘ and long established Makomborero primary school about 10 kilometres away. Some of children had to walk the distance to and fro the school and others, mostly of the wealthier resettled farmers’ children, were commuting by bus.
The parents usually transferred their children from Mafara to the Makombororo mission primary school in the area, after grade four, when they were now able to walk the distances involved. And, others sent their children to boarding schools or to schools back in their original homes in search of better educational facilities for their children.

Also, some of the parents, especially the former commercial farm workers, stopped their children from continuing school after grade four and five as they had now employable on the local farms or other economic activities in the community.

4.3.2.2 Batsirai primary school enrolment

Table 4: 2 below gives the enrolment figures for Batsirai primary school in 2012. The figures were obtained from the teachers as well as the head teacher’s enrolment records.
Table 4: 2 Batsirai Primary School Enrolment-2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ECD ‘B’</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Class</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>298</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Research data

Batsirai primary school had 298 children, 163 of whom were boys and 135 were girls. The community residents had recently renovated an old building and converting it into a special classroom. Thus 27 children with special learning needs had been identified from grade three to seven and had formed the special needs class and reducing the size of the Of the parent classes.

4.3.2.3 School enrolment Chiedza primary
Lastly, the enrolment for Chiedza primary school, which was fairly balanced across the grade levels as shown in table 4:3 below.

Table 4:3 Chiedza Primary School Enrolment-2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-total</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>304</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Early Childhood Development**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ECD-stage</th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 (3-4 years)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 (4-5 years)</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand-total</td>
<td>191</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>349</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Research data

The school had experienced an unprecedented increase in children enrolling for the 2012 grade one class. Although the head teacher could not provide an explanation for the sharp increase, the teacher in charge of the infants
department speculated on a recently introduced donor sponsored children’s feeding scheme that was based at the school but managed by the community residents.

Therefore, it has been observed that the older primary schools seemed to show a more stable enrolment pattern than the newly established resettlement primary school. Also, the wealthier new farmer parents, in the new resettlement school, were moving away their school going children from their local school to schools outside their community where they would get better facilities for a better quality education. Some of the new farmer parents also laid blame on the calibre of some of the teachers in the new resettlement school.

4.3.3.0 Teaching staff

Most of the classes in all three schools were being taught by qualified teachers who held either certificate, diploma or degree qualifications. However, some of the classes were being taught by student or untrained teachers.

4.3.3.1 Background Details of Teaching Staff

Table 4: 4 below provides background details of teaching staff in the three primary schools that participated in this study.
The teachers who were teaching in the three schools were composed of nine student teachers, twenty two certificate and diploma holders, three graduate teachers, and two Para-professionals. The two Para-professionals were local community women who had been employed by the community residents, through the SDC for teaching in the ECD classes. The student teachers, who are on teaching practice were attached to a qualified teacher and thus taught children in their mentors’ classes. However, the arrangement was different at Mafara Primary school where some of the student teachers had full class responsibility. And, some of the parents who were not happy with the arrangement ended up transferring their children to other schools.
Some of the teachers, in the three schools that participated in this study were not staying in the schools. While most of the teachers were staying in the city of Mutare and were commuting to and fro the primary schools daily, some who were full time members of the communities lived in their homes.

On most occasions, the researcher would find himself giving a lift to some of the teachers each time he visited the school sites for data generation or verification.

In tandem with the teachers' commuting to and fro their schools, the researcher observed that, teachers’ accommodation was critically inadequate in all three schools that participated in this study. At Mafara Primary school, all seven teachers were observed to be sharing one house. This was an ordinary, former farm managers’, 3 bed roomed house that the teachers were to share for accommodation together with their families. As a result, the four qualified teachers were observed to intermittently commute from the city of Mutare where they were renting accommodation for their families.

Batsirai primary school had four teachers’ houses, some of which had some broken window panes and apparently no one was living in them. Five of the teachers come to work at the school by public transport from Mutare each morning. The head teacher and his deputy cycled to and fro the school daily from their home village 10 kilometres away. And, two of the teachers who were residents of Batsirai village resided in their homes in the village, hence leaving five, mostly student teachers staying in the school during term time.

Also, Chiedza primary school had four teachers’ houses. Three of the houses were observed not to have been in use for a long time. These three teachers’
The house, which was being occupied by student teachers, had been renovated recently. The researcher observed that seven of the teachers were commuting to and fro the school daily from Mutare city where they lived. The other four teachers, including the head teacher and his wife, were local and lived in their homes in the small scale farming area.

However, the commuting teachers would at times come to school late and leave earlier than prescribed time as the public transport that was used by the teachers had erratic travel schedules.

Some of the parents were much disgruntled by the inconsistent clock in and out of the schools by the teachers. At Chiedza primary school, the researcher had observed teachers leaving school at 11:59 hours on being picked up by an Econet branded commuter omnibus. Although the echoes of disgruntlement were heard from most research participants from all three school sites, they were loudest in Batsirai School were community residents and teachers ended up in open confrontation that was later resolved by the SDC.

In a focus group discussion with the teachers, some of the teachers expressed their experiences with parents during the confrontation crisis period, one young lady who from time to time drove her husband’s luxurious car to come to work at the school reminisced thus,
“Sometimes you hear them shouting, ‘you are late for school’ but I will have been delayed by police officers on the way to work. If you delay by 5 minutes, they make a case out of it, ‘you love to get an incentive but you come late for work’, the case is, why you came in at 5 minutes after 8, they can even shout at you in the road”.

However, the researcher observed that to an extent, the crisis had been managed well and teachers were now observing stipulated work times as explained by the head teacher and further observed by this researcher. The head teacher, in an in-depth interview had expressed satisfaction over his success in resolving the crisis, He commented thus,

“Some teachers come from Mutare every day....they would come after 8 so the parents expressed those sentiments.....it was a crisis....I created a committee of teachers and parents....I worked with that... and I think it helped because now they arrive earlier than those staying here. This time you find that 7.30........7.45....they are already here. All this come from parents ...their observations on their teachers and the sentiments they expressed and it helped”.

Most interesting on the issue of teachers’ accommodation was the observation that, the community residents , and especially those of Batsirai and Chiedza communities, felt that the houses they had built for their teachers to stay in, and be readily available for teaching the children were habitable. On the other hand, the teachers felt that the teachers’ houses did not have the essential basics such as burglar bars to ensure their belongings were safe over weekends and electricity to drive their necessary electric gadgets.
4.3.4.0 School physical structures and provisions

This section presents the state of physical facilities and educational resources in the primary schools that participated in this study.

4.3.4.1 Mafara primary school

On arriving at Mafara primary school, the first sight is a neatly constructed and attractively painted block of classrooms that stands facing the front from the back of the school yard. At the entrance and in your right is an old and dilapidated farm store building. In between the two buildings is a large open ground on which some large flat canopy indigenous ‘muunga’ trees are growing wild at various points creating a contradicting but scenic depiction to the visitor. But, for most of the community residents and the education of the children of Mafara community, the school was not an attraction but disenchantment.

Mafara Primary School, which was started in an old farm store building in 2002, still had only two standard classrooms, a blair toilet, and a water point, but without any indication of work in progress. The school had no boundary fence and some stray goats and cattle from the new farmers were observed to freely roam the school grounds even during lesson times. The researcher observed that the junior classes (grade 5, 6, 7) were having lessons from the new block of two classrooms. The middle classes (grade 3 and 4) were observed holding lessons in the open grounds under trees. Also, the infant
classes [ECD 1 and 2, grade 1 and 2] were observed as having their lessons from either the crowded and poorly illuminated farm store building or outside under trees depending on the weather.

In addition, the school did not have a standard school office, a library and play grounds for games and sport. Subsequently, because of this lack of adequate classrooms and other facilities the wealthier parents had transferred their children to other primary schools outside Mafara community. Further, whenever the weather was bad during the summer and winter months, most parents stopped their children from attending school. In a focus group discussion with the teachers, one of the lady teachers described her experience. She said,

“We now know this place, if in the morning, it is cloudy, and then you know that most children won’t come to school. The child is simply told that today the weather is not good for you...and they don't come.....”

Unlike Mafara Primary school, the older schools, Batsirai and Chiedza, had enough classrooms for each of the classes they had enrolled.

4.3.4.2 Batsirai primary school

At Batsirai primary school, the researcher observed that the community residents had contracted a carpenter and painter to repair and repaint the children’s classrooms. The freshly painted [exterior blue] classrooms with fully glazed windows and lockable doors were complemented by well terraced grounds and delightful marigold flowers in bloom. The classrooms were observed to be well furnished and were fitted with chart rails, double chalk
boards and had book cabinets. In addition, the school had two multi squat-hole blair toilets that adequately catered for all children. In addition, there were adequate toilet facilities for both male and female teachers.

Further, the researcher observed that the headmaster’s office, though small, was well positioned and easily accessible to visitors. It housed a store room for stationery, textbooks and equipment such as balls, wall maps, and paint brushes. Also in the store room there was a steel cabinet for safekeeping of security items such as the school stamp, financial record books and examination materials. In the main, the headmaster had a modest desk set and decent chairs for his visitors, and much of the story about the school was told by the neat displays on the office walls.

For sporting activities, the school had fairly developed and well marked grounds for soccer, netball, volleyball basket ball and hand ball. The community residents were proud of the neat appearance of their school.

However, one of the original blocks of classrooms, though attractive from outside, had most of the roofing timber damaged by termites and the iron sheets hung precariously above the children. Also, the school did not have an adequately equipped ECD play centre or library.

In the same vain, the school did not have a reliable source of clean water for drinking, cleaning and gardening purposes. Children were bringing in some drinking water in used plastic bottles from home.

4.3.4.3 Chiedza primary school
Chiedza primary school had adequate classrooms for all the classes that were in the school. As the researcher moved around the school, he observed that there was some repair work going on the buildings. The researcher observed that the exterior walls of the classrooms had been newly repainted and some doors and windows had been repaired. The school was observed to have adequate and suitable furniture for the grade three to seven classes.

In addition, the head teacher’s office that housed a strong room for safekeeping of valuable materials such as examination materials, financial papers, and other security items had been newly repainted. In the main, the head teacher’s office was suitably furnished, and informative charts were neatly laid out on the walls.

Attached to the office block was a small library that had a variety of reading and reference books. In addition, the school library had just recently received a consignment of books from an alumina working and living in the Capital, Harare. The consignment was a result of successful fundraising programme that had been organised in the school recently.

For hygiene, the school had two multi squat –hole blair toilets that were observed to adequately cater for the children. In addition, adequate Blair toilet facilities were available for both male and female staff.

A section of the school yard had been developed for sport. The school had a clearly demarcated area for sporting activities. There were play grounds for soccer, netball, volley ball, and hand ball. The general school grounds, that showed signs of recent attention, were clean, with well laid out paths that had been lined with aloe plants that were abundantly available in the school.
environs. To add on to the landscape were beautiful jacaranda trees that were in bloom, and whose shade was observed to be popular with school children during their break time.

However, the researcher observed that the grade three and four classroom floors were badly potholed, internal walls were dirty with graffiti, and the rafters were badly damaged by termites. In addition, the grade one, two and ECD classrooms did not have lockable doors and chart rails. Furniture for the ECD, grade one and grade two classrooms was both inadequate and unsuitable for the children as it was too high for the infants to sit and write on. Also, the EDC teacher did not have adequate teaching and learning materials and play centre equipment for use during her teaching and learning activities.

Critically, the manual bore-pump that was being used to supply water to the school was now aged and unreliable. The pump broke down regularly, leaving the school without water for drinking and cleaning.

In presenting the background of the primary schools that participated in this research it is also important for the researcher to describe what the situation was like with regards to classroom stationery, which is also essential for effective teaching and learning processes.

4.3.5.0 Textbooks and stationery

During the data generation and collection process the researcher observed that all three primary schools in this study had enough textbooks for the main primary school curriculum subjects. It was in focus group discussions that were held with teachers and in-depth interview with head teachers at the three
primary schools that they revealed that they had received text book donations from the United Nations Children Education Fund (UNICEF) - Education Transition Fund (ETF). This fund that was managed by the UNICEF had donated text books for the core primary school curriculum subjects. The core primary school curriculum subjects are Mathematics, English, Shona, and Environmental Science. The UNICEF had donated the text books in enough numbers for a 1:1 pupil/text book ratio for each grade in each of the schools that participated in this study.

However, the schools, through the parents were expected to provide text books for the other, non core subjects for their children. The non core primary school curriculum subjects were Social studies, Home Economics, and Religious and Moral Education. Nevertheless, the researcher observed that in all three schools most parents had not provided these text books for their children. Further, the researcher observed that in most classes he had visited, many of the children, mostly in Mafara primary school, did not have exercise books and other essential stationery for use during teaching and learning activities.

At this point, it is now established that the three primary schools that participated in this study were located in communities that had different geographical and socio-economic backgrounds. The main economic activities were predominantly subsistence farming for most of Batsirai residents, small scale commercial farming for Chiedza, and part time jobs, gold panning, as well as vending activities for Mafara residents. However, variations in economic activities were characteristic within the communities as different groups of residents pursued different activities. The three primary schools had
different enrolment patterns, and most significant was the transferring of children from Mafara primary school. Most of the teachers who were working in these three schools did not have suitable accommodation in the schools instead commuted from the city of Mutare where they lived with their families. The older primary schools, Batsirai and Chiedza, had basic classrooms and other essential facilities in place for teaching and learning but the new resettlement Mafara primary school did not have most of the essential facilities. Nevertheless, the parents of children in the three primary schools had unfulfilled ambitions for improving quality of basic education in their schools. It is therefore essential at this point to understand how the community residents describe their role in achieving the desired quality of basic education.

4.4.0 The Research Findings

This section of the report focuses on describing how the various stakeholders in the three communities were involved in providing basic education. This researcher had huge amounts of data that had come out of many hours of in-depth interviews and focus group discussions with parents, other members of the communities, and teachers. Thus, the task of analysing this huge amount of data took a long time but was successfully completed and distilled to three major themes which included how communities contribute to basic education, community participation dynamics, and influence of community participation on education quality.

4.4.1.0 The contribution of communities in providing basic education
It emerged during the in-depth interviews and focus group discussions that whenever community members defined community participation, they were, in actual fact describing how they were involved in providing basic education. Thus, the question on how communities define participation is answered simultaneously with how communities contribute to basic education.

4.4.1.1 Communities prepare children for school

In all three schools, most of the focus group discussions that were held, parents started by mentioning that they prepared their children for school. Parents ensured that children were ready for school each school day. For a child to be ready for school, it meant that they had eaten breakfast and were properly dressed. One of the women remarked,

“I feel I should care for the child so that he or she goes to school well fed and to make sure he goes to school everyday (Cp 8: 1).” And another added,

“I as the parent should make sure the child has a school uniform......and allowing the child to participate...... (Cp 8: 8).”

4.4.1.2 Ensuring that children are fed

All women focus groups, in all the three primary schools, started by describing how they prepared breakfast for their children to eat before going to school. The women described how they woke up early in the morning to prepare breakfast for the school children. The breakfast, which most of the women were happy and proud of comprised mainly traditional food such as yams,
green mealies, sweet potatoes, Irish potatoes, pumpkins, and occasionally some bread, or rice.

In addition to breakfast, some of the women prepared some snack packs for their children to have during break time at school so as to have enough energy to carry out learning activities.

4.4.1.3 Clothing children appropriately

Parents in all three communities contributed in providing basic education through making sure their children were appropriately dressed for school. Most of the parents in each of the three communities were happy with the type of uniforms for their respective schools, and they enjoyed seeing their children wearing them. The researcher had observed that each of the three primary schools had distinct uniform colours that made the school children appear the same but different from those of other schools in the area. The school uniform for Mafara primary school was observed to comprise a dark green hat, English khaki shirt and shorts, long grey socks, black shoes and a dark green jersey for boys. And, the girls’ uniforms was made up of a light green dress with stripped green collar and sleeves, dark green hat, white socks, black shoes and a dark green jersey. The make and style of uniforms for both boys and girls at Batsirai and Chiedza primary schools were similar to those of Mafara primary school. However, the primary colour for Batsirai was blue, and green for Chiedza primary school.
And, most of the school children who wore the full set of uniforms appeared smart and happy among their peers. However, although the uniforms were readily available at the local shops, some of the parents could not afford the cost thus their children did not have them and appeared different from the rest of the school children.

4.4.1.4.0 Communities prepare schools for children

Communities were involved in various ways in developing their schools. In the new school the focus was on constructing new classrooms for the children, and in the older schools the emphasis was on maintaining the old classrooms and teachers' houses. Further, the communities were involved in clearing and cleaning the school grounds of bushes and grass in the beginning of every year after the long school holidays break.

4.4.1.4.1 Communities construction new school buildings

The school in Mafara is a new school, established in 2002, and was still in the construction phase. In the beginning, the newly resettled farmers in Mafara resettlement area were enthusiastic in starting a school for their children. They had invited the former workers from the commercial farms, whose children had no school nearby, to join them in building a primary school for the children.

They had worked together harmoniously in the spirit of togetherness, in building a new school for the children. Men and women were all involved in doing the work. They worked side by side as they carried out the various
tasks. As the women fetched water, dug, mixed and casted the bricks, men took turns to make and fire the brick kilns. During the building stage, women provided water, and men took turns to prepare mortar for the builders as well as help in putting up the roofs.

All parents were involved in carrying out the building tasks, and those who could not attend in person would compensate by paying the equivalent in money. Although it had taken the relatively small community some long time, they had successfully built a block of two classrooms, a blair toilet, and a borehole to provide clean water at the new school.

However, the new classrooms were not enough for all the children in the school. And, other basic structures such as school offices, teachers’ houses, and library were not yet available. More so, facilities such as grounds for sport and games were also not available at the school.

4.4.1.4.2 Communities repair school buildings

In the older primary schools, Batsirai and Chiedza, communities were more involved in carrying out repair work on the old buildings and sporting facilities. The participation of the community members in maintaining the school buildings and facilities was done in various ways. To begin with, there were tasks that involved the community as a whole and those that were for parents only.

In Batsirai primary school, parents were responsible for any damages that were a result of negligence or deliberate action of their children. Then, all members of the community were involved in providing labour for general work
at their respective schools. However, Batsirai and Chiedza primary schools had unique ways of carrying out some of the tasks of maintaining their schools. While Batsirai School was unique in organising labour for general clearing and cleaning school grounds, Chiedza School was unique in organising school repairs as well as cleaning grounds.

4.4.1.4.3 Communities maintain school grounds

The unique feature in the organisation of cleaning of schools grounds at Batsirai primary school was the involvement of the traditional leadership.

According to the education act revised 2006, and the Statutory Instrument No 87 of 1992, the SDC has the responsibility of organising community participation activities in the school. However, at Batsirai School, providing communal labour at the school was organised by the headman and his kraal heads, in liaison with the head teacher and SDC.

In the beginning of each year, the headman of Batsirai village, through the traditional organisational structures, coordinates the residents of Batsirai village to prepare their school for the new academic year. The residents of Batsirai, whether they had children in the school or not, joined hands to work on clearing the general school grounds of grass and bushes. The manual work was done on the traditional sacred day ‘chisi’ when none of the residents would work on their fields. This manual work at the school was supervised by the kraal headmen who also joined in the manual work.

All were involved in the manual work, even the headman, in an in-depth interview, described his annual experiences in cutting down bushes when
preparing the school grounds for the coming in of ‘their children’ in the beginning of the first term of each year.

The women, in focus group discussions that were held at the school, excitedly explained how the men and women had cut and cleared grass and filled up ditches around the school grounds. In addition, the men had repaired the security fence around the school as the women were planting marigold flowers along paths in the school. Indeed, this researcher saw some of the beautiful flowers that were in full bloom in the school grounds at the time of the visits.

Upon completion of the work, the village residents were usually satisfied with their work and expressed their joy on their successful uplifting of the face of their school, through song and dance.

The head teacher, in an in-depth interview expressed his satisfaction with the effectiveness of the involvement of members of the community in preparing the school for the children’s new term of schooling. However, in a different manner, the community at Chiedza also made significant contribution in maintaining their primary school.

The community members for Chiedza primary school were involved in maintaining their school grounds with the coordination of a local cleric. The priest, who belonged to one of the Christian churches in the community, had organised his congregation to maintain school grounds on occasions. In a focus group discussion with parents at the school one woman revealed,
“....we have come, under the leadership of the ......Church, to clean up the whole school and give it a face lift (cp2:14).”

And, another woman added that,

“we in the United ..... Church Mothers’ Union came to work on the school grounds.....we did all the work. (cp2:17)

As the mothers’ union was involved in providing labour in maintaining school grounds, the men were also busy in maintain school buildings.

The community members at Chiedza primary school described a unique way in which they had maintained existing buildings at their primary school. As with the mothers’ union, the fathers’ union had also been involved in school activities. In a focus group discussion with parents at the primary school, one of the parents explained,

“We, The ......Church Fathers’ Union, also as parents of the children here repainted......(looking and pointing outside) .... that classroom block, the culture hut and the toilets.....(cp3:4).”

And another man added,

“We also fitted windows and we are still going further.......because we wanted to repaint our sign post out there..... but were disturbed by a funeral in the community.......we arranged that we are meeting on this coming Saturday (cp3:20).” Besides maintaining the school buildings, community members
were also participating in providing basic education for their children through paying money for financing various activities in the school.

4.4.1.5.0 Communities contributing money to the school

In all three primary schools that participated in this study, Most of the parents of children in each of the schools expressed that they were contributing to providing basic education through paying school fees and other levies for their children. However, most of the community residents were not happy with the act of paying money to the school. In a focus group discussion with the SDC, the chairman aptly summarised the view of the community members when he said,

.....Our parents believe in politics....most of them say, this type of school should provide free education....these are free schools...the government says no child should be sent away from school because of money....(Bt4:4).

And, more so, the way the money was being used, most parents were particularly not happy with paying money for teachers’ incentives. In the annual general meeting that was held at Chiedza Primary school, one of the community members remarked,

“let us remove incentives, these teachers are at least getting a salary, we don’t have anything... last time they stopped teaching our children when they said that they were not going to teach the children when they wanted 10.. We then raised our fees to15, because they wanted10......so we thought that was
the solution….now they want even more….we are now giving ourselves a burden and making them rich!”

However, besides paying school fees, community members explained that they were also involved in fundraising activities for their primary schools.

4.4.1.5.1 Fundraising activities at Batsirai primary school

In Batsirai primary school, it was the SDC that was engaged in fundraising activities for their school. These projects were focused on raising money for use in the general operations of their school.

Batsirai primary school had a well established gum tree plantation from where they had harvested timber poles and firewood for sale to other community residents. The gum poles that were used mainly for fencing and roofing purposes were sold to the community members. In a focus group discussion with the SDC at Batsirai primary school, one of the members explained how they were selling their timber. She explained thus,

“…..and carrying out projects that can bring us some money…. we have projects like gum trees …people come and buy roofing timber from here…what we do is if it is roofing timber we say 1 dollar for 2…..if it is poles for fencing…a 1 dollar for 1 …..this year it is now…uuuu…250..aaah...is it..? (Bsdc1:10).”

By the time of the research, the Batsirai primary school SDC had raised about 250 US dollars in that year from the sale of poles. Some of the timber, that was only suitable for fire wood, was used in the SDC’s brick moulding project.

Brick moulding project
The SDC for Batsirai primary school had also started a brick moulding project as an alternative way of raising funds for the school. In a focus group discussion, a member of the SDC explained, “what happened last year was......most parents could not afford to pay school fees, so we asked them to come and mould bricks....and we then used the gum wood to ‘cure’ the bricks. A person would mould bricks and the school would sell the bricks and get money for the school. .....because the parents were failing to get money to pay school fees (Bsdc1:22).”

Meanwhile, community members at Chiedza primary school were also engaged in fundraising for their school but through different activities. In a focus group discussion with parents at Chiedza primary school, they excitedly expressed how they had raised some money for their school. With a lot of interjections, one of the men explained that a priest had organised a soccer sporting competition in which Chiedza primary school soccer team and other three neighbouring primary schools’ teams contested for honours and prize money. On raising substantial sponsorship in the form of sporting uniforms, soccer balls and prize money, the tournament was held at Chiedza primary school. The competition, which was won by the host school, was a great success. And, In the AGM that was held at the primary school, the priest explained in detail the financial account of the sports gala. The priest explained thus, “........the event raised 600 US dollars..........How the 200 US dollars was spent on prizes is very clear....... we gave it to the SDC. Then the other 100 US dollars was for music and entertainment......because the children need the
interludes and the PA system also made the day’s communication more effective. . . . . we provided refreshments for our teachers and invited guests who included our councillor, headman, and headmen from schools that participated in the gala. . . . . and 300 US dollars remained for the school. . . . everything is in detail, for anyone to see. . . . . (Agm 2:13).”

Besides fund raising activities, community members in all primary schools were contributing through supplying children and their teachers with essential stationery for use at school.

4.4.1.6.0 Communities supply teaching and learning materials to schools

The community members were supplying teachers and children with stationery for use in the teaching and learning activities that took place in the three primary schools.

4.4.1.6.1 Supplying classroom stationery

All parents, in all focus groups, in all three primary schools that participated in this study mentioned that they were contributing children’s stationery to their schools. Unlike teachers’ stationery that was purchased from part of the money that was paid for school fees, children’s stationery was bought by the parents themselves and handed directly to their children.

During the focus group discussions, both men and women in the participating schools indicated that they were contributing exercise books, ball pens,
pencils, khaki cover, plastic cover, and a stencil for labelling the books for each child.

On the whole, the parents expressed that they were providing each of their junior class child with a set of four A4 size writing exercise books, one mathematics exercise book, a ball-pen, a pencil and a ruler. And, each child in the infants’ grades, which is from grade one to three, was to be provided with a set of three A5 size writing exercise books and one for mathematics, a pencil and a ruler. All exercise books were expected to be covered and labelled. In addition, the parents revealed that the stationery was to be replaced as and when any one of the items was used up or lost.

4.4.1.6.2 Text books

In the focus group discussions held with parents in all three communities, some of the parents expressed that they supplied their children with text books. The parents explained that the text books were mostly used for homework purposes.

In addition, community members were also involved in providing basic education through monitoring the performance of teachers and the children.

4.4.1.7.0 Communities monitor performance of teachers and students

The communities were monitoring their teachers and children's performance through regular checking on their behaviour in the school and in the community.

4.4.1.7.1 Monitoring teachers’ behaviour
Some of the community residents, mostly in Batsirai and Chiedza communities were involved in monitoring attendance of the teachers at their respective schools. The participation of parents in monitoring teacher’s behaviour was clearly articulated at Batsirai primary school.

4.4.1.7.2 Monitoring teachers attendance at school

In Batsirai primary school, community residents were monitoring the movement of teachers in and out of the school as a means of ensuring that they attended to their classes at least for the prescribed working hours. In a focus group discussion with the SDC members at Batsirai primary school they explained that they were involved in monitoring teachers’ behaviour at school. The SDC chairman explained that,

“... as Sdc....I also need to check whether teachers are coming to school at the right time, this is because there was a time we had problems with parents saying teachers are coming late for school from town ....so we had an issue with parents .....(Bsdc 6:18.)”

In addition, some of the residents had observed that most of the commuting teachers were coming late for school and sometimes they would leave early before lessons had ended. And, to correct the observed commuting teachers’ routines, the community members had confronted the individual teachers whenever they had noticed them coming in late or leaving before time.
In a focus group discussion, some of the teachers at Batsirai primary school confirmed that parents had approached them expressing their disapproval of coming late for school. Some of the teachers narrated their encounters with parents during the monitoring exercise. One of the lady teachers, evidently emotional, described her experience thus,

“They come to the school and shout you down.....you the teacher.....they come to embarrass you in public...and the child is happy that madam has been shouted down by a parent...... (Bt9:1).”

And another lady teacher added that,

“Sometimes you hear them shouting..... ‘you are late for school’.....but you will have been delayed on the way (Bt16:6).”

Further, a male teacher contributed to the discussion by adding that,

“Some of them wait for the day they get drunk...they come up even to the school office....and shout.... ‘pass rate...this and that .....our children are not doing well.... (Bt16:10)”

Finally, in an in-depth interview with the head teacher, he described his experience when he was responding to a probe on the magnitude of the confrontation with community residents. He described thus,

“There are some who are rowdy by nature....they just shout out from the community....they come around to shout at us......and these teachers had responded directly and had exchanged harsh words with parents....however, ..... it was resolved again by the committee..... (Bht8:24)”. 
And still in Batsirai village, the residents besides monitoring the attendance of the teachers in their primary school were also monitoring the behaviour of teachers in public within the community. The community residents had raised complaints, through the SDC, about one young teacher who was allegedly drinking beer irresponsibly at the local bottle store.

These monitoring experiences coupled with the observations made by parents with reference to pupils’ home work had creating some latent animosity between the teachers at the school and the members of the community in general. The teachers were not happy with the monitoring that was being done by the community residents. They felt that their personal as well as professional respect and dignity were being compromised by these community residents who were carrying out the monitoring activities on them.

In an in-depth interview, the head teacher described how some of the teachers had been treated by the community residents in public. He explained his experience thus,

“if a teacher gets to the bar and buys himself a pint, someone from the community, who has nothing to do, points a finger saying, that is our money being spent (incentive money)..this and that....and starts harassing him.....and you see such things (Bht9:18)

However, this confrontation between teachers and parents did not take place in public places only but in the school premises also. In a focus group discussion with parents at Chiedza primary school, one of the women when contributing to a discussion on challenges faced in participation, remarked that,
“A poor relationship between the teacher and parent makes it difficult to teach the child effectively....uuhm.....as an example a parent goes to school and shout down a teacher then the relationship makes it difficult to teach the child (cp9:12).” And in agreement that some parents would go to school to shout down teachers, in a focus group discussion with teachers they described their experiences with the community members. One of the lady teachers narrated her experience. She said,

“some of them, even if they come into the school for other purposes, they don’t even come to the classroom to see their children’s work, but the next thing they do is to come when there is a problem, a misunderstanding, they come here to shout you down. They will be in bad mood and they shout you down. Really embarrassing you in public and the child is please because madam has been shouted down, it is embarrassing (Bt8:23)”.

4.4.1.7.3 Monitoring children’ behaviour

Most of the parents in Mafara were involved in various ways in supporting the teaching and learning activities that went on in their primary school. However, some of the parents were not able to participate in the activities that were initiated by the teachers in their school. To begin with most school children were given school work to do at home by their teachers.

4.4.1.7.4 Parents support in children’s home work

Most of the teachers at Mafara primary school were giving work to the children in their classes to do at home. They expected parents to supervise
the children in doing that work, which was always expected to be submitted for marking on the following day. However, In all three primary schools that participated in this study, there emerged three distinct groups of parents with regards to supervision of children’s home work. Two groups were in the extreme ends of supporting children’s home work. On one end was the group that was very supportive, and on the other end was a group that did not support homework. Thus, in the middle was the group that was willing but faced various challenges in supporting children’s home work.

Those parents who supported children’s home work put in a lot of effort in ensuring that their children had done their home work well and that it was ready for marking by the teacher each morning.

In a focus group discussion with the women at Mafara primary school, a young woman described her experience in supervising her child in doing home work. She described her experience as,

“When the child comes from school.....and after feeding....then I ask...‘what did you learn at school today?’.....then do you have home work? Eeeeh......then we sit down and help each other in doing the home work... (Mm1:21)”

And the local councillor, in an in-depth interview described his experience in helping his child in doing home work. He said,

“Personally, I ask child on what they would have learnt on that particular day...... I’m told that we have done this and that ...I ask, ‘what did you do well? What did you not do well?’......so that I know where the weakness of the child
is...where is his strength....then I know the area to tackle in helping the child (Mc18:6)

However at Batsirai School, some of the parents were not happy with the home work that their children were being given by their teachers. The teachers were assigning children to do home work that was textbook based, yet on the other hand the parents did not have the relevant text books. And, for that reason most parents were not able to help their children in doing the home work.

And, during an in-depth interview, the head man became visibly disturbed as he expressed his view on home work. He decried,

“I expect them..... Teachers..... to be people who will be at the school...... and work at the school there, their time of work should not be time to travel....... and give children home work only, ....that... go and write from home...go and write from home....(with emphasis)....here we wont be able to blame the children...when the children fail....because us the parents are not educated....we cannot teach them”. However, besides participating in children’s home work, parents were also involved in children’s learning activities through attending consultation days.

**4.4.1.7.5 Parents monitoring children’s learning progress**

One of the major events on the school calendar for all three primary schools that participated in this study was the consultation day. This was a day set aside by the school for parents to come into the school and meet with the teacher to discuss their child’s learning progress. Parents are given the child’s
exercise books and mark records to scrutinise before conferencing with the teacher in the presence of the child.

In Batsirai primary school, the head teacher was happy with the way parents’ conference with children’s teachers. He had observed that some of the parents were able to point out where they were not happy with the progress of the child, as well as complementing were progress was pleasing. He explained that,

“In most cases they contribute when we invite them to come and see their children’s books....consultations......some of them express their sentiments ......those that they are happy with as well as what they are not happy about. They talk to an extent that teachers will have pointers to areas for improvement... because some say out right that, ‘I am not seeing any progress with my child.....I am not happy with that. Some praise the teacher....which motivates the teacher (Bht1:26).”

However, most parents at the three primary schools that participated in this study did not attend consultation days regularly. The teachers from Mafara and Batsirai primary schools were not happy with the low attendance that characterised most of their consultation days. The teachers, in particular, felt the loss of an opportunity to meet and discuss with the parent of the children they taught, since it was the only formalised opportunity for them. In Chiedza primary school, attendance was said to vary from class to class.

In an in-depth interview with the head teacher at Chiedza primary school, he described attendance of parents at consultation activities as varying, “In one class it could be as high as 35 parents out of 50, and in another it can be as
low as 7 parents out of 43.” And, in most situations it was the parents of the bright children who attend the consultation day activities more regularly than those of the slower ones.

In most cases the parents of children with learning problems did not attend consultation days because they believed that there was no more need for consulting for a slow learning child. In a focus group discussion, one teacher described his experience in which he had been told by a parent of a child with learning difficulties that,

“...the child is too dull and had nothing to show me, therefore there was no reason to waste time attending consultation day activities”.

4.4.1.7.6  Parents’ participation in children’s co-curricula activities

The community, mostly young men of Batsirai and Chiedza communities, were involved, together with the teachers, in coaching school children during training sessions in sport. In separate focus group discussions with the men in the two communities, they described experiences of their involvement in coaching athletics and soccer teams at their respective schools. Some of the young men coached the school teams and travelled with them to provide technical as well as morale support during inter school competitions.

The head teacher of Batsirai primary school, in an in-depth interview, explicitly expressed his appreciation for the involvement of the community members in school’s sporting activities and the subsequent success that the teams had recorded in sporting competitions that year.
4.4.1.7.7 Parents’ participation in ECD children’s learning activities

Each of the three primary schools that participated in this study had employed extra staff for their respective schools. Mafara and Chiedza primary schools had each employed teachers to teach their ECD classes. However, the two ECD teachers who were employed by the communities were paraprofessionals who had little formal training in the work they were employed to do.

4.4.1.8.0 Community members, participation in SDC activities

Finally, in carrying out some of the activities that were performed in providing basic education communities were coordinated by the SDC. The SDC as an elected community representative in school administration regularly consulted with the community through meetings. In the focus group discussions, most parents and other residents expressed that they attended school meetings that are called for by the SDC. However, in some of the meetings the agenda is pre-set by the SDC and ideas from the people are not considered. In a focus group discussion with parents at Chiedza primary school one man remarked,

“When we are called for meetings, the agenda is already set from the office; the issues that come from parents are not accepted. They simply say let us focus on what is on the agenda, those are now arising...and then they come too late in the meeting. There will be no time...it is not transparent. We have had several meetings which do not get to conclusions; meetings end in confusion as nobody will be listening to anyone...people will just be speaking
anyhow. Sometimes people just walk out. We have had several of such meetings. It has happened for a long time (cp12:20).”

However, notwithstanding the various challenges that are manifest in community residents’ participation in the activities at their respective primary schools, they continued their involvement in providing school inputs, as well as in teaching and learning processes. This participation was instrumental in shaping the ultimate quality of basic education for their children. Most of the parents were involved in basic education through preparing the children for school each day. They made sure the school children were fed, bathed, and smartly dressed in school uniform before sending them off to school each morning. The parents paid school fees and levies, supplied children with exercise books, textbooks, and writing materials; assisted in home work, sporting activities, and attended consultation days, general and AGMs; and provided labour and building materials whenever they were needed. It is, however, critical to articulate the various factors that promoted or hindered community residents in participating in providing quality basic education for their children in primary school.

4.4.2.0 Dynamics influencing community participation in education

In the processes of contributing to provision of basic education, communities were influenced by various factors that arose from three principal dynamics: economic and financial dynamics, social dynamics, and cultural dynamics.

4.4.2.1.0 Economic and financial dynamics
Several economic and financial dynamics influenced community participation in providing basic education. The major economic dynamics that influenced community participation in the communities in this study were the economic as well as the financial dynamics.

4.4.2.1.0 Differences in community members’ income

There were three broad income levels among the community, which are the relatively rich, the modest, and the poor. These levels of income were most clearly demonstrated among the members of Batsirai community.

First, there was the group of the relatively well provided residents who received regular income, which was made up of people who were permanently employed in various formal employment sectors within or outside the community. Second, there was the group of members of the community who were engaged in modest semi-skilled self employment activities and successful subsistence farmers, who raise substantial financial income from their various trades. Last, there was the group of people without a form of fixed source of income, which was made up of families of young unemployed parents. Some of the unemployed young fathers spent most of their time at the local business centre from where they occasionally met people who hired them to do menial tasks for money. These different levels of community members’ income were reflected in various activities as the
community members participated in providing basic education. To begin with, paying school fees was one of the major responsibilities of parents of children in the schools. And critically, the processes involved in school fees issues were dominated by members from the higher levels of income group. The higher level income group members dominate from the SDC structures to the administration of the school fund.

4.4.2.1.1 Income level and SDC membership

Different levels of participation were reflected in selection of people to become members of the SDC. In most cases community members in the higher income level category are selected to become SDC members ahead of people from lower income levels. In most cases, the poor members of the community themselves, also voted for people from the high income group as their representatives in the SDC.

In a focus group discussion with the women at Batsirai primary school, they expressed the following as they were contributing to a discussion that focussed on qualities of people that they selected to become members of the SDC:

One of the women expressed her opinions thus,

“We will be looking for ......in most cases... in elections we will be looking for someone who has something to show at his home. Some one we know...one who is educated...one who pays fees....”
Another woman followed it up with,

“..One whose home looks presentable.......does he has some form of job....that he is doing. ....because.... what does he know....in the school..... what does he offer...because even here at school.... he may have a challenge.... because he may not be able to motivate others to make progress in developing the school”

And another woman added,

“Somebody who has something to show.....one who is elderly, respectable ......and approachable......they all laugh.....(Bm10:12)”

4.4.2.1.1.2 Income level and rate of paying school fees

The different levels of income were also reflected in the rate with which parents paid school fees. Although, most of the parents from the higher income levels usually paid school fees on time, at the beginning of each term, many of the parents from the lower income levels, either paid fees in instalments or did not pay anything.

In an in-depth interview with the head teacher at Batsirai primary school, he expressed his experience in relation to the low income level group of parents. he explained thus,

“There are generations of parents here, the young parents we have here, do very little for this school, the fathers and mothers of the young generation, those with children mostly in grades 1 and 2....... These ones who are not employed and are busy looking for....... what to do in life....... are the majority of the ones who did not pay the fees........ they don’t even come into the
school...to....haaah.... These are the people who pose challenges.....they are a frustrated group......."

And, during a data verification visit, an informal discussion with a young, alumni, parent whose child was in grade three at his former Batsirai primary school revealed that he was frustrated by the decisions of the SDC and no longer liked to do anything for the school. Upon further probing by the researcher, the young parent, when responding to a question on why he no longer liked his former school, he remarked,

“aahh...anobhowa madhara aya, kunyanya SDC yacho. Vanodaidzira mari yakareba.....yezera ravo vega ....zvichemo havanzwi....tingaita sei mudhara?”
(these seniors frustrate us, especially the SDC. They ask for large amounts of money.....which, only they can afford....they don’t listen to our plight.....what can we do sir? .....).

4.4.2.1.1.3 Income level and essential school supplies

The different income levels of community members were also reflective in the manner with which parents supplied children with essential school materials. In the focus group discussions that were held with the parents in all three schools, some of the parents explained that they could not afford to buy school uniforms for their children. They explained that although the uniforms were readily available at the local shops, they did not have the money to buy them. However, on checking to establish whether the uniforms were over priced or not, the researcher had observed that school uniforms were being sold at an average price of US 50 dollars for boys and US 60 dollars for girls
at the local shops. And, these prices at the local shops compared favourably with those that were seen in uniform shops in Mutare city.

In addition, the researcher had observed that the children who were not wearing school uniform appeared withdrawn and unhappy among their classmates. In a focus group discussion with parents at Mafara primary school, they described how some of the grade seven children who had been in the schools since grade one level and had moved up to grade seven level without ever putting on their school’s uniform colours. Also, a similar scenario had been observed at both Chiedza and Batsirai primary schools. And, in agreement, a lady teacher at Chiedza primary school expressed her observations during a focus group discussion. She explained thus,

“here we were saved by the church which came up with help.......giving children some uniforms.......here...a child can move from grade one up-to grade seven without ever putting on our uniform. Only to be given one by the church....... so that the child is dressed like other school children ....... that the child does not show as if he or she is inferior to others”.

4.4.2.1.1.4 School stationery

This study has found out that some of the parents and particularly the younger and low income parents had challenges in providing exercise books and pens for their children’s use at school. In a focus group discussion with parents at Mafara primary school one man summed up the plight of the low income parent when he explained some of the challenges that were faced by community members in participation. He explained thus,
“Some even fail to pay the money.....because the money we work for is not even enough for the family upkeep. Sometimes you see the child coming to school without shoes......because of the small pay we get. Sometimes the money is not even enough for food. Sometimes they would have failed to pay school fees so they will not come.....These are the children who come to school without books......and you even wonder whether they eat anything before they come to school. The desire that my child should be like this will be there but the issue is that there is trouble in the house. These children sometimes they see that their parents do not have money and they are struggling.....this is why in the end they just leave for school even without food (Mf 5:5.)”

Further, the different levels of income trends were also reflected in the financial administration of the school fund.

4.4.2.1.2 Administration of school income

In all three primary schools, the school fees fund was administered by the SDC. The SDC, which was made up of elected representative parents, the head teacher, and representative of the responsible authority, made decisions on how the school fund was going to be distributed in the various activities of the school. And, the finance sub committee, which was made up of the SDC chairman and vice chairman, the head teacher and deputy head teacher, who were all authorised signatories of the school fund made decisions on who was to be paid and when to be paid. Therefore, decisions on school financial issues were made at three levels: the parents’ assembly at AGM level, the
SDC level, and finance sub committee level. Subsequently, differences in opinion arose at the different levels of administering the school fund.

4.4.2.1.2.1 Determining school fees level

The different levels of income were also reflected in the various opinions that were put forward when discussing levels of fees to be paid to the school. In all three primary schools, the amount of fees was decided during the AGM. To begin with, the SDC prepared a budget for the year and presented it for approval by parents at the AGM. Usually the budget approval session was a highly contested issue in which people from different income levels stood against each other. This researcher attended the AGM at Chiedza primary school, where he observed that the debate on the amount of school fees to be paid was a heated one, and had created disharmony among community members. Some of the community members who had presented a case for reducing the proposed budget ‘to make it more affordable’ were not happy with the final figure of US 20 dollars per child per term, and had abandoned the meeting prematurely.

4.4.2.1.2.2 Enforcing payment of fees

Although, the government does not allow children to be sent away from school due to unpaid fees, the SDCs, in full support from the high income level members of the community, sent children of parents in arrears away from school as a means of enforcing payment.

At Mafara and Batsirai schools, although the SDCs had advised parents to make part payments in agreement with the head teachers on deadlines for full
payment, children of parents who had not paid school fees on time were asked to stay at home. At Chiedza primary school, children of parents who could not rise at least three quarters of the fees on the first day of the new term were not allowed to enrol with the school. In the AGM at the primary school, a local policy announcement by the SDC emphasised that,

“........then there is this issue from the meeting we had on the 9th of November, here... get this very clearly...emphasis..I am saying this whether you like it or not ....(much emphasis).., I am being forced by district policies to do this, ... no child will be allowed to get into the classroom... here... without a receipt of payment...(much emphasis)... Like we do in town, school is school it doesn’t matter whether rural or not, what I m saying is.... if you want to make a plea...... it is just an understanding with the committee here...(pointing to the chairman), but a plea that is acceptable is only after paying three quarters of the money required...emphasis....So that we are talking of only a quarter......here....”

Most of the parents, especially those in the low income group are troubled by some of these financial decisions in which their voices are not heard by the those close to final decision making. In a focus group discussion with the women at Batsirai primary school, one woman remarked,

“.....I am vey worried about this.....they don’t hesitate to send our children back home because of school fees....what can we do....nothing....”

4.4.2.1.2.3 Allocation of financial resources to competing needs
The financial management state of affairs that was obtaining in the three primary schools that participated in this study was so complex such that the head teachers had challenges in managing the financial dynamics. The financial scenario was best articulated in Batsirai and Chiedza primary schools. The differences in opinion, mostly between parents, teachers and head teachers, originated mostly from the allocation of school financial resources to various needy areas of school operations. The allocation of school financial resources, which was the responsibility of the finance sub committees of the respective SDCs, had raised murmurs of concern over financial neglect of some sections of school operations, such as sporting activities and rebuilding of aged classrooms.

4.4.2.1.2.4 Competing financial demands for the school

It is important to underscore on the onset that, the financial scenario was a rather messy set of complex relationship of competing financial interests among teachers, parents, SDCs, education officers, NAPH, BSP, and head teachers. To be clearly understood the researcher will set the stage by detailing the crucial items which are to receive allocation from the school fund.

In the first place, in all three primary schools, the head teachers mentioned that the financial budgets that are presented and approved in the AGMs could not be implemented as planned due to pressure from various sources. Among other priority items, the school budgets include the following areas: affiliation fees with the Better Schools Programme (BSP), the National Association of Primary School Heads (NAPH), teachers’ stationery, teachers’ incentives,
sporting activities, administrative expenses, and various school physical development projects.

The BSP, which is a Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (MPSE) programme, is responsible for most of the district staff development activities. The BSP fund is used among other things, to pay for district education officers and inspectors’ facilitation allowances, as well as BSP district staff salaries. NAPH is responsible for planning, organising, and coordinating all sporting activities in primary schools in the Zimbabwe. Teachers’ incentives were allowances that were given to teachers as some form of top up allowance to the ‘low salaries’ that the teaching staff members were receiving from government.

However in reality, most of the budget items need to allocated funds almost at the same time but that money is always not available at the right time. Priority allocation has to be done in accordance to crucial competing interests from the stakeholders involved in the activities. In some circumstances, the professional interests of the head teacher are also at stake. One of the head teachers described his experience as,

“When I get to the offices, they will ask me... ‘Matenda, you are the head at Chiedza which has 304 children, we need affiliation fees,...... which is so much....others will have paid’ ......and...I don’t have the money; I don’t have anywhere to get it....I have to pay.... so for me to use personal money.....aaah...(Cagm7:11).”
Therefore decisions are made by the finance sub committee to finance some of the items and postpone others. In an in-depth interview with one of the head teachers, he explained,

“We have to use funds from other votes to advance payment for affiliation fees and incentives...aaah.... in most cases ...aah..(laughs)......that’s when the practice of using money inappropriately....comes in.... getting money you were going to use for other things so as to fulfil the expectations of those who are making noise. You end up using the general purpose....other funds ....but....in actual sense if we are to see it properly, you are still using that.....even if you take building fund to cover up....it is the same. It was very tough for us....(Bht24:25).”

Therefore, most of the money that is being paid in early by parents is used to pay critical affiliation fees to BSP, NAPH, and teacher incentives that are basic requirement for the school to start functioning. Thus, there is no money for most of the other budget items as some of the parent’s will not have paid up on fees. And, some of the projects that the communities had planned and budgeted for a long time have not yet been implemented. One of the head teachers explained that,

“....then you can see that the project won’t start because some of the obligations that I must fulfil first in the beginning of the term..... like paying affiliation fees should be met. so you are forced to reprioritise, and this means you are pushing the project further, may be to next term....so to a large extent we cannot even dream up big projects of our own funding (Bht18:14)."
In the end, the parents, mostly those who pay fees early, are dissatisfied with the allocation of funds as their children continue learning from old and unsafe buildings as well as being denied full curriculum opportunities in areas such as sporting and game activities.

In a focus group discussion with the parents at Chiedza primary school, one of the men expressed his opinion as,

“At the moment we have an issue with that block. ..( gesturing) you see there....We are always being asked to pay money to build that block......but up to now nothing has been repaired. (shaking head). We always pay...they always say.....if a storm is to come...children will be at risk... they will be in danger..but when the money is paid, nothing is done......we then wonder why repair work is not being done. We can say what is most disappointing to us is the way the money is being used, we are not satisfied”. (c21)  

4.4.2.0 Social dynamics

The social dynamics that are influencing community participation in education include level of awareness of educational issues, political affiliation and level of availability of basic needs.

4.4.2.1 Differences in community members’ awareness of educational Issues

Community participation in education is influenced by differences in community members’ levels of awareness of educational issues by the parents and other community members. The level of awareness of educational issues seemed to influence the manner with which individual
community members perceived quality of basic education. This awareness of educational issues also influenced the extent to which parents and other community members understood their responsibilities in providing basic education.

4.4.2.2 Differences in community members’ awareness of basic requirements for quality education

The difference in perception of education quality is most distinct among the members of Mafara community. There is a significant difference in the general level of awareness of educational issues between the former commercial farm workers living in the farm compounds and the resettled farmers. Most of the former commercial farm workers seem to have a lower level of awareness of educational issues than their fellow newly resettled farmer residents. In an in-depth interview with the councillor at Mafara primary school, he expressed his opinion on the general level of education of the community members. He opined,

“yaaa....that’s one area where there is a problem....because parents when invited to come and see their child’s books, they don’t come. Even them coming on their own to see their child’s work....they fail to do that...especially from the compound. Parents are not very free to come to the school.......it is a case of ignorance.....they don’t know that they should do that....also some parents are not responsible. Parents have not been taught how the school operates, what they should do. They should attend workshops Mc19:3.”

On the other hand, the resettled farmers in Mafara resettlement area included many civil servants who worked in and around Mutare City, and other citizens
who are more aware of educational issues than their fellow residents from the farm compounds.

While most of the former farm workers were celebrating the opening of a new school for their children, some of the resettled farmers who had enrolled their children with Mafara primary school had started transferring them to other ‘better quality’ schools. These parents were not satisfied with the quality of facilities, buildings, the curriculum and critically the character of children from the compound dwellings. When responding to a question on why parents were transferring their children, the SDC chairman acknowledged the gap in quality expectations among residents, as well as between other and the local school. The SDC chairman expressed his opinion thus,

“Comparing with our neighbouring schools such as ......., you can see that even what their grade one children are able to do, compare with our children here, they are different....they are ahead.... Even their behaviour is different...... that one is better. You see, here, some of the things....... we just say as long as the child is going to school......huuh.... no standards....; more so....Our children can go up to grade seven without......even learning to play tennis or even netball. Some of the parents have lost faith in our school (Msdc15:14).”

These transfers, according to women in a focus group discussion at the school, meant that these parents, who had withdrawn their children, and had been making some significant contribution to the construction of the new school, had also effectively withdrawn their participation from issues relating to this local primary school.
In a focus group discussion with the women at Mafara primary school, one of the women, when responding a question on challenges that were being faced in developing the school, expressed her opinion thus,

“.....the problem I see is that most parents are sending their children to other schools where there are adequate facilities......Those of our community with money......their money is no longer being used here to develop this local school .....Their children don’t learn here any more (Mr4:20).”

4.4.2.2.3 Differences in community members’ awareness of responsibility in providing education

Distinctively, in Mafara community, there were two clear groups of residents with different levels of understanding and appreciation of roles of parents in providing basic education. Most of the newly resettled farmers appreciated their role in assisting their children in doing homework, providing exercise books, and monitoring of children’s attendance at school.

On the contrary, the majority of the former commercial farm worker parents did not appreciate what they were being asked to do for their children in providing basic education. They did not buy exercise books and pens for their children nor supervise their children in doing home work because they did not appreciate the significance of their role. The head teacher at Mafara Primary school, in an in-depth interview, opined that those parents did not buy stationery for their children not because they did not have money but because
they were not aware of the importance of exercise books in teaching and learning. He explained his view thus,

“.....child has no book..... some of the things....you know....a child can go for the whole term without exercise books...how much is an exercise book...20c...and that is a dollar for five books...but if you look at the parent....will be smart....goes to town regularly...money passes through her hands regularly but doesn’t buy a book for his child...”

The head teacher had maintained that these parents were not conscious of the educational importance of buying exercise books for their children. In the same manner, they were not aware of the educational value in attending school meetings, paying school fees, and critically, the moulding of bricks for constructing the new school.

In agreement, when the councillor was responding to a question on why some of the parents did not buy exercise books for their children nor attend meetings, he responded thus,

“....there are parents who see the teacher as having the sole responsibility in the child’s education..... thats not it... parents should assist...... The parent’s effort is important (Mc17:23).”

In addition, the SDC chairmen in the three primary schools that participated in this study were relying on their respective head teachers for direction in carrying out their duties. This was more clearly demonstrated in Batsirai and Chiedza primary schools where the SDC chairmen was observed to depend
heavily on guidance from their respective head teachers in most of what they had to do, including preparing annual reports for the AGM.

This dependence tended to offer the head teachers opportunity to usurp the chairmen’s decision making power. Apart from the head teachers’ usurping the chairmen’s power, political leadership in the community was also overriding community participation decisions that were made by the chairmen.

4.4.2.2.3 Differences in community members’ awareness of parent and teachers relationship

Moreover, some of the parents in Mafara community were afraid of their teachers so much that they avoided meeting with them even when invited. In a focus group discussion with the teachers, a lady teacher described her experience in which a parent had indicated to her that she was afraid of her because she was a schoolteacher. She described her experience as,

“....and when I met the woman in the compound she said,...’let me be honest madam, I got the message but I did not come. I knew my problem and I thought you would scold me’....you see they fear coming to the school.....they fear us (Mt9:10)”.

Further, during the annual general meeting at Chiedza primary school, some of the community resident did not comprehend the financial statement as it was presented in technical language with some figure work. And as a result, community residents were not able to make any comments on the financial statement.

4.4.2.2.4 Political affiliation dynamics
Community participation, and especially group participation, was influenced by political affiliation of the members involved. This influence was clearly demonstrated in Mafara where community participation was according to the members’ affiliation to national political parties. The local political party leaders were using their political power to influence how the residents were participating in the issues concerning their primary school. In an in-depth with the local councillor, he explained in some detail how political influence was affecting participation in the school. He explained thus,

“.......so far I have talked about the issue of the political situation, sometimes parents, when there is a leader who is affiliated to a political party, they observe to see where that person who is advocating development is aligned to and you find that their support is biased towards that person or otherwise....... This is why I wish the political situation could get better so that parents don’t say if so and so says something we don’t respond, and if so and so says something we respond. That is affecting us. Things should be like.....eeeh...., we want to do this...from the leader who will be there.....and things should happen. This issue of ......eeeh....which political side is he......we will be destroying our children.....because this is their future we are talking about (Mc15:23)”.

Besides national politics, community participation was also influenced by fear of the educated teachers.

4.4.2.2.5 Availability of basic needs

The level of availability of basic needs influenced community members’ participation in the education of their children. These basic needs include
food, shelter, water and sanitation. However, in this study the most critical basic needs dynamic that influenced community members’ participation in education was food.

There were clear levels of availability of basic needs among members of the communities that participated in this study. Community members who had higher levels of availability of basic needs seemed to have more time available for other engagements including educational activities for their children. On the other hand, community members, both men and women, who did not have adequate food available in the homes tended to spend most of their time looking for provisions for their families.

Looking for food received superior priority than engaging in community participation in education activities. Most of the parents who did not have adequate food reserves in the home did not have time to attend school occasions such as meetings and consultation days. One of the men in a focus group discussion explained how community members prioritised their tasks for the day. He explained that,

“.....the major issue that hinders parents from participating freely.....parents prioritise.....that aaah.... meeting....can I go to the meeting ...sometimes the child at the school there..... ....as an example.....will need food when he comes back....so they prioritise....... and sometimes they put looking for food first.......and the school later....so that’s what usually happens (Mc13:9).”

Not withstanding the influence of other factors on attending meetings, most community members did not attend school meetings regularly. In Mafara primary school, attendance at school meetings would be as low as six parents
out of the expected 90 parents. In a focus group discussion with the SDC members, the chairperson lamented thus,

“... as a member of this SDC, I see as if the parents here ......their contribution is fairly low. When we call for a meeting.....Sometimes only six parents attend.......the majority don’t come. But it doesn’t mean that all these children were born out of only six parents. We have held..... say a meeting with the few who come..say ....beginning of the year...(Msdc1:5).”

Equally low, was the attendance of parents at Batsirai primary school. Most of the young parents did not attend school meetings. In a focus group discussion with the teachers at Batsirai primary school, one of the ladies contributed to a discussion on school meetings by adding that,

“Parents do not come for meetings....only those few who pay fees come for meetings...Bt7:14”.

Parents and community members who did not attend meetings did not have current information with regards to the education of their children and their school. In an in-depth interview with one of the head teachers, when responding to a question on why some of the parents would speculate on school issues, he explained that,

“.....aaaah the case is that .....some of them it is just lack of information...they don’t know what is happening....they don’t attend meetings......they don’t come to see their children’s work for him to see what is happening...so it means he has no knowledge of what is happening in his school.....(Bht9:8).”
Further, parents who did not have adequate basic needs had challenges in feeding their children in readiness for school. In some cases, the mothers did not have enough food in the homes and therefore school children just went to school without eating anything in the morning and did not have any snack for the midmorning break. In a focus group discussion with women at Mafara primary school, a young mother remarked,

“I often have problems in getting food to put in my child’s lunch box (Mm10:8)”

The lack of food situation was worsened by frequent drought periods that occurred in the area. And, some of the women from Mafara community went out to glean for grain from commercial farms. In a separate focus group with discussion with parents at Chiedza primary school, another young woman contributed to the discussion on challenges faced in obtaining food by saying,

“The challenge is when there is drought ...like these years ....it makes the children fail to get enough feeding (Cp8:14)”.

4.4.2.3.0 Cultural dynamics

Cultural dynamics were also found to be influencing community participation in education. The cultural dynamics are reflected, firstly in the general initial attitude of some of the community residents towards education. And, secondly, cultural dynamics are reflected in the different roles that people had to do at homes, which influence their participating in education of their children.

4.4.2.3.1 General attitude to education
This study found out two distinct types of general initial attitude of residents towards education. These were positive initial attitude to education, and negative initial attitude to education. The positive initial general attitude was clearly demonstrated in Batsirai community. Taken as a whole, the members of Batsirai community had a positive attitude towards the education of their children. The community participated in most of the manual tasks at the school as whole community irrespective of whether one had children in the school or not, and affectionately referred to the school as ‘our school’.

In a focus group discussion with some of the women, they revealed their central value conviction on why they participate in various ways in the education of their children. One of the women described her baseline attitude towards education as,

“It’s our school. We have our child here. We are the parents of the children, we feel proud getting to this school and find it pleasant looking, we should work for it”. (b10)

On interacting with some of the elderly members of the community, the researcher observed that most of the people had passed through the school. They strongly believed that education was the means to a better quality of life and when they participated in manual work at the school, they did it for the education of ‘their’ children.

In a focus group discussion with some of the women at the school, an elderly woman explained that,
“It is the value of education that makes us leave the house, the life we have these days, if you don’t have education, it is nothing, and so if you have your education, you find that all will be well.”

Another one added that,

“......because even our children who are grown up if you look at them and compare with one from next door, and yours who did not get educated. You really see that it is different. You see that the educated and his things are different from the uneducated. I can even sell my chickens to pay school fees”. (b9)

On the other hand the negative initial general attitude was observed mostly in Mafara where most of the community members from the compounds did not respond positively to school issues. In an in-depth interview with the head teacher, when responding to a question on his opinion on why parents were not paying fees on time, summarised his views by saying,

“...then we have farm workers....in most cases.....you know the mentality that has always been associated with farm workers ....education for them has not been something very important......they would like to know how to count the sheep of the farmer and also.... or..... to be able to do that general work as it were...and as you know ...there is no role model in the farm ...so... they are not concerned. Even the tasks here ...even if you say brick moulding...they don’t come..aaah...that’s why development is behind... they don’t want. Some of them don’t have sense of ownership.......this is because they are people who are employed.....any time he can be told to go away....so..... (Mht1: 15)"
The negative attitude was also apparent in the general lack of parent support in children’s learning activities, to the extent of abusing children’s school stationery. In a focus group discussion with teachers, they described their experiences with regard to the general attitude of parents towards education of their children. A senior lady teacher described her experiences,

“....the younger ones tell you the truth innocently..... Sometimes you ask the child, ‘where is your home work... And she tells you that.... ‘pepa racho rakasvutiswa fodya nababa’ (my father used the paper with the homework to prepare his cigarette).....and you can see the type of parent..... (Mt7:23)”.

Another lady teacher also described a similar experience. She narrated thus,

“on this other day, I asked the child, ... ‘give me the reading card I gave you yesterday’.... The card had reading words for the week...... I had given it to the child who was struggling with the words so that she would practise at home..... She told me that, ‘khadhi racho rakapfutsiswa moto namhamha’(my mother used the card to start a fire).... I was stunned .......and I just left it at that.... (Mt8:17)”.

4.4.2.3.2 Gender roles in the home

Cultural dynamics that influence community participation in education are also evident in parent involvement in supporting children’s after school learning activities. To begin with, gender roles make it that women do most of the tasks around the home and men go out and fend for the family. Thus, when
children come back from school with home work, some of the mothers will be too busy to monitor the activities.

In a focus group discussion with the women at Mafara primary school, they shared their various experiences in supervising their children’s home work. One of the women narrated her experience thus,

“I have too much work in the home. I cannot get time for homework, I have to work in the field and garden, do laundry and ironing, cooking and washing up, ....time to sit down and do home work is not available, ...too much work...sometimes..(Mm10).”

In some of the cases the children, mostly girls, assist their parents in doing the domestic chores. Girls get down to weeding the fields, cleaning plates, and fetching water for use in the home, while boys set out to herding cattle. One of the women in a focus group discussion explained,

“we...some parents have a tendency ...that when the child comes home from school, they say...... aaaah....... we were waiting for you.......they give him heavy work......that child has no time to do the work. Some times, parents have a problem and should be informed that when a child comes from school, he should have time for home work ...other tasks can come later.

4.4.3.0 Influence of community participation on quality of education

Community participation in education had observable influence on three major aspects of quality in basic education. These are teaching and children’s learning, and the scope of the school curriculum.
4.4.3.1.0 Influence on Teaching and children’s learning

Most children, especially at Mafara and Chiedza primary schools have difficulty in concentrating, interacting, and doing practical activities in various subjects that they learn at school. This lack of concentration and practice is mainly due to inadequate stationery supplies, feeding, and motivation of teachers.

4.4.3.1.1 Concentration and participation in class

While most of the school children are well fed at Batsirai, many are hungry at Mafara and Chiedza primary schools. Many of the children come to school hungry and have difficulty in doing activities in subjects like physical education, sport, and general work. In some instances children go to sleep during lessons because of hunger. In focus group discussions with teachers, they described some of their experiences with hungry children. One of the lady teachers at Mafara primary school described her experience thus,

“....there are some who end up sleeping in class because they are hungry....when you call out his name....you discover he has been asleep...you ask ...why are you sleeping...aaah...madam... I am hungry... (Mt11:10).”

Another teacher from Chiedza primary school described a experience in which he was failing to cover the work he had planned for children because some of them came to school hungry. In a focus group discussion with teachers at the school, an elderly teacher complained,

“It affects my work....the child does not concentrate when I am working with her....when I am pacing up to cover the syllabus....that child has no energy to
do that.......that child’s progress is ....aaah...we can say ...retarded....its slow...I do not achieve my targets on time... you can see that....participation by a well fed child is more than participation and concentration by a hungry child....when you engage children in games that require more energy....you see the hungry child failing to participate well....... (Ct7:28).”

Further, in some cases the hungry children become mischievous, turning over litter in the dust bins. In some cases a child steals food from others and fights break out and hence disrupting order in the classes. A teacher from Chiedza primary school expressed her experiences as follows,

“...when children go out of the classroom for break ....you see them picking left over pieces of food thrown away in the bin by other children and teachers....and others, when having a break time snack, hide in the classroom....and you see those without food chasing them around tables and asking for food.... ‘Please give me something to eat’....sometimes they steal other children’s lunch boxes....and problems start..... (Ct7:19)”

### 4.4.3.1.2 Written work

All the teachers, in all three research sites, mentioned that most children did not have adequate opportunities for written work in all curriculum subjects. Thus, most children did not have practice in mathematics, languages and content subjects. This lack of opportunity to practise learnt concepts and skills through written work was due to inadequate supply of exercise books and ball pens by parents.
In some of the classes that the researcher visited, it was so obvious that most of the children did not do anything during written work time. While some of the children wrote exercises on ordinary newsprint paper or khaki covering paper, some would just sit and stare without any attempt to engage. In a focus group discussion with the SDC, the chairman also acknowledged thus,

“If you get into a class ...you can see that this child is not writing.....has no pen...this child has no exercise book...and that is most of the classes..... (Bsdc9:19).”

The teachers that this researcher interacted with during the visits explained their classroom practice was largely limited as most of the children did not have the necessary stationery for written work. Thus they found it difficult to monitor children’s learning progress as they did not have records of daily as well as end of unit evaluation marks.

In a focus group discussion at Chiedza primary school a lady teacher described her experience,

“The child’s learning is not effective without exercise books..... even if you teach well....without the child writing.... without seeing whether the child is improving or not.......without seeing whether the child has grasped what I have taught or not......so all this affects the children... (Ct6:11).”

As a result most of the children, including those who show signs of high academic potential, who do not have opportunities to practise through written work do not perform their best in class. Most of them have lower scores than those who have regular written work during lessons at school. In a focus
group discussion with teachers at Batsirai primary school, a lady teacher described her experience thus,

“... aah, for those children whose parents provide what the school requires, if it is books they bring, if it is fees they pay, the children are found excelling really well, evidence that learning was really taking place. They pass outstandingly well. Like us in the infants ....we are getting children scoring 25 out of 25. But those ones who don’t have books, those who get books after 3 weeks, and during fees times they will be absent, they score marks as low as 3 marks only. You can see the variation 25 and another child scores 3. That’s what it comes out like ....... yes...have high potential.....it’s only the supplies that will be inadequate... (Bt8:12).”

4.4.3.2.0 Influence on children’s consistence in learning

Many of the children in the schools that participated in this study were frequently absent from school. In most of the cases absenteeism of children was a direct result of various community participation related dynamics.

4.4.3.2.1.0 Absenteeism

Community participation was seriously contributing to absenteeism of children from school. This was a phenomenon that was rife in all three primary schools that participated in the study.

4.4.3.2.1.1 Absenteeism due delayed payment of fees
Firstly and major, absenteeism was directly linked to parents’ support of school budgets through paying school fees and providing school stationery. Because of the different economic backgrounds of the parents, some could not pay school fees for their children on time. And as a strategy for enforcing payment of fees, children were sent back home by the respective SDCs in each of the schools that participated in this study.

In a focus group discussion with the teachers at Mafara primary school, a young lady teacher interjected,

“... ah...there is too much absenteeism in this school! (Mt7:9)” ...when the senior teacher was smothering discussion on how the school was managing delayed payment of fees. Apparently, the senior teacher was aware that sending children away from school because of non payment of fees was against standing education policy in Zimbabwe. However, in agreement with the young lady teacher, the Mafara head teacher, also expressed that absenteeism was rife in the school. He explained that,

“...at the moment, absenteeism is a problem.....sometimes a child is removed from the register...then later resurfaces...there are cases where children come to school for less than 10 days per term....you can even remove them from the register...only to find them come someday (Mt21:23). ”

And, in a focus group discussion with the SDC at Chiedza primary school, the treasurer also confirmed the use of the strategy,

“...we tell the child to go back home.... to go and remind the parent .....it is now too long before you have paid the fees (Csd5:21)”. 
And one of the women in a focus discussion at Batsirai primary school bemoaned, when contributing to discussion focussing on challenges faced in participating in providing quality basic education. She complained thus,

“....haaaaa...this chasing away of our children because of these money issues....they do not hesitate to send away our children away because of these issues of school fees....the child is sent back home...go and collect the money....and the child takes three to four days before going back to school (Bm2:6)”.

4.4.3.2.1.2  Absenteeism due to lack of classroom stationery

Then secondly, some of school children who did not have exercise books or pens for written exercises were sent back home by the teachers so that parents would provide for them. A teacher at Batsirai primary school narrated her experience in a focus group discussion,

“I sometimes go to the office to ask for assistance and if the head teacher has something ...he usually assists....but if he doesn’t have anything he tells me to send the child back home to get the required materials.....And another teacher interjected to add on,...so that’s what we experience here, if the exercise book is finished, they stop coming to school (Bt5:1)”.

4.4.3.2.1.3  Absenteeism due to lack of monitoring by parents

Third is lack of monitoring, parents had contributed to absenteeism due to lack of monitoring of children’s attendance at school. This lack of monitoring of children’s attendance at school was mostly manifest at Mafara primary school. Most of the parents did not seem to care about the need for their
children to attend school regularly. Most of the parents did not seem to care about whether the children had gone to school or not.

4.4.3.2.1.4 Absenteeism due to domestic tasks given by parents

The parents, in some ways encouraged their children to be absent from school by assigning domestic tasks to be done during school time by their children. The head teacher of Mafara School complained in an in-depth interview that,

“....actually they ....parents.... are the ones who make children not to come to school.... ‘you are not going to school today....stay here and take care of the baby’....so attendance is very poor (Mht26:16)”.

And, one of the teachers in a focus group discussion added that,

“If there is ‘mutsvare’ (local language for the activity of gleaning grain after the commercial farmer has finished harvesting the field) you don’t see anyone here at school.... the whole of that week....we spend it alone here.....you won’t see any child in the school. When they finish searching for grain with their parents...that’s when they start coming to school (Mt9:21)”.

And a classical, in a focus group discussion with the teachers at Mafara primary school, the senior teacher described her experience of an extreme case in which a child would be brought to school, to write examinations only and soon after, go back home. She explained her experience as given,

“Absenteeism is too much, they can even make the child stay at home for the whole term...just staying at home....and when it is exam time, the child is
brought to write exams. When he finishes the examination, the child is back....home ...doesn’t come to school....just stay with the parents (Mt7:9; Mt6:4)”.

4.4.3.3.0 Influence on children’s persistence in learning

In most of the cases, some of the children who were frequently absent from school did not go far in the basic education system. They ended up abandoning school activities completely and thus dropped out of the system.

4.4.3.3.1 Drop out

Most of the finance related absenteeism cases presented in sections........above would usually end up as drop out cases. After long spells of being away from school most of the children then abandoned schooling completely.

4.4.3.3.1.1 Drop out due to non payment of fees by donors

The situation was aggravated by the delay by some donors in paying fees for the children they had pledged to help and schools were demanding payment from parents instead. Some of the affected children had already been sent away by the school authorities. In the AGM at Chiedza primary school, it had been made quite clear as the head teacher explained thus,

“....PLAN has not paid anything from January to December to date. So parents with children on PLAN fund should pay up.......Transform Africa has paid half of the fees. Parents with children on Transform Africa should pay the
difference...... No child will be allowed to get enrolled into the classroom here ....without a receipt of payment.....if you don’t have a receipt your child will stay at home (Cagm1:16)”.

4.4.3.3.1.2 Drop out due to parents’ low expectation in education

Some of the decisions to leave school were made by parents, most of them in Mafara community, who believed that by being able to read, write, and speak in English; children will have acquired adequate education for their livelihoods.

The teachers, in a focus group discussion, maintained that children dropped out of school because of the parent’s belief that children did not need much of school education. A teacher from Mafara School explained that:

“It is mostly at grade 5 level that they start staying away from school. Some of the parents say that.... ‘...what is important is for the child to know how to communicate with the white man....that they say for sure....they say..... ‘I want my child to know how to talk to the white man......if he can talk to the white man, then he can come and work where I am working (Mt7:1)”.

In agreement, the SDC chairman for Mafara primary school narrated his current experiences in Mafara community in comparison with experiences in his former pre-resettlement community in relation to community perception of education. He explained as follows:

“When I compare with my home area....if parents are invited to the school, they come in their numbers but what I see here is different. This area.....there is ‘chipurazi’ that is (traditional commercial farm worker mentality). People feel
that if they can get... just to grade five...they will be alright....they can now get employed (Msdc6:25)"

Further, children dropped out of school due to abuse by parents and other residents.

### 4.4.3.3.1.3 Drop out due to child abuse by parents

Cases of parents dissuading children from attending school were mostly rampant in Mafara community. At Mafara primary school, most grade seven girls had dropped out of school due to parent initiated child abuse. A senior lady teacher in the school narrated some of her experiences with the behaviour of elder school girls and boys.

“.... these mothers abuse their daughters, especially if the girl is in grade 7, they think of a plan to use her. They start initiating her into it....sexual activities... so that they can get more money because now they will be two doing it for the family.... But when you see it and you ask the child that.....ah..... you seem to be in a relationship....., there is something happening to you, the child does not tell the truth. The child will only disclose after you have really pinned her down..., ‘kuti mai vangu varikudya mari ya nhingi’(that my mother is given money by the man I have a relationship with). The child does not even handle the money, and you really tell that this child is in trouble...when the girl realises that you are now aware of it, she stops coming to school (Mt5:10)".

The head teacher confirmed the teacher’s experience with child abuse, he explained thus,
“One of our girls is already ‘of loose morals’ and now living there at the sawmill...where there are a lot of men cutting timber....the mother is in that business also there (Mht30:12)
.

And the boys were not spared abuse scourge in the community. Some of them were reported to have dropped from school as they got to the upper grades [grades 5, 6 and 7] mostly due to gold panning and substance abuse. A teacher explained,

“Also, some of the older boys ...grade 6 and 7 boys... join their fathers in gold panning activities during school time. Those involved have already lost interest in school as they ignore the school head’s calls for them to come to school, and instead enjoy their instant cash which they sometimes use to lure younger school girls and have a ‘nice time’ in the compound..... they are there....in the compound....many of them...they have refused to come to school to continue with education....especially the grade sevens. You find the child already drinking and smoking all types of substances (Mt10:5; Mt5:15)”

4.4.3.3.2 Teacher commitment

Many of the teachers who were teaching in the three primary schools that participated in this study were not motivated to do their job. This lack of motivation had originated mostly from irregular payment of teacher incentives and strained teacher and parent relationships.

The teachers were unusually casual in the manner with which they went about their school business. And some of them at times left their classes
unattended, when they boarded city bound commuter omnibuses well before end of school day. The teachers were aggrieved by the ‘low’ incentive money they were receiving from the parents and had unsuccessfully negotiated for meaningful upward review with their respective parents’ representatives. Some of the teachers had adopted a ‘go slow’ mode of operation with their classes. In an in-depth interview with the head teacher at Batsirai primary school, when responding to a probe on how teachers had responded to low incentive allowances, he explained thus,

“.....but where it happened ....it was related to the issue of incentives...when it started...teachers were getting to extent of going slow and that was affecting the children...but otherwise I don’t have a challenge that ended up affecting the child in the classroom. (Bht3:18).”

And, in a focus group discussion with teachers at Chiedza primary school teachers expressed various feelings about the issue of incentive allowances. One of the male teachers described his feelings over the issue. He narrated thus,

“It affects me as a teacher, why? Because in some schools around and especially urban areas... they get more meaningful incentives, but we are all civil servants with the same training....aaah.... and ......you really see that you are behind. So I won’t be able to do my work properly and whole heartedly. If I’m motivated I give more advanced class and homework but without motivation, I just give the minimum (Ct19:19”).

And most of the parents were aware of and worried about the various ways through which the teachers were expressing their lack of commitment to
teaching the children. In a focus group discussion with men at Mafara primary school, one of the elderly men reflected and contributed to a discussion on incentives issues, grumbled thus,

“We want teachers who are serious with our children....this is because of incentives....if you don’t give the teacher money.....they don’t work...they don’t teach your child...why..... We don’t want to see children loitering out side the classrooms. They should be in their classrooms. (Mf10:10).”

4.4.3.3.3 Teaching and learning relationships

Community participation in providing quality basic education had influenced the shaping of relationships between teachers and parents, and between teachers and the children that they were teaching. These relationships, to a very large extent had been shaped by dynamics involved in allocation of financial resource, and in monitoring of attendance at work by community residents.

4.4.3.3.3.1 Parent and teacher relationship

In all three primary schools that participated in this study, the general relationship between teachers and parents was not cordial and in some cases it was highly polarised....see sections.......... The strained relationship between teachers and parents was most pronounced in Batsirai and Chiedza primary schools and at times spilt over to affect the relations of teachers and children in the classrooms.

In both, Batsirai and Chiedza primary schools, the relationship between parents and teachers were soured mainly because of differing perspectives
on teacher incentive allowances and teacher commuting mode of bringing their services to the schools. At Batsirai primary school, some of the commuting teachers were getting late at school, see section........and parents had reacted through direct confrontation; see section......and the teachers had reacted differently to the confrontation. Some of the teachers had developed conditions of fear, others had their feelings hurt, and subsequently, others were processing requests for transfers from the school. In a focus group discussion with the teachers at the school, some of the teachers expressed the following reactions to the incidents: a young lady teacher remarked, “I get hurt, really hurt...” and another lady teacher described her experience thus,

“I am one who was actually afraid of coming to school...I was afraid....I felt insecure.....I felt that... aah ...these people who can shout at me on the road ...ah..they can do anything to me....I am actually thinking of transferring out of this school...”.

In addition, the whole happening had made most of the teachers feel demeaned. They felt that the parents had not treated them as professionals in front of their children, a feeling that made some of them feel that they had lost professional respect. The head teacher remarked that,

“teachers feel that parents had gone beyond their responsibility..., ‘they now want to get in and teach us our work....as if we don’t know our work’,... and ...... teachers were going to the extent of going slow on the job...aaah...and that was affecting the education of the children ”.

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More so, these feelings had affected the teachers’ perceptions of the children in class and the way they reacted to them during teaching and learning activities.

4.4.3.3.2 Teacher and school child relationship

In some of the cases in which parents and teachers got into misunderstandings with the class teachers, the teachers subsequently begrudged the child, even to the extent of not teaching them. A male teacher explained his reaction when he contributed in a focus group discussion on how teachers had responded to the confrontation incidents; he narrated his experience thus,

“It depends on what the parent has done to you but ...aaah...it hurts...you get hurt by what they will have done to you...and sometimes you really become harsh on the child (Bt18:17)”.

And the school head, when responding to the same question, in an in-depth interview, he opined,

“...but do you think ...on the day this happens....can the teacher do his best....that’s the day she will be moody. The child is bound to suffer on that day (Bht5:2)”.

In a similar circumstance at Chiedza primary school, a woman contributing to a discussion that was focussing on relationships between teachers and children following misunderstandings with parents, described her experience as,
“A poor relationship between the teacher and parent makes it difficult to teach the child well...as an example...my experience..... a teacher finds that I the parent has failed to do as the teacher requested, as my child will have done something wrong..... then the teacher begrudges the child.....the teacher does not even want to teach my child...the teacher doesn’t like the child anymore (Cp9:12).”

4.4.3.3.4  Scope of school curriculum

Community participation had an influence on the scope of the curriculum that a primary school can offer to the children. Two major themes that emerged from the data were facilities and equipment.

4.4.3.3.4.1  School Facilities

In all the schools that participated in this study they had mentioned that they had failed to introduce some of their locally desired school subjects. The main reason for not introducing the subjects they so desired, was lack of facilities and equipment. The influence of community participation on the scope of the school curriculum that a school could provide for the children was more clearly articulated at Mafara primary school.

The members of Mafara community facilities had, for more than a decade, failed to build enough classrooms and sports fields for their children. Thus, the school children did not have games and sporting activities on their school curriculum. In a focus group discussion with the SDC, one of the members contributed on the issue of sporting facilities by expressing his observation,
“Also the issue of games....we see that children can go up-to grade 7 and still are unable to play for example, tennis or even netball.....cannot play......but we will be hoping that if my child ...perhaps may fail in books....but can do something in games.”

Also, at all the schools, Mafara, Batsirai and Chiedza primary Schools, both teachers and community residents had indicated that they desired to have computer studies, and gardening and other practical subjects but had failed to raise money to bring electricity to their schools and for equipment. One elderly man, when contributing in a discussion on quality schools remarked,

“........even tools for the school....like shovels and hoes.....and a place where gardening activities can be done........or if they are doing building .....there should a place where building lessons take place....there should be computers because you see that if our child competes with one from...that school......there will be a big difference because we don’t have what they have there........”

Equally critical, was the availability of water, as the boreholes, that were being used were by then too old and seriously unreliable. The unreliable bore-hole sources of water could not sustain gardening practical activities that most parents wished children to learn. One of the parents had remarked that,

“.....may be me ...as a parent, I expect the child to be able to read as a sign of showing knowledge, then I should not engage in teaching making hoe handles, or ox yokes, ploughing crops, cleaning plates, things that the child should be able to do and show thinking.”
Albeit, these visions have remained dreams as the community residents have not been able to put together the resources for the projects.

4.4.3.3.2 Specialist staff

In addition to providing additional facilities for new curriculum subjects, the community is required to hire specialist teachers for some of the desired courses. However, community members do not seem to have the resources to meet the requirement. At Mafara and Chiedza primary schools, the parents have hired unqualified local women to teach the ECD classes. And, all three primary schools could not afford to hire trained security guards for their schools.

Finally, an overview of the findings as they relate to the key concepts in this study is provided in table 4: 5 given below.

Table 4: 1 Overview of research findings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preparing children for school</th>
<th>Economic dynamics</th>
<th>Teaching and learning processes</th>
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<tr>
<td>Ensuring that children are fed</td>
<td>Different levels in household income that leading to:</td>
<td>Lack of concentration and participation in class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clothing children appropriately</td>
<td>• Unequal representation on SDC, rate of paying school fees, in determining level of fees, and administering school funds.</td>
<td>Inadequate written work for practice and assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction of new school structures</td>
<td>Social dynamics</td>
<td>Increased absenteeism by children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Construction of new buildings</td>
<td>Different levels in education and general awareness of</td>
<td>Increased drop out of children from school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Construction of new grounds</td>
<td></td>
<td>Low teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintaining existing structures</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
- Maintaining existing buildings
- Paying school fees
- Fundraising for the school
- Classroom stationery
- Text books
- ECD teachers
- Monitoring behaviour of teachers
- Monitoring behaviour of children
- Monitoring children’s learning progress
- Supervising children’s co-curricula activities
- Attending school meetings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education issues that lead to:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Differences in defining community participation, perceptions of quality education, and relations with teachers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political differences that lead to different response to participation leadership</td>
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<td>Different levels in availability of basic needs in the household that leads to different amounts of time committed to participation activities.</td>
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<th>Cultural dynamics</th>
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<td>Different initial attitude to education that lead to different responses to call for participation</td>
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<td>Different gender role expectations that determine time available for involvement in participation activities</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Scope of school curriculum</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Limited available school facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unavailability of qualified personnel for ECD classes and any other additional subjects proposed by the school</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Source: own research

4.4.4.0 Analysis and discussion of findings

This section of the report presents an analysis of the findings that emerged from the data analysis process and presented above. The major findings as presented above are centred on what community contributes to providing quality basic education, community dynamics that influence participation, and how the community dynamics influence quality of basic education.

In line with the UNESCO (2004) framework for understanding education quality, communities were involved in various ways in promoting quality of
basic education in their primary schools. In the major theme, community contribution in providing basic education, the study found out that communities were involved in preparing children for school, supplying teaching and learning materials, building and maintaining school buildings, and monitoring teachers’ and children’s behaviour.

Most of the participants in this study described how they were involved in feeding and clothing their children appropriately for school, as well as supplying stationery for use by children in class activities. In addition, some participants described how they were involved in raising money and providing labour for repairing and repainting classrooms.

Nevertheless, a critical observation across the findings is that the contribution of the community members was mostly inadequate for providing a quality basic education for their children. This assertion is based on the evidenced that, members of the community for Mafara primary school had not provided enough classrooms and some of the children were having lessons under trees. And, in all schools that participated in this study, community members had not supplied adequate stationery hence many of the children did not have enough exercise books and pens for use during written work exercises. Also, some of the community members did not have enough food in the homes and some of the children went to school hungry and without anything to eat at break time.

Therefore, this observation suggests that communities had not provided their primary schools and children with adequate facilities and enough stationery for use in teaching and learning activities. Nziramasanga (1999) in a
commissioned national survey on education and training in Zimbabwe came up with a similar conclusion on school facilities. Similarly, Nhamo (2012) in his mixed-method study on factors affecting the teaching of Physical education in Chinhoyi-Zimbabwe concluded that there was inadequate supply of facilities for sport in primary schools. In addition, Chivedza, Wadesango, and Kurebwa (2012) in a qualitative study of factors that militate against the provision of quality education at grade seven level in Gokwe South Central Cluster in Zimbabwe, concluded that among other factors, the shortage of resources in schools was a critical factor. Similarly, Swift-Morgan (2006) in her qualitative study on community participation in Ethiopia came to a similar conclusion. She concluded that despite community participation in providing teaching and learning resources, some of the primary schools did not have enough teaching and learning resources for both teachers and children respectively. In addition, Chikoko (2009) in his empirical study on decentralised decision making in Malawi and Zimbabwe concluded that the relationship between community participation and quality of education was not automatic.

An inadequate supply of educational resources was found to militate against quality education (Chivedza, Wadesango, and Kurebwa 2012). Without an adequate supply of stationery, such as exercise books and ball pens, school children may not be able to do written work effectively. Written work is important in children’s learning as it offers children opportunity to practise what they have learnt as well as do necessary assessment and evaluation exercises and tests. These assessment and evaluation tests provide essential data for teachers to monitor children’s learning progress, which is a central aspect of quality teaching and learning (Stronge, 2014).
Further, most of the children attended school without enough feeding. Yet, Children who enjoy a healthy livelihood are more likely to do well in class (Heneveld, 1994; McCain and Mustard, 1999). And similarly, Stebbin (1999) advises that, children, especially the younger ones, need to be well fed for them to have quality learning characteristics such as high concentration and participation levels in class activities. Thus, healthy children have more chances of optimising on learning opportunities that arise during teaching and learning activities.

In addition, quality basic education takes place when children show high levels of consistence and persistence in learning through regular attendance at school (Douglass and Ross, 2011; Heneveld, 1994; UNESCO, 2004). However, in contrast, this study has shown that community participation has tended to promote absenteeism and drop out cases in primary schools.

In the same grain, teachers have always played a central role in teaching and learning processes (UNESCO, 2004; Stronge, 2014). Thus, the quality of teaching and learning that takes place mirrors the quality of the teachers. And, for teachers to perform well in their classrooms, they need to experience supportive working conditions (Stronge, 2014; Chivedza, Wadesango, and Kurebwa 2012). However, the findings of this study seem to show that teachers did not have high morale, motivation, and commitment in doing their job.

However, White (1996) in her model of interests in community participation advises that differences in socio-economic backgrounds of community members have potential to create differences in perceptions and interests that
are overtly or covertly contested on the participation arena. And, Pretty (1995)'s model recognises that the intentions of the initiator of participation exert significant influence in shaping the manner in which participation is modelled and organised.

Therefore, this study links the inadequacy of teaching and learning resources that has been discussed in this section to economic and financial dynamics that influence community participation in providing basic education as discussed in chapter four above. The two distinct income levels of community members, which are the upper income group and the low income group, participate at different levels. The upper income group members, by virtue of being the majority members of the SDCs thus according to Pretty (1995) have more opportunities to shape the nature and extent of participation by the different groups in the community. As a result, some of the members of the low income group participate at much lower levels in paying school fees and even in supplying essential materials for quality teaching and learning as discussed in chapter four above.

Further, if only 16.4% and 24% of the economically active people in Mutare rural and Mutasa districts respectively are paid employees (Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency, 2012) and over 85% of the economically active group is in the 30 -50 years age range (Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency, 2012), then most of the parents and especially the younger ones may not have predictable and dependable incomes for effective participation in providing essential inputs for quality basic education for their children.
This study, in sharp contrast to De Grauwe (2001) who, in his quantitative survey of four African countries had concluded that rural communities in Zimbabwe had not contributed significantly to monitoring presence and performance of teachers in local schools, found out that communities were monitoring teachers’ hours of work at their schools. In Batsirai primary school most participants described how they monitored teachers’ times of coming in and leaving the school. However, what emerges from this finding is that some of the members of the community did not seem to have the basic respect for teachers as professionals in their midst. This assertion is evidenced by the shouting down of teachers in public, on the roads and even at school in front of the children they teach, a clear indication of lack of orientation on how to monitor the teachers. Similarly, Boonstoppel and Chikohomero (2011) in a qualitative training- needs assessment survey of primary schools in Manicaland, Matabeleland South, and Matabeleland North provinces in Zimbabwe concluded that most SDCs and community members were not aware of their roles and responsibilities in participating in providing basic education. And, although the monitoring activities by the community members had resulted in teachers’ increased punctuality and observance of set out dismissal time, they now felt insecure, less motivated and had developed negative relationships with both school children and parents.

This study links the unsystematic monitoring of teachers by community members to social dynamics that influence community participation in providing basic education. As observed by White (1996) that differences in community members’ level of education has potential to create differences in perceptions and understanding of issues in participation, this study
established that there were two distinct levels of community members’ understanding of educational issues, the more and the less informed groups of members. And, the less informed group of members was more likely to see the teachers of their children with less respect as discussed in chapter four above. Yet, on the other hand, Shaeffer (1984) stresses that teachers have been observed to have a general tendency protect their professional status from public debase at all times, thus creating potential ground for conflict.

Also, parents participated in promoting quality of basic education through monitoring children’s home work. However, it has emerged from the findings that most of the parents could not monitor children’s homework effectively. Although, in the first place some of the children did not have the essential exercise books for doing home work, most of them had work given to them by their teachers on pieces of paper. However, while most of the community members wanted to assist their children in doing home work, most parents and children were either too busy with domestic chores to find enough time for doing it, or there parents did not consider home work as an important aspect of their children’s education as discussed in chapter four above.

As observed by White (1996) that differences in cultural backgrounds of community members had potential for creating participation dynamics that could influence the nature and extent of participation that occurs. Thus, this study links the inadequate support to children’s homework to cultural dynamics that influence community participation in providing basic education. In the major theme cultural dynamics, this study found out that some sections
of the community had some negative basic attitude towards education. This finding was also observed by Williams (1994) in his model on community and participation in education. In his model, Williams (1994) argues that communities have either a negative or a positive initial attitudinal disposition for involvement in educational programmes for their children. And, similar attitudinal disposition influences on community participation in providing quality education have been observed in this study as discussed in chapter four above.

Also, in the cultural dynamics theme, this study found out that some of the gender roles tended to influence community participation in education. Women spent more time on domestic chores than men. And, these domestic chores tended to hinder their participation in monitoring children's home work. In her discussion paper on depoliticising participation, White (1996) argues that gender dynamics influence interests in participation. Although White (1996) argued with a focussing on participation in general, similar observations have been reflected in this study on community participation in providing basic education.

4.5.0 Chapter summary

This chapter has presented, analysed and discussed the findings of this study. The findings were presented in three major themes that emerged from the research data. The major themes highlighted community members’ contribution in providing basic education, the dynamics that influenced community participation, and the effects of community participation on quality of basic education. Also, an analysis and discussion of the findings was done.
And, from this analysis and discussion of the findings of this study, it has clearly emerged from the research data that the participation of communities in providing basic education has largely been influenced by economic and financial, social, as well as cultural dynamics. And, the resultant participation has had some negative influence on teaching and children’s learning processes as well as on the scope of curriculum in the primary schools. Therefore, the relationship between community participation dynamics and quality of basic education is a causal relationship (Patton, 1990) in which economic and financial dynamics, social dynamics, as well as cultural dynamics have shaped the nature and extent of community participation that occurs and subsequently, the quality of basic education in rural primary schools. This relationship between community participation dynamics and quality of education is summarised diagrammatically in chapter five.
CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter focuses on presenting a summary of the study as covered in the preceding chapters, summarise the research findings, articulate the conclusions and make some recommendations. In addition, the contribution of this study to knowledge on community participation in education will be highlighted.

This study set out to investigate how community participation dynamics influence the quality of basic education in primary schools. In carrying out the study, the researcher was guided by the following research questions.

- How do community residents define community participation in providing quality basic education?
- How are community residents involved in providing quality basic education?
- What are the factors that promote or hinder community residents in providing quality basic education?
- How does community participation influence quality of education in schools?
- How can community participation in providing quality basic education be improved?

5.1 Summary of the study

The study was carried out in a framework of five chapters. Each of the five chapters has provided detailed coverage on specific sections of the study that have been essential in addressing the research problem.
Chapter one provided a background to the study in which the research problem and the related research questions were clearly articulated. Also, the assumptions and limitations of the study were identified and acknowledged. In addition, the significance to the study, and especially to policy making, development discourse, and participation in education, have been explained. And, key terms that were used in this study were defined.

Chapter two provided a review of related literature in which local and international perspectives in community participation in development in general, and in providing basic education in particular were identified and discussed. In this chapter, both conceptual and theoretical frameworks that guided the study were provided. Further, insights into the potential benefits and challenges in community participation in education were highlighted, and the research gap to be filled by this study was identified. In addition, perspectives in quality were identified and discussed, from which pointers of quality were subsequently identified.

Chapter three has clarified the philosophical underpinnings that have guided this study. The chapter has highlighted the relevancy of adopting a qualitative paradigm, in which a multiple case study design provided the methodological framework within which the study was carried out. Non probability sampling techniques were highlighted and justified for adoption in this study. In addition, the in-depth interview and focus group discussion data generation, as well as the document analysis and observation data gathering techniques were discussed. Lastly, the chapter outlined and justified the steps that were followed in analysing that data that were generated in the study.
Chapter four provided a thick description of the background to the three research sites from where qualitative data were generated. In addition, the chapter has presented the research findings. The findings of the study were presented according to three major themes that emerged. These were community description of community participation, dynamics in community participation, and influence of community participation on quality of education. A further analysis of the findings and the relationship to existing knowledge was done in line with the research questions that guided the study. And, this chapter therefore provides a summary of the research findings that have been detailed in chapter four above.

5.2 Summary of the research findings

After a daunting data analysis exercise in which iterative processes of reading and coding were carried out, the data finally distilled into the findings that are being summarised in this section. The study found out that community members defined community participation according to how they were involved in the education of their primary school children. And, the community members were involved in the education of their children in three major ways.

Firstly, community members contributed in providing children with basic educational needs. This involved parents preparing their children for school through feeding and clothing them appropriately each morning before seeing them off to school; the community being involved in preparing the schools for the children through constructing new buildings and grounds as well as maintaining existing buildings and grounds at their primary schools; and
Supplied teaching and learning materials in terms of stationery such as exercise books and pens as well as text books.

Secondly, community members monitored teaching and learning processes through checking teachers’ behaviour in and out classrooms, as well as checking children’s learning progress through supervising home work, attending consultation days, and attending school organised sporting activities.

Third, community members were involved in school finance and administration through paying school fees, engaging in fundraising projects, and participating in SDC activities such as attending meetings.

In addition, the study found out that in carrying out the school activities, community members were influenced by three major community participation dynamics. Firstly, the study established the effects of economic and financial dynamics in which participation of community members was influenced by level of family income and level of involvement in school financial matters. Secondly, this study identified the effects of social dynamics in which the participation of community members was influenced by level of general understanding of educational issues, political affiliation, and availability of basic needs in the home. And lastly, people were affected by cultural dynamics in which community members participation was influenced by gender roles in the home, and the initial general attitude towards education as a whole.

And finally, the study found out that the influence of the economic, social, and cultural dynamics on community participation had some impact on quality of
basic education in two major quality aspects. Firstly, community participation had impacted negatively on teaching and learning activities in the school due to inadequate supplies of teaching and learning materials, absenteeism and children dropping out of school, and uncommitted teachers. Secondly, the school curriculum was also negatively affected due to unavailability of essential facilities, equipment, and qualified and motivated teachers.

5.3 Conclusions

The conclusions that have been made originate from the major findings that have been established from data that were collected and systematically analysed in the light of the theoretical framework that guided this study. Therefore, the study concluded that,

Communities have made some effort in providing essential educational inputs for meeting the expectations in the various quality dimensions as expressed by the UNESCO (2004) framework for understanding education quality, for their children as well as their primary schools. However, the nature and extent of the community contribution to the various educational quality dimensions had been greatly reduced through the influence of mainly economic forces that influence behaviour of individuals within the community. Thus, the impact of the community contribution on quality of basic education has been minimal.

In addition, the study concluded that, communities have made some effort in monitoring teaching and learning processes, as a way of promoting the quality
of basic education in their primary schools. However, the effort towards monitoring teachers’ behaviour and children’s learning progress has been negatively impacted on by the influence of social and cultural dynamics that influence behaviour of individuals in the communities. Thus, the influence of the community monitoring activities on teachers’ behaviour and children’s learning progress, on the quality of basic education in their primary schools has not been significant.

Therefore, it is from the research findings, which have been summarised above, that this study’s conclusions have been made. This study thus makes the following overall conclusion: Economic and financial dynamics, social dynamics, as well as cultural dynamics in community participation had some negative influence on the participation of many of the community members in providing quality basic education for their children. And, to improve the influence of community participation on quality of basic education in rural primary schools, the study provides some recommendations that are based on the research findings and conclusions.

5.4 Recommendations

The major findings and conclusions of this study show that communities were participating in providing quality basic education for their children. Although, the communities had a much higher potential to participate in improving the quality of basic education in their schools, their observed contribution was not significant. However, for that high community potential to be realised and facilitate the improvement of the quality of basic education, the following
recommendations need to be considered by rural primary schools, SDCs, local community leaders, policy makers, policy implementers as well as fellow researchers.

- Rural primary schools need to organise community participation orientation programmes for members of the community so as to provide a basic awareness of educational issues.
- Rural primary schools may need to use per capita grants to provide initial stationery to children in special circumstances.
- Rural primary schools may need to create space for organised study time for children to do some of their ‘home work’ at school.
- Local leaders in the community could facilitate the equalising of participation by different groups in the community through conscious inclusion.
- SDCs need to consciously consider the participation circumstances of the disadvantaged groups in the community
- SDCs need to adjust community participation activities to suit local conditions
- Policy makers and implementers need to make conscious effort to equalise/moderate participation in all decision making areas by the poor and wealthier groups at community level.
- There is need for the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education to provide policy frameworks on institutionalised community participation-orientation programmes at school level.
- There is need for consciously introduce theory and practice in community participation at pre-service teacher training level
Further, it is important to note that the problem that prompted the study was centred on poor quality of basic education in primary schools as seen through performance of children at grade 7 level. And, community participation as a strategy for improving quality of basic education had not yielded the expected results. Therefore, it is imperative that this study provides some solution for improving community participation in providing basic education which in turn is likely to lead to improved quality of education. Therefore, there is need for further suggestions on putting the above recommendations into practice, as a form of potential solution to the problem identified in this study.

Firstly, rural primary schools in similar situations with those in this study may need to organise one day community orientation programmes in which all new parents to the school participate (Dekker and Lemmer, 1993). These programmes may focus on educating parents on issues relating to operational processes and procedures of the school, role of parents in teaching and learning, and structures for community participation in providing basic education. It is envisaged that such orientation programmes, if done with most of the new parents joining the school, will mitigate the effects of social dynamics on participation. Thus the quality of community participation may indeed be improved and subsequently the quality of basic education provided by the school.

Secondly, public policy advocacy may be initiated regarding mediation of fees level discussions at local parents’ AGM assemblies for balanced considerations of community capacity and school needs. Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education representatives at district level may be called upon to preside at these AGM assemblies. The moderation of fees to affordable
levels may mitigate the effects of economic and financial dynamics hence improve financial inflows to the primary schools. Thus, improved financial participation by parents may lead to improved availability of resources and reduced fees related absenteeism and drop outs.

Lastly, given the paradox that most of the parents had the task to assist their children in doing home work and at the same time had a myriad of economic and social tasks to be done, as presented in chapter four above, posed a critical challenge to community participation. Therefore, rural primary schools in similar circumstances with the schools in this study may need to create space on their time tables to organise some study period in which children engage in supervised ‘home work’ activities at school. This innovation may mitigate the effects of cultural dynamics on community participation by providing extended study period for the children and subsequently improve their academic scores (Cooper, 2008).

Further Research

- Given that this study was a qualitative case study, for which the findings may only be transferred to similar contexts; there is need for a quantitative survey study to be carried out so as to establish the extent of the observed phenomenon.
- Further, this study focussed on rural communities only, thus there is need to undertake similar studies in urban settings so as to extent the understanding of community participation dynamics.
5.5 The model

A synthesis of the findings of this study has resulted in the conclusion that economic, social and cultural dynamics have some influence on the extent to which community members can participate in providing basic education to their children. The relationship between the economic, social and cultural dynamics, community participation, and quality of basic education is one of cause and effect (Patton, 1990). Therefore, optimising the favourable effects of the economic, social, and cultural dynamics, in turn improves the nature and extent of community participation, ad subsequently improves the quality of basic education. Thus, this relationship among community participation dynamics, community participation and quality of basic education, which is represented in figure 5:1 below, provides a model for understanding and identifying problems and challenges in community participation in education (Bazeley, 2009).
5.5.1 Figure 5:1 The Dynamics Model of Assessing Community Participation in Education

Cultural Dynamics
Gender roles, initial community attitude on education

Economic Dynamics
Levels of income, level of involvement in management of school finances

Social Dynamics
Availability of basic needs, political affiliation, level of awareness of educational issues

Quality of teaching and learning resources and processes, commitment of teachers and children to teaching and learning activities, relationships among teachers and parents, teachers and children, and scope of school curriculum

Community Participation
Preparing children, preparing schools, supplying educational resources, paying money, monitoring teachers’ and children’ behaviour, monitoring children’s learning process

Source: Own research output.
This model represents the relationships between community members’ cultural, economic and social backgrounds and their participation in providing quality basic education for the children. This model, which emerges from empirical data that were gathered and analysed in this study, shows that participation dynamics that arise from various cultural, economic, and social backgrounds of community members shape the nature and extent of community members’ participation in providing quality basic education. And, it is from these participation dynamics that the model is appropriately named.

5.5.1 The cultural dynamics

The cultural dynamics, according to this study, arise from various gender role expectations on parents and children. Men and women had various specific domestic and economic roles to play, so were boys and girls, which at times were in direct conflict with school expectations, as discussed in chapter four above. Further, and in agreement with literature reviewed in chapter two above, cultural dynamics were seen to arise from variations in community members’ initial attitude on education and subsequent value placed on the education of their children.

5.5.2 The economic dynamics

The economic dynamics, as they were observed from this research study, emerged from variations in community members’ level of income. The variations in community members’ income were observed to manifest in selection of SDC members, payment of school fees, supplying of essential
school materials, and in making decisions relating to financial matters of the school. And, this manifestation of various community members’ economic backgrounds tended to influence the nature and extent of the various members and groups of members in the community, as discussed in chapter four above.

5.5.3 Social dynamics

The social dynamics that were observed in this study emerged from variations in community members’ level of education, level of understanding educational issues, level of availability of basic needs in the household, and in political affiliation. These variations were observed in community members’ participation in school meetings, special occasions, special school functions, as well as in supporting teaching and learning activities. These observed social dynamics tended to influence how various community members and groups of members participated in the stated school activities.

Moreover, this model adds on and complements Williams (1984) model community attitude towards education and local demand for education which has been discussed in chapter two above. Williams (1984) model argues that the initial community attitude towards education determines the extent to which a community can participate in providing education. However, this new model is based on dynamics influencing community participation in providing basic education. And, the model could be of use in understanding and identifying problems and challenges that may affect community participation in providing basic education. by focussing on identifying the influence of cultural, economic, and social dynamics, practitioners in community participation in
education may be able to identify and solve problems and challenges that may threaten the effectiveness of the participation. Below, the study presents a table that provides suggestions on how the model could be applied in identifying problems and challenges in community participation in providing basic education. However, the examples given in this table are not exhaustive but only serve to illustrate the application of the model in community participation practice.
### Table 5: Application of the Dynamics Model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nature of Dynamics</th>
<th>What to look for</th>
<th>Possible action to take</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Cultural dynamics  | • Influence of gender roles for men/boys and women/girls on participation activities  
• Influence of general community attitude on education                                                                                                     | • Adjust participation programmes to suit local conditions  
• Adjust school curriculum to suit local values, needs and economic constraints                                                                                                                                   |
| Economic dynamics  | • Influence of differences in household income on representation of various sections of the community on the SDC, payment of fees, and supply of essential school materials  
• Representation of various sections of the community in making decisions on financial issues of the school                                          | • Co-option of representatives of various sections of the community in the composition of the SDC  
• Involve community members in making major decisions on financial issues of the school  
• Communicate financial issues regularly with community members                                                                                           |
| Social dynamics    | • Influence of community members’ general awareness of educational issues  
• Influence of political affiliation  
• Influence of availability of household basic needs in the community                                                                                     | • Implement community participation orientation programmes for parents  
• Involve local political and traditional leaders in community participation issues  
• Adjust community participation expectations to local context.                                                                                                 |

Source: Own research
5.5.4 Chapter summary

This chapter has provided a summary of the research process through highlighting of the key issues that were discussed in each chapter. And, the first three chapters threaded together clearly articulated the issue of poor quality basic education, the ineffectiveness of community participation as a strategy for improving education quality and the emergence of dynamics on the participation arena. In addition the chapters have analysed the problem through reviewing relevant literature and identified suitable qualitative methodologies for investigating the problem.

Subsequently, data that were gathered and analysed in chapter where economic and financial dynamics, social dynamics, and cultural dynamics were identified and their influence on participation was appropriately linked to poor quality in education in the schools.

This chapter, therefore, justifiably concluded that community participation dynamics had negatively influenced community participation resulting in inadequate provisions of essential educational materials in schools, ineffective teaching and learning processes, and non comprehensive school curricula. In addition, the chapter has recommended practical strategies in mitigating the effects of the identified dynamics through organised study sessions at school, mediation of community financial participation, and orientation programmes for new parents.
Lastly, this chapter has proposed a model for improving community participation in providing basic education by addressing challenges from participation dynamics.

References


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National Education Archives-London.


The World Bank.


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Data Display: Batsirai Community

**What is being done?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What is being done</th>
<th>Enrolment of children</th>
<th>Recruitment of school going age children</th>
<th>Who is involved: Parents, guardians, village health worker, headman checks for children not attending school in his area,</th>
<th>Challenge: They do not stay long in school, there is no money for fees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Providing the child’s basic school requirements</td>
<td>Text books</td>
<td>Uniform: The child should have a full uniform (GP)</td>
<td>Exercise books</td>
<td>pens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experiences</td>
<td>Motivation</td>
<td>No writing materials:</td>
<td>Covering books:</td>
<td>Parents attitude:</td>
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<td>And the teacher feels motivated when she sees a child with a full set of basic requirements</td>
<td>Almost 80% of my class don’t buy books (tchr), can get up to 3 weeks without books beginning of term, end up buying for them for things to move (tchr)</td>
<td>Some bring books without covers, end up buying, HM wants to see covered books and written work at the end of day (tchr)</td>
<td>Buy the books for them yourself (tchr), we end up buying books for them (tchr), especially those who do well in class (tchr), some replied to me saying it is your own issue and your madam (tchr)</td>
<td>Chase around to bring books, I tell the HM and if he has some he gives one to the child to write all subjects in one.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing food</td>
<td>Breakfast: Preparing food for the child (mot) child should have food before going to school (mot)</td>
<td>Mid morning sack</td>
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<td>challenges</td>
<td>No feeding: Have nothing to eat</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monitoring</td>
<td>Children</td>
<td>Children’s progress</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| | General consultation: Children carry books home for parents to check and make comments (HM), members check whether children have exercise books and pens (sdc), check daily progress orally (M), **Special consultation day:** Parents are invited to come and see their children’s work on a designated day, they discuss with the child’s teacher **Home work:** When the child goes through home work you can tell that there is something problematic somewhere, **Challenge:** Lack of text books to use at home, too much home work...their time at school should not be time to give homework only, Lack of knowledge...we parents are not educated (HdM) | Communication: some write letters to the head expressing their views, im not happy with child’s work, Some speak without fear, they really speak out, **Relationship:** teachers feel parents want to get in and teach them their work as if they don’t know their work (HM) | Challenge: Some parents don’t come,
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teachers</th>
<th>Work Practices</th>
<th>How:</th>
<th>Relationships:</th>
<th>Experience:</th>
<th>Benefits:</th>
<th>Challenges:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pupils’ discipline</td>
<td>Parents help in shaping a well organised pupil who come to school</td>
<td>teachers feel parents are going beyond their limit,</td>
<td>if you delay by 5 minutes they make an issue out of it(tchr), shout out that you want to get an incentive but you come late for work,</td>
<td>Teachers are now getting to work punctually(HM),</td>
<td>Inadequate professional supervision(Hdm) Hms to work with government supervisors in schools,(Hdm)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

|          |                  | Can shout at you in the road without even asking for the reason, Sdc members make |                  |                  |                  |                  |
| Paying school levy | Setting the levy:  
Sdc prepares the annual budget, AGM endorses the level of levy, | Who pays:  
Parents and guardians | How used:  
Staff and administration stationery, cleaning materials, garden materials, affiliations, transport and subsistence, phone, sport uniforms, staff development travelling, wages, ECD, incentives, sporting activities, repairing furniture, feeding children in sport | Rate of payment:  
We can say a ¼ pay in full on time, |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Challenges | Non payment:  
Parents and guardians, money is difficult to get, it is even difficult to increase the levy | Non paying group:  
Mostly the young parent, they drink beer but don’t want to pay fees(HM)  
old women, but the old women are better, pay bit by bit, sometimes sell a chicken(HM), | Delayed payment:  
NGOs, | Part payment:  
We encourage them to pay what they will have got until they finish, they struggle to pay, |
| | | | Parents failing to complete work given:  
Sometimes they fail to do the work given, | Failin g to pay school debts on time:  
affiliation fees, employee wages, |
<p>| | | | | Providing adequate teacher requirements on time: |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Enforcement/mitigating measures/safety nets</strong></th>
<th><strong>Doing some jobs in the school:</strong></th>
<th><strong>Role of sdc:</strong></th>
<th><strong>Role of school Head:</strong></th>
<th><strong>NGO beneficiaries:</strong></th>
<th><strong>Sending children home:</strong></th>
<th><strong>Assistance:</strong></th>
<th><strong>Who is assisted?</strong></th>
<th><strong>Who selects for assistance?</strong></th>
<th><strong>Challenges:</strong></th>
<th><strong>Role of kraal head:</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The brick project, parents mould bricks, they are sold and money credited to levy arrears,</td>
<td>Discusses with defaulters, sometimes send them to the headman, we make sure they have paid(Hdm)</td>
<td>They negotiate with HM, determines payment extension dates</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sometimes we ask the children to go back home and remind parents, when a child is sent away for fees he can be away for up to two weeks,</td>
<td>NGOs Transform Africa BEAM PLAN Unicef, Other community members, Churches</td>
<td>Orphans and other vulnerable children, The school</td>
<td>BEAM selection committee, PLAN represenatives, sdc,</td>
<td>Inadequate fund for all the needy Uns fair selection</td>
<td>Monitor s fees paymen t by his subjects (HM), provided updated lists from time to time,</td>
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<tr>
<td>Brick moulding project,</td>
<td>Gum plantation</td>
<td>Sdc,</td>
<td>Gum plantation was established in the 1990s,</td>
<td>Roofing poles sold at USD1 for 2, fencing poles USD1 each,</td>
<td>In 2012, they raised 1200 USD from brick sales,</td>
<td>Fees defaults mould bricks that are more than what they owe the school,</td>
<td>Delay in getting buyers, you sometimes keep the bricks for a long time yet the school needs the money,</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paying teachers’ incentive</td>
<td>Who is paying? Parents and guardians, how?</td>
<td>Parents’ argument: It is a lot of money going to the teacher, it could be going for school development or fees could be lower and more affordable, I wish incentive could be banned(sdc), government should pay teachers adequate money as it used to be(sdc)</td>
<td>Conflict challenge: Out here in rural areas, the incentive is low and our teachers don’t teach with full effort (sdc), payment fluctuates depending on rate of fees payment...creating conflicts, now teachers are teaching according to the money we are paying(sdc), Teachers’ argument: Our souls are hurt, we wish to transfer, some are getting as much as 250 us on top of salary(tchr)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Providing manpower</td>
<td>Labour: Providing labour for general cleaning, when they say they have work to do we come and do it, they go and dig toilet pits, carry river sand, carry water for construction (HM)</td>
<td>Repairing bore hole: Provided labour in repairing the bore hole</td>
<td>Fitting window panes, doors, these are now old buildings, lot of repair work (sdc), they sat down and discussed, came up with a figure, we paid, and true, now the doors have handle, those that didn’t close are now closing (M)</td>
<td>Painting administration block: Youth union fitted window panes</td>
<td>Constructing work: They come and mould bricks,</td>
<td>Painting school buildings: The school contracts local painters for a fee (th)</td>
<td>Renovating buildings: The classroom block with a zinc roof should be renovated</td>
<td>Furnishing: Repairing broken desks, sdc sees to it that children have adequate furniture</td>
<td>School ground: Covering up the ditches around, grass cutting when schools open in January, parents help us clean the yard (tch)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Employees</td>
<td>School guard: School development committee has employed a school night watchman.</td>
<td>Challenges: Experiences some salary delays,</td>
<td>Advantages Guard: Safety of school property</td>
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<tr>
<td>What community is expected to do</td>
<td>Enrolment of the children</td>
<td>All primary school going age children are compelled to be in school (document analysis)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Provide stationery</td>
<td>Exercise books, covers, pens, ruler</td>
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<td>Provide uniform</td>
<td>Complete uniform that includes shoes and socks, child should be bathed and looking clean,</td>
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<td>Feeding the child</td>
<td>Providing breakfast before school, mid-morning snack</td>
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<td>Paying school levies</td>
<td>School development levy, teachers’ incentive</td>
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<td><strong>Infrastructural</strong></td>
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<td>Involvement in school development planning(HM)</td>
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<td><strong>Involvement in teaching and learning</strong></td>
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<td>Pupil attendance at school, Teachers’ attendance</td>
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<td>Monitoring children’s learning progress, consultations</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>How it is being done</strong></td>
<td>Planning parents activities in the school:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Planning strategy: General meetings Annual general meeting Sdc meetings Finance sub committee(Fsc)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Response to meetings: Some don’t for either consultation or meetings(tchr), they are few(M), the elderly always come(HM), those who pay are the ones who come for meetings(tchr), we are dealing with a ¼ of the parents, (tchr) i call for a meeting people come in their numbers(HdM), young parents those with children in grade 1 and 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participant(s) Head man, Sdc members, Councillor, school head, deputy head, parents, non parents,</td>
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<tr>
<td>What is discussed: Projects to be implemented(M), Feed back on projects being implemente d, teaching and learning activities(H)</td>
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<tr>
<td>When Gen meeting- once a term, and when need arises</td>
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<tr>
<td>Training Who-sdc Why-ability to understand needs for the school Duties of sdc office bearers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Roles Head man- ensure order, Conflict between parents and teachers, Chairman-end of year</td>
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<tr>
<td>Source of agenda: Sdc, school Head, parents, head man, teachers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Challenges: Differing opinions, some of the good ideas are rejected (HdM), Conflict Rowdy behavio</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kraal head: Work is divided according to kraals, they monitor the carrying out of tasks, encoura</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Teacher committe

don't attend meetings(HM), those young parents don't come(tchr), the young parent I don't know with other schools that work parents do they don't come(HM), they are always drunk, we have accepted that it is frustration(HM) those very aged and the sick are no longer able to do the jobs,

M), parents’ observations (M), School Development plans from the sdc, Ideas from parents: We evaluate them, all the positive ones we take them, what we can do immediately we do, what is long term we pass on to general meetings(HM)

report School head-annual report Sdc-Clarifying issues, coordinate parents activities Fsc – manages the school finances

ges those doing the task, sdc invites kraal heads and give them the responsibility(Hd M), work is done on chisi,
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grievance handling</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Procedure:</strong> Parents inform sdc that behaviour of teachers is not acceptable then the chairperson brings it to the head, they investigate, we call a meeting with all teachers or the teacher(HM), sometime allowed teachers and parents to come together(HM) we send parents grievances to head(sdc)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Nature of grievances</strong> Incentives’ coming late for work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grievance handlers:</strong> As head you play a balancing act between parent and teacher(HM)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Challenge:</strong> We don’t have a platform for discussing some of these issues with parents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managing finance</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Volunteering</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Communication</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Factors influencing participation</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Leadership</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Attitude</td>
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<tr>
<td>Policy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Donor syndrome</td>
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<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Donor syndrome</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

| Financial | Unemployment: We are just seated here in the rural areas, there are no jobs(F) I don’t anywhere I can get money(GP) |
| Financial liquidity: Sometimes we plant and get something but when sell people want barter trading, I will give you a piece of soap, cooking oil, salt, candle etc but I want money for fees, |
| Money: Getting money is a problem, they fail to pay school development levies, money is a problem for parents, you can tell that this is really a problem of where to get money, |
| Poverty: Some are generally poor, they simply don’t have the money(sdc) ,some won’t be having anything(GP) |

| Value of education | Benefits: You get professional jobs(GP), our children to get a good life, |
| Life experience: Im not educated and you see that the educated and his things are different from the uneducated |

<p>| Motivation | Responsibility: Im the parent of the child, I feel proud getting to his school and find it pleasant |
| Ownership: It is our school and I have my child here(M) |
| Success: For them to succeed(M) I would rather sell my chicken so that I pay school fees(M), I want |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of education</th>
<th>Attitude:</th>
<th>my child to be someone in future(M),</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>There is a lot of illiteracy among them, they don’t see good things, they just reject without reason,</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Influence on quality</th>
<th>Infrastructure</th>
<th>Buildings:</th>
<th>Retards project progress:</th>
<th>Grounds:</th>
<th>Sub standard buildings:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Have repainted the school, Renovated kitchens for staff members, renovated old classroom to accommodate a special class</td>
<td>It hinders progress in implementing a project, we scale down or we shelve it,</td>
<td>Cleared bushes, filled in potholes, planted flowers, improved appearance,</td>
<td>That building we don’t want it, it will hurt our children(M), that block is so noisy that children wont hear what the teacher is saying because the roofing sheets will be making so much noise,</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teachers</th>
<th>Commitment: Uncommitted teachers, Come in late and leave before time Not teaching to their best</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Motivation: Unmotivated teachers</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teacher/parent relationship: They come down when there is a problem and shout down the teacher,</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Respect: They call you by the first name if they happen to know it and mock you in the process,</td>
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<tr>
<td>Learners</td>
<td>Attentiveness: Hungry children often sleep during lessons, children failing to perform well in games, fails to achieve targets set, does not concentrate, retarded pace in syllabus coverage</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Inferiority complex:* Isolated due to lack of uniform, feel out of place due to uncovered ex books, can move from g1 to g7 without a uniform</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Drop out:* This is why you find the child ends up seated at home...it will be hard....fees payment,</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Absenteeism:* When you say go back home and get your fees some parents just stay with them at home for over a week, if the office doesn't have anything I just send them home,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching and learning processes</td>
<td>Reduced teacher/student contact time:* Teachers were getting to the extent of going slow and that was affecting the children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commmunity members' perception of quality</td>
<td>Curriculum</td>
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<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching and learning resources</td>
<td>Adequate text books and stationery(P, tchr)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School infrastructure</td>
<td>Adequate furniture:* for the teacher to do her work(sdc), tables, desks, chairs, and benches(F)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Human resources</td>
<td>Absenteeism:* No absenteeism on staff and pupils at the school</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Data Display: Chiedza Community**

### What is being done?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What is being done</th>
<th>Enrolment of children</th>
<th>Recruitment of school going age children</th>
<th>Who is involved: Parents, guardians, village health worker</th>
<th>Challenge: End up dropping out due to lack of levy, school stationery and uniforms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Providing the child’s basic school requirements</td>
<td>Exercise books</td>
<td>covers</td>
<td>pens</td>
<td>uniform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experiences: Stealing from each other: Know fully well they wont get money to buy pen/ pencil from home</td>
<td>No writing materials: A child can go for several weeks without requisite writing materials, some wont be able to get the materials from anywhere- I sometimes buy for them, parents refuse to replace used books, sometimes the reply is I don’t have money now, will buy when next I go to town,</td>
<td>Not wanting to write: They don’t ask for books from parents so as to pass on the blame of not having books to them, they will be afraid of the teacher because they are not writing well</td>
<td>What is done: Finally, I just leave the child.</td>
<td>Full set: There are some who bring in a full set of books on time(tchr)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing food</td>
<td>Breakfast: Mid morning sack</td>
<td>Challenges</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>No feeding:</strong> Some children leave home without eating something, later in the day they sleep during lessons...especially with infants’ classes,</td>
<td><strong>Have nothing to eat during break time (observation)</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<p>| Monitoring children’s progress | Consultation: parents come to see the children’s exercise books | Who is involved? Parents and guardians, teachers | How often? Even three times per term | Process: Parents and guardians consult with the teacher, see children’s books, discuss with | Benefits of consultation: parent and teacher share child’s learning experiences, parent is informed of strategies for assisting the child at home, | Attitude: My child is dull, what do I come to see there? | Right to monitor: They are not putting effort to use their right to monitor(tchr), | Attendance: They don’t come, those who are better off....the parents make an effort(tchr), Normally, it is not very bad, i can say in a class of 50, at least 35 would turn |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paying school levy</th>
<th>Setting the levy: Sdc prepares the annual budget, AGM endorses the level of levy, 2013 is 20us per term, inclusive of incentive, the school doesn’t get get any other money from somewhere, parents brace up and struggle to pay the money they will have pegged,</th>
<th>Rate of payment: We can say a ¼ pay in full on time,</th>
<th>Who pays: Parents and guardians</th>
<th>How used: Staff and administration stationery, cleaning materials, garden materials, affiliations, transport and subsistence, phone, sport uniforms, staff development travelling, wages, ECD, incentives, sporting activities, repairing furniture, feeding children in sport</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Challenges</td>
<td>Non payment: Parents and guardians, money is difficult to get, it is even difficult to increase</td>
<td>Non paying group: Mostly the young parent, those with children in both primary and secondary</td>
<td>Delayed payment: NGOs,</td>
<td>Part payment: We encourage them to pay what they will have got until they finish, they</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Enforcement/mitigating measures/safety nets</strong></td>
<td><strong>Doing some jobs in the school:</strong> some who fail do some jobs in the school, School to engage in income generating projects and employ us parents</td>
<td><strong>Role of sdc:</strong> Discusses with defaulters, sometimes send them to the headman, we make sure they have paid(Hdm)</td>
<td><strong>Role of school Head:</strong> They negotiate with HM, determines payment extension dates</td>
<td><strong>NGO beneficiaries:</strong> asked to pay and claim refunds when organisatio n pays,</td>
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<tr>
<td>Holding a sports gala</td>
<td>The Pastor of the local church (UMC)</td>
<td>Third term of 2012.</td>
<td>Organised soccer gala for 5 local primary schools. Sourced prizes,</td>
<td>all schools received prize money balls and sports uniforms, host school got paint and library books from alumni</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paying teachers' incentive</th>
<th>Who is paying?</th>
<th>How?</th>
<th>Parents’ argument:</th>
<th>Challenge:</th>
<th>Teachers’ argument:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Parents and guardians, 10us school and 10us incentive, | It is part of the levy, | paying people on salary, who receive bonuses, it pains us. We are giving ourselves a burden and making them rich | Teachers not teaching children, creating conflict, attitudes, as parents see teachers as robbers, Incentives have affected the child more than any other factor(Tchr) | it affects me as a teacher, we are all civil servants, equal qualifications, yet others are getting more meaningful incentives, you really see that you are behind, I wont be able to do my work properly and whole heartedly, if Iam motivated I give more advanced work and homework, but without motivation, I just give the minimum,
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Providing manpower</th>
<th>Labour:</th>
<th>Repairing bore hole:</th>
<th>Fitting window panes:</th>
<th>Painting administration block:</th>
<th>Constructio work:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>We assist through providing labour for general cleaning, when they say they have work to do we come and do it.</td>
<td>Provided labour in repairing the bore hole</td>
<td>Provided in UMC fathers union</td>
<td>Youth union fitted window panes</td>
<td>Parents provide bricks, building sand, stones and water</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employees</th>
<th>ECD Teacher:</th>
<th>School guard:</th>
<th>Challenges:</th>
<th>Advantages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>She is not qualified – she is paraprofessional, she is teaching zero grade A and Zero grade B.</td>
<td>Has two different level classes at the same time, sometimes experiences salary delays, has inadequate play centre equipment and classroom play materials</td>
<td>School developme nt committee has employed a school night watchman.</td>
<td>Experiences some salary delays,</td>
<td>Paraprofessionals have some training, ECD curriculum being implemente d to some extent, providing a firmfoundat ion for grade one,</td>
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<tr>
<th>Challenges:</th>
<th>Advantages ECD:</th>
<th>Advantages GuARD:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Experiences some salary delays,</td>
<td>Paraprofessionals have some training, ECD curriculum being implemente d to some extent, providing a firmfoundat ion for grade one,</td>
<td>Safety of schoo l prope rty,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What community is expected to do</td>
<td>Enrolment of the children</td>
<td>Provide stationery</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>All primary school going age children are compelled to be in school (document analysis)</td>
<td>Exercise books, covers, pens,</td>
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<tr>
<td>How it is being done</td>
<td>Planning parents activities in the school:</td>
<td>How: General meetings Annual general meeting Sdc meetings Finance sub committee(Fsc)</td>
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<td>---------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Involvement in teaching and learning</td>
<td>Pupil attendance at school, Teachers’ attendance</td>
<td>Monitoring children’s learning progress, consultations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grievance handling</td>
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<tr>
<td>Managing finance</td>
<td>Purchasing: HM and chairman know what is purchased by the fees, they are the ones who really know how things are purchased as they are needed in the school (Hman)</td>
<td>Financial policy: Head needs to be strict with policy, Accountability on all the monies in the school lies with the HM. The head has the final decision on financial matters - which disappoints some committee members, Training: Need for more financial workshops (HM), Why training? To stamp out the talk of money being converted to personal use (HM), people to know their roles in monetary issues,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Volunteering</strong></td>
<td>Who assists NGOs:</td>
<td>Nature of assistance:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transform Africa</td>
<td>Labour-painting buildings, repairing windows and doors(P) Clearing school grounds, paying school levies, sports uniforms, balls, books donations,</td>
<td>Orphans and other vulnerable children, The school</td>
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<tr>
<td>BEAM</td>
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<tr>
<td>PLAN</td>
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<td>Unicef, Other community members, Churches</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Communication</strong></th>
<th>Means of communication:</th>
<th>What is communicated?</th>
<th>Challenge:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sending children Writing letters Phone, meetings</td>
<td>Parents’ requests and grievances to responsible authority, teachers’ messages to parents, ideas on school development, invitations to school functions, meeting, consultations,</td>
<td>unclear communication channels-where do you start, where do you go...</td>
<td></td>
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</table>
### Factors Influencing Participation

#### Relationships

**Conflicts:**
- Council mediates when there is conflict

**Who is Involved:**
- Teacher and parent,

**Causes:**
- Student Indiscipline-
  - Stealing,
- Punishment-
  - Parent shouting down a teacher,
- Unfair treatment of children by teachers,

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#### Leadership

**Accountability:**
- Not satisfied with the way the money is being used

**Feed back:**
- No explanation on use of levy- we have been asked to pay money for that block, but upto now nothing has been repaired

**Transparency:**
- We always pay the money but when the money is paid nothing is done, we wonder why repair work is not being done, No money for sport competitio ns, we always ask

**Ignoring parents suggestion:**
- They simply say its ok and it ends there. It is humiliating,

**Poor handling of meetings:**
- Meetings end up in confusion, parents walk out, we have had several such meetings, it has happened for a long time,

**Unfair practices:**
- Giving jobs to non residents, inconsistent application of levy policy

**Incompetence:**
- Poor negotiating skills- incentive s, they say no to everythin g,

**Attitude:**
- Sdc to have school at heart, make life difficult at school(T chr),

**Lack of knowledge:**
- Policy on incentiv e, motivati on of teachers ,

**Supervision:**
- Inadequate supervision, inadequate teaching time-commut ing teachers (econet has come)
about these issues, we are always told there is no time...it is not transparent

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy</th>
<th>Implementation: Corporal punishment, incentives, school levy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Financial</td>
<td>Unemployment: Difficult to get jobs, Some have skills to catch fish, request for small jobs to do</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Money: Getting money is a problem, they fail to pay school development levies, money is a problem for parents, you can tell that this is really a problem of where to get money,</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>No income generating projects: This community has no income generating projects, no facilities for irrigation, they are subsistence farmers who just wait for the rains,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drought: No part time jobs here to get money to pay school fees, no water for growing vegetables for sale, Lack of adequate feeding affects our job here at school, hunger, there is drought so money is too much for parents, allow us to focus on looking for food .they did not harvest anything, it was a right off,</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Value of education</td>
<td>Attitude</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents should learn that education is important for themselves</td>
<td>Where do you want to go? Where are the jobs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Incentives</th>
<th>Teacher performance</th>
<th>Retards school development</th>
<th>Attitude:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No teacher who is deeply thinking about incentive can come from home and come and teach properly,</td>
<td>Parent pays 20us, 15us for incentive and 5us for the school, its killing a lot of things, it hurts,</td>
<td>Teachers should leave this fund alone, things like incentives must go, we should avoid parents’ feeling that they are paying teachers directly</td>
<td></td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conflict:</th>
<th>Professiona l ethics:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Complaints sent to council are on incentives, some children stop coming to school, we are paying you...a feeling that causes friction,</td>
<td>Loss of professional respect, a teacher is government worker...if you don’t give us money we will not teach,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influence on quality</td>
<td>Infrastructure</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teachers</th>
<th>Commitment:</th>
<th>Motivation:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Uncommitt ed teachers, Come in late and leave before time Not teaching to their best</td>
<td>Unmotivate d teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learners</td>
<td>Truancy: Stealing food from each other, hide exercise books, not getting to school because of inadequate basic requirements...uniform, pen, exercise books, parents interferenec e in pupil discipline</td>
<td>Attentiveness: Hungry children often sleep during lessons, children failing to perform well in games, fails to achieve targets set, does not concentrate, retarded pace in syllabus coverage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching and learning processes</td>
<td>Reduced teacher/student contact time: here in rural areas, when we open, teacher and children will have to do the strenuous work</td>
<td>Encourages use of punishments: There are parents who say they were punished and therefore punish my child.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community members’ perception of quality</td>
<td>Curriculum</td>
<td>Technical subjects: building, agriculture, metal work, we have children who are talented in these, they are not being taught in our school(P), technical drawing, home-economics, carving, carpentry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching and learning resources</td>
<td>Adequate text books and stationery</td>
<td>Parents who pay fees on time, adequate financial resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School infrastructure</td>
<td>Adequate furniture</td>
<td>Electricity: those schools that are outstanding have electricity, all neighbouring schools have electricity except two(HM)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------</td>
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<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human resources</td>
<td>Absenteeism: No absenteeism on staff and pupils at the school</td>
<td>Qualified teachers: teachers who keep studying, should stay at the school(p) should not threaten children(SDC) should show interest(SDC), loves children and make them like to learn(P), a sober teacher not coming to school with red eyes that really show that eeeeh..(SDC) qualified ECD,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Data Display: Mafara Community

| What is being done | Enrolment of children | Recruitment
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>School going age children</td>
<td>Parents, guardians, teachers and school head follow up dropouts(tchr,HM)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>They do not stay long in school, there is no money for fees(HM)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Providing the child’s basic school requirements</th>
<th>Laundry:* We do the children’s laundry when they come from school(M)</th>
<th>Uniform:* Provide school uniforms, jerseys, shoes so that the child looks the same with others(M),</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Exercise books* Parents contribute through providing books(C),</td>
<td>Pens/pencil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Text books:* Things like text books are beyond their means(tcr, HM),</td>
<td>Text books:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Covering books*: We cover our children’s books(M), wrap them in plastic cover(M),</td>
<td>Covering books:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experiences</th>
<th>No writing materials: I some parents don’t provide on</th>
<th>Covering books:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Parents attitude: And the parent says</td>
<td>Inviting the parent: Even if you call that parent whose child has no book..he</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No uniforms:* Some children come without shoes, those in uniform play on their own, they laugh at each</td>
<td>No uniforms:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
time(thr, HM), have bought books for three kids during my stay here, a child can spend the whole term without exercise books(HM), sometimes exercise books get used up but I have no money(M), can come from January to December without a book(tchr),

| Providing food | Breakfast:* I may have some breakfast but nothing for the lunchbox(M), it can be sweet potatoes or rice | Mid morning sack* I prepare a lunch box with bread for the child to feed, | Have nothing to eat:* Doesn’t bring a lunchbox, gave maputi to a child who had a headache and soon started playing—she was hungry, some end up sleeping in class(tchr) Sometimes the money is not enough for food(M), |
| Monitoring | children | Children’s progress | consultatio n:* Parents attend consultation days(HM), the father | Commuina tion:* Messages between teacher and parent through |
| | | | Benefits: *parents and teacher share information about the child(tchr), | Challenge:* Some parents don’t come(C), parents just accept what you are saying but they don’t do it, |
| | | | Revision :* I ask, what have you learnt at |
has more chances to attend. Their work is less in the home(M), I ask for time to see my child’s books every month, I discuss with the teacher(thc),

children, parent will know problem areas in learning,

school today?

Home work:* If the child is given homework I give the child time to do homework(P), I assist in doing that homework, I even add onto the work they will have been given from school(C),

When the child goes through homework you can tell that there is something problematic somewhere

Who assists?* In most cases the father will be away at homework time(M), father usually comes late in the night and they will be tired(M),

Challenges:* In most cases they don’t do the homework(tchr), Sometimes the work can be difficult for me(M), children will be tired when they come from school(M), in my case madam don’t give me homework i have no one to help me(tchr), i have too much work in the home to get time for homework-working in the garden, fields doing laundry and ironing(M), time time sit down and do homework is no t available(M), too much work, sometimes you end up just doing something that is not relevant just for the madam to see that some effort was put towards the homework she gave(M), if you say to a child I will slap you she will tell that she would report you to her mother(tchr),
| **Pupils’ discipline** | Parents help in shaping a well organised pupil who come to school | **Challenge:** Condoning children’ misbehaviour: Parents encouraging misbehaviour especially for girl child(tchr), early pregnancies are getting more and more here(thcr), parents don’t monitor children’s attendance at school-they are there many of them who have refused to continue with school especially grade 7s(thcr, HM), actually parents are the ones who make them stop coming to school(HM). |

| **Paying school levy** | Setting the levy: * Sdc prepares the annual budget, AGM endorses the level of levy, | How used: * Staff and administration stationery, cleaning materials, garden materials, affiliations, transport and subsistence, phone, staff development travelling, wages, ECD, incentives, sporting activities, feeding children in sport |

| **Rate of payment:** | 20 us per child per term, grade 1 to 7(HM, M) 10 us per month for zero grade(HM), ½ pay, 1/2 don’t pay(thcr), |

| **Who pays:** | Parents and guardians |

<p>| <strong>Challenges</strong> | Non payment:* Some have arrears backdating to last year(sdc) |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Enforcement/mitigating measures/safety nets</strong></th>
<th><strong>Doing some jobs in the school:</strong>*</th>
<th><strong>Role of sdc:</strong>*</th>
<th><strong>Role of school Head:</strong>*</th>
<th><strong>NGO beneficiaries:</strong>*</th>
<th><strong>Sending children home:</strong>*</th>
<th><strong>Assistance:</strong>*</th>
<th><strong>Who is assisted?</strong></th>
<th><strong>Who selects for assistance?</strong></th>
<th><strong>Challenges:</strong>*</th>
<th><strong>Nature of assistance:</strong>*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sometimes they are given tasks to do in the school(sdc)</td>
<td>Follow up on defaulters,</td>
<td>They make pleas with the headmaster (SDC), they are given more time to look for the money the headmaster here is very understanding(F),</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>the child is sent back home(M), but there are some who fail(M),</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Inadequate fund for all the needy Unfair selection(F)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paying teachers’ incentive</td>
<td>Who is paying? Parents and guardians</td>
<td>How? It is included in the fees, we agreed that it is 20 us per month,</td>
<td>Parents’ argument: It is a lot of money going to the teacher, it could be going for school development or fees could be lower and more affordable, i wish incentive could be banned(sdc), government should pay teachers adequate money as it used to be(sdc)</td>
<td>Conflict challenge: Out here in rural areas, the incentive is low and our teachers don’t teach with full effort (sdc), payment fluctuates depending on rate of fees payment..creating conflicts, now teachers are teaching according to the money we are paying(sdc),</td>
<td>Teachers’ argument: Our souls are hurt, we wish to transfer, some are getting as much as 250 us on top of salary(tchr)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Providing manpower</td>
<td>Labour:*</td>
<td>Planning:*</td>
<td>Volunteering:*</td>
<td>Challenge:*</td>
<td>Construction work:*</td>
<td>Motivation:*</td>
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<tr>
<td>We assist through providing labour for general cleaning, cutting grass(M), clearing around buildings</td>
<td>There is a works committee that coordinates the groups, we work in groups(M) One can send a representative(M), sdc monitors(F) can pay someone to do the task for you(f)</td>
<td>Parents volunteered to pay labour for the ECD toilet, Parents volunteer to do extra work.... sympathising with the situation- our children are few and in most cases small so for one to seriously say they can do all the general work in this school is impossible(HM)</td>
<td>We are few and at times it is tuff, Busy in the fields(GP), commitment elsewhere, some don’t turn up to do the tasks(HdM) no commitment(HdM), eg the withdrawal of the EU fund due to lack of bricks</td>
<td>They come and mould bricks(sdc,Hdm,F,M, C), water for building, carpentry work, carrying river sand for the toilet(sdc), moulding and curing bricks for school construction, Digging the toilet(GP)</td>
<td>they see the future of their children in this school, even as a parent I feel the joy that my child is attending a good school(HdM) i don’t want my child to follow in the same predicament with me, im not educate(F), not to make our children travel long distances looking for a school,</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employees</th>
<th>School guard:</th>
<th>Challenges:</th>
<th>Advantages Guard:</th>
<th>Safety of school property</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School development committee has employed a school night watchman.</td>
<td>Experiences some salary delays,</td>
<td>Safety of school property,</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What community is expected to do</th>
<th>Enrolment of the children</th>
<th>All primary school going age children are compelled to be in school (document analysis)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provide stationery</td>
<td>Exercise books, covers, pens, ruler</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide uniform</td>
<td>Complete uniform that includes shoes and socks, child should be bathed and looking clean,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feeding the child</td>
<td>Providing breakfast before school, mid-morning snack</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paying school levies</td>
<td>Paying school fees on time (tchr)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Infrastructural development</strong></td>
<td><strong>Involvement in school development planning:</strong> provide ideas and suggestions (HM)</td>
<td><strong>Making bricks:</strong> (M)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Involvement in teaching and learning</strong></td>
<td><strong>Pupil attendance at school:</strong> parent must make sure the child has left for school (GP)</td>
<td><strong>Teachers’ attendance</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Planning parents activities in the school:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Planning strategy:</strong> General meetings Annual general meeting</td>
<td><strong>Response to meetings:</strong> the headmaster announces the meetings (C)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Response in meetings:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Participant:</strong> Sdc, school Head, parents,</td>
<td><strong>Participant:</strong> AGM: Head man, Sdc members, Councillor, school head,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Response in meetings:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sdc meetings</td>
<td>Few attend meetings that are organised by the sdc(C)</td>
<td>deputy head, parents, non parents, (HM) <strong>SDC:</strong> Sdc members only, others by invitation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grievance handling</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Managing finance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteering</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td><strong>Means of communication:</strong> * Sending children Writing letters Phone, Meetings, Headmaster’s announcements at assembly, Through sdc area</td>
<td><strong>What is communicated?</strong> * Parents’ requests and grievances to responsible authority, teachers’ messages to parents, ideas on school development, invitations to school functions, meeting, consultations, teachers’ grievances,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response to participation</td>
<td>Meetings:* Poor response- I now have two years in this but parents if you say lets do this thing..There is No help that comes forth, we can say out of 100% we can get only 2% who come for the meeting and be there and participate in what will be happening(SDC), contribution is fairly low(sdc),some refuse to come(M),the few that come fall short to represent other parents(sdc),sometimes only two parents attend(sdc),some have negative attitude(C),we have a small proportion of parents who are committed(HM), just a third participate(HM), you announce,send letters, remind, but they don’t come(HM), if they responded we should be having many blocks(tchr)when you send out notices they all promise to come we relax thinking that people will come only to find out that none has come(sdc)</td>
<td>School tasks: It is the sdc that really works, the manual work they end up doing it themselves(tchr), it tries to work where ever it is able to try and create an image(tchr) the rest don’t come(tchr)t hose without children here don’t come(HM),</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factors influencing participation</td>
<td>Relationships</td>
<td>Conflict:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher and parent,</td>
<td>The problem is conflict between teachers and parents</td>
<td>Monitoring practices, incentives, water,</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Leadership:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Motivation:</th>
<th>Lack of information:</th>
<th>Quality:</th>
<th>Unfair practices:</th>
<th>Participations policy:</th>
<th>SDC membership:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>The leadership should keep encouraging the community for the development of the school to remain in the minds of the people(C)</em></td>
<td><em>What do they do with our money for, they just ask us to pay fees...what for?(tchr)</em></td>
<td><em>Enrolment is poor because they just say here thats no school(HM)</em></td>
<td><em>Some of the parents are not satisfied with the BEAM selection procedures, (F), we are not going because assistance we are getting from the school is not there(M), some children are being assisted by donors but our children are not being selected to benefit from donors(sdc),but this BEAM fund it is now like a question of looking at peoples’ faces...who knows who(F)</em></td>
<td><em>We come in at different times and so in the end everyone comes...we have no policies on that(M)</em></td>
<td><em>When selecting member we should not select youthful parents only, we should also include the elderly people who can assist with advice(GP)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitude/motivation</td>
<td>Concern:*</td>
<td>Meeting procedures:*</td>
<td>Fear of teachers:*</td>
<td>Level of education:*</td>
<td>Ownership:*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Not even one day the person comes to the headmaster to plead and say at least I have managed 5us(sdc), not being concerned about what goes on in the school(sdc) I saw that a child can be bitten by a snake so I came to slash the grass(HM),</td>
<td>I don’t find the meetings relevant so next time they don’t come(C),</td>
<td>parents are not very free to come to school(C), I feared that you would reprimand me(tchr), sometimes you meet the parent in the village and you ask why they were not coming they tell you that I knew my problem so I thought you would scold me(tchr),</td>
<td>It is a case of ignorance, they don’t know that they should do that(C), some parents are not responsible, parents should be taught how the school operates, what they should do, they should attend workshops(C),</td>
<td>the reason is that most people here are workers so they say if we develop today where we will go we will develop again so we should leave it like that(tchr, HM, sdc), if I commit myself to this school at times I can go, like these new ones, no one stays if one comes today tomorrow they are gone(NM), some of them don’t have a sense of ownership because they are employed anytime he can be told to go away(HM), the parent will simply say I’m a lodger in this community I shall go(sdc), so no concern for the school in the area he is living(SDC),</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Government responsibility:
They say the education of their children is the responsibility of the government, children should not be sent away,

Free education:
Some will put in some politics, this type of school provides free education, these are free schools, no child should be sent away from school then they remain adamant like that (HM),

Policy stalemate:
Parents should pay school levy, and govt policy, if it is known that you have sent away children from school because she has not paid fees, it won't go well with the policy (sd).

School Policy:
Parents should abide by the school policy, Only those with children in the school pay levies and come to do work, Other members of the community is voluntary

Defaults: Children are sent away (M), they don't hesitate to drive away our children with regards to fees, the elderly come and explain their circumstances, that's when you assist (tchr), child sent to collect parent over non-participation in providing labour, kraal head refers to headman, moulding bricks for sale,
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Donor syndrome</th>
<th>Value donations highly:*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>They expect a lot from donors, this community has many people who just wait and want things to be done by donors(GP), they send children without anything so that they are seen as suffering and get the sympathy for aid(GP)</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Financial</th>
<th>Unemployment:*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parents don’t stay long in their employment(tchr), the main issue here is unemployment(C), the little they get is spent on food, for a parent to send children to school they should have fed(C), most of the people here are not employed they survive on piece jobs, for them to break the small money is difficult because there is hunger in the family(HdM), the little money they get they will be prioritising food(SDC),</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Incentive:*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>We want teachers who are serious with our children ..this because of incentives..i f you don’t give the teachers money, they don’t work(M),</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Poverty:*</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Some are generally poor, they simply don’t have the money(sdc), some won’t be having anything(GP) parents like that feel ashamed to come and help with labour in the school because they don’t have money, their children come to school without books, you even wonder whether they eat something before they come to school(F)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General Work:*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>We are overwhelmed with work there is too much work in the home(M), in these resettlement areas people will be busy in the fields(C), people say they are busy at work and we understand that(HM),</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Money:*</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The parent can have concern and values education of children but fails to get money for the child to continue with school(C), parents have no money they need assistance from the government(P), you will be convince that this person is willing but sure he doesn’t have(HdM),</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value of education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivation</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Education quality</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrolment is poor because they just say here thats no school(HM) children walk long distances to other schools so we have less parents and less children so for us to develop few as we will be it is a challenge(M), as a parent, when results come I will be expecting good results so when they are not I first look at the school and do you ever seriously learn there, there is no learning there..I blame the teachers(SDC), those who came through the fast treck their children are not in this school(HM), comparing with our neighbouring schools you can actually see that what their Grade 1 children are able to do compared to our children here is different, their behaviour is different that one is better ..you see some of the things we just say as long as the child is going to school..no standards..some parents lose faith(SDC)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Politics</th>
<th>Political situation:*</th>
<th>Power:*</th>
<th>Policy stalemate:*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It is not only money that is a problem but also the political situation(C), parents, when there is a leader who is affiliated to a political party, they observe to see where that person who is advocating development is aligned to and you find that their support is biased towards that person or otherwise(C), parents say if so and so says something we don’t respond</td>
<td>The headman has no power, he encourages but to no avail, the issue is we are just talking by</td>
<td>Parents should pay school levy, and govt policy, if it is known that you have sent away</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
and if so and so says something we respond, that is affecting us(C), this issue of which political side is he, we will be destroying our children(C),

word of mouth we have no way of enforcing it(sdc)

children from school because she has not paid fees, it wont go well with the policy(sdc)

---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Influence on quality</th>
<th>Infrastructure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Buildings:* Construction of new classroom block with the help of EU</td>
<td>Retards project* progress: It hinders progress in implementing a project, we scale down or we shelve it,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grounds:* Cleared bushes, filled in potholes, planted flowers, improved appearance ,</td>
<td>Sub standard buildings:* Parents have failed to construct more classrooms and children are learning from various corners of an old farmhouse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bore hole:* Sinking and fitting a borehole with the help of DDF</td>
<td>Retarding construction progress:* Classrooms are inadequate (sdc,HM, tchr) grade 6 and 7 are sharing a classroom, grade 4 and 5, grade 1,2,3,and ECD old farm store(HM). Parents failed to raise 20 000 bricks for a classroom block whose funds had been availed by the EU, the funds were withdrawn and passed on to another project.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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| Teachers | Commitment:* Teachers don’t teach children of those who have not paid incentive money(F) those who have paid are not being given work or taudht(F) |
| Teacher/parent relationship:* Avoidance due to awareness of not providing school requirements, I was not coming I thought you | Respect* Little respect, if you threaten to slap then I will go and tell my mother(tchr) |
| Motivati on:* Unmotivated teachers | --- |
| Learners | Attentiveness:*
Hungry children often sleep during lessons(tchr)
sometimes complain of headache when given maputi
starts playing(tchr) in the end they just leave for school without food(F), |
| Inferiority complex:*
Isolated due to lack of uniform, feel out of place due to uncovered ex books, those in uniform play on there on(tchr) |
| Drop out:*
Each time the child is sent away from school they just say let the child stay at home(sdc), that is when it is said the child should stop coming to school(F), the moment you discover her behaviour she drops out of school(thcr), parents fail to pay fees to the extent that children and up staying at home(M). |
| Absenteeism:*
Parents have no concern children can come to school once per week(tchr), when writing exams the child is brought to write exams soon after the child goes back to stay with parents(tchr), can stay away for a whole term, attendance is very poor here(HM), remain and take care of the baby(HM), they can be removed from the register but later resurfaces(HM,sdc). |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teaching and learning processes</th>
<th>Motivation: **</th>
<th>Examinatio n results: **</th>
<th>Written work:**</th>
<th>Participatio n:*</th>
<th>Disrupting lessons:*</th>
<th>Game s:**</th>
<th>Teacher/ pupil relations hip:*</th>
<th>Promoti ng corporal punishm ent:</th>
<th>reduced teacher contact: **</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>It is encouragin g the work becomes meaningful to children and teachers(H M), when parents come and see our work and make comments we feel happy(HM) they liven our spirits(H</td>
<td>** Reducing performanc e: Those who do homework are the ones who do well(tchr) children do not perform at the level of their class,</td>
<td>There is no learning without the child writing, those who don't have books and are absent during fees times score low marks.</td>
<td>** You will see that the child is not free in class, he will always be jittery that any time I will be sent back home for fees(HM) those who are adequately supplied will be very free, child's performance is affected badly(tchr)</td>
<td>Just as I arrive and say good morning ..Knock.. parent ...introduce lesson..pho ne..meeting</td>
<td>We see that children go upto grade seven unabl e to play eg netba ll or tennis (sdc), when going for compe tition s the children don't have birth certifi cates(SDC,H M)</td>
<td>It depends on what the parent has done to you but sometim es you become really hash to the child, I will be jeopardisi ng my work because of the child(thr),</td>
<td>I want my child to be like you or better so if you can beat her or all you can do ...do it(tchr)</td>
<td>teach ers are not teaching children of parents who have failed to pay money for incentiv es(F) even if they have paid fees the children are there in the classroo m but is not being taught or given</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community members' perception of quality</td>
<td>Curriculum</td>
<td>Practical subjects:*</td>
<td>Good Results:*</td>
<td>Effective teaching:*</td>
<td>ECD:*</td>
<td>Pupils' behaviour:*</td>
<td>Attendance:*</td>
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<td>Computers, home economics, sport,(F) agriculture(HdM) building should be done(F)</td>
<td>good final results(sdc,tchrs) should not have a zero percent pass rate(tchr), i was very happy when my daughter won a tooth brush and a cup in sporting completion, she was in grade1, she came out first in a running race..even today Im still happy(M) I look for good results(M), even end of term results should be pleasing(M)expecting an 80%(HM) really producing 4 units(tchr),we are getting around 30% last time we got 33%(HM)</td>
<td>children should be learning(M) learning progress should be observable(M)</td>
<td>Well equipped ECD centre(C),</td>
<td>Pupils should not smoke at school going age(tchr) should not use vulgar words(tchr)</td>
<td>Pupils should attend school regularly (HM)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teaching and learning resources</td>
<td>Adequate textbooks* and stationery (HM, tchr)</td>
<td>Parents who pay* fees on time, adequate financial resources (tchr)</td>
<td>Library books:* Current library books (C)</td>
<td>Adequate classroom resources:* text books, manila, chalk, chalk boards, syllabus (tchr, HM)</td>
<td>Adequate syllabuses:* (HM)</td>
<td>Adequate teachers’ resource books:* (HM)</td>
<td>Adequate charts:* In the classroom (F)</td>
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<tr>
<td>School infrastructure</td>
<td>Adequate furniture:* * Adequate furniture (HM),</td>
<td>Electricity: ** School should be electrified (F)</td>
<td>School tools:* School should have its own tools like shovels, hoes (F)</td>
<td>Adequate toilets:* ** (HM, M)</td>
<td>Adequate classrooms:* that take the number of pupils at standard ratio (M) with blackboards, chalk, charts, and reading books (M),</td>
<td>Teachers’ houses:* Adequate teachers’ houses (HM)</td>
<td>Standard grounds: ** With floors and fenced (F)</td>
<td>Library:* (C)</td>
<td>Reliable water supply:* * Children should not carry drinking water and for cleaning toilets (M, F, GP)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Human resources</td>
<td>I caretaker:* * children work too much in this school (GP) HM and a group of boys were observed fighting a raging fire fearlessly getting into the midst of the veld fire (observation)</td>
<td>Qualified* teachers:* Adequate trained teacher, real teachers (M) teachers who stay long in the school (C),</td>
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The Focus Group Discussion Protocol

Introduction

I want to thank you for taking the time to meet me today. My name is Mesheck Godfrey Sango. I am a student with the Zimbabwe Open University. My topic focuses on the influence of community participation on quality of basic education in primary schools in rural areas. I would like to talk to you about your experiences in participating in providing basic education.

The focus group discussion should take about an hour. I shall be taping the session because I do not want to miss any of your comments. So, because we are on tape, I ask you to speak loud enough so that I do not miss any of your comments. Also, I shall be taking notes during the session.

All responses will be kept confidential. This means that responses will be used for purposes of this research only. You do not have to talk about anything you do not want to and you may end the interview at any time. Do you have questions on what I have just said?

Warm up question

To start our discussions, May each one of you tell the group your brief background (your name, location in the village, your main occupation at home and how you are connected to this school?)

The Questions

- As major stakeholders in the education of your children, how are you involved in the life of this school?
- In your opinion, how would you want to be involved in the life of this school?
- How do you get engaged in the various community participation activities?
- What difficulties do you experience in getting involved in community participation activities?
- How do you overcome some of these challenges?
• How is the involvement of residents from this community promoting or hindering quality education in this school?

• What recommendations do you have for future community participation in the various processes of providing basic education in this school?

• Is there anything more you would like to add?

Conclusion

We have come to the end of our discussion. I will be analysing the information you and others gave me and submitting a report to the university in due course. I will be happy to share the findings of this study with you if you so wish. I may come back to verify some points if need arises.

Thank you for your time.
The In-depth Interview Protocol

Introduction

I want to thank you for taking the time to meet me today. My name is Mesheck Godfrey Sango. I am a student with the Zimbabwe Open University. My topic focuses on the influence of community participation on quality of education in primary schools in rural areas. I would like to talk to you about your experiences in participating in providing basic education.

The interview should take about an hour. I shall be taping the session because I do not want to miss any of your comments. So, because we are on tape, I ask you to speak loud enough so that I do not miss any of your comments. Also, I shall be taking notes during the session.

All responses will be kept confidential. This means that responses will be used for purposes of this research only. You do not have to talk about anything you do not want to and you may end the interview at any time. Do you have questions on what I have just said?

Warm up question

You are one of the important stakeholders in the provision of education to the children of this community, may you tell me a little about yourself (when did you become the local headman/councillor, how big is the community- physical boundaries, population, major economic activities) and how you are connected to the school.

- How are you and other community members involved in the life of this school?
- In your opinion, how would you want to be involved?
- What difficulties do you experience in getting involved in the various activities in this school?
- How can these challenges be overcome?
- How is community promoting or hindering quality education in this school?
- What recommendations do you have for future community participation in this school?
- Is there anything else you would like to add?
Conclusion

We have come to the end of our interview. I will be analysing the information you and others gave me and submitting a report to the university in due course. I will be happy to share the findings of this study with you if you so wish. I may come back to verify some points if need arises.

Thank you for your time.